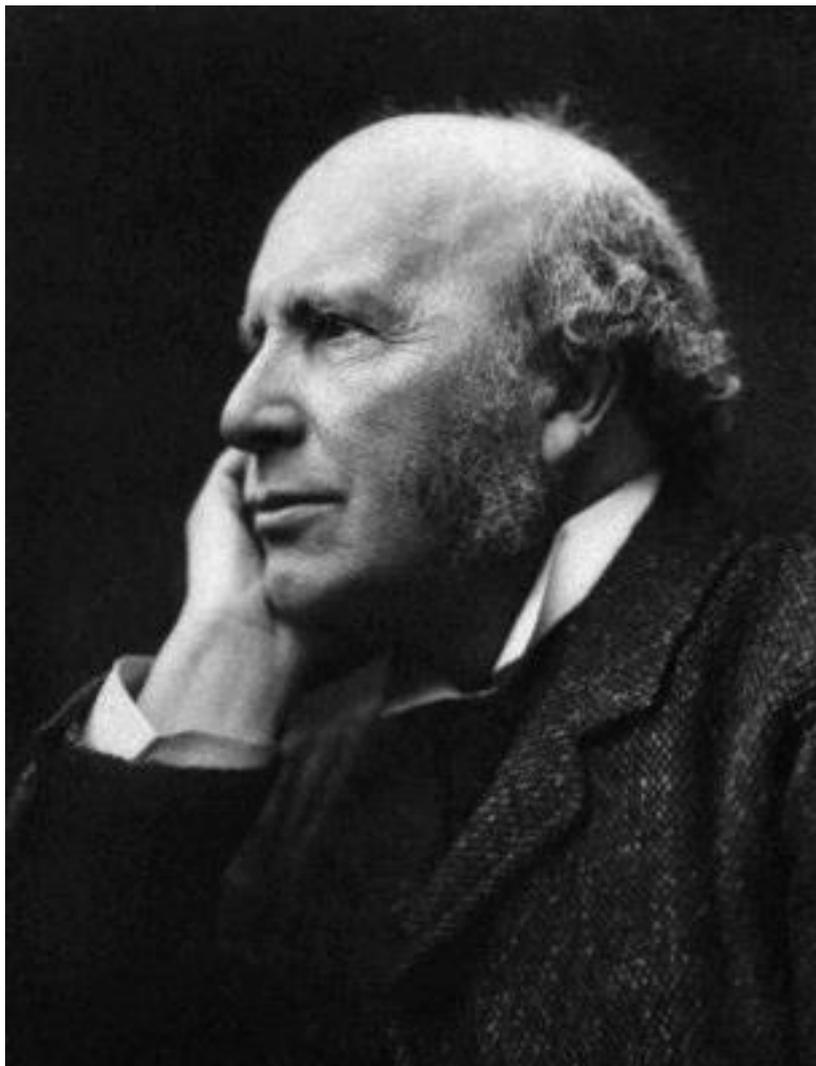


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“EL VENCEDOR EDICIONES”

ITALY AND HER INVADERS

THOMAS HODGKIN



PREFACE.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to meet the requirements of two different classes of readers. For the sake of the general reader, who may not have his Gibbon before him, nor a Latin Dictionary and Classical Atlas at his elbow, I have taken for granted as little special knowledge of Roman history as possible, I have generally kept the text clear of untranslated quotations, and I have explained, with even tedious minuteness, the modern equivalents of ancient geographical designations, and have sometimes used the modern name only, at the cost of an obvious anachronism.

On the other hand, as I have proceeded with my work, and become more and more interested in the study of my authorities, I have begun to indulge the hope that I might number some historical scholars among my audience. To these, accordingly, I have addressed myself almost exclusively in the notes, whether at the foot of the page or at the end of the chapter; and these notes, for the most part, the general reader may safely leave unstudied. Should my book be fortunate enough to come into the hands of a scholar, he is requested to pardon many an explanation of things to him trite and obvious, which I should never have introduced had I been writing for scholars alone.

It will be observed that when sums of money are spoken of, I have generally given the equivalent in sterling. This does not, however, convey much information to the mind unless it be also stated what was the "purchasing power" of a sum equivalent to a pound sterling in those days. I would gladly have added a chapter on "The History of Prices under the Empire" and had collected some materials for that purpose, but I feared to weary my readers with a discussion which might have interested only a few. The general conclusion at which the most careful modern enquirers seem to have arrived is thus stated by Gibbon: about the year 470, the value of money appears to have been somewhat higher than in the present age. The general rise of prices since Gibbon's time may justify us in making this statement somewhat stronger. It is probable that in Imperial Rome £100 would have had about the same command over commodities which £200 has in our own day. But of such enormous differences in value, when measured by the precious metals, as exist between the England of Victoria and the England of the Plantagenets there is here no question.

I have made a slight departure from precedent by introducing more illustrations, than are usual in a work of this description. The chief object of the chromo-lithographs of ecclesiastical edifices at Ravenna is to convey to those who have not visited that place some idea of the general effect of the Mosaics. They are engraved from drawings carefully made on the spot by Mr. George Nattress. The coins here figured are, with one exception, all in the British Museum. I am indebted to the kind assistance of Mr. H. A. Grueber (in the coin department of that institution) for their selection and arrangement. For the maps, though chiefly founded on Smith's Classical Atlas, I must be myself responsible. Some boundaries are conjecturally drawn, but I have endeavoured to make this conjectural element as small as possible.

I take this opportunity to express my thanks to three friends, with whom this book, which has given me six years of happy labour, will always be connected in the mind of the author. My brother-in-law, Mr. Justice Fry, first encouraged me to attempt such an undertaking, and the advice of Dr. James Bryce and the Rev. M. Creighton was exceedingly helpful at a later period of the work. My hearty thanks are also due to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, for undertaking the publication of the work of one who is a stranger to the University of Oxford.

The volumes now published form a chapter of history which is complete in itself; but if life and health be continued to me, I hope to narrate hereafter the fortunes of the Ostrogoths and Lombards, and thus to bring my work down within sight of the august figure of Charles the Great.

THOS. HODGKIN.

BENWELLDENE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, *5th December, 1879.*

BOOK I
THE VISIGOTHIC INVASION
INTRODUCTION.
SUMMARY OF ROMAN IMPERIAL HISTORY.

CHAPTERS

- I. EARLY HISTORY OF THE GOTHS
- II. JOVIAN, PROCOPIUS, ATHANARIC.
- III. VALENTINIAN THE FIRST
- IV. THE LAST YEARS OF VALENS
- V. THEODOSIUS
- VI. THE VICTORY OF NICAEA
- VII. THE FALL OF GRATIAN
- VIII. MAXIMUS AND AMBROSE
- IX. THE INSURRECTION OF ANTIOCH
- X. THEODOSIUS IN ITALY AND THE MASSACRE OF THESSALONICA
- XI. EUGENIUS AND ARBOGAST
- XII. INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE
- XIII. HONORIUS, STILICHO, ALARIC
- XIV. ALARIC'S FIRST INVASION OF ITALY
- XV. THE FALL OF STILICHO
- XVII. ALARIC'S THREE SIEGES OF ROME.
- XVIII. THE LOVERS OF PLACIDIA
- XIX. PLACIDIA AUGUSTA
- XX. SALVIAN ON THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT

BOOK II
THE HUNNISH INVASION

- I. EARLY HISTORY OF THE HUNS.
- II. ATTILA AND THE COURT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.
- III. ATTILA IN GAUL.
- IV. ATTILA IN ITALY.

BOOK III

THE VANDAL INVASION AND THE HERULIAN MUTINY

- I. EXTINCTION OF THE HUNNISH EMPIRE AND THE THEODOSIAN DYNASTY.
- II. THE VANDALS FROM GERMANY TO ROME.
- III. THE LETTERS AND POEMS OF APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS.
- IV. AVITUS, THE CLIENT OF THE VISIGOTHS.
- V. SUPREMACY OF RICIMER. MAJORIAN.
- VI. SEVERUS II, THE LUCANIAN. ANTHEMIUS, THE CLIENT OF BYZANTIUM.
- VII. OLYBRIUS, THE CLIENT OF THE VANDAL. GLYCERIUS, THE CLIENT OF THE BURGUNDIAN. JULIUS NEPOS, THE CLIENT OF BYZANTIUM. ROMULUS AUGUSTULUS, SON OF ORESTES.
- VIII. ODOVACAR, THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.
- IX. CAUSES OF THE FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

BOOK IV
THE OSTROGOTHIC INVASION.

- I. A CENTURY OF OSTROGOTHIC HISTORY.
- II. THE REIGN OF ZENO.
- III THE TWO THEODORICS IN THRACE
- V. FLAVIUS ODOVACAR.
- V. THE FRIGIAN WAR
- VI. THE DEATH-GRAPPLE.
- VII. KING AND PEOPLE.
- VIII. THEODORIC AND HIS COURT
- IX. THEODORIC'S RELATIONS WITH GAUL.
- X. THEODORIC'S RELATIONS WITH THE EAST.
- XI. THEODORIC'S RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH.
- XII. BOETHIUS AND SYMMACHUS.
- XIII. THE ACCESSION OF ATHALARIC.
- XIV. JUSTINIAN.
- XV. BELISARIUS.
- XVI. THE LOVERS OF AMALASUNTHA.

BOOK V
THE IMPERIAL RESTORATION
535—553

- I. THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR
- II. BELISARIUS AT CARTHAGE AND AT NAPLES.
- III. THE ELEVATION OF WITIGIS.
- IV. BELISARIUS IN ROME
- V. THE LONG SIEGE BEGUN.
- VI. THE CUTTING OF THE AQUEDUCTS.
- VII. THE GOTHIC ASSAULT.
- VIII. ROMAN SORTIES.
- IX. THE BLOCKADE
- X. THE RELIEF OF RIMINI.
- XI. DISSENSIONS IN THE IMPERIAL CAMP.
- XII. SIEGES OF FIESOLI AND OSIMO.
- XIII. THE FALL OF RAVENNA.
- XIV. AFFAIRS AT CONSTANTINOPLE
- XV. THE ELEVATION OF TOTILA.
- XVI. SAINT BENEDICT (480 – 547)
- XVII. THE RETURN OF BELISARIUS.
- XVIII. THE SECOND SIEGE OF ROME.
- CHAPTER XIX. ROMA CAPTA.
- XX. THE RE-OCCUPATION OF ROME.
- XXI. THE THIRD SIEGE OF ROME.
- XXII. THE EXPEDITION OF GERMANUS.
- XXIII. THE SORROWS OF VIGILIUS.
- XXIV. NARSES AND TOTILA.
- XXV FINIS GOTHORUM. THE LAST OF THE GOTHIS

BOOK VI.
THE LOMBARD INVASION.

- I. THE ALAMANNIC BRETHREN.
- II. THE RULE OF NARSES.
- III. THE LANGOBARDIC FOREWORLD
 - 1. Early Notices of the Langobardi by Greek and Roman Writers.
 - 2. The Saga of the Langobardi
 - 3. War with the Heruli
 - 4. War with the Gepidae.
- IV. ALBOIN IN ITALY.
- V. THE INTERREGNUM.
- VI. FLAVIUS AUTHARI.
- VII. GREGORY THE GREAT.
- VIII. GREGORY AND THE LOMBARDS.
- IX. THE PAPAL PEACE.
- X. THE LAST YEARS OF GREGORY
- XI. THE ISTRIAN SCHISM.

BOOK VII
THE LOMBARD KINGDOM
A.D. 600-744

- I. THE SEVENTH CENTURY.
- II. THE FOUR GREAT DUCHIES.
 - I. The Duchy of Trient (Tridentum).
 - II. The Duchy of Friuli (Forum Julii).
 - III. The Duchy of Benevento (Beneventum).
 - IV. The Duchy of Spoleto (Spoletium).
- Note A. Ecclesiastical notices of the Lombards of Spoleto in the Dialogues of Gregory the Great. Life of St. Cetheus.
- III. SAINT COLUMBANUS.
- IV. THEUDELINDA AND HER CHILDREN.
- V. THE LEGISLATION OF ROTHARI.
- VI. GRIMWALD AND CONSTANS.
 - The Story of St. Barbatius.
- VII. THE BAVARIAN LINE RESTORED.
- VIII. STORY OF THE DUCHIES, CONTINUED.
- IX. THE PAPACY AND THE EMPIRE.
- X. THE LAWS OF LIUTPRAND.
- XI. ICONOCLASM.
- XII. KING LIUTPRAND.
- XIII. POLITICAL STATE OF IMPERIAL ITALY.
- XIV. POLITICAL STATE OF LOMBARD ITALY.

BOOK VIII.
FRANKISH INVASIONS.

- I. INTRODUCTION. THE MEROVINGIAN KINGS. EARLY FRANKISH HISTORY.
- II. THE EARLY ARNULFINGS
- III. PIPPIN OF HERISTAL AND CHARLES MARTEL
- IV. DUKES OF BAVARIA
- V. THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

- VI. THE ANOINTING OF PIPPIN
- VII. THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE
- VIII. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EXARCHATE
- IX. THE PONTIFICATE OF PAUL I (757-767).
- X. A PAPAL CHAOS.
- XI. THE PONTIFICATE OF STEPHEN III.
- XII. RAVENNA AND ROME.
- XIII. THE ACCESSION OF POPE HADRIAN.
- XIV. END OF THE LOMBARD MONARCHY.

BOOK IX
THE FRANKISH EMPIRE
774-814

- I. THE PONTIFICATE OF HADRIAN I.
Frankish and Byzantine Affairs,
- II. THE PONTIFICATE OF HADRIAN I.
Italian Affairs.
- III. TASSILO OF BAVARIA.
- IV. TWO COURTS : CONSTANTINOPLE AND AACHEN
- V. POPE AND EMPEROR.
- VI. CHARLES AND IRENE.
- VII. VENICE.
- VIII. THE FINAL RECOGNITION.
- IX. CAROLUS MORTUUS.
- X. THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION.

SUMMARY OF ROMAN IMPERIAL HISTORY.

THE object of this history is to trace some of the changes by which classical Italy, the kernel of the Roman Empire, the center of government and law for the Western world, became that Italy of the Middle Ages, whose life was as rich in intellectual and artistic culture as it was poor in national cohesion and enduring political strength. To some other historian will belong the delight of telling worthily in the English language the story of those wonderful Italian Commonwealths, which nurtured and diffused the sacred flame of civilization, while England, France, and Germany were yet dreaming the dreams of barbarism. Other English scholars are even now relating the history of that succeeding age, so perplexing in its alternate appeals to our admiration and our abhorrence, during which Italy, still in the van of European nations, was passing from the mediaeval into the modern phase of thought and manners, the Age of the Renaissance. But my business is at the other, and to most readers the much less interesting, end of her history. I have to deal with the period of fading light and increasing obscurity during which the familiar Italy of the Classics slowly assumes the character which we term Medieval. Italy is the country with which our interests will be permanently bound up, and other nations are mentioned only in so far as they directly or indirectly influenced her destinies. But I must warn the reader that this limitation will often be found to be of the most elastic nature. Every wandering tribe which crossed the Alps, eager to pierce its way to the discrowned capital of the world, contributed something to the great experiment of the making of the new Italy, and the previous history of that tribe, whether it dwelt in Lithuanian steppes or wasted Chinese provinces, is therefore within the scope of our enquiry, which proposes to deal not only with Italy but also with her invaders. In the period covered by the present volumes, moreover, it is impossible wholly to dis sever the history of Italy from that of the other portions of the Roman Empire. This is shown in the lives of two of the first statesmen whom we meet with. A Spanish gentleman (Theodosius), clothed with the Imperial purple at Constantinople, by a battle fought among the mountains of Friuli makes himself master of Italy, and dies at Milan, leaving the dominion of Western Europe to his son. The chief minister of that son (Stilicho), a soldier of German extraction, born probably in Thrace, first emerges into notice as ambassador to the king of Persia, is married beside the Bosphorus to a daughter of Spain, wars by the Rhine, and dies at Ravenna. Do what we may, therefore, we shall find our story continually diverted from the country between the Alps and Etna by the perturbing influences of other countries, especially by Byzantium, in the earlier part of this period, and by Gaul in the later. Still, the reader is requested to bear in mind that it is the history of Italy primarily which I shall endeavour to set before him, that the course of the narrative is prescribed by the order of the successive appearances of the barbarians upon the Italian theatre, and that I am not so presumptuous as to endeavour to tell over again what has been already told by the unsurpassable skill of Gibbon, the story of the Fall of the Roman Empire.

Five great invasions by the barbarians, corresponding roughly to five generations of mankind, or 160 years, mark the period which may be called *The Death of Rome*. These five invasions are those of the Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths and the Lombards. Alaric the Visigoth first led a hostile army into Italy A.D. 402; Alboin the Lombard entered the same country with his conquering host A.D. 568. It is the story of the three earlier invasions that I shall attempt to tell in the present volumes, and the period to which I have especially

directed my attention is the century which intervenes between the years A.D. 376 and 476. For though the Visigoths did not actually set foot in Italy till A.D. 402, the cause which set them in motion, and which, more than any other, determined the great migration of the Germanic tribes into the countries forming the Roman Empire, was the appearance of the Huns, a horde of Asiatic savages, on the confines of the Visigothic territory between the Black Sea and the Carpathians, in the year A.D. 376, and (by a coincidence which may help to fix both dates in the memory) it was precisely a century after this event, in the year of our Lord 476, that the last Roman Emperor (Augustulus) was pushed off his throne by the first Teutonic ruler of Italy (Odoacer). In the century thus selected the chronological landmarks will be best furnished by the successive appearances of fresh barbarian nationalities upon the scene.

The First Book, which covers the longest interval of time, will deal with the events of the close of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century, considered either as causes or as consequences of the great Visigothic invasions (A.D. 400 to 414). After a sketch of the earlier history of the Gothic nation, I shall relate with some detail the history of the Empire, both in the East and West, after the death of Julian (363), in order to explain the series of events which ultimately brought the Visigothic invaders into Italy. For it was from the East that the impulsion came. The cause which set the Visigoths in motion, and which more than any other determined the great migration of the Germanic tribes into the countries forming the Roman Empire, was the appearance of the Huns, a horde of Asiatic savages, on the confines of the Visigothic territory between the Black Sea and the Carpathians, in the year 376. (By a coincidence which may help to fix both dates in the memory it was precisely a century after this date, in the year 476, that the boy-Emperor Romulus Augustulus was pushed from his throne by the first Teutonic ruler of Italy, Odovacar.)

The Second Book, after describing the efforts of scholars to throw light on the darkness of the history of the *Huns* previously to their arrival in Europe, will deal chiefly with those eventful years in the middle of the fifth century, during which Italy and the whole of Europe, Teutonic as well as Roman, trembled before the might of Attila.

The Third Book will be devoted to the early history of the *Vandals*, their invasions of Italy, and the revolt of the German mercenaries in the Roman army (476).

During the three centuries and a half which intervened between the death of Augustus and the beginning of the epoch which we are going to consider in detail, the Emperors who governed Rome may be divided broadly into six great classes:

1.-The Julian and Claudian Emperors (A.D. 14-68), four men whose names have burnt themselves for ever into the memory of the human race, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. All these men in different ways illustrated the terrible efficacy of absolute world-dominion to poison the character and even the intellect of him who wielded it. Standing, as it were, upon the Mount of Temptation, and seeing all the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them stretched at an immeasurable distance below their feet, they were seized with a dizziness of the soul, and, professing themselves to be gods, did deeds at the instigation of their wild hearts and whirling brains such as men still shudder to think of. Their hands were heavy on the old Senatorial families of Rome, heavier still on their own race, the long-descended posterity of Venus and of Iulus. In the genealogy of the descendants of Augustus, "stabbed", "poisoned", "starved to death", are the all but invariable obituary notices of the women as of the men. But the imperial Reign of Terror was limited to a comparatively small number of families in Rome. The provinces were undoubtedly better governed than in the later days of the Republic, and even in Rome itself the common people strewed flowers on the grave of Nero. Frightful as was the waste of money on the wild extravagances of Caligula and Nero, it perhaps did not outrun the supply received from the vast confiscated estates of the slaughtered senators; and the tax-

gatherer, at any rate in Italy and the West, was not yet that name of terror to the provincials which he became in after days.

2. A.D. 69-96. The *Flavian Emperors* (A.D. 69-96) ought, perhaps, hardly to be classed together, so little was there in common between the just, if somewhat hard, rule of Vespasian, or the two years' beneficent sway of Titus, "the delight of the human race", and the miserable tyranny of Domitian. But the stupendous Colosseum, the Arch of Titus, and the Amphitheatre at Verona, serve as an architectural landmark, to fix the Flavian period in the memory; and one other characteristic was necessarily shared by the whole family, the humble origin from which they sprang. After the high-born Julii and Claudii, the descendants of pontiffs and censors, noblemen delicate and fastidious through all their wild debauch of blood, came these sturdy sons of the commonalty to robe themselves in the imperial purple, and this unforgotten lowness of their ancestry, while it gave a touch of meanness to the close and frugal government of Vespasian, evidently intensified the delight of Domitian in setting his plebeian feet on the necks of all that was left of refined or aristocratic in Rome. All the more strange does it seem, when we consider the humble extraction of these Emperors, that their name should have remained for centuries the favourite title of Emperors no way allied to them in blood, a Claudius (Gothicus), a Constantine, a Theodosius, and many more, having prefixed the once ignoble name of Flavius to their own. And hence, by a natural process of imitation, the barbarian rulers who settled themselves within the limits of the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, Burgundian, Lombard, Visigoth, adopted the same mysteriously majestic forename, unconsciously, as we must suppose, selecting the very epithet which best described their own personal appearance, yellow-haired sons of the North as they were among the dark-colored Mediterranean populations.

(Autharis the Lombard adopted the name of Flavius about the year A. D. 584. Recared the Visigoth about the same time. The intention appears to have been in each case to signify to their subjects in Italy and Gaul respectively that they claimed some portion of the dignity of the Roman Emperors. Odoacer, if the coin attributed to him be correct, also called himself Flavius).

3. The *Adoptive Emperors* (A.D. 96-192) who followed the Flavian dynasty conferred upon the Empire the inestimable boon of nearly a century of internal peace, order, and good government. If we cannot acquiesce without reservation in the celebrated statement of Gibbon, that "if a man were called on to fix the period in the history of the world in which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus", we can truly say that we know not where to find any other consecutive series of sovereigns which can be compared to these illustrious names, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, Marcus. Valiant, accomplished, just, able to bear their share in the rough work of the defense of the Empire against external aggression, yet not delighting in war, these men, with many differences of temperament, of intellectual power, and of moral excellence, were alike in their earnest single-heartedness of purpose to use the vast power entrusted to them for the good of their world-wide realm. Alike in central Rome and in the remotest provinces of the Empire, we find the traces of their beneficent activity, working not as if for a year or a generation, but for eternity. The column at Rome which commemorates the Dacian triumphs of Trajan measures also the greatness of the excavations for the magnificent *Forum Trajani*. From the Lower Danube to the Black Sea, from the Upper Danube to the affluents of the Rhine, from the Tyne to the Solway, from the Frith of Forth to the Frith of Clyde, men can still trace the boundary lines of the Roman Empire traced by the mighty hands of Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus. Not even the

Colosseum of Vespasian or the Pantheon of Agrippa impresses the mind with a sense of the majestic strength of Rome so forcibly as the massive bulwarks of a bridge erected by Hadrian's cohorts over some little British stream unknown to the majority even of Englishmen, or the square and solid blocks of an Imperial guard-house on some remote and solitary Northumbrian moor. And of these works, with that peculiar quality of grand permanence which they bear upon their fronts, and which seems to say that they are the work of men who could count near a thousand years of empire behind them, and could count upon more than a thousand years of empire before them, the best and most characteristic are those which were reared in the second century by order of these princes whom we have called the Adoptive Emperors.

But for one consideration, the method of selection, which gave to the Roman world so splendid a succession of rulers, would seem to be so good as to deserve to be reintroduced into practical politics. The Commonwealth having once been fortunate enough to secure a wise and virtuous ruler, and having entrusted him with as much power as possible short of absolute despotism, leaves it to him to select, in the maturity of his years and judgment, the man whom he deems likeliest to carry on his great work in his own spirit of absolute devotion to the welfare of the State. Avoiding thus the oft-recurring absurdities of popular election, avoiding also the hap-hazard of hereditary succession, wherein Nature seems sometimes to amuse herself by producing sons who are the very burlesques and parodies of their fathers, the State obtains the selection of the man presumably the fittest of all her children to govern in his turn. He is adopted by the reigning sovereign, calls him father, is treated by him with the confidence and affection due to a son, steps naturally into his vacant place at his death, and carries forward the great and beneficent schemes of which he has learnt the secret.

An admirable theory, and one which owing to a combination of favourable circumstances did, as we have seen, for nearly a century work out most beneficial results in practice. But everyone can see what is the deep-rooted and enduring principle in human nature which must cause it to fail in the long run. "And Abram said: Behold to me thou hast given no seed : and lo, one, born in my house is mine heir". And behold the word of the Lord came unto him saying, "This shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thy loins shall be thine heir". Neither the proverbial jealousy between kings and their sons, nor the nobler principle of postponing family affection to the good of the State, can be trusted to counterbalance, for more than a generation or two, the irresistible instinct which makes a man prefer to work for his own offspring rather than for the offspring of other men, and unwilling to play at adopting sons when he has sons of his own growing up around him. So, having got this principle of hereditary succession deep in the nature of things, and likely to last as long as the human race itself, the wisest course seems to be to accept it, make the best of it, and by the safeguards of what we call constitutional government prevent it from doing more harm than can be helped to the world.

4. *The Barrack Emperors (A.D. 192-284).* No more striking illustration both of the strength of the parental instinct and of the mischiefs of hereditary succession, could be afforded than by the change which befell the Roman Empire in the year A.D. 180, when Marcus Aurelius, wisest, most patriotic, and most self-denying of emperors, instead of adopting a successor left his power to his son Commodus, most brutal and profligate of tyrants. The convulsions which followed his murder were the prelude to the reigns of a class of men whom we may describe as the *Barrack Emperors*, whose reigns made up a century as miserable and ruinous as the period of the Adoptive Emperors had been prosperous and tranquil. The open sale of the Imperial dignity to Didius Julianus (A.D. 193) by the Praetorian Guards was only the expression in an unusually logical and shameless form of the motives which animated the Roman armies in the successive revolutions with which they afflicted the State. The

proclamation of a new emperor brought with it a liberal *donative* to the common soldiers, promotion and the chance of lucrative employment in the civil hierarchy to the officers. Therefore, as a skilful tradesman makes his profit by rapidly “turning over” his capital, even so in the interests of the military profession must emperors be made and unmade with a rapidity which almost takes away the breath of the historian who tries to record these bewildering changes. And the Praetorians of Rome were not to have a monopoly of this profitable speculation. It had been discovered long ago that emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome, and in Britain, Gaul, Spain, Africa, on the Persian frontier, wherever the legions were stationed, *pronunciamentos* (to borrow a term from Spanish politics) were constantly occurring, and second-rate generals were perpetually being hatched into emperors. Today the purple robe, the radiated crown, the epithets, “Augustus”, “Pius”, “Felix”, “Invictus”, “Pater Patriae”, and all the cant of conventional courtliness, tomorrow the headless trunk, the dagger-stabs in the purple, the murdered children, and a legion in the adjoining province greedily fingering their new donative and shouting the names of another pious, happy, and unconquered emperor who had been mad enough to climb the slippery slope.

In the period of seventy-three years (A.D. 211-284) which elapsed between the death of Severus and the accession of Diocletian, no fewer than eighteen emperors were recognized at Rome, besides a crowd of anti-emperors in the provinces, whose shifting shadowy forms defy enumeration. Thus the average length of the reign of each of these comparatively legitimate emperors was only four years and three weeks. What state could prosper which changed even its ministers as often as this? But the course of events during the two preceding-centuries had made of the emperor more than any single minister, far more of course than any constitutional king. He was the very mainspring of the State: in the army, in the courts of law, in the administration, in legislation, his impulse was needed to set the machine in motion, his guidance to keep it in the right track. There are some great names, some heroic natures belonging to this time. Decius, Claudius, and Aurelian will all claim a share of our admiration when we glance at their deeds in recounting the early history of the Gothic inroads. But what could the most strenuous ruler accomplish with so short a tenure of power? He was just beginning to learn his work when a mutiny of the soldiery or the sword of a barbarian, or one of those terrible pestilences which denoted and increased the misery of the time, carried him off, and the skein, more tangled than ever, fell into the hands of a too often incapable successor. Add to this primary evil of the rapid change of rulers others which were derived from it— inroads of the Germanic tribes, triumphs of the increasingly arrogant Persian kings, dilapidation of the frontier fortresses, utter exhaustion of the Treasury, and above and beyond all, a depreciation of the currency such as the world hardly saw again till the days of the French *assignat*; and the picture of this most miserable century is, not indeed complete, but at least sufficiently dark to disenchant us with that theory of “Caesarism” of which it furnishes a fitting illustration.

One point ought not to be left unnoticed. Not till towards the end of this period of the Barrack Emperors do we meet with any traces of real generalship among the Roman military leaders. The wretched system of *pronunciamentos* not only drained the life-blood of the State but ruined the discipline of the army. It was seen then as it has so often been seen since in the history of the world, that if once the interests of the military profession are allowed to become a paramount consideration in politics, it soon ceases to be an efficient instrument even for its own purpose of scientific manslaughter.

5. *The Partnership Emperors (A.D. 284-323).* This time of anarchy was closed by the accession of Diocletian, who inaugurated a period short in duration but productive of boundless consequences to the world, the period of the *Partnership Emperors*. Himself borne

to power by something not very unlike a mutiny of the troops on the Persian frontier, he nevertheless represented and gave voice to the passionate longing of the world that the age of mutinies might cease. With this intention he remodelled the internal constitution of the State and moulded it into a bureaucracy so strong, so stable, so wisely organized, that it subsisted virtually the same for more than a thousand years, and by its endurance prolonged for many ages the duration of the Byzantine Empire. With the same end avowedly in view but doubtless in part also at the promptings of his own superhuman pride, Diocletian severed himself more decisively than any of his predecessors from the Augustan policy of recognizing in the emperor only the first of Roman citizens, and ostentatiously claimed from his subjects a homage no less servile than that which was rendered to the most absolute of Oriental despots. The diadem worn after the Persian fashion, the jewelled buskins with their very soles tinged with purple, the reverence, not by kneeling but by complete self-prostration on entering the Imperial presence, exacted from all subjects of whatever rank—these innovations, almost as alien to the spirit of Augustus as to that of either Brutus, were now contentedly acquiesced in and formed part henceforward of the traditions of the Roman monarchy. So, too, did the pompous and inflated phraseology of the sovereign and his retinue, of which some samples, such as Sacred Majesty and Serene Highness, have passed into the language of modern courts and survive even to our own day. But the most important principle which Diocletian introduced into the politics of the Empire was Administrative Division. Recognizing the impossibility of properly ruling those vast dominions from one only seat of government, recognizing also the inevitable jealousy felt by the soldiers of the provinces for their more fortunate brethren under the golden shower of donatives at Rome, he divided the Roman world into four great Prefectures, which were to be ruled, not as independent states but still as one Empire by four partners in one great imperial firm. This principle of partnership or association was made elastic enough to include also the time-honoured principle of adoption. Diocletian associated with himself the stout soldier Maximian as his brother Augustus; then these two Augusti adopted and associated two younger men, Galerius and Constantius, as junior partners in the Empire, conferring upon them the slightly inferior title of Caesars. The Caesar Constantius governed from his capital of Treves the Prefecture of the Gauls, containing the three fair countries of Britain, France, and Spain. Maximian from his capital (not Rome but Milan) administered the Prefecture of Italy, comprising Italy Proper, Southern Germany, and North-Western Africa. Galerius from Sirmium (near Belgrade) ruled the Prefecture of Illyricum, containing the countries which we now know as European Turkey and Greece, with part of Hungary, while the rest of the Empire, namely Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, bore the name of the Prefecture of the East, and owned the immediate sway of Diocletian himself, who fixed his capital at Nicomedia in Bithynia. According to this system while the younger monarchs, the Caesars, were engaged in the tough work of the defence of the frontiers, their more experienced colleagues were to apply their matured intellects to the less exciting task of internal government and legislation. Civil war, it was fondly hoped, was rendered impossible; for whenever an Augustus died his Caesar stood ready to succeed him, and the nomination of the new Caesar would be decided by the calm collective wisdom of the three reigning sovereigns. The scheme was really deserving of a certain measure of success, and had Diocletian's colleagues all been men as just and moderate as Constantius Chlorus, it probably would have succeeded, at least for a generation or two. But, as everyone knows, it failed, and that in the very lifetime of its author. After nineteen years of sovereignty, on the whole well and wisely exercised, Diocletian retired from the cares of government to his superb palace and his cabbage-garden by Salona on the Dalmatian shore of the Adriatic. Much against his will, the elderly soldier, Maximian, retired likewise. The health of Constantius was visibly declining, and the choice of new Caesars was left to Galerius, the worst of the Imperial quartet, who chose two men, one of them the half-witted Maximin Daza,

his own nephew, and both even more unsuited for empire than himself. Then steamed up and boiled over a very devil's cauldron of resentments and rivalries. Constantine the Great claims successfully the purple worn by his dead father, Maximian retracts his abdication and associates his son Maxentius: everybody who has any conceivable claim upon the Empire is declaring himself Augustus and his son Caesar: before the death of Diocletian no fewer than six men are all posing as full Roman Emperors. We hasten on to the familiar end. By A.D. 314 two Emperors alone, Constantine and Licinius, are left, the former in the West, the latter in the East. They become brothers-in-law; they endeavour to persuade the world, perhaps even their own hearts, that they are friends. But it is of no avail; the two queen-bees cannot dwell together in the same hive; each is bound to destroy or be destroyed at the battle of Chrysopolis (A.D.323) Licinius is defeated, soon after he is slain, and Constantine remains sole heir of the magnificent inheritance of Julius and of Marcus. Yet let it not be thought that the scheme of Diocletian utterly failed. When Constantine dedicated in A.D.330 the magnificent city by the swift Bosphorus, which still bears his name, that diamond which still makes so many sore hearts among the envious queens of the world, he was but giving bodily shape to the best thought of the deep brain of Diocletian, and that thought, if it ruined Rome, perhaps saved the Empire.

6. *The Theologian Emperors (A.D.326-363).* Constantine the Great and his family make up the last but one of our Imperial classes, and may be styled the *Theologian Emperors*. There is this one feature common to Constantine the Orthodox, to Constantius the Arian, and to Julian the Apostate, that with all of them the relation of man to the unseen world was the topic which most profoundly interested the intellect, whether it succeeded or failed in moulding the life. Constantine's youth and early manhood were passed amid the din of Diocletian's terrible persecution of the Christians, a persecution which must have possessed a fascinating interest for him on account of his father's suspected and his mother's avowed attachment to the new faith. That persecution was not the work so much of the statesmanlike Diocletian as of the coarse and tyrannical Galerius: and yet we may almost say, looking to the relative positions of the Empire and the Church, that Diocletian himself was bound to persecute if he did not believe. The Christian Church, a strong and stately hierarchy, proclaiming its own eternal truth and the absurdity of all other faiths, had grown up within the easy latitudinarianism of the Roman Empire, an *imperium in imperio*. Its Bishops were rapidly becoming the rivals of the Imperial Vicars, its Patriarchs of the Imperial Prefects. Even the wife and daughter of the greatest of the Emperors were believed to be Christians at heart, and the most popular of his colleagues more than tolerated the new faith. In these circumstances, urged on by the malign influence of Galerius, and influenced perchance contrary to the advice of his deeper nature by the traditions of his predecessors and his supposed duty to the Empire, Diocletian became a persecutor, and having undertaken the bloody task brought to its execution the same thoroughness, the same square-headed pertinacity which characterized his whole career as a statesman. He failed. The Empire which had accepted the challenge of the Church was signally defeated in the encounter. Thenceforward it was in the nature of things that the Church should dominate the Empire. The corruption which was wrought in Christianity by the atmosphere of the Court of Constantinople is admitted more or less by all schools of Christian thought. But, on the other hand, unbelief itself recognizes in the long theological duel of the fourth century something more than the mere hair-splittings of ambitious and worldly ecclesiastics. The constancy of Diocletian's martyrs had achieved the long delayed triumph of Christianity. The Roman world, which had been for three centuries in doubt what "this new doctrine whereof thou speakest is", was now prepared, not unanimously, but by an overwhelming majority, to accept it as "the fixed Highway to the Infinite and Eternal", as furnishing the long sought-for answer to the weary riddle of human existence.

But what *was* the answer? In what precise terms was it framed? As our poet says:—
 “Heaven opens inward, chasms yawn,
 Vast images in glimmering dawn
 Half shown are broken and withdrawn”

Tennyson, The Two Voices.

There had been something of vagueness in the language of the earlier teachers of Christianity, in the very fullness and passion of their faith something almost like Agnosticism in their manner of speaking about heavenly things. This must now exist no longer. If the Gospel was indeed the new philosophy making void all that Zeno and Epicurus had taught before, it must have its own philosophical scheme of the nature of the Godhead, clear and sharp as anything in the writings of Plato or of Philo, and capable of being defended by irresistible logic in all the schools of Alexandria. The attempt to elaborate such a theological system out of the statements of the disciples of Jesus concerning their Master involved the Church and the Empire in fifty years of the Arian controversy. To settle this controversy, as he hoped, but in reality to open the lists and vite all the world to take part in it, Constantine summoned (A.D.325) the august Council of Nicaea. From the standard of orthodoxy established in the Nicene Creed, Constantine himself before his death, in A.D.327, visibly declined, and his son, Constantius II, eventually the sole inheritor of his power, became one of its bitterest opponents. The twenty-three years during which Constantius filled the throne of the East are emphatically the Age of Councils. Councils were held at Antioch, at Tyre, at Sardica, at Arles, at Rimini, and at Constantinople. In the words of a contemporary historian, “Even the service of the posts was disorganized by the troops of Bishops riding hither and thither [at the public expense] to attend what they call Synods, convened by the Emperor’s order, in the hope of bringing every man round to his own opinion”.

A strange spectacle truly, and one which it is difficult to think of without scorn. Not only the great and intelligible feud between Athanasius and the Arians, but the endless divisions and subdivisions of the Arians themselves, Homousians and Homoeans and Eunomians, the innumerable creeds, the Bishops set up and pulled down by the Imperial authority, make up a history which in the modern reader stirs alternately the sensations of weariness and amusement. But amusement changes into contempt, and contempt into indignation, when he discovers that Constantius, the main-spring of all this theological activity, was a moody and suspicious tyrant, deeply imbued with the blood of his nearest kindred, constantly sentencing better men than himself to death at the bidding of the envious eunuchs who were the ministers of his luxury. Yet even for the perpetual theological fussiness of Constantius one might plead for a milder sentence in consideration of that influence of the spirit of the time, from which no man can altogether free himself. The whole current of the age swept men’s minds irresistibly into theology. All that remained of the intellectual subtlety of the Greek, of the practical common sense of the Roman, were engaged in solving the momentous question, “What is that true-opinion concerning the Nature of Christ, the possession of which secures us eternal life, and the deviation from which, even by a hair’s-breadth, means eternal ruin?” And the organ for discovering this true-opinion being a duly convened council of Bishops, and the expression of it a creed with duly accentuated anathemas upon all “right-hand errors and left-hand deflections” where could the uneasy conscience and mystified brain of a theologizing Emperor find rest if not in the bosom of yet another council formulating with the conventional anathemas yet another creed. The death of Constantius during the successful insurrection of his cousin Julian swept away for a time these endless creed-spinners. It may seem strange to class the so-called “Apostate” among the Theologian Emperors, yet every student of his life will admit that with him too man’s relation to the unseen universe was the point round which all his being turned. He was no Positivist (to use the language of our own day); though not a

persecutor, except of the mildest type, he was no Latitudinarian in matters of religion: he was deeply, seriously, earnestly, impressed with a belief in the existence of the old Olympian gods, and tried, but without a trace of success, to restore their worship. He did *not* say, dying in his tent by the Tigris of the wound inflicted by the Persian javelin, "Oh Galilean, thou hast conquered!" yet he might truly have said so, for the one dearest wish of his life was foiled. The pagan Theologian Emperor had made no enduring impression upon his age. Once more had the full wave of Imperial power dashed against the calm figure of the Christ, and once more it retired, not a fold of the seamless vesture disarranged.

7. The last category of Emperors (A.D.363-476) might be styled *The Sovereigns of the Sinking Empire*: but as we have now reached the threshold of our special subject, it will be convenient to forego any general sketch, and to begin to paint them with a little more detail.

BOOK I.
THE VISIGOTHIC INVASION

CHAPTER I.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE GOTHS

The Roman Commonwealth, from the time of Marius to that of Julian, had borne the brunt of the onset of various Teutonic peoples. The tribe which bore the distinctive name of Teutones, the Suevi, the Cherusci, the Nervii, the Marcomanni, and in later times the great confederacies which called themselves Free-men and All-men (Franks and Alamanni), had wrestled, often not ingloriously, with the Roman legions. But it was reserved for the Goths, whose fortunes we are now about to trace, to deal the first mortal blow at the Roman state, to be the first to stand in the Forum of *Roma Invicta*, and prove to an amazed world (themselves half-terrified by the greatness of their victory) that she who had stricken the nations with a continual stroke was now herself laid low. How little the Gothic nation comprehended that this was its mission; how gladly it would often have accepted the position of humble friend and client of the great World-Empire, through what strange vicissitudes of fortune, what hardships, what dangers of national extinction it was driven onwards to this predestined goal, will appear in the course of the following history.

The Gothic nation, or rather cluster of nations, belonged to the great Aryan family of peoples, and to the Low-German branch of that family. From the remains of their language which have come down to us we can see that they were more nearly akin to the Frisians, to the Hollanders, and to our own Anglo-Saxon forefathers than to any other race of Modern Europe. Ethnological science is at present engaged in discussing the question of the original seat and centre of the Aryan family, whether it should be placed—as almost all scholars a generation ago agreed in placing it—in the uplands of Central Asia, or whether it was situated in the North of Europe and in the neighbourhood of the Baltic Sea. It is not likely that any great value ought to be attached to the traditions of the Gothic people as to a matter so dim and remote as this: but as far as they go, they favour the later theory rather than the earlier, the Scandinavian rather than the Central-Asian hypothesis.

The information which Jordanes gives us as to the earliest home and first migration of the Goths is as follows:—“The island of Scanzia [peninsula of Norway and Sweden] lies in the Northern Ocean, opposite the mouths of the Vistula, in shape like a cedar-leaf. In this island, this manufactory of nations (*officina gentium*), dwelt the Goths with other tribes”. [Then follows a string of uncouth names, now for the most part forgotten, though the Swedes, the Fins, the Heruli are still familiar to us.] “From this island the Goths, under their king *Berig*, set forth in search of new homes. They had but three ships, and as one of these during their passage always lagged behind, they called her *Gepanta*, ‘the torpid one’. Their crew, who ever after showed themselves more sluggish and clumsy than their companions, when they became a nation bore a name derived from this quality, *Gepidae*, the Loiterers. However, all came safely to land at a place which was called ever after Gothi-scandza. From thence they moved forward to the dwellings of the Ulmerugi by the shores of the Ocean. These people they beat in pitched battle and drove from their habitations, and then, subduing their neighbours the Vandals, they employed them as instruments of their own subsequent victories”. So far Jordanes.

This migration from Sweden to East Prussia is doubted by many scholars, but, till it is actually disproved, let it at any rate stand as that which the Gothic nation in after days believed

to be true concerning itself. An interesting passage in Pliny's Natural History gives us a date before which the migration (if it ever took place) must have been made. According to this writer, Pytheas of Marseilles (the Marco Polo of Greek geography, who lived about the time of Alexander the Great) speaks of a people called Guttones, who lived by an estuary of the Ocean named Mentonomon, and who apparently traded in amber. Seeing that the name Guttones closely corresponds with that of *Gut-thiuda* (Gothic people), by which the Goths spoke of themselves, and seeing that amber is and has been for 2000 years the especial natural product by which the curving shores and deeply indented bays of the Gulf of Danzig have been made famous, it seems reasonable to infer that in these amber-selling Guttones of Pytheas we have the same people as the Goths of Jordanes, who must therefore have been settled on the South-East coast of the Baltic at least as early as 330 before Christ. Pliny himself (writing about 70 AD) assigns to the Guttones a position not inconsistent with that which apparently was given to them by Pytheas; and Tacitus, the younger contemporary of Pliny, after describing the wide domain of the Ligii, who dwelt apparently between the Oder and the Vistula, says that "behind [that is Northwards of] the Ligii, the Gothones dwell, who are governed by their kings somewhat more stringently [than the other tribes of whom he has been speaking] but not so as to interfere with their freedom". This valuable statement by Tacitus is all the information that we possess as to the internal condition of the Goths for many centuries. But within the last few years the brilliant hypothesis of an English scholar as to the origin of the Runic mode of writing has given an especial importance to the settlement of the Goths at this South-East corner of the Baltic. If that hypothesis be correct —and it appears to find considerable acceptance with those philologers who are best qualified to decide upon its merits— we have not only a hint as to the social condition of the Goths and their kindred tribes, but we have a strong inducement to carry their settlement in East Prussia up to the sixth century before the Christian Era, that is some 200 years before the early date to which we were inclined to attribute it, by the authority of the navigator Pytheas.

It is well known that all over the North of Europe there exists a class of monuments, chiefly belonging to the first ten centuries of the Christian Era, which bear inscriptions in what for convenience sake we call the Runic character, the name *Rûn*, which signifies a mystery, having doubtless been assigned to them from some belief in their magical efficacy. Now these Runes are practically the exclusive possession of the Low German races, the term being used in that wide sense which was assigned to it at the beginning of the Chapter. Runic inscriptions were often carved by our Anglo-Saxon ancestors: they swarm in all Scandinavian lands: they were evidently in use among the Goths and the tribes most nearly allied to them. But along the course of the Rhine, upon the Northern slope of the Alps, by the upper waters of the Danube they are unknown. Franks and Alamanni and Bavarians seem never to have known the Runes. But where they were known, although many modifications were introduced in the course of centuries, there is a remarkable general agreement in all the early Runes, notwithstanding the wide geographical dispersion of the nations by whom they were used. To quote the words of Dr. Isaac Taylor, the author of the hypothesis which we are about to consider: "This ancient and wide-spread Gothic alphabet is wonderfully firm, definite and uniform. To decipher the inscription on the golden torque of the Moesian Goths by the help of the alphabet stamped on the golden Bracteate from Swedish Gothland is as easy as it would be to read an Australian tombstone by the aid of a spelling-book from the United States. Distant colonies employ the common alphabet of the mother country". The origin of this widely spread Alphabet (or, to speak more correctly, of this *Futhorc*, for it begins not with Alpha and Beta but with the six letters whose combination makes the word *Futhorc*, and by that name it is generally called) has been hitherto a *Rûn* as full of mystery as the inscriptions themselves were to the unlettered warriors who gazed upon them with fascinated fear. That the *Futhorc* could not have been

invented by the Northern tribes in absolute ignorance of the historic Alphabet of the nations that dwelt round the Midland Sea, was clear from some of the letters contained in it. Yet on the other hand the divergencies from Mediterranean Alphabets were so many and so perplexing that it was difficult to understand how the Runes could be descended from any of them.

Some years ago a theory which had obtained considerable currency connected the Runes with the Phoenician Alphabet, and suggested that they were the descendants of the letters introduced to the nations of the North by the adventurous mariners of Tyre. An earlier and perhaps more plausible theory was that the Runes represented the Latin Alphabet as communicated to the Teutonic nations by Roman traders and soldiers in the days of the Empire. An objection, apparently a fatal objection, to this theory is that precisely in the countries where Roman influence affected the Teutonic nations most strongly, in Gaul, in Rhenish Germany, in Helvetia and Rhaetia, no Runes are to be found. But in the year 1879 Dr. Isaac Taylor, in a little monograph entitled *The Greeks and Goths*, advocated a solution of the enigma which, though daring almost to rashness, may possibly hold the field against all comers. Examining the forms of Greek letters which were in use among the colonists (chiefly Ionian colonists) whose cities lined the Southern coast of Thrace and the shores of the Aegean in the sixth century BC, he finds among them many remarkable coincidences with the earliest forms of the Runic Futhorc. Differences many and great still exist, but they appear to be only such differences as, in accordance with the ascertained laws of the History of Writing, might well creep in, between the sixth century before the Christian Era and the third century after it, the earliest period to which we can with certainty refer an extant Runic inscription.

To what conclusion then do these enquiries point? To this, that during the interval from 540 to 480 BC there was a brisk commercial intercourse between flourishing Greek colonies on the Black Sea, Odessos, Istras, Tyras, Olbia and Chersonesos—places now approximately represented by Varna, Kustendji, Odessa, Cherson, and Sebastopol—between these cities and the tribes to the Northward (inhabiting the country which has been since known as Lithuania), all of whom at the time of Herodotus passed under the vague generic name of Scythians. By this intercourse which would naturally pass up the valleys of the great rivers, especially the Dniester and the Dnieper, and would probably again descend by the Vistula and the Niemen, the settlements of the Goths were reached, and by its means the Ionian letter-forms were communicated to the Goths, to become in due time the magical and mysterious Runes. One fact which lends great probability to this theory is that undoubtedly, from very early times, the amber deposits of the Baltic, to which allusion has already been made, were known to the civilized world; and thus the presence of the trader from the South among the settlements of the Guttones or Goths is naturally accounted for. Probably also there was for centuries before the Christian Era a trade in sables, ermines, and other furs, which were a necessity in the wintry North and a luxury of kings and nobles in the wealthier South. In exchange for amber and fur, the traders brought probably not only golden *staters* and silver drachmas, but also bronze from Armenia with pearls, spices, rich mantles suited to the barbaric taste of the Gothic chieftains. As has been said, this commerce was most likely carried on for many centuries. Sabres of Assyrian type have been found in Sweden, and we may hence infer that there was a commercial intercourse between the Euxine and the Baltic, perhaps 300 years before Christ. This stream of trade may have had its ebbings as well as its flowings. Some indications seem to suggest that the traders of the Euxine were less adventurous and "Scythia" less under the influence of Southern civilization at the Christian Era than six centuries before it. But however this may be, there can be no doubt that the route which had thus been opened was never entirely closed; and when the most Eastern German tribes began to feel that pressure of population which had sent Ariovistus into Gaul and had dashed the Cimbri and Teutones against the legions of Marius, it was natural that they should, by that route along which the

traders had so long travelled, pour forth to seek for themselves new homes by the great sea into which the Dnieper and the Dniester flowed. This migration to the Euxine was probably made during the latter half of the second century of our Era: for Ptolemy the geographer, who flourished in the middle of that century, mentions the *Guthones* as still dwelling by the Vistula and near the Venedae. It was most likely part of that great Southward movement of the German tribes which caused the Marcomannic to cross the Danube, and which wore out the energies of the noble philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius in arduous, hardly-contested battles against these barbarians. The memory of the migration doubtless lingered long in the heart of the nation, and it was, as Jordanes himself says, from their old folk-songs, that the following account of it was derived.

“In the reign of the fifth King after Berig, Filimer, son of Gadariges, the people had so greatly increased in numbers that they all agreed in the conclusion that the army of the Goths should move forward with their families in quest of more fitting abodes. Thus they came to those regions of Scythia which in their tongue are called Oium, whose great fertility pleased them much. But there was a bridge there by which the army essayed to cross a river, and when half of the army had passed, that bridge fell down in irreparable ruin, nor could anyone either go forward or return. For that place is said to be girt round with a whirlpool, shut in with quivering morasses, and thus by her confusion of the two elements, land and water. Nature has rendered it inaccessible. But in truth, even to this day, if you may trust the evidence of passers-by, though they go not nigh the place, the far-off voices of cattle may be heard and traces of men may be discerned. That part of the Goths therefore which under the leadership of Filimer crossed the river and reached the lands of Oium, obtained the longed-for soil. Then without delay they came to the nation of the Spali, with whom they engaged in battle and therein gained the victory. Thence they came forth as conquerors, and hastened to the furthest part of Scythia which borders on the Pontic Sea. And so in then: ancient songs it is set forth almost in historic fashion”.

Even from the brief note-book of Jordanes we can see what a fateful moment was that in the history of the Gothic nation, when, travel-worn and battle-weary, the heads of the long column halted, beholding the monotonous horizon broken by a bit of deeper blue. We can imagine the joyful cry “*Mare!*” (*Sea*) passing from wagon to wagon, and the women and children clambering down out of their dark recesses to see that little streak of sapphire which told them that their wanderings were drawing near to a close. It was true. The journeyers from the Baltic had reached the Euxine, the same sea which, centuries before, the ten thousand returning Greeks had hailed with the glad cry, “*Thalatta, Thalatta!*”. Well might the Gothic minstrels in the palaces of Toulouse and Ravenna preserve the remembrance of the rapture of their forefathers at that first sight of the Southern Sea. The Settlement of so large a nation as the Goths (for a large nation they must still have been, notwithstanding all their losses on the journey), cannot have been effected without the forcible displacement of tribes already in possession of the territory to which they migrated. No details of these wars of conquest have come down to us; but, from what we know of the map of Scythia in the third century, it may be conjectured that the Roxolani, the Bastarnae, and perhaps the Jazyges, had to make room for the Gothic invaders, after whose advent their names either disappear altogether or at least occupy a much less prominent position than before. The names of these tribes of barbarians probably convey little information to the reader's mind; but when we observe that they were probably of Slavonic extraction, while the Goths were pure Teutons, we see that we have here an act in that great drama in which Russia and Germany are at this day protagonists (end of the XIXth century). Generally the Slav has rolled westwards over the lands of the Teuton. Here we have one of the rare cases in which the Eastward movement of the Teuton has ousted the Slav.

Thus then were the Goths by the beginning of the third century after Christ seated upon the Northern shores of the Euxine Sea. They appear to have soon become differentiated into two great tribes, named from their relative positions to the East and the West, *Ostrogoths* and *Visigoths*. It is curious to observe that throughout their varied career of conquest and subjugation, from the third century to the sixth, these relative positions continued unaltered. The two tribes, which were perhaps at first severed only by a single river, the Dniester or the Pruth, had for a time the whole breadth of Europe between them, but still the Visigoth was in the West, while reigning at Toulouse, and the Ostrogoth in the East, while serving in Hungary. If we may trust Jordanes, each tribe had already its royal house, supposed to be sprung from the seed of gods, to which it owed allegiance: the Visigoths serving the Balthi, and the Ostrogoths the illustrious Amals. Modern criticism has thrown some doubt upon the literal accuracy of this statement: in fact, we discover from the pages of Jordanes himself that Amals did not always reign over the Eastern tribe, nor kings of any race uninterruptedly over the Western. But, remembering the statement of Tacitus as to the stringent character of the kingship of the Gothones, and knowing that as a rule the prosperity of the German nations waxed and waned in proportion to the vigour of the institution of royalty among them, we may safely conjecture that, during the greater part of the two centuries which followed the migration to the Euxine, the Goths were under the dominion of kings whose daring leadership they followed in the adventurous raids of which we have next to trace the history. For the two kindred peoples which were thus settled near the mouths of the great Scythian rivers and by the misty shores of the Cimmerian Sea knew that they were now within easy reach of some of the richest countries in the world. Along the Southern coast of that Euxine, the Northern coast of which was theirs, were scattered the wealthy cities of Bithynia, Paphlagonia, and Pontus, from Heraclea to Trebizond. Through the narrow stream of the Bosphorus (not yet guarded and made illustrious by the New Rome, Constantinople) lay the way to the famous old-world cities of Greece and the temple-crowned islands of the Aegean. Further North, on the right (that is the West) of the dwellings of the Visigoths rose the long curving line of the Carpathian Mountains. Few were the passes which led between these broad beech-covered highlands; but it was well known to the Visigothic dwellers by the Pruth and the Moldava that those passes led into a Roman land where gold mines and salt mines were worked by chained slave-gangs, where great breadths of corn-land filled the valleys, and where stately cities like Apulum and Sarmizegetusa rose by the banks of the Maros or under the shadow of the Carpathians. This land was the province of Dacia, added to the Roman Empire by Trajan, and still forming a part of that Empire, notwithstanding the over-cautious policy of Hadrian, who dismantled the stone bridge which his great predecessor had thrown across the Danube, and who seems to have at one time dallied with the thought of abandoning so precarious an outpost of the Empire.

Whatever may have been the original extent of the Dacian province, there can be little doubt that now, at any rate, it comprised only Transylvania and the Western half of Hungary, with so much of Lesser (or Western) Wallachia as was necessary to connect it with the Roman base of operations in Moesia on the Southern bank of the Danube. Anyone who looks at the map and sees how Dacia, thus defined, is folded away in the embrace of the Carpathian mountains, will understand why long after the barbarians on the Lower Danube had begun to move uneasily upon the frontier, the Dacian outpost still preserved its fealty to Rome. For one or two generations the migrated Goths may probably have remained in some sort of peace and friendship with the Roman Empire. The wars with the nations whom they found settled before them in Southern Russia had for a time exhausted their energies, and as Rome was willing to pay to them (as also to others of her barbarian neighbours) subsidies which she called *stipendia*, and which she treated as pay, but the receiver might easily come to look upon as tribute, the Goths on their part were willing to remain quiet, while nursing the hope of an

opportunity for proving their prowess in the rich lands beyond the River and the Sea. That Opportunity came at last, in the middle of the third century; but the great “Scythian war” (241-270), as it was called, which lasted for a generation and filled the middle years of that century with bloodshed, seems to have been begun, not by the Goths themselves, but by a rival nation. The Carpi, a proud and fierce people, whose dwellings bordered on the Gothic settlement, chafing at the thought that the Goths received yearly *stipendia* from the Empire, while they received none, sent ambassadors to Tullius Menophilus, governor of Lower Moesia under Gordian III, to complain of this inequality and to demand its removal. Menophilus treated the ambassadors with studied insolence. He kept them waiting for days, while he inspected the manoeuvres of his troops. When he at length condescended to receive them he was seated on a lofty tribunal, and surrounded by all the tallest soldiers of his legions. To show the ambassadors in how little account he held them, he continually broke in upon their discourse to converse with his staff on subjects foreign to their mission, thus making them feel how infinitely unimportant in his eyes were the affairs of the Carpi. Thus checked and humbled, the ambassadors could only stammer out a feeble remonstrance, “Why do the Goths receive such large moneys from the Emperor, and we nothing?” “The Emperor”, said Menophilus, “is lord of great wealth, and graciously bestows it upon the needy”. “But we too are in need of his liberality, and we are much better than the Goths”. “Come again”, said the governor, “in four months, and I will give you the Emperor's answer”. At the end of four months they came, and were put off for three months more. When they again appeared, Menophilus said, “The Emperor will give you not a denarius as a matter of bargain, but if you will go to him, fall prostrate before his throne, and humbly beg him for a gift, he may perchance comply with your request”. Sore at heart, but humbled and overawed, the ambassadors left the presence of the haughty governor. They did not venture to the distant court of the dreaded Emperor, and for the three years that Menophilus administered the province they did not dare to break out into insurrection. At the end of that time it seems that the Carpi took up arms (241), poured across the Danube into Moesia and destroyed the once flourishing city of Histros (or Istros) at the mouth of the great river. We hear nothing more of this invasion of the Carpi, but soon the Goths too began to move. By this time the confusion in the affairs of the Empire under the men whom I have styled the Barrack Emperors, had become indescribable. Civil war, pestilence, bankruptcy, were all brooding over the doomed land. The soldiers had forgotten how to fight, the rulers how to govern. It seemed as if the effete and unwieldy Empire would break down under its own weight almost before the barbarians were ready to enter into the vacant inheritance. One of the worst of these Barrack Emperors was Philip the Arabian (244-249). He availed himself of his position as Praetorian Prefect to starve the soldiers whom the young Emperor Gordian was leading upon an expedition against Persia, and then used the mutiny thus occasioned as a weapon for his master's destruction and a lever for his own elevation to the throne. Having gained the purple by treachery and deceit, he stained it by cowardice and crime. Soon after his accession the Goths began to complain that their annual *stipendia* were being withheld from them, an omission which was probably due not so much to any deliberate change of policy, as to the utter disorganization into which the finances of the administration of the Empire had fallen under the indolent Arabian who bore the title of Augustus. This default turned them at once from friends and *foederati* of the Empire into enemies and invaders.

Under their king *Ostrogotha* (whose name perhaps indicates that the Ostrogothic half of the nation took the lead in this expedition) they crossed the Danube, and devastated Moesia and Thrace. Decius the Senator, a man of stem and austere character, was sent by Philip to repel the invasion. He fought unsuccessfully, and indignant at the slackness of his troops, to whose neglect he attributed the Gothic passage of the Danube, he dismissed large numbers of them from the army as unworthy of the name of soldiers. The disbanded legionaries sought the

Gothic camp, and Ostrogotha, who had probably retired across the Danube at the end of his first campaign, formed a new and more powerful army, consisting of 30,000 Goths, of the Imperial deserters, of 3000 Carpi, of Vandals, and Taifali, and Peucini from the pine-covered island of Peucé at the mouth of the Danube. To the second campaign Ostrogotha did not go forth himself, but sent in his stead two able captains, by name Argaith and Guntheric. Again the barbarians crossed the Danube, again they ravaged Moesia, but, as if this time not mere booty but conquest was their object, they laid formal siege to Marcianopole, the great city built by Trajan on the Northern slope of the Balkans, named by him after his sister Marciana, and now represented by the important city of Schumla. But the fierce, irregular onset of the barbarians was ill adapted for the slow, patient, scientific work of taking a Roman city. In their failure to capture Marcianopole we have the first of a long series of unsuccessful sieges which we shall meet with in the history of the next three centuries and which culminated in the great failure of the Ostrogoths to recapture Rome from Belisarius. On this occasion the Goths received a large sum of money from the inhabitants of the untaken city, and returned to their own land.

For some time the further inroads of the Goths were delayed by a quarrel with the kindred tribe of the Gepidae, the 'Torpids' of the primeval migration from Scandinavia. This tribe, still lagging in the race, had not reached the shores of the Euxine and were apparently stationed by the upper waters of the Vistula, perhaps in the region which we now call Gallicia. Filled with envy at the successes of the Goths, and dissatisfied with their narrow boundaries, they first made a furious, successful, and almost exterminating raid upon their neighbours, the Burgundians, and then their king Fastida sent to Ostrogotha, saying, "I am hemmed in with mountains and choked with forests; give me land or meet me in battle". "Deeply", said Ostrogotha, "as I should regret that tribes so nearly allied as you and we, should meet in impious and fratricidal strife, yet land I neither can nor will give you". They joined battle at the town of Galtis, past which flows the river Auha; the Gepidae were thoroughly beaten, and Fastida fled humiliated to his home. So many fell in the battle that, as Jordanes hints with a grim smile, "they no longer found their land too strait for them".

After this episode the Goths returned to their more important business, the war with Rome. *Cniva* was now their King, and Decius, the general in the previous campaign, was Emperor of Rome (249-251). This man unfavourably known to us in ecclesiastical history as having set on foot one of the fiercest persecutions of the Christians, that namely to which the illustrious Cyprian fell a victim. Yet Decius was no mere tyrant and voluptuary, persecuting and torturing for the sake of a new sensation. He had in him something of the heroic spirit of his great namesakes, the Decii of the Samnite wars. He was willing, even as they had been, to sacrifice himself for the glory of Rome, to which the Goths without and the Christians within were, in his eyes, equally hostile; and his calm readiness to accept death in the discharge of his duty, showed that he shared the heroism of the martyrs whose blood he blindly shed.

King Cniva, with 70,000 of his subjects, crossed the Danube (249) at the place (about thirty-four miles above Rustchuk) which is still called Novograd, and was then known as Novae. In his first campaign he fought with varying fortune against Gallus, the duke of Moesia, and Decius, the young Caesar, whose father the Emperor appears to have remained at Rome during the first year of his reign. Nicopolis was besieged by the Goths, but of course not taken. Still Cniva moved southwards, first lurking in the fastnesses of the Balkans, and afterwards crossing that range and appearing before Philippopolis, now the capital of "Eastern Roumelia", then an important city at the intersection of the highways in the Thracian plain. Hither vast numbers of panic-stricken provincials had flocked for refuge, and the Roman generals were naturally anxious to raise the siege. The young Decius led his legions over the rugged passes of the Balkans (a serious barrier to the passage of troops, as the Russian generals

found in the campaign of 1877): and having surmounted these he gave his men and horses a few days' rest in the city of Berea. Here Cniva with his Goths fell upon him like a thunderbolt, inflicted terrible slaughter on the surprised Roman soldiers, and forced Decius to flee with a few followers to Novae, where Gallus with a large and still unshaken host was guarding the Danubian frontier of Moesia. After this battle the disheartened defenders of Philippopolis soon surrendered it to the barbarians. Vast quantities of treasure were taken, 100,000 of the citizens and refugees (so said the analysts) were massacred within the walls of the city, and, what might have been yet more disastrous for the Empire, Priscus, governor of Macedonia and brother of the late Emperor Philip, having been taken prisoner, was persuaded to assume the Imperial purple, or persuaded the Goths to allow him to do so, and declare himself a rival Augustus to Decius. Thus early in their career were the Goths resorting to the expedient of creating an Anti-Emperor. The proclamation of Priscus and the tidings of the Gothic successes drew the Emperor Decius to the scene of action. He probably left Rome at the end of the year 250 or the beginning of 251; and the persecution of the Christians seems to have abated somewhat on his departure. Priscus, who had been declared a public enemy by the Senate, was soon killed, and for a time the Gothic campaign went prosperously for the Empire. In the North, Gallus, duke of the frontier, collected the troops from Novae and Oiscus (each the depôt of a legion) into a powerful army. In the South the Emperor provided for the safety of the rich and still inviolate province of Achaia by sending a brave young officer named Claudius to hold the pass of Thermopylae against the invaders, should they turn their steps southward. While the Romans gained confidence from the arrival of the Emperor, the Goths, to whom even their victories had been costly, and who were perhaps demoralized by the sack of Philippopolis, lost theirs. They found themselves hard pressed by Decius, and offered, we are told, to relinquish all their captives and all their spoil if they might be allowed to return in peace to their own land. Decius refused their request, and ordered Gallus and his army to obstruct the line of their homeward march, while he himself pursued them from behind. If we may trust a Roman historian (which is doubtful, since a beaten army is always ready with the cry of treachery), Gallus, already coveting the Imperial crown, opened negotiations with the barbarians, and these by a concerted arrangement posted themselves near a very deep swamp, into which by a feigned flight they drew Decius and his troops. The Romans, floundering in the bog, soon became a disorderly multitude. Moreover, at this critical period, the younger Decius fell, pierced by a Gothic arrow. The troops offered their rough and hasty sympathy to the bereaved father, who answered with stoical calmness, "Let no one be cast down: the loss of one soldier is no serious injury to the State". He himself soon after perished. With a vast multitude of his officers and men, he was sucked in by that fatal swamp, and not even his corpse, nor those of thousands of his followers, were ever recovered. The date of this disastrous battle can be fixed with considerable certainty in the last days of the month of November, 251. The place was (says Jordanes) Abrittus, a city of Moesia, the site of which has yet to be discovered, but which was probably somewhere in the marshy ground near the mouth of the Danube. It is interesting to note that the Gothic historian says that "even to his day it was still called Ara Decii, because there, before the battle, the Emperor had miserably offered sacrifice to his idols".

The death of a Roman Emperor and the loss of his army in battle with barbarians from out of the Scythian wilderness was an event which sent a shudder through the whole Roman world, and raised new and wild hopes in all the nations that swarmed around the long circumference of the Empire. There were three great disasters in the course of four centuries which seemed to indicate that the rule of Rome over the world might not be so eternal as the legends upon her medals and the verses of her poets declared to be its destiny. The first was the defeat of Varus and his legions in the Saltus Teutoburgiensis; the second was this catastrophe of Decius in the

marshes of the Dobrudscha; the third was the similar calamity which will be described in a future chapter, and which befell the A.D. 378 to Emperor Valens on the plains of Hadrianople.

For the time however the actual danger of invasion from the Goths was at an end. These barbarians were still bent on plunder rather than on conquest, and being intent on returning to their Scythian homes with the spoil of Thrace, they condescended to fulfil the compact which they had made—if indeed they had made it—with Gallus, late duke of Moesia and now wearer of the purple and lord of the Roman world. The terms of the treaty were that they should return to their own land with all their booty, with the multitude of captives, many of them men of noble birth, whom they had taken at Philippopolis and elsewhere, and that the Emperor should pay them a certain sum of money every year. This yearly payment might be treated, according to the nationality of the speaker, as a mere renewal of the *Stipendia* of previous years (no doubt greatly increased in amount) or as an actual tribute paid by the Roman Augustus to the Gothic king. However, even this ignominiously purchased peace with the barbarians was of short duration. The time was one of the darkest in all that dark century; Emperors were rising and falling in rapid succession (Gallus 251, Aemilian 253, Valerian 254); a terrible pestilence which was to last fifteen years, bred in Ethiopia, had stalked down the valley of the Nile and was wasting the Asiatic and Illyrian provinces, and on the Eastern frontier the never-long-slumbering hostility of the Persian king was arousing itself for a fresh attack on the exhausted Empire. It was apparently during these disasters that the Goths crossed the Carpathians, and finally wrested Dacia from her Roman rulers, though this important event, recorded by no historian, can only be inferred by us from the sudden cessation of Roman inscriptions and coins in Dacia about this time.

But the chief feature of the “Scythian war” which soon followed, and one which bring the Goths before us in a new capacity, as the forerunners of our own Saxon and Scandinavian forefathers, was its maritime character (258-262). The Scythians (under which generic name we have to include, not the Goths only, but also the Carpi, Heruli, and other neighbouring tribes) seem to have pressed down to the sea-shore and compelled the Roman and Greek settlers in the Crimea, by the mouth of the Dnieper and along the shores of the Sea of Azov, to supply them with ships, sailors, and pilots, for buccaneering expeditions against the lands on the other side of the misty Euxine. The chronology of these events is difficult and obscure, and it will not be desirable to attempt to discuss it here, but the main outline of the four chief expeditions may be sketched as follows. I shall use the generic name ‘Scythians’, which I find in our Greek authorities, without attempting in each case to say what was the share taken in them by the Goths, properly so called, and what that of their allies.

The first voyage of these new barbarian Argonauts was made to a city of that same Colchis from which Jason brought back Medea and the Golden Fleece. Pityus (*Soukoum Kaleh*), at the eastern end of the Euxine, once a flourishing Greek city, had been destroyed by Caucasian highlanders, and rebuilt by the Romans, and was now surrounded by a very strong wall and in the possession of a splendid harbour. The Roman governor, Successianus, made a spirited defence, and the barbarians after sustaining severe loss were compelled to retire. Upon this the Emperor Valerian promoted Successianus to the high, the almost royal dignity of Praetorian Prefect, and removed him to Antioch that he might assist him in rebuilding that city (ruined by the Persians) and in preparing for a fresh campaign against the Persian king. Apparently the loss of one man's courage and skill was fatal to the defenders of Pityus: for when the barbarians, having made a feigned attack on another part of the coast, rapidly returned, they took that stronghold without difficulty. The ships in the harbour and the sailors impressed into the Scythian service smoothed their way to further successes. The great city of Trapezuntium (*Trebizond*), on the southern shore of the Black Sea, being surrounded by a double wall and strongly garrisoned, might have been expected to prove an insuperable

obstacle. But the Scythians, who had discovered that the defenders of the city kept a lax watch, and passed their time in feasting and drunkenness, quietly collected a quantity of wood which they heaped up one night against the lowest part of the walls, and so mounted to an easy conquest. The demoralized Roman soldiers poured out of the city by the gate opposite to that by which the Scythians were entering. The barbarians thus came into possession of an untold quantity of gold and captives, and, after sacking the temple and wrecking the stateliest of the public buildings, returned by sea to their own land.

Their success stimulated a large neighbouring tribe of Scythians to undertake a similar enterprise. These, however, dreading the uncertainties of the navigation of the Euxine, marched by land from the mouths of the Danube to the little lake of Philea, about thirty miles north-west of Byzantium. There they found a large population of fishermen, whom they compelled to render them the same service with their boats which the men by the Sea of Azov had rendered to their countrymen. Guided by a certain Chrysogonus, whose Grecian name suggests that he was a deserter from the cause of civilization, they sailed boldly through the Bosphorus, wrested the strong position of Chalcedon at its mouth from a cowardly Roman army far superior to them in numbers, and then proceeded to lay waste at their leisure Nicomedia, Nicaea, and other rich cities of Bithynia. The men who had overcome so many difficulties were, after all, stopped by the Rhyndacus, an apparently inconsiderable stream which falls into the Sea of Marmora. Retracing their steps, therefore, they tranquilly burned all the Bithynian cities which they had hitherto only plundered, and piling their vast heaps of spoil on wagons and on ships, they returned to their own land.

The foregoing account of this inroad of the barbarians is given to us by Zosimus the Greek historian. The Goth Jordanes, whose historical perspective is not extremely accurate, informs us that during the expedition they also sacked Troy and Ilium, which were just beginning to breathe again for a little space after that sad war with Agamemnon. But neither Chalcedon nor Troy seems to have imprinted itself so deeply in the barbarian memory as a certain town in Thrace named Anchialus (*Bourghaz*), built just where the range of the Balkans slopes down into the Euxine Sea. For at or near to Anchialus "there were certain warm springs renowned above all others in the world for their healing virtues, and greatly did the Goths delight to wash therein". One can imagine the children of the North, after the fatigue of sacking so many towns, beneath the hot sun of Asia Minor, rejoicing in the refreshment of these nature-heated baths. "And having tarried there many days they thence returned home".

The tidings of these ravages reached the Emperor Valerian at Antioch, where he was still engaged in deliberating whether he should arrest the onward movement of the Persians by war or diplomacy. Sending a trusted counsellor, Felix, to repair the fortifications of Byzantium, in the hope of thus making a repetition of the Scythian raids impossible, Valerian at length marched eastwards against the king of Persia (AD 260). He marched to his own destruction, to the treachery of Macrianus, to the fatal interview with Sapor, to his long and ignominious captivity at Persepolis (260-265). The story which was current fifty years later, that the haughty Persian used the captive Emperor as a horse-block, putting his foot on Valerian's neck whenever he mounted his steed, and remarking with a sneer that this was a real triumph, and not like the imaginary triumphs which the Romans painted on their walls, may have been the rhetorical invention of a later age : but it seems beyond question that the aged Emperor was treated with studied insolence and severity, and that when he died, his skin, painted in mockery the colour of Imperial purple, was preserved, a ghastly trophy, in the temple of Persepolis. His son Gallienus (260-268), who had been associated with him in the Empire, and whose right to rule was challenged by usurpers in almost every province of the Empire, was a man of excellent abilities, but absolutely worthless character, a *poco-curante* on the throne of the world at a time when all the strength and all the earnestness of the greatest of the Caesars

would hardly have sufficed for that arduous position. Gallienus accepted both his father's captivity and the Empire's dismemberment with flippant serenity.

"Egypt", said one of his ministers, "has revolted".

"What of that? Cannot we dispense with Egyptian flax?"

"Fearful earthquakes have happened in Asia Minor, and the Scythians are ravaging all the country".

"But cannot we do without Lydian saltpeter?"

When Gaul was lost he gave a merry laugh, and said, "Do you think the Republic will be in danger if the Consul's robes cannot be made of the Gaulish tartan?"

Two or three years after the commencement of the captivity of Valerian, a third expedition of the Scythians, which must have been partly maritime, brought the barbarians to another well-known spot, to the Ionic city of Ephesus, where they signaled their sojourn by the destruction of that magnificent Temple of Diana, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, of whose hundred marble columns, wreathed round by sculptured figures in high relief, an English explorer has lately discovered the pathetically defaced ruins. But a holier shrine of art than even Ephesus was to be visited by the unwelcome pilgrimage of the Teutons. Four or five years later some warriors of the Herulian tribe (accompanied possibly by some of the Goths properly so called), with a fleet which is said to have consisted of five hundred ships—if they should not rather be called mere boats—sailed again through the Bosphorus, took Byzantium, ravaged some of the islands of the Archipelago, and landing in Greece, wasted not only Corinth, Sparta, and Argos, but even Athens herself, with fire and sword (A.D.267). The soft and cultured Athenians, lately immersed in the friendly rivalries of their professors of rhetoric, and who had not for centuries seen a spear thrown in anger, were terrified by the apparition of these tall, gaunt, skin-clothed barbarians under their walls. They abandoned their beautiful city without a struggle, and as many as could do so escaped to the *demes*, the little villages scattered along the heights of Hymettus and Cithaeron. It was probably during the occupation of Athens by the barbarians which followed this surrender that a characteristic incident occurred. A troop of Teutonic warriors roaming through the city in search of something to destroy, came to one of the great libraries which were the glory of Athens. They began to carry out the parchment rolls, full of unintelligible learning, and to pile them up in a great heap, intending to behold a magnificent bonfire. "Not so, my sons", said a gray-bearded Gothic veteran; "leave these scrolls untouched, that the Greeks may in time to come, as they have in time past, waste their manhood in poring over their wearisome contents. So will they ever fall, as now, an easy prey to the strong unlearned sons of the North".

That the Gothic veteran spoke only a half-truth when he uttered these words was soon shown by the valiant and wisely planned onset, which was made upon the barbarians by Dexippus, rhetorician, philosopher, and historian, who at the head of only 2000 men, cooperating apparently with an Imperial fleet, succeeded in expelling the barbarians from Athens, and to some extent effaced the stigma which their recent cowardice had brought upon the name of the Greeks. Details as to the siege and counter-siege are alike wanting, but we still have the speech, truly said to be not altogether unworthy of a place in the pages of Thucydides, in which the soldier-sophist, while cautioning his followers against rash and unsupported skirmishes, breathes a high heroic spirit into their hearts, and appeals to them to show themselves fit inheritors of the great traditions of their forefathers. "Thus shall we win from men now living, and from those who are yet to be, the meed of ever-to-be-remembered glory, proving in very deed that even in the midst of our calamities the old spirit of the Athenians is not abated. Let us therefore set our children and all our dearest ones upon the hazard of this battle for which we now array ourselves, calling upon the all-seeing gods to be our helpers".

When they heard these words, the Athenians were greatly strengthened, and begged him to lead them on to battle, in which, as has been already said, they appear to have won a complete victory. Gallienus himself appears to have had some share in a further discomfiture of the Heruli, which was followed by the surrender of their leader Naulobates, who entered the Imperial service and obtained the dignity of a Roman Consul. But the Emperor was soon recalled to Italy by the news that his general Aureolus had assumed the purple, apparently in the city of Milan. Gallienus hastened thither and began the siege of the city, which lasted some months. Before its close, Aureolus, who found himself hard pressed, succeeded in forming a conspiracy among the officers of Gallienus, which ended in the assassination of that prince while he was engaged in repelling a sortie of the besieged.

The Roman world again awoke to hopefulness when the reign of the Imperial voluptuary was ended, and when out of the nightmare-dream of plots, assassinations, and civil wars, the strong and brave Illyrian soldier Claudius, who had already borne a leading part in the defence of Moesia, emerged as sole ruler of the Empire (Claudius II, 268-270). Aureolus was defeated and put to death; the Alamanni, who from the lands of the Main and the Neckar had penetrated into Italy as far as the Lake of Garda and menaced Verona were vanquished, and half of their host were slain. After some months spent at Rome in restoring peace to the troubled state, Claudius turned his steps towards his own native Illyricum, in order to rescue that portion of the Empire from the avalanche of barbarism, which was thundering over it. It was indeed time for Rome to put forth her whole Strength. The Goths with all their kindred tribes were pouring themselves upon Thrace and Macedonia in vaster numbers than ever. The previous movement of these nations had been probably but robber-inroads; this was a national immigration. The number of the ships (or skiffs) which they prepared on the river Dniester, is stated by Zosimus at 6000. This is probably an exaggeration or an accidental corruption of the historian's text; but 2000, which is the figure given by Ammianus, is a sufficiently formidable number, even of the small craft to which the estimate refers. And the invading host itself, including doubtless camp-followers and slaves, perhaps some women and children, is said, with a concurrence of testimony which we dare not disregard, to have reached the enormous total of 320,000.

In Order to obtain any sense from the conflicting accounts of this Campaign, we must suppose that this vast Gothic horde made their attack partly by sea and partly by land. While the 2000 ships sailed over the Euxine, and, after vainly attacking Tomi, Marcianople, and Byzantium, traversed the swift Bosphorus, and again sought the pleasant islands of the Aegean, the rest of the host, with women and children, with wagons and camp-followers, must have crossed the Danube and pressed southwards across the devastated plains of Moesia. The sea-rovers, who had suffered from storms and from collisions in the narrow waters of the Sea of Marmora, reached at length, in diminished numbers, the promontory of Athos, and there repaired their ships. They then proceeded to besiege the cities of Cassandria (once better known under the name of Potidaea) and of Thessalonica. Strong as were the fortifications of the latter important city, it would perhaps have yielded to the barbarians, had not tidings reached them that Claudius was in Moesia, and that their brethren of the Northern army were in danger. After a skirmish in the valley of the Vardar in which they lost 3000 men, they crossed the Balkans and, perhaps uniting with their Northern brethren, gathered round the army of Claudius who was ascending the valley of the Morava and had reached the city of Naissus.

The battle which followed looked at first like a Roman defeat. After great slaughter on both sides the Imperial troops gave way, but coming back by unfrequented paths, they fell upon the barbarians in all the joy of their victory, and slew of them 50,000 men. After this defeat the sea-rovers seem to have returned to their ships, and abandoning the siege of Thessalonica, to have wasted their energies in desultory attacks on Crete, Rhodes and Cyprus; but partly from the ravages of the plague which was at this time desolating the shores of the

Levant, and partly from the energetic attack of the Alexandrian fleet under the command of the valiant officer Probus (afterwards Emperor), they suffered so severely that they were obliged to return home having done no memorable deed. As to their brethren of the land army, they made a rampart of their wagons, behind which for some time they kept the Romans at bay. They then turned southwards into Macedonia, but so great was the pressure of hunger upon them that they killed and ate the cattle that drew the wagons, thus abandoning their last chance of returning to their northern homes. The Roman cavalry shut them up into the passes of the Balkans; the too eager infantry attacking them were repulsed with some loss. Claudius, or the generals whom he had left in command, resumed the waiting game, and at length after the barbarians had endured the horrors of a winter among the Balkan fastnesses, aggravated by the miseries of the pestilence, which raged there as well as in the islands of the Aegean, their stout Gothic hearts were broken and they surrendered themselves unconditionally to their conqueror.

It was in the following words, whose boastfulness seems to have been almost justified by the facts, that Claudius, who received the surname Gothicus in celebration of his victory, announced the issue of the campaign to the governor of Illyricum:

“Claudius to Brocchus. — We have destroyed 320,000 of the Goths; we have sunk 2000 of their ships. The rivers are bridged over with shields; with swords and lances all the shores are covered. The fields are hidden from sight under the superincumbent bones; no road is free from them; an immense encampment of wagons is deserted. We have taken such a number of women that each soldier can have two or three concubines allotted to him”.

Of the males in the diminished remnant of the Gothic army who were admitted to quarter, some probably entered the service of their vanquisher as *foederati*, and many remained as slaves to plough the fields which they had once hoped to conquer for their own. But the terrible pestilence, which more than the Roman sword had defeated the armies of the barbarians, intensified by the unburied corpses strewn over the desolated land, entered the Roman camp and demanded the noblest of the host as a victim. In the spring of 270 Claudius Gothicus died, having reigned only two memorable years. He was succeeded by another brave Illyrian, like himself of humble origin, the well-known conqueror of Zenobia, Aurelian (270-275). This Emperor, of whose exploits when still only a tribune marvellous stories were told, who was reported to have slain in one day eight-and-forty Sarmatians, and in the course of a campaign nine hundred and fifty; this soldier who had been so fond of his weapons and so quick to use them that his surname in the array had been “Hand-on-sword”, distinguished himself in the history of the Empire by a wise stroke of peaceful policy, the final abandonment of Dacia. This province, which ever since the Marcomannic war at the close of the second century had been a precarious possession of the Empire, had now been for fifteen years freely traversed by the Goths and their kindred tribes. Aurelian saw that the energies of the State would be over-taxed in the endeavour to retain an isolated outwork such as Dacia had ever been, and that it would be wiser to make the Lower Danube once more the limit of the Empire in this quarter. Details are unfortunately not given us as to the manner in which the Romans relinquished Dacia. Had they been preserved, they would probably have furnished an interesting commentary on the yet more obscure abandonment of Britain a century and a half later. But we are told that “the Emperor withdrew his army and left Dacia to the provincials” (a strange expression for the new comers from Scythia) “despairing of being able to retain it, and the peoples led forth from thence he settled in Moesia, and made there a province which he called his own Dacia, and which now divides the two Moesias” (Superior and Inferior). This new “Dacia of Aurelian”, a curious attempt to gloss over the real loss of a province, consisted of the eastern half of Serbia and the western end of Bulgaria, and was eventually divided into two smaller provinces, *Dacia Ripensis*, whose capital was the strong city of Batiaria on the Danube, and *Dacia Mediterranea*, whose capital Sardica became famous in the fourth century as the seat of an

Ecclesiastical Council, and under its modern name of Sofia is now again famous as the modern capital of Bulgaria. In abandoning the old trans-Danubian Dacia to the Goths, Aurelian may probably have made some sort of stipulation with them that they should not again cross the great river, nor sail the Euxine Sea as enemies to Rome. The recession of the Imperial frontier, by whatever conditions it was accompanied, was undoubtedly a piece of real statesmanship. Could a similar policy have been pursued, cautiously and consistently, all round the frontiers of the Roman Empire, it is allowable to conjecture that that Empire, though in somewhat less than its widest circumference, might still be standing.

After the reign of Aurelian the Goths remained for nearly a century on terms of peace, though not unbroken peace, with Rome. The skirmishes or battles which caused the Emperors Tacitus (275-276) and Probus (276-282) to put *Victoria Gothica* on their coins, and in right of which Diocletian (282-305) and Maximian added *Gothici* to their other proud titles of conquest, were probably but the heaving of the waves after the great tempest of Gothic invasion had ceased to blow. In the Civil War between Constantine and Licinius, Gothic *foederati* fought under the banners of Constantine, and at a later period of his reign 40,000 of the same auxiliaries under their kings Ariaric and Aoric followed the Roman eagles on various expeditions. But Constantine himself, intervening in some quarrel between the Goths and their Sarmatian [Slavonic] neighbours, took part with the latter, and conducted operations against the Goths, which are said to have caused the death of near 100,000 of their number from cold and hunger. Hostages were then given by the defeated barbarians, among them the son of king Ariaric, and the usual friendly relations between the Goths and the Empire were resumed.

These hundred years of nearly uninterrupted peace may have been caused partly by the exhaustion resulting from the invasions in the reign of Gallienus and the remembrance of the terrible defeat which the Goths had sustained at the hands of Claudius. Some increasing softness of manners and some power of appreciating the blessings of civilization, the result of their intercourse with Roman provincials on both sides of the Danube, may have contributed to the same result. But doubtless the main reason for this century of peace was the greatly increased strength of the Empire, precisely upon her Danubian frontier.

After the wars of Gallienus a series of brave and capable Illyrian soldiers mounted the throne. Not only Claudius, but Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius, Constantine, all deduced their origin from Illyricum. Some of these men had risen to eminence in the terrible Gothic struggle. All of them, with eyes quickened by affection for their own fatherland, saw the necessity of strengthening this middle section of the Empire's long line of defence. It was in order to be near the vital point which the Scythian marauders had penetrated that Diocletian took up his abode at the Bithynian city of Nicomedia. It was in continuation of the same policy and by one of the highest inspirations of statesmanship that the world has witnessed,—that Constantine planted his new Rome beside the Bosphorus. Thus the Scythian invasions, the history of which we have been labouring to recover from the discordant fragments of the chroniclers, hold a prominent position among the causes which have brought about the endless 'Eastern Question' of today (AD 1880). And, without doubt, as the terrible Gothic invasions contributed to the foundation of Constantinople, so the foundation of that city and the transference of so much of the strength of the Empire from the Tiber to the Golden Horn, had the effect of striking terror and despair into the hearts of the barbarians on the northern shore of the Euxine, and had much to do with the century of comparative peace between 'Gothia' and 'Romania'.

Of this period of Gothic sojourn in Dacia we have one interesting relic in the celebrated Buzeu Ring. This is a golden arm-ring, elastic and snake-shaped, and is part of a large treasure of golden ornaments found at Buzeu in Little Wallachia, in the year 1838. Upon the flat surface of the ring is carved, or rather stamped with a hammer and a sharp instrument, the Runic

inscription equivalent to —GUTAENIOWI HAEILAE, which may be translated either “Holy to the Temple of the Goths” or “Holy to the new Temple of the Goths”. There is some little difficulty about the middle part of the inscription, but none as to its beginning and end, which are admitted to contain the name of the Gothic people and the Teutonic adjective for “holy”. From the heathen character of the inscription it must be referred to a pretty early period in the Gothic occupation of Dacia, say between 250 and 350. It has been suggested that the great intrinsic value of the gold, forming the Buzeu hoard, points to the dedication of the spoils of some great triumph — the plunder, it may be, of the camp of Decius, or the ransom of the wealthy city of Marcianople. But this is of course mere conjecture.

One result of the settlement in Dacia was probably to broaden the line of demarcation between the two nations of the Ostrogoths and the Visigoths, if indeed it did not (as might be argued with some probability) for the first time divide the Gothic people into those two sections. Everything in the story of the barbarian migrations shows us how powerful was the moral, we might almost say the spiritual, influence, exercised by the stately fabric of Roman civilization upon the barbarians who

“With straitened habits and with tastes starved small”

came to burrow in its abandoned chambers. True, Aurelian had invited the old inhabitants who chose to do so to leave the old Dacia and become settlers in his new Dacia south of the Danube, but many probably did not accept the invitation, and in any event there was much Roman which could not migrate. The great roads, the cities, the mines, the baths, the camps, the temples remained, to impress, to fascinate, to attract the minds of the barbarians. Legends of the mysterious people who had wrought these mighty works, tales of vast treasure-hoards, guarded by dwarfs or by serpents, would be told by Gothic mothers to their children. In some cases the ruined Roman city would be shunned as a dwelling-place by the Teutonic settlers, oppressed by a nameless fear of the spirits that might be haunting the spot. But even so, their own rude town would inevitably grow up near to the ancient *civitas*, for the sake of the roads which led to it. The experience of all other German settlements within the limits of the Empire warrants us in asserting *a priori* that the influence of their settlement in Dacia must have been a civilizing one on the Gothic warriors, that it must have instilled into them a certain dissatisfaction with their own dull, unprogressive Past, and must have prepared their minds to admire, and in some measure to desire, the great intellectual heritage of Rome. And, *a posteriori*, we find precisely in the Visigothic nation a capacity for culture and for assimilation with their Roman subjects, greater and earlier than that possessed by any other of the barbarian invaders of the Empire; and we are surely entitled to assume that the century passed in Roman Dacia had something to do with this result. But it is the Visigothic branch alone of which we may think as thus silently transformed by Roman influences. The Ostrogoths dwelling in the vast plains of Lithuania and Southern Russia had no such trophies of civilization around them as those which met the gaze of their Western brethren. Some little civilizing influence may have been exerted upon the coast-dwellers and the inhabitants of the Crimea by the Greek cities that were scattered helplessly among them: but the greater part of the Ostrogothic people, having been Scythians of the steppes for centuries, remained Scythians still, barbarous, illiterate, untouched by the intellectual superiority of Rome.

As far, however, as we can trace anything of the political system of the Goths at this period, the less cultured part of the nation maintained a sort of ascendancy over their Visigothic brethren. The kings, Ariaric and Aoric, whom we have met with as fighting for or against the Emperor Constantine, may have belonged to either section. The reign of the next king, Geberic, was chiefly distinguished by a successful attack on the Vandals (337), whom he drove out from

their settlements on the western border of Dacia, and forced to take shelter under the Roman supremacy in the province of Pannonia. Geberic also may have been either Visigoth or Ostrogoth, though there is something in the way in which his name is introduced by Jordanes which seems to make the latter the more probable supposition. But after Geberic we come to Hermanric, noblest of the Amals, who subdued many warlike nations of the North and forced them to obey his laws, and here we are undoubtedly upon Ostrogothic ground. Jordanes compares him to Alexander the Great, and enumerates thirteen nations with barbarous names (scarcely one which corresponds to any that was ever mentioned by any historian before or since), all of whom obeyed the mighty Hermanric. There is a sort of mythical character about all the information that we receive concerning this Ostrogothic conqueror; but as it is said, with some appearance of truthfulness, that he extended his dominions even to the Aestii, who dwelt upon the amber-producing shore of the Baltic, his kingdom, which evidently included many Slavonic as well as Teutonic tribes, must have occupied the greater part of Southern Russia and Lithuania, and was probably much the largest dominion then governed by any single barbarian ruler.

Did the royal power of Hermanric include any overlordship over the Visigothic branch of the nation? It is difficult to answer this question decisively; but, upon the whole, notwithstanding many traces of independent action, it seems probable that the Visigoths were, however loosely, incorporated in the great confederacy of barbarian tribes whereof Hermanric was the head. Their own immediate rulers bore some title of less commanding import than that of King, which has been translated by the Roman historians into the vague word *Judex* (Judge). The inferiority of the title, and the fact that it was apparently borne by several persons at a time, are clear indications that a disintegrating process was at work in the Visigothic nation, and that the unity which a monarchical constitution gives was beginning to disappear under the influence of peaceful contact with the higher civilization of the Empire.

At a later period the reader's attention will be called to some of the interesting but difficult questions connected with German kingship. Meanwhile it may be well that he should note for himself how far the authority of the king was limited by the necessity of obtaining for his decisions the approval of the armed nation, and what was the effect of warlike and of peaceful intercourse with Rome, either in consolidating or in loosening the regal power among the barbarians. These are really the two most important points in the constitutional history of the Germanic tribes; and while complete and well-rounded theories concerning them are much more easily formed than solidly established, the careful observer of a multitude of little facts which meet us in the course of the narrative, will probably arrive at some general conclusion which will not be far from the truth.

One thing may be at once stated, that the invariable tendency of war, especially of war in critical dangerous times, was to exalt the kingly office. The same national necessities which led the United States of America to entrust almost despotic authority, under the name of "the War-Power" to President Lincoln during the late war of secession, led to the disappearance of many a Gothic and Frankish kinglet, and to the concentration of supreme power in the hands of an Alaric, a Theodoric, or a Clovis during the long struggle for victory with Rome. On the other hand, when 'Romania' and 'Barbaricum' were at peace one with another, the influence of the Empire on barbarian royalty was, as has been already said, disintegrating. The majesty of the Augustus at Rome or Constantinople overshadowed the rude and barbarous splendour of the Gothic *Thiudans*. His pretensions to be descended from the gods were met with a quiet sneer by the Greek merchant who brought his wares to sell in the Teutonic home-stead. Touching at so many points the great and civilized world-Empire, from which they were often separated only by a ford or a ferry, and touching it in friendly and profitable intercourse, the barbarians were ever in danger of losing that feeling of national unity which both lent strength to the

institution of kingship, and received strength therefrom. The Governor of the province on the opposite side of the river became more to the Teuton as his own distant and seldom-seen King became less. The barbarian began to forget that he was a Goth or a Vandal or an Alaman, and to think of himself as a Moesian, a Pannonian, or a Gaulish provincial. Thus did Rome during the long intervals of peace win many a bloodless victory over her barbarian neighbours. This process, which was probably going on during all the first half of the fourth century, and which seemed to foretell a very different result from that which actually came to pass, was powerfully aided, as far as the Visigoths were concerned, by two momentous changes which were being introduced among them. The worship of Wodan and Thunor was being displaced by the religion of Christ, and the Gothic language was giving birth to a literature. The chief agent in these two events, full of importance even to the present day, was a man who a hundred years ago would have been spoken of as an obscure ecclesiastic, but for whom in our own day the new science of the History of Speech has asserted his rightful position, as certainly "attaining to the first three" in the century in which he lived. If the greatest name of that century be admitted to be Constantine, and if the second place be yielded to Athanasius, at least the third may be claimed for the missionary bishop of the Goths and the first translator of the Bible into a barbarian tongue, the noble-hearted Ulfilas.

Ulfilas (311-381), who was born probably in 311 was not of pure Teutonic extraction, but was descended from Cappadocian ancestors who had been carried captive by the Goths, probably during that raid into Asia Minor which ended at the baths of Anchialus. He was however himself, in heart and by speech, a Goth, and in the course of his life he became master both of the Greek and Latin languages. In the capacity either of an ambassador or, more probably, a hostage, he was sent while still a young man to Constantinople. During his stay there (which lasted apparently for about ten years), if not at an earlier period, he embraced the Christian religion; he was ordained *Lector* (Reader); and eventually, in the thirtieth year of his age, he was consecrated bishop by the great Arian ecclesiastic, Eusebius of Nicomedia. From this time onwards for forty years he was engaged in frequent missionary journeys among his countrymen in Dacia, many of whom, having become converts to Christianity, were persuaded by him to cross the frontier, in order to escape the cruel persecutions of their heathen countrymen, and to settle within the limits of the Roman Empire. These Christianized Gothic settlers were called *Gothi Minores*, and their dwellings were situated upon the northern slopes of the Balkans. Our information as to these Lesser Goths is derived exclusively from the following passage in Jordanes: —

"There were also certain other Goths, who are called Minores, an immense people, with their bishop and primate Vulfila, who is said, moreover, to have taught them letters: and they are at this day dwelling in Moesia, in the district called Nicopolitana, at the foot of Mount Haemus, a numerous race, but poor and unwarlike, abounding only in cattle of divers kinds, and rich in pastures and forest timber, having little wheat, though the earth is fertile in producing other crops. They do not appear to have any vineyards: those who want wine buy it of their neighbours; but most of them drink only milk".

The result then of this partial Christianization of the Visigoths by the labours of Ulfilas was that by the middle of the fourth century a peaceful invasion of Moesia had been made, and a colony of simple-hearted Gothic herdsmen was settled between the Balkans and the Danube, near the modern city of Tirnova.

From a most interesting MS. recently discovered at Paris, which contains a sketch of the life of Ulfilas by a contemporary and devoted admirer, probably Auxentius, bishop of Dorostorus (the modern Silistria), we learn that it was the persecuting policy of a Visigothic Judex that drove Ulfilas and his emigrants across the Danube. "And when", says Auxentius, "through the envy and mighty working of the enemy, there was kindled a persecution of the

Christians by an irreligious and sacrilegious Judge of the Goths, who spread tyrannous affright through the barbarian land, it came to pass that Satan, who desired to do evil, unwillingly did good; that those whom he sought to make deserters became confessors of the faith; that the persecutor was conquered, and his victims wore the wreath of victory. Then, after the glorious martyrdom of many servants and handmaids of Christ, as the persecution still raged vehemently, after seven years of his episcopate were expired, the blessed Ulfilas being driven from 'Varbaricum' with a great multitude of confessors, was honourably received on the soil of Romania by the Emperor Constantius of blessed memory. Thus as God by the hand of Moses delivered his people from the violence of Faraoh and the Egyptians, and made them pass through the Red Sea, and ordained that they should serve Him [on Mount Sinai], even so by means of Ulfilas did God deliver the confessors of His only-begotten Son from the 'Varbarian' land, and cause them to cross over the Danube, and serve Him upon the mountains [of Haemus] like his saints of old".

The comparison of Ulfilas to Moses appears to have been a favourite one with his contemporaries. We are told that the Emperor Constantius, who probably had met him face to face, and who approved of his settlement of the lesser Goths in Moesia, called him "the Moses of our day". But if he was the Moses of the Gothic people he was also their Cadmus, the introducer of letters, the father and originator of all that Teutonic literature which now fills no inconsiderable space in the libraries of the world. Let us briefly summarize what he did for his people as author of their alphabet and translator of the Christian Scriptures into their dialect.

As has been before stated, the Goths and their kindred peoples already possessed an alphabet of a primitive kind, the Runic *Futhorc*. But this was best adapted, and practically was only used, for short inscriptions on wood or stone, on metal or horn, such as "Oltha owns this axe", "This shield belongs to Hagsi", "Echlew made this horn for the dread forest-king"; or the already-mentioned Buzeu inscription, "Holy to the temple of the Goths". In fact, if any one looks at the shapes of the earlier Runic letters he will see that they are just those shapes which an unskilful workman naturally adopts, when carving even the letters of our own alphabet with a knife on the trunk of a tree. All is straight lines and angles, and the circle, or any kind of curve, is as much as possible avoided. It was not in this way or on this kind of materials that a national literature could come into being. Ulfilas therefore, who was of course possessed of all the graphic appliances of a Byzantine scribe of the fourth century, determined to free himself entirely, or almost entirely, from the primeval Runes of his forefathers, and to fashion the new alphabet of his people mainly upon that which was most extensively used upon the shores of the Euxine and the Aegean and in the holy city of Constantinople, the venerable alphabet of Hellas. While referring the reader who may be interested in this subject to a note in which it is more fully discussed, it will be sufficient to say here that, both in the order and the forms of the letters, the alphabet of Ulfilas is based upon the Greek, but that it contains three letters which are unmistakably Runic (those which represent J, U, and O), three in which a Runic influence is observable (B, R, and F), and three in which a similar influence seems to have been exerted by the Latin alphabet (Q, H, and S).

The grammar of the Gothic tongue, as exhibited in the translation of Ulfilas, is, it need hardly be said, of riceless value in the history of Human Speech. We here see, not indeed the original of all the Teutonic languages, but a specimen of one of them, three centuries earlier than any other that has been preserved, with many inflections which have since been lost, with words which give us the clue to relationships otherwise untraceable, and with phrases which cast a strong light on the fresh and joyous youth of the Teutonic peoples. In short, it is not too much to say, that the same place which the study of Sanskrit holds in the history of the development of the great Indo-European family of nations is occupied by the Gothic of Ulfilas

(Moeso-Gothic, as it is sometimes not very happily named) in reference to the unwritten history of the Germanic races.

But let us not, as enthusiastic philologists, fancy that Ulfilas lived but to preserve for posterity certain fast-perishing Gothic roots, and to lay the foundation for Grimm's Law of the transmutation of consonants. To Christianize and to civilize the Gothic people was the one, chief and successfully accomplished, aim of his life. It was for this that he undertook, amidst all the perils and hardships of his missionary life, the labour, great because so utterly unprecedented, of turning the Septuagint and the Greek New Testament into the language of a barbarous and unlettered race; by the mere conception of such a work showing a mind centuries in advance of its contemporaries. Nor was it a portion only, the Gospels or the Psalms, as in the case of our own King Alfred 503 years later, which was thus rendered into a language "understood of the people". The whole of the New Testament and much the larger part of the Old were turned into Gothic by the good bishop, who, however, according to a well-known story, refrained from translating the Books of Kings (that is, of course, the two Books of Samuel and the two of Kings), which contain the history of wars: because his nation was already very fond of war, and needed the bit rather than the spur, so far as fighting was concerned. One can understand the wise economy of truth, which withheld, from these fierce Dacian warriors, Sagas so exciting as the battle of Mount Gilboa, the slaughter of Baal's priests at the foot of Carmel, and the extermination of the House of Ahab by Jehu son of Nimshi.

Ulfilas, who was of course well acquainted with the Greek language, no doubt translated the Old Testament from the Septuagint version and the New from the original Greek. His translation has been appealed to for the last two centuries as a valuable witness to the condition of the Greek text in the fourth century. It contains however some singular traces of the influence of the old Latin text where that differs from the Greek. This is generally explained as the result of corrections in his version, made by some later hand during the residence of the Ostrogoths in Italy. But considering the close connection which existed between the Churches of Illyricum and those of Italy, it seems at least as probable that Ulfilas himself worked with the old Latin version (the *Itala*) before him, and in these passages gave it the preference over his Greek codices. This view of the matter is confirmed by the express statement of Auxentius that he was conversant with three languages, Greek, Latin, and Gothic. Of the great work thus accomplished by the Moesian bishop, fragments only, but precious fragments, are left to us. Of the Old Testament we have two or three of the chapters of Ezra and Nehemiah, and nothing else save scattered quotations; but of the New Testament we have the greater part of the Epistles of St. Paul in palimpsest; and above all, we have more than half of the Gospels preserved in the splendid *Codex Argenteus* at Upsala; a MS. probably of the fifth century, which is inscribed in silver and gold characters upon a parchment of rich purple colour, and which, both by the beauty of its execution, by the importance of its text, and of the perished language in which it is written, and by its own almost romantic history is certainly one of the greatest palaeographical treasures in the world.

If it is often hard in our own day to say whether a great man more moulds his age or is moulded by it, we need not to be surprised that we find it difficult to decide with certainty how far Ulfilas originated, and how far he merely represented, the conversion of the Teutonic races to Christianity. Something had probably been already done by the Greek dwellers in the cities on the Euxine to convert the Ostrogoths of the Crimea to the orthodox faith; and hence it is that we find a certain bishop Theophilus, who is called Bosporitanus (doubtless from the Cimmerian Bosphorus) appearing from among the Goths ('de Gothis') at the Council of Nicaea, and subscribing its decrees. But this seems to have been a feeble and exotic growth. The apostolate of Ulfilas among the Visigoths was, as far as we can see, the efficient cause of the conversion, not of that nation only, but of all the Teutonic tribes by whom they were

surrounded. His was evidently a most potent personality, and his book, carried by traders and warriors from village to village, and from camp to camp of the barbarians, may have been even more powerful than his living voice. Let the operating cause have been what it may, nearly all the Teutonic nations of Eastern Europe who came in contact with the Empire during the period upon which we are about to enter, became Christian in the course of the fourth century and chiefly during the lifetime of Ulfilas. But the form of Christianity taught by Ulfilas, and earnestly accepted by the Goth, the Vandal, the Burgundian, and the Sueve, was one of the various forms which passed under the common denomination of Arianism. Many have been the stories, dishonouring to Ulfilas and the Goths, and quite inadequate to the result that they profess to explain, which, probably without any untruthful intent, the ecclesiastical historians have put into circulation in order to explain this unacceptable triumph of heterodoxy. It has often been asserted that the Goths were seduced into heresy by the Arian Emperor Valens, that their profession of the form of Christianity which he professed was the price paid by them for that settlement within the confines of the Empire which will shortly have to be described, and that the broker in this unholy compact was their revered bishop Ulfilas. A careful study of the whole subject proves the extreme improbability, we may almost say, the absolute falsity of this account of the matter. Some influence must probably be attributed to the previous religious training of the Goths and the nations akin to them, when we seek to account for the rapid diffusion of Arian Christianity among them. Accustomed as they were to think of the All-father and his godlike sons, it was easy to accept the teaching of the priests who told them of a second God, strong as Thunor, but also gentle and beloved as Balder, who sat as it were on the steps of the throne of the Most High, a God in his relation to the human family, but yet not equal in power and majesty to the eternal Father. And it was the same kind of thought, struggling with the philosophic conception of the unity of the Supreme Being, which strove to find an utterance in the multitudinous creeds, Arian and Semi-Arian, to which the Councils of the fourth century gave birth.

But after all, though such considerations as these may account for the special fascination which Arianism had for the Teutonic neighbours of the Empire, and for the special dangers that attended a form of faith in which their old polytheism perhaps still lingered, they are not necessary to explain the Arianism of their greatest teacher and apostle. His religious career almost precisely corresponds with those fifty years of reaction from Nicene orthodoxy which present so difficult a problem in the history of the Eastern Church. The truth is therefore that Ulfilas was an Arian because every considerable ecclesiastic with whom he came in contact at Constantinople was an Arian; because that was the form of faith (or so it seemed to him) which he had been first taught; because he was consecrated bishop by the great Arian controversialist Eusebius of Nicomedia, and received the kiss of peace from the prelates to whose ranks he had just been admitted, at the great Arian synod of Antioch (341); because, in short, during the whole time that his theological mind was being moulded, Arianism, of one kind or another, was orthodoxy at Constantinople, and Athanasius was denounced, as a dangerous heretic. He himself, when lying at the point of death, prefaced his Arian confession of faith with these emphatic words : "I, Ulfilas, bishop and confessor, have ever thus believed" : and there is no reason to doubt that, as far as any man can speak accurately of his own spiritual history, these words were true.

The form of Arianism (for that battle-cry was uttered by many armies) which Ulfilas professed was that generally known as the *Homoion*, and agreed well with his lifelong devotion to the work of translating and disseminating the Scriptures. While Athanasius was fighting, sometimes against the world, for the mystic word *Homoousion*; while the Semi-Arian bishops were labouring to re-unite all parties and keep their own sees by means of the cunningly devised word *Homoiousion*; while the controversy was passing on to niceties of speculation

concerning ‘being’ and ‘substance’ which only the Greek language could express, and which probably not a single, even Greek intellect really understood; the advocates of the *Homoion* tried to recall the combatants to a more simple and more scriptural standing-ground, and said : “Neither *Homo-ousios* nor *Homoi-ousios* is to be found in the archives of our faith. Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is like (*Homoios*) to the Father who begat him according to the Scriptures”. This was the language of the creed adopted at the Arian Synod of Constantinople (360), a creed which, as we are expressly told, received the signature of Bishop Ulfilas. The confession of faith already alluded to, which he composed when lying on his death-bed, contains these words: “I, Ulfilas, bishop and confessor, have ever thus believed, and in this, the alone true faith, do I make my testament to my Lord. I believe that there is one God the Father, alone unbegotten and invisible: and in his only-begotten Son our Lord and our God, artificer and maker of every creature, having none like unto himself ...; and in one Holy Spirit, an illuminating and sanctifying power, neither God nor Lord, but the minister of Christ, subject and obedient in all things to the Son, as the Son is subject and obedient in all things to the Father”.

In the account of the teaching of Ulfilas given by his admirer Auxentius, it is said : “By his sermons and his tracts he showed that there is a difference between the divinity of the Father and the Son, of the God unbegotten and of the God only-begotten : and that the Father is the Creator of the Creator, but the Son the Creator of the whole creation; the Father, God of our Lord, but the Son the God of every creature”.

This, it will at once be seen is not Trinitarian orthodoxy, but neither is it anything like the views concerning the nature of Jesus Christ which are held in our own time by the vast majority of those who would disdain for themselves the title of Orthodox Christians. In order to understand the theological conditions of the period before us, it is necessary that we should let the disputants speak their own language, and should not attribute to those who are now classed as heretics, either more or less deviation from the standard of faith which has now been established in the Christian Church for fifteen centuries, than is disclosed to us by their own creeds and anathemas, of which they have left us so copious a provision. But if the theological chasm between the barbarian converts of Ulfilas and the party which ultimately triumphed in the Church was somewhat less than our modern prepossessions would have led us to suppose, from a political and historical point of view the disastrous effect of the conversion of the Goths and their kindred to the Arian form of Christianity can hardly be stated too strongly. That conversion made the barbarians parties to the long law-suit between Arians and Trinitarians, which had dragged on its weary length through the greater part of the fourth century, and in which, up to the time that we are now speaking of, the persecuting spirit, the bitterness, the abuse of court favour, had been mainly on the side of the Arians. The tide was now soon to turn, and the disciples of Athanasius were to be the dominant party, the favourites of court and people. Into such a world, into the midst of a clergy and a laity passionately attached to the *Homoousian* formula, the Arian Teutons were about to be poured, not only to subdue and overturn, but if possible to renew and to rebuild. In this work of reconstruction the difference of creeds proved to be a great and often a fatal difficulty. The Barbarian might be tolerated by the Roman; by the Catholic the Arian could not but be loathed. Of even the Heathen there was hope, for he might one day renounce his dumb idols and might seek admission, as did the Frank and the Saxon, into the bosom of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church. But the Schismatic would probably grow hardened in his sin, he would plant his false bishops and his rival priests side by side with the officers of the true Church in every diocese and every parish. There could be no amalgamation for the faithful with the Arians. The only course was to groan under them, to conspire against them, and as soon as possible to expel them.

Here then for the present, having reached the seventh decade of the third century, we leave that great confederacy of Teutonic peoples which went by the collective name of Goths. They have wandered from the Baltic to the Euxine; they have engaged in one terrible conflict with Rome, the result of which was all but fatal to the Empire. They have since then been for the greater part of a century at peace with their mighty neighbour; they have received her subsidies; they have served under her eagles; they are rapidly embracing her newly adopted faith. It may be that they will be altogether moulded according to her impress, and that Gothia will gradually become Romania. Not so however thinks the keen analytic intellect of the philosopher on the throne. From under his unkempt hair the piercing eye of Julian discerns the coming danger. When his war against the Persians was coming to a head, either by some divine warning or by the exercise of his reason, he perceived from afar the coming troubles among the Goths like the ground-swell of a storm. For he said in one of his letters, "The Goths are now at rest, but perhaps they will not always so continue"

CHAPTER II

JOVIAN, PROCOPIUS, ATHANARIC.

The death of Julian at the very crisis of his campaign against Sapor, King of Persia, was followed by events which illustrated in a striking manner the weakness of such an elective monarchy as the Roman Commonwealth had now become. The dead Emperor left no son, and the race of Constantine died with him. In these circumstances the right of the soldiers to choose the Emperor on the field of battle, a right which always existed in theory and which was only kept in practical abeyance by such expedients as the *association* of a son with his Imperial sire, now revived in full force. The position of the invading army on the eastern bank of the Tigris, cut off from its base of operations and deprived of the great leader whose courage had breathed confidence into every soul, was difficult but not desperate. It might have been thought that, from the mere instinct of self-preservation, soldiers in such a position would have selected the fittest soldier to lead them home victorious: yet never was a leader chosen more absurdly unfit to grapple with the responsibilities of his new position than he who actually assumed the diadem. There was jealousy between the two main divisions of the army, the Eastern and the Western; between the comrades who after Julian's victory over the Alamanni had proclaimed him Augustus at Paris, and the opponents who, but for the timely death of his colleague Constantius, would have found themselves actually fighting against the brilliant Apostate. During his lifetime, the genius and the popularity of Julian had smothered these discords; but now upon his death they were on the point of breaking out into a flame. Here, at the head of the Gaulish legions, stood Nevitta and Dagalaiphus—their very names told their barbarian origin; there, leading the debate on behalf of the legions of Constantius, were Victor and Arintheus. The discussion was so fierce between them that it might seem as if the horrors of civil war would soon be added to scarcity of provisions and all the other dangers of the Romans' position in the heart of the enemy's country. This peril was averted when both parties agreed to offer the diadem to Sallust, the Praetorian Prefect of the East, deservedly the most trusted of the military counsellors of the deceased Emperor. In an evil hour for the State, if wisely for his own tranquillity, Sallust refused the honour, pleading sickness and old age as sufficient reasons against taking the weight of empire on his shoulders. It was important that a choice should be speedily made, before the flame of dissension between East and West could flash up again; though one soldier of distinction proposed, with some show of reason, that the generals should consider themselves as lieutenants of the dead Julian till they had brought the troops safely back within the limits of the Empire, and then outside one of the cities of Mesopotamia “by the united suffrages of both armies elect a legitimate Emperor”. This proposal did not find favour, but someone suggested the name of Jovian, which was eagerly echoed by a few noisy partisans; and without reflection, almost without enquiry whom they meant by that name, Jovian was elected.

There were two men in the host, each of some little note in his way, bearing the name of Jovian. One, who held the rank of *notarius*, had been some months before a leader of the brave band of men who burrowed through the secret recesses of a mine under the walls of Maiozamalcha, and emerging suddenly in the middle of the city had slain all its defenders who came in their way, and opened the gates to the besiegers. Somewhat higher in rank, but less known for any deed of valour, was Jovian, the colonel of a regiment of the guards. He was son of Varronianus, a Count who had served the State with some credit and had recently retired

into private life. He was tall, blue-eyed, of a cheerful countenance, fond of exchanging good-natured pleasantries with his comrades of the camp; but, except his handsome presence and his father's respectable career, there seems to have been no reason whatever why he should have been chosen to rule. However, when the name of Jovian was mentioned, perhaps with a view to the elevation of the hero of Maiozamalcha, his messmates, interpreting it of their well-born and genial fellow-officer, hailed it with acclamations. He was soon robed in the purple, the only difficulty being that it was hard to find a robe of the Imperial colour large enough for his giant limbs, and was hurried along the four miles' line upon which the soldiers were drawn up, with shouts from his new subjects of "Jovianus Augustus". How little the mass of the army understood what they were doing was proved by the fact that misled by the similarity of name, many supposed that Julian was still alive and had recovered from his wound, and that it was he, their old commander, who was being hailed by these shouts of welcome. Only when, instead of the pale face and upright figure of the somewhat undersized Julian, they saw the tall stooping form and ruddy good-humoured countenance of his guardsman, did they fully comprehend the change which a few hours had wrought in the hand that was to guide the destinies of the Empire.

The whole story of Jovian's election reminds us of one of those sudden changes of fortune and unexpected compromises which have often marked the proceedings of a Conclave assembled for the choice of a Pope. But the interests at stake were probably greater than have ever been involved in the discussions in the Vatican—the hastening or the delay of the downfall of the Roman Empire, a point to be gained or lost in the contest of thirty centuries between Europe and Asia. As soon as Jovian was robed in the purple, there began that unavowed competition between the interests of the State and the interests of the Dynasty with which our own generation, having witnessed the capitulation of Sedan (AD 1870) and the surrender of Metz, can so easily understand. The Imperial army was still formidable to the Persians, and whenever it met them in the field it inflicted severe losses upon them. The friendly province of Corduene was—so we are assured—only 100 miles distant to the North, and from that district there was reason to hope that another large division under Sebastian and Procopius was advancing to join the Roman host. Notwithstanding the great and undeniable difficulties of the commissariat, all these considerations pointed to a rapid northward march up the eastern bank of the Tigris. The river would at least supply them with water, and if the ranks of the soldiers were to be thinned, it was surely better that they should die fighting than starving. But at every suggestion of this kind the flatterers of Jovian whispered in his ear the terrible name of Procopius, who was not only one of the generals of the advancing army, but a kinsman of the just deceased Emperor and a most likely person to be selected by a mutinous soldiery as a rival claimant to the throne. Thus that very junction of forces which, from a military point of view, was the one thing supremely to be desired for the Roman army, was the one thing to be supremely dreaded by the Roman Emperor. In this state of affairs any proposals for peace coming, the death from the Persian camp were sure of a favourable reception. Sapor, who had been profoundly impressed and dispirited by the rapid and successful march of Julian, recovered his confidence on the receipt of joyful tidings from a Roman deserter. This deserter, a standard-bearer of the legion called Joviani, had carried on a kind of hereditary feud with Varronianus and his son, and now preferred exile in Persia to the perils which must impend over the enemy of the Emperor. He informed the King that the foe whom he so greatly feared had breathed his last, and that a crowd of horse-boys had raised to the shadow of Imperial authority a guardsman named Jovian, a man of soft and indolent disposition. Such was the aspect which the tumultuary election of a Roman Emperor might easily be made to wear. At the same time, other deserters from the Imperial host conveyed the terrible suspicion—one which could not be positively refuted though it entirely lacks

confirmation— that Julian had fallen not by a Persian but a Roman javelin, hurled perhaps (but the historian does not himself suggest this) by a Christian hand.

Though elated by this welcome news, Sapor had enough of the fighting capacities of the Imperial army, even within the last few days, to make him desirous to build a bridge of gold for a retreating foe. Yet from the soft and inert Jovian he saw that it would be possible to wring terms of lasting advantage for Persia. He therefore sent to the Roman camp the general who bore the title of Surena and another noble of high rank to announce that from motives of humanity he was willing to spare the remains of the invading array, and permit them to return in safety to their own land if the following conditions were accepted by them. Five provinces on the upper waters of the Tigris and Euphrates, which had been won from Persia by Galerius, were now to be restored. The great city of Nisibis, which had with scarcely any interruption belonged to the Roman Empire since the time of Trajan and which had been the great *entrepôt* of the commerce of East and West, was to be surrendered to Sapor: and the cities of Singara and Castra Maurorum with fifteen fortresses were to share the same fate. Last and most ignominious condition of all, Arsaces, king of Armenia, who had dared to ally himself with Rome against Persia, was to be abandoned to the vengeance of the King of Kings.

Against such terms as these even Jovian struggled for four days, precious days, during which the provisions of his army were being rapidly consumed. Then he yielded, having obtained only one concession from the Persian, that the inhabitants of Nisibis and Singara might be allowed to depart from those cities, and the Roman garrisons to leave the fortresses before their surrender. The treaty was then signed, a treaty of peace for thirty years; hostages were given on both sides, and Jovian, being permitted to cross the Tigris without molestation, commenced his march across the wasted and waterless plains of Mesopotamia. After a journey of seventy miles, occupying six days, a time of terrible hardship both for the soldiers and their horses, the army received, at a city called Ur, a supply of provisions sent for their use by the generals Sebastian and Procopius. The facts that the two armies were within such comparatively short distance of one another, and that after all, famine, the great enemy of the retreating host, had to be encountered, just as if no treaty had been signed, seem to form the strongest possible condemnation of an arrangement, the real object of which was to secure the diadem for Jovian, at whatever cost to the Empire.

Before long the new Emperor and his army stood under the walls of Nisibis, Fame, swifter than the couriers whom Jovian had sent into all parts of the Empire to announce his accession, had divulged the humiliating terms of the treaty by which he had purchased an unmolested return. The citizens of Nisibis still cherished a faint hope that their prayers might prevail upon him to forego the execution of that article of the treaty in which they were concerned. But this hope grew fainter when they observed that Jovian remained in his camp, pitched outside the walls of their city, and although pressed, steadfastly refused to enter the palace which had been visited by a long line of his predecessors, from Trajan to Constantius. Men said then that he blushed to enter the gates of the impregnable city which he was about to surrender to the enemies of Rome.

It was probably because the new Emperor perceived the murmurs of discontent which were excited in the army by the complaints of the people of Nisibis, that on the first night of his sojourn before the city he ordered a deed of cruelty to be committed which was little in accordance with his usual easy good nature. The other Jovian, the hero of Maiozamalcha, was said to have invited some of the officers repeatedly to his table, and at these repasts to have made indiscreet allusions to the fact that he too had been spoken of as a candidate for the purple. He was hurried away at nightfall to a lonely place, hurled down a dry well, and his body covered with stones. Next day Bineses, Sapor's Commissioner, entered the City and displayed the banner of Persia from the citadel, a signal to all who wished to remain Roman

citizens that the time had come when they must abandon their homes. With chaplets in their hands the inhabitants poured forth to the Imperial tent and besought the Emperor not to surrender them against their will to the power of Persia. They did not ask for assistance: with their own soldiers and their own resources they would fight for their ancestral homes as they had often done before. To this petition, which was urged in the name of the municipal Senate and people of Nisibis the Emperor would only reply that "he had sworn to the treaty and could not, to gratify them, incur the guilt of perjury". Then Sabinus, president of the Senate of Nisibis, took up the discourse and spoke in somewhat bolder tone. "It is not right", said he, "oh Emperor, to abandon us, nor compel us to make trial of barbarian customs after we have been for many centuries fostered by the Roman laws. In three wars with the Persians, Constantius was saved from ruin by the valour of our city, which resisted to the last extremity of peril on behalf of the Empire. He recognized the obligations which this constancy laid upon him. When the fortune of war went desperately against him, when he had to flee with a few followers to the insecure shelter of Hibita, when he had to live on a crust of bread offered to him by an old peasant woman, still he surrendered not a foot of Roman territory: while you, oh Emperor signalize the very commencement of your reign by the surrender of a city whose defences from of old have been inviolate by the enemy". Still the Emperor refused to listen to the impossible petition, and pleaded, as he was bound to plead, the necessity of observing his plighted faith. He refused the crown which the citizens had brought him, but at length, overcome by their importunity, allowed it to be placed on his head, whereupon an advocate named Silvanus with a bitter taunt exclaimed, "So, oh Imperator, may you be crowned by all the other cities of your realm". Jovian understood the sneer, and exasperated by the unwelcome fidelity of the citizens, would concede only the short space of three days within which those who refused to accept the condition of Persian subjects must leave the precincts of Nisibis.

Then one universal cry of misery went up from the despairing city. Matrons with dishevelled hair bewailed their hard fate in being compelled to abandon the ancestral hearths by which their infancy had been spent. Some, more unhappy, had to contemplate long separation from the husband or the children whom necessity forced to remain behind. Everywhere a weeping crowd filled the streets, touching with loving hands the very door-posts and thresholds of the houses which they had known so long and were never to revisit. Soon the roads were filled with the throng of fugitives carrying with them such part of their household furniture as their strength enabled them to remove, and sometimes leaving articles of great price behind, in order to transport some commoner possession which its associations had endeared to them. Most of the emigrants betook themselves to Amida, the nearest town on the Roman side of the new frontier : but she and all her sister-cities were filled with lamentation, all men fearing that they would be exposed, defenceless, to the raids of the Persians, now that the great barrier-city of Nisibis had fallen.

I have dwelt at some length on the circumstances attending the abandonment of this city of Nisibis, because they illustrate the nature of the connection which existed between the one great civilized World-Empire and its members. Here was a city erected upon the highlands of Mesopotamia; whose river, after a devious course, flowed into the Euphrates. From its walls Tigris could perhaps be descried gleaming upon the eastern horizon. It was doubtless essentially Asiatic in its character : its citizens spoke the Aramaic tongue of Hazael and Benhadad; those who were most closely connected with Europe and had the most successfully assimilated the Western civilization, might at the utmost be familiar with the Greek language which had been learned by the subjects of Seleucus and Antiochus. Yet these Orientals clung with passionate devotion to the name of Romans, and asked for nothing better from their rulers than to be allowed to fight for their connection with the far-off City by the Tiber. In the course of this history we shall often come across cruel cases of oppression by Roman governors; we

shall often have to trace the desolating presence of the Roman tax-gatherer; we shall sometimes hear the suggestion that even subjection to the barbarian is better than the exhausting tyranny of Roman prefects. But this is not the abiding, the universal conviction of the subjects of the Empire. Their own old feelings of nationality have long ago been laid aside, and to them the Empire, or as they call it 'the Commonwealth of Rome', is home; loved, notwithstanding all its faults, and not to be abandoned without passionate lamentation.

As for Jovian, his action as Emperor scarcely extended beyond the cession of the five Mesopotamian provinces. With nervous haste he sent his messengers all over the Empire announcing his own accession and the salutary peace which he had concluded with Persia; and notwithstanding a mutiny at Rheims, in which his father-in-law and newly-appointed commander-in-chief, Lucillianus, was slain, his election was upon the whole tranquilly accepted by all the legions and provinces of the Empire. Procopius, who met him at the last stage before Nisibis, was charged to escort the dead body of Julian to Tarsus, and there to pay the last rites to the memory of his deceased kinsman. This done, he who well knew the suspicion with which he was regarded, discreetly vanished for a time from the eyes of men. Jovian entered Antioch, but stayed not long there, being terrified by omens and annoyed at the lampoons of the citizens. At Tarsus he visited and adorned the tomb of his predecessor. At Angora, which he had reached by the commencement of the new year, he exhibited himself to his subjects dressed in the robe of a Consul. By his side as his colleague sat his son Carronianus, a little child, whose screams as he was carried in the curule chair were deemed an evil augury for the new dynasty of Jovian. And in fact before seven weeks of the new year had passed, that short-lived dynasty perished. At the obscure town of Dadastana, in Bithynia, Jovian died suddenly in the night. Some said that the newly-plastered walls of his chamber in the road-side *mansio* caused his death; some, an over-heated stove; some, a too-hearty meal eaten on the previous evening. It is only certain that the inglorious life of the new Emperor was ended, in his thirty-third year, and that not even in that age of suspicion was any hint uttered that his death was due to the contrivance of an enemy.

Thus then the throne of the world was again vacant, and the act of election performed eight months before on the plain of Dura had now to be repeated in Bithynia, but this time in a more leisurely manner and with less danger of a mistaken choice. At Nicaea, the Capital of Bithynia, the city at which, thirty-nine years before, the great Parliament of Christianity had assembled, there were now gathered together the chiefs of the civil and military administration in order to discuss the all-important question of a successor to the vacant throne. All men felt that the crisis was a grave one for the Empire: but where there was so little to indicate upon whom the choice would fall, many went with high hopes which were doomed to disappointment. Sallust probably took the first place in the deliberating council. First was proposed the name of Aequitius, a man who held a somewhat similar position in the household troops to that of Jovian: but his rough and temper and clownish manners caused him to be rejected. Then Januarius, a relative of Julian, who was Marshal of the Camps in Illyricum, was suggested as a fit wearer of the purple : but to communicate with him in distant Illyricum seemed to involve too dangerous a delay. When the name of another guardsman, Valentinian, was proposed, it was hailed with unanimous approval, and the suggestion was greeted as the result of heaven-sent inspiration. It is true that even he was absent, at Angora, in Galatia: but ten days sufficed to take thither the news of his elevation and to bring him back to the camp. The day on which he returned being that on which the intercalation for Leap Year was made, was deemed unlucky by the superstitious Romans, and consequently no proclamation was then issued: but, on the following day, the army was drawn up on the plain of Nicaea, and beheld upon a lofty tribunal the stately form of the new Emperor.

Valentinian, like so many of the best and strongest rulers of Rome in the third and fourth centuries, like Claudius, Aurelian, Diocletian, and Constantine, came from the central (Illyrian) portion of the Empire, between the Danube and the Adriatic. He had no long line of noble ancestors to boast of. His father Gratian, born of obscure parentage at Cibalae on the Save, appeared when a lad in the army of some Roman general and offered a rope for sale. Five soldiers set upon him with the rough horse-play of the camp and tried to wrest his precious rope from him, but to their amazement he resisted them all. From that day Gratianus Funarius was a well-known name in the camp, and his extraordinary personal strength, combined with skill in wrestling, secured his rapid advancement in the military career. He became guardsman, tribune, and Marshal of the Camps, which latter high position he held in the province of Africa. Here however a suspicion of embezzlement led to his dismissal: but either the suspicion was unjust or his repentance procured his pardon, for at a later period he held the same office in the province of Britain. At the end of a long and generally honourable career he retired to his native town of Gibalae, where, however, he again fell into some degree of disfavour with the reigning Emperor (Constantius), owing to the hospitality which he afforded to the usurper Magnentius.

The son of Count Gratian possessed his father's strength and heroic stature, and of course started in life with greater advantages than had fallen to that father's share. In 357 Valentinian was a cavalry officer, holding an important command in Gaul, where the misunderstandings arising from Constantine's jealousy of his cousin Julian for a short time, and most undeservedly, clouded his military reputation and caused him to receive an unwelcome furlough. With the triumph of Julian, if not before, his time of inactivity ended: but he again lost for a little while the favour of the Emperor, owing to the roughness with which he exhibited his Christian contempt for the somewhat fussy religiousness of his heathen master. At some ceremony in the temple of Antioch, at which military duty required his attendance in the train of the Emperor, a heathen priest sprinkled Valentinian the life-guard with the lustral water of the gods. He made a disdainful gesture, and cut off with his sword the part of his military cloak which had received the undesired aspersion. The philosopher Maximus (apparently) played the ignoble part of an informer, and Valentinian, for this contempt of the Emperor's religion, was for a few months deprived of his commission. Before long, however, he was again following the Imperial standards, the temporary hindrance to his fortunes being abundantly compensated by the luster which now attached to his name in the eyes of all believers, as, if not a martyr, at least a confessor of the Christian faith.

Such was the past history of the fortunate "Tribune of the second Schola of Scutarii", or as we should say Colonel of the Second Regiment of Guards, who now, in the forty-fourth year of his age, was presented to the assembled troops on the plain outside Nicaea to receive the acclamations which would make him Emperor. His tall and sinewy frame, the light colour of his hair, the blue-gray tint of his sternly-glancing eyes, spoke probably of an admixture of Teutonic blood in the veins of the Pannonian peasant, his father: but there was also somewhat of classical beauty in his features. With all the many and grievous faults in his character which history reveal to us, Valentinian was a born king of men, and one who, when presented to an assembly of soldiers as their leader, was certain to win without difficulty their enthusiastic applause. The acclamations were duly uttered, the purple was hung around his shoulders, the diadem was placed upon his head, and the new Augustus prepared to harangue his soldiers. But even while he was in act to speak, a deep sound, an almost menacing murmur, rose from the centuries and maniples of the array, "Name at once another Emperor". Some thought that the hint was given in the interest of one or other of the disappointed candidates; but it is more probable that the military parliament really aimed, in its own rough way, at promoting the good of the state, and wished to prevent the recurrence of such another disaster as that which, by the

impact of one Persian javelin, had transferred the whole power of the Roman commonwealth from a Julian to a Jovian. At once, however, the high spirit of the new Emperor revealed itself, and the soldiers learned that they had given themselves a master. In few but well-chosen words Valentinian thanked the brave defenders of the provinces for the supreme honour which, without his expectation or desire, they had conferred upon him.

The power which but an hour ago was in their hands was now in his; and it behaved them to listen while he set forth what he deemed to be for the welfare of the state. The need of a colleague he felt, perhaps more strongly than any of them, but the absolute necessity of harmony between the rulers of the world weighed even more strongly upon his mind. It was by concord that even small states had grown to great strength, and without it the mightiest empires must fall in ruin. Such a colleague as would work in full harmony with himself he trusted that he might find, but he must not be hurried in the search, nor compelled at a moment's notice to utter the irrevocable word that would bind him to a partner whose disposition he would only begin to study when it was too late to turn the knowledge of his character to account.

The harangue produced its desired effect in the minds of the soldiers. Those who had been most eager in demanding the immediate association of a colleague admitted the reasonableness of the plea for delay. The eagles and the banners of the different legions clustered emulously round the new Emperor, and escorted him, already with the awful aspect of dominion in his countenance, to the Imperial palace.

The deliberations of the new Emperor with himself concerning his future colleague did not occupy many days. Already, it is probable those who were best acquainted with his temper saw to what conclusion his words about the necessity of harmony pointed. On the morrow after his elevation he called a council of the chief officers, and asked if they had any advice to give him as to the association of a partner in his throne. All the rest were silent, but Dagalaiphus, the brave Teuton from the Gaulish provinces, said : "If you love your own family, most excellent Emperor, you have a brother. If you love the State, seek for the worthiest and clothe him with the purple". The Emperor showed that he was offended, but dismissed the assembly without disclosing his purpose. On the first of March, when the legions entered Nicomedia, he promoted his brother Valens to the dignity of Tribune of the Imperial Stables. Before the end of the month, (March 28, 365), at the building known as the Hebdomon he presented Valens to the troops, arrayed in purple and diadem, and declared him Augustus. The needful, the apparently unanimous, applause was given, for none dared face the stem glance of the elder Augustus, and the two brothers rode back to Constantinople in the same car of state.

Of Valens, the new occupant of the Imperial throne, there is but little to be said, except that he was one of those commonplace men whom a hard fate has singled out for a great position, as if on purpose to show the essential littleness of their souls. He possessed neither the manly beauty nor the soldierly qualities of his brother. Of moderate stature and swarthy skin, bandy-legged, somewhat pot-bellied, and with a slight cast in his eye, he could boast of nothing in his outward appearance which might compel the beholder to forget the meanness of his extraction. In action he was tardy and procrastinating, and yet, as we shall see, on one memorable occasion his ignorance of the elements of the problem before him led him to commit an act of almost inconceivable rashness. He was excessively tenacious of the dignity which he had so undeservedly acquired, and his suspicion of all whom he supposed to be plotting to deprive him of it, led him into a course of most cruel tyranny. Yet in the ordinary detail of government he displayed some praiseworthy qualities. He was a lover of justice towards all except the supposed pretenders to his throne. Though avaricious and by no means scrupulous as to the means of replenishing his treasury, he was also, by an unwonted combination of qualities, very careful of his subjects' financial prosperity, never imposing a new tax, but relieving, whenever he could, the weight of the old imposts; so that Ammianus,

who writes with no friendly feeling towards him, declares that “never in matters of this sort was the East more leniently dealt with than under his reign”. It should be added here, for it had an important bearing on the whole course of his reign, that he was a bigoted and sometimes a persecuting Arian, while his brother Valentinian held the Nicene faith, but refused to persecute either heretics or heathens.

The one chief merit of the public life of Valens was his unswerving loyalty to the brother who had raised the new him to the throne. “He attended to his wishes as if he had been his orderly”, says Ammianus, with a little contempt. Yet surely, in the circumstances of the Roman Empire, complete harmony between its rulers was a boon of the highest value, and the feebler, poorer, nature of Valens was right in leaning on the strong arm of Valentinian. The events which actually occurred caused the fraternal partiality of the elder brother to be in the highest degree disastrous to Rome. Yet it was a great matter to avert such terrible and exhausting wars as had been waged between Constantine and Licinius, as had been all but waged between Constantius and Julian. Had it not been for the accident of the premature death of Valentinian, the world might have had no cause to regret his association of Valens with himself.

Thus then was the whole Roman world subject to the two sons of the rope-seller of Cibalae, and they now proceeded to divide its wide expanse between them. Very soon after the ceremony of association they had both fallen sick of a dangerous fever, but having recovered from this illness (which was falsely attributed by some to the machinations of the friends of Julian) they left Constantinople near the end of April, and travelling slowly, reached, at the beginning of June, Naissus, now the Serbian city of Nisch. Here, or rather at the villa of Mediana, three miles out of the city, the brothers remained for a little over a fortnight, arranging the details of the great partition. The Gauls, Italy, and Illyricum were taken by Valentinian, the city of Milan being chosen as his residence in time of peace. The Gaulish army of Julian with its officers, among whom was the brave and outspoken Dagalaiphus, fell naturally to his share. On the other hand, the Prefecture of the East, which included not only Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, but the eastern half of Thrace and Moesia, was marked out as the portion of Valens, who ruled it from his capital of Constantinople, but who also often resided at Antioch, especially when there was danger of war on the Persian horizon.

The highest military officers Partition of Valens were Victor and Arintheus; his Prefect and chief adviser in civil matters the veteran Sallust, who, as we have seen, might easily have worn the diadem himself. There seems to have been much marching and counter-marching of the legions between East and West before all these arrangements were finally completed and before each Emperor had his own army satisfactorily quartered in his own dominions. Soon after the accession of Valentinian a deed of wickedness was wrought by his orders. The eyes of the hapless child Varronianus, his predecessor's son, were put out, as we are told, “from fear of what might happen in the future, though he had done no wrong”. A grievous illustration truly of the cruelty of which the new Byzantine statecraft could be guilty, notwithstanding its external profession of Christianity; and no less striking an evidence of the conflict in men's minds between the elective theory and the increasingly hereditary practice of the Imperial succession — a conflict which might cause even the infant son of a ten-months' Emperor to be hereafter a source of danger to the state.

This conflict of theories, and the miserable position of into which it often brought the relatives of a deceased sovereign, were the causes of an event which greatly occupied the minds of men in the early years of the new Emperors, and had an important bearing on the attitude of the Goths to Rome; namely, the rebellion of Procopius. This man, the descendant of a noble family in Cilicia, of unblemished character, who had attained to respectable if not pre-eminent rank both in the civil and military service of the state had now to live the life of a fugitive, like David when proscribed by Saul, hunted as a partridge on the mountains, simply

because there were rumours, doubtful and obscure, that his cousin Julian had secretly presented him with a purple robe, or had named him, on his death-bed, as a suitable successor. After the death of Jovian of Maiozamalcha had shown to all men the jealous character of his Imperial namesake, Procopius, as has been already said, thought it safer to disappear for a time from the common haunts of men. He retired at first to his estates near the Cappadocian Caesarea, and when an order was sent to that place for his arrest he feigned submission to his fate, but obtained leave to see his wife and children before his departure. A sumptuous banquet was prepared for his captors, and in the night-time, while they were sleeping the sleep of drunkenness, Procopius contrived to escape with some of his followers and to reach the shore of the Euxine. Taking ship he sailed to the Crimea, and there lived for some months in poverty and wretchedness, probably on the uplands in the interior. Weary at length of this squalid mode of life, doubtful if the barbarians would keep his secret faithfully, and longing to hear again the civilized speech of Greece or Rome, he ventured forth from his hiding-place and came by devious roads to Chalcedon on the Bosphorus, where two faithful friends alternately permitted him to take shelter in their houses. From hence occasionally venturing to creep forth, effectually disguised by the changes which hunger and hardship had wrought in his face, he listened to the talk of the citizens, and learned their growing discontent. It was by this time the summer of 365. Valentinian and Valens had been for more than a year upon the throne, and in the Oriental Prefecture, at least there was deep dissatisfaction with their rule. The faithful Sallust had been thrust aside, and Valens had appointed his father-in-law, Petronius Probus, Prefect in his room. This man, suddenly advanced from an obscure to a lofty position, crooked in body and mind, and apparently delighting in the sorrows of his fellow-men, was, by his administration, spreading dismay through all classes of the community. The innocent and the guilty were alike subjected to judicial torture, and so remorseless was his vindication of the claims of the Exchequer that, as men said, he seemed as if he would go back a century to the days of Aurelian, to hunt for arrears of unpaid taxes .

To internal discontent was added the menace of the external invasion. All round the frontiers of the Empire, the tidings of the death of the mighty Julian and of the disgraceful peace concluded by his successor had profoundly stirred the hearts of the barbarians. The Alamanni, a great and strong confederacy who were dominant on the upper Rhine, had resumed their ravages in Raetia and Gaul; in Pannonia, the Sarmatians (a generic term for the Slavonic peoples) and the Quadi were roaming at their will; four barbarous nations, the Picts, the Scots, the Atacotti and the Saxons, were vexing the Romanized Britons with continual miseries; the incursions of the Moors into the province of Africa were more than usually destructive; lastly, and most important for our present purpose, the Goths, strong and prosperous after their long peace with Rome, and apparently disposed to consider that their *foedus* with the Emperor Constantine bound them no longer, now that strangers to his blood ruled at Milan and Constantinople, were overrunning the nearer parts of Thrace with their predatory bands. There was probably also some rumour of impending difficulty with Persia, and we find that Valens was marching in haste to Antioch, when the news of the Gothic inroad caused him to send back a sufficient force of cavalry and infantry to the places threatened by their attack.

Owing to these various causes there was great disorganization in the Eastern Prefecture, and the capital was bare of the regular troops upon whose Procopius, weary of his outcast life and thinking that death itself would be better than the hardships which he had recently endured, determined to make a throw of the dice for empire.

Two Gaulish legions, the *Divitenses* and the *Junior Tungrians*, were on their way to their quarters in Thrace, and had to spend two days at Constantinople. Probably there was already some dissatisfaction among these troops at being removed from their homes in the West in

order to serve in a dangerous and profitless campaign on the banks of the Danube. However this may have been, the daring spirits among them were accessible to the lavish offers made by the desperate Procopius, and promised for themselves and their comrades to aid him in his designs upon the throne. The necessary and hurried interviews took place under cover of the night, a night so dark and still that the ministers of Valens had not the slightest hint of what was going forward, and that, in the daring language of a heathen orator “even Jove himself must be deemed to have slumbered”. When morning dawned there was a general concourse of the rebel officers and soldiers at the baths of Anastasia, and there the troops beheld the person whom they were to hail as the new Augustus. They saw a man of about forty years of age, tall of stature, but stooping (probably from his long-continued sedentary occupation), looking like a clerk rather than a general, and with the shy downcast glance of one who had been for years a hunted fugitive. There he stood, the pale and ghost-like pretender, with one thought uppermost in his mind: “Since my death is decreed, let me choose the steepest and shortest road, into the abyss”. The Imperial wardrobe was yet unransacked, and the only garments that could be procured were singularly unfitted to the majesty of an Augustus. In a gold-embroidered tunic which reached only to his knees, with purple buskins on his feet, and a spear in his hand from which fluttered a purple ribbon, he looked like a tragedy-king on the orchestra of a theatre. However, he forced a smile to his pallid and anxious face: with honeyed words he fawned upon the authors of his greatness; and donative, promotion, high office were promised lavishly to the various ranks of his supporters. He then marched through the streets of Constantinople, the soldiers around him forming a *testudo* of shields over his head to guard him from darts or stones that might be hurled from the house-tops. However, no attack was made; no sign of favour or opposition was given by the multitude, and through the strange silence of the streets Procopius and his satellites marched to the tribunal before the palace, from which the Eastern Emperors were wont to address their subjects. Here he long stood silent, chilled and awed by the silence of the populace. At length words came to his parched tongue, and he spoke of his relationship to the great Emperor who had fallen. Probably also he now began to ply the populace with the same kind of promises of material advantage which had proved effectual with the soldiers. Debts were to be abolished; lands were to be redistributed; all the demagogue’s easy generosity at others’ expense was freely exercised. The bait took; the thin applause of the hired partisans was echoed at length by the hearty acclamations of the crowd, and Procopius could now truly assert that he had been hailed as Emperor by the people, or at least by the mob of Byzantium. After a somewhat discouraging visit to the Senate-house, from which all the noblest Senators were purposely absent, he entered the palace which had once been the abode of his cousin Julian, and which was to be his official residence for eight months from this time.

For in truth the elevation of Procopius, though viewed with disapprobation by the official classes and attended by some circumstances which moved the laughter of contemporary historians, was by no means a contemptible movement, but one which was very near attaining a signal success. The two great Praetorian Prefects, of Constantinople and of the East, appointed by Valens, were at once thrown into prison, and the Urban Prefecture and the important dignity of Master of the Offices were bestowed on two Gaulish officers, doubtless belonging to the mutinous legions which had placed Procopius on the throne. Troops were raised; the legions on their way to the Gothic war were stopped and easily persuaded to enlist under the new Emperor; and, more important of the Goths themselves were found willing to serve under the banners of one who held himself forth as the kinsman of their great ally the Emperor Constantine.

This tie of relationship to the great Flavian house, a tie of a very slender kind and which probably in truth connected him with none but Julian himself, was insisted upon by Procopius

and his adherents on every possible opportunity. Constantius had left a widow named Fausta and an infant daughter named Constantia. Whenever he addressed the troops the new Emperor was accustomed to carry Constantia “his infant kinswoman” in his arms, and Fausta wearing the purple robes of an Augusta appeared by his side.

Meanwhile the tidings of these strange and unexpected events reached the two brothers who were the rightful possessors of the sovereign power; and characteristically different was the manner of their reception. While all the hucksters and costermongers of Constantinople were rejoicing over the accession of the people's friend, a few of the more influential citizens who deemed that any turn of Fortune's wheel would be safer than the present strange condition of affairs, slipped out of the capital, and by hurried journeys sought the absent Emperor of the East. First of the fugitives to arrive was Sophronius, then only a notary, in after years Prefect of Constantinople. He found Valens at the Cappadocian Caesarea, about to depart thence to Antioch in leisurely ignorance of the danger to his crown. When he heard what had happened at Constantinople, stupefied with terror and bewilderment he turned aside into Galatia to await further tidings. For some weeks each post brought worse and worse reports from the capital; and Valens was reduced to such a depth of despondency that only the urgent entreaties of his nearest friends prevented him from resigning the purple and taking up that load of exile with its attendant dangers and hardships which Procopius had only just laid down. At length, however, braver counsels prevailed; and with two legions, the Jovian and the Victorious, he marched to Bithynia to meet his rival.

Valentinian was in Gaul, drawing near to the city of Lutetia Parisiorum, when, on a certain day near the end of October, two messengers from different quarters bearing evil tidings reached him at once. One informed him that the Alamanni had refused with indignation the gifts offered to their ambassadors, gifts smaller and cheaper than had ever been given them before, had cast them on the ground, and were in full career for the Gaulish frontier, breathing destruction and revenge. The other had to communicate a vague and uncertain rumour of the revolution effected a month before by Procopius at Constantinople. The tidings came from the brave and faithful Aequitius, Governor of Illyricum, the same who had been himself proposed as a candidate for the purple, whose staunch loyalty probably now saved the dynasty of Valentinian, since the Illyrian provinces, firmly held by him for his master, and with the three chief passes leading into the Oriental Diocese, strongly garrisoned, interposed an impenetrable barrier against the designs of the Procopians. But even this faithful servant had heard so dim and inaccurate a history of what had passed at Constantinople that his messenger could not say whether Valens were still alive or dead.

The first impulse of Valentinian was to march at once to the East to deliver or to avenge his brother. His nearest counsellors, however, ventured to represent to him the miseries which the barbarians during his absence on this expedition would inevitably inflict on the defenceless provinces of Gaul. The choice was a difficult one, and the matter was set in various lights by different advisers; but the strong, if stern and rigid, mind of Valentinian was arrested by this thought, to which he several times gave utterance, “Procopius is the enemy only of me and my brother, while the Alamanni are the enemies of the whole Roman world”. Not a single soldier—this was his conclusion—should leave the limits of Gaul. The spirit of the great days of the Republic, the spirit of Regulus and of Sulla was after all not yet dead in the hearts of Romans.

Thus it came to pass that Valens had to conduct the struggle with Procopius, unaided by Valentinian, and through the autumn and winter of 365-6 the usurper, thus enabled to concentrate his force, was upon the whole so successful, that it seemed as if his revolutionary diadem might be transmitted to his descendants. We can with some effort discern what was the division of parties and interests between the two claimants for the Empire of the East, and what the rallying cry of each faction and the taunts which it hurled at its opponents. On the side of

Valens seem to have been immovably ranged all his fellow-countrymen from the Pannonian provinces, and these probably included the best and bravest officers in the Imperial army. As before hinted, the senators and the official classes of Constantinople seem to have been for the most part ranged on the same side, dreading a civil war between East and West, and doubting Procopius' power to consolidate his position.

The adherents of Procopius were to be found among the lower orders at Constantinople, attracted by his promises of a redistribution of property; among the sufferers from the unjust exactions of Petronius; among the officers of the two mutinous legions for whom his success was a matter of life and death; and among all those newly created Prefects, Counts, and Tribunes, whom, after the custom of revolutions, this sudden turn of the wheel had raised from nothingness to power.

We note with interest the names of two men of kingly origin who took sides in this civil strife of an Empire to which they were aliens. Vadomar, king of the Alamanni, having been deposed and made prisoner by Julian, had taken service under the Emperors of Rome, from whom he received the office—a singular one for a Teutonic chieftain—of Duke of Phoenicia: and he was now employed by Valens in an unsuccessful siege of Nicaea. On the other hand, the young Hormisdas, of the royal seed of Persia, whose father, an exile from his country, had visited Rome in the train of Constantius, and guided through Mesopotamia the cavalry of Julian, now received from Procopius the office of proconsul, and with his wife narrowly escaped capture by the soldiers of Valens.

The partisans of Valens were loud in their invectives against “the moody Cilician misanthrope who might have been satisfied to pass his life in the condition of a notary, and scribe, but who had left his desk and his ink-horn in order to take on himself the vast burden of the Empire of Rome”: while the adherents of Procopius were prepared with the easy retort that their opponents were fighting for a base-born Pannonian; and when Valens appeared under the walls of Chalcedon, its defenders assailed him with loud and bitter cries of “Sabaiarius” a word which by a slight anachronism we might translate “Bavarian-beer-drinker”.

The war was confined to Asia Minor, and chiefly to the north-western portions of it. Nicaea, as has been said, was in vain besieged by the troops of Valens, while Cyzicus, to which the soldiers of Procopius laid siege, and whose harbour had been closed by an iron boom, was taken by the valiant Aliso, who having ordered his men, standing and kneeling in their boats, to form a *testudo*, himself with a mighty blow of his axe cut the boom in sunder. Procopius at first showed considerable cleverness—of no very exalted kind—in playing the game of an usurper. Sham-messengers, dusty as if from a long journey, but really coming in from the suburbs of Constantinople, announced the death of Valentinian and the defeat of Valens. Sham-embassies from Persia, Egypt, Africa, proclaimed the alliance or the subjection of nations at the ends of the earth. When he met the troops of his rival drawn up for battle by the river Sangarius, he suddenly remembered, or feigned to remember, an old comrade in a certain Vitalianus, who was conspicuous in their ranks, and advancing to meet him with outstretched hand, uttered a short harangue recalling the glories of his kinsman Julian and pouring scorn on the degenerate Pannonian. The result of this well-played comedy was that the soldiers lowered their standards and their eagles, clustered round Procopius, and escorted him back to his camp, swearing by Jove (as from long habit Roman soldiers still swore) that Procopius should be forever invincible.

But success made Procopius idle: the falsehood of rumours as to Valentinian's death before long became manifest, and soon after the beginning of 366 the tide, we cannot say of battle, but of treason, turned. Supplies were running short with the usurper. The populace of Constantinople complained that the *annona* or daily largess of bread, was not given with the accustomed liberality—a surer evidence than all the pretended ambassadors whom Procopius

could parade—through the streets of the capital, that the great corn-producing province of Egypt was not on his side. The senators were loaded with grievous imposts, and advantage was taken of the turn of the year to collect two years' taxes in one month. And the usurper himself, instead of pushing forward to complete the victory achieved at Cyzicus, lingered in the cities of Asia, and held vague consultations with persons skilled in gold-mining as to the possibility of extracting from the bowels of the earth the gold which he needed for the war.

Military discipline and the reverence for tried and veteran officers began to assert itself more and more, even in the ranks of the mutineers. When the great commander Arintheus arrived at the Phrygian town of Dadastana he found the troops of the enemy at that place commanded by a certain Hyperethius, who had previously held no higher office than that of butler to the Marshal of the Camp. Disdaining to fight with such an adversary he strode forth between the two armies and in a loud voice commanded his former soldiers to bind the menial who dared to call himself their captain; and such was the old instinct of obedience to the voice of Arintheus that they obeyed. To this instinct Valens now determined to make a powerful appeal against the continually urged argument of Procopius' relationship to Julian. To the childish graces of the little Constantia, borne in the arms of her self-styled cousin, he determined to oppose the white hairs of the veteran Arbetio. This man who had risen from the condition of a common soldier to the highest commands in the army, had served with credit in the campaigns of Constantius and Julian. His military fame was eminent, though he was little better than a shifty intriguer in civil affairs. He had worn the robes of a consul in 355 and had even been accused under Constantius of aspiring to the Imperial purple. He had now retired from active service, but, in so great a crisis of the fortunes of the state, each party hoped that the sly old veteran would intervene on its side. Elated by his apparent prosperity Procopius foolishly showed his impatience at the delays and vacillation of Arbetio, and ordered his house at Constantinople, which was full of furniture of priceless value, to be burned. From that moment, as might have been expected, Valens had no more devoted adherent than Arbetio, who was the very man that was required to win back to military obedience the mutinous legions, disgusted with the promotion of butlers and copying-clerks to high commands in the army.

In the spring of 366 Valens, who had been reinforced by a large body of soldiers under the command of Lupicinus, his Master of the Horse, led his army from their quarters on the confines of Phrygia and Galatia, westwards through the defiles of Olympus into the province of Lydia. Here Arbetio joined him, and here before long on the plains of Thyatira, the two armies met in battle. The impetuous valour of Hormisdas threw the line of the army of Valens into confusion, and had all but won the day for Procopius. But the general on that side was Gumoarius or Gumohar, long ago seen through by Julian as a hoary old traitor, but whom Procopius had unwisely entrusted with one of the chief commands in his army. Gumohar had undoubtedly been gained over by Arbetio, though there is a slight divergence of testimony as to the precise means by which he carried into effect his treacherous designs. According to one account he suddenly raised the cry, Augustus! Augustus! The password was re-echoed by all the officers who were in the conspiracy, and all who thus shouted passed over, with shields reversed and spears shaken to and fro in sign of surrender, into the camp of Valens. The other story makes Arbetio the chief actor in the scene. Suddenly appearing before the rebel troops and claiming the hearing to which his high military rank and white hairs entitled him, he assailed Procopius with loud reproaches as an insolent intruder on the Imperial dignity, and besought the soldiers who had been led away by his artifices, the men who had been partners with himself in many toils and dangers, and who were dear to him as his own sons, to follow him, their parent, rather than that abandoned scoundrel who was already on the brink of ruin. The appeal was successful : the soldiers followed their old leader: Gumohar conveniently

contrived to be taken prisoner, and the general, with the best part of the troops of Procopius, were soon quartered as friends in the camp of Valens.

Procopius fled, not to Constantinople but into Phrygia where there were still some legions following his standard. Agilo who commanded this portion of the army was an old comrade of Arbetio, and was easily persuaded to follow the example of Gumohar. The armies met near the city of Nacolia : the comedy of an appeal to old memories of common service was probably again enacted, and the remnant of the troops of Procopius entered the service of his rival. The revolution had begun with a military *pronunciamento*, and was ended by a movement of the same kind but in the opposite direction. Procopius fled from the field, not of battle but of surrender, to the mountains, and was accompanied by two officers, Florentius and Barchalba. The too early rising moon favoured the pursuers rather than the pursued, the hope of escape became desperate, and suddenly his two companions hoping to purchase their safety at his expense, sprang upon him and bound him with cords. At daybreak they brought him to the Emperor's camp, silent and with the old gloom upon his face deeper than ever. His head was at once severed from his body (May 27, 366) and it is with some satisfaction that we read that for want of adequate deliberation Florentius and Barchalba shared the same fate.

The rebellion of Procopius was thus at an end, but his kinsman Marcellus, an officer of the household troops, who appears to have been one of his most capable helpers and who commanded the garrison of Nicaea, assumed the purple and endeavoured to prolong an ineffectual resistance. He put to death Serenianus, one of the chief advisers of Valens, who had been taken prisoner and lodged within the walls of Nicaea. He also occupied Chalcedon, and began to negotiate with the Gothic leaders for the support of the 3000 men whom they had sent to the aid of Procopius. But before he could consolidate his forces, Aequitius, who had led an army out of Illyricum through the pass of Succi and who was busied with the siege of Philippopolis, sent a small but daring band of soldiers, who caught him, we are told, like a fugitive slave, and brought him into the presence of Aequitius. He was cruelly flogged and tortured and then put to death. The garrison of Philippopolis still continued stubbornly to defend that city, not believing the report of the death of Procopius, and it was only upon the actual sight of the head of the usurper, which was being borne in ghastly triumph to Valentinian in Gaul, that they most unwillingly consented to its surrender.

Thus then had fallen Procopius, "the Emperor of a winter" as he was now called in derision by the flatterers of success. Valens apparently soon returned to Constantinople, and here perhaps in the early months of 367, sitting in the Senate-house, he listened to the flattering harangue of the orator Themistius, to which we are indebted for much of our knowledge of the baffled revolution.

Though we know with what sycophancy in all ages power is worshipped, whether it reside in an autocrat or a mob, we could hardly have expected that Themistius would have ventured on some of the topics of praise which he has chosen, and which must have seemed like ridicule to those who knew the facts of the late campaign. He enlarges on the courage of Valens, who apparently never met the foe in open fight; on his constancy and unshaken firmness, when but for the entreaties of his counsellors he would have resigned the purple; on the magic of his name, which at thirty furlongs distance caused the soldiers of his rival to desert to his standards, when that act of treachery was really due to the white hairs of Arbetio, and the machinations of Gumohar. Looking however beneath the surface we can discern some grains of perhaps unintended candour. He admits and seeks to excuse the long delay of Valens, he slightly alludes to his ignorance of philosophy, and he hints as gently as possible that the Emperor is not sufficiently prompt in the issue of an amnesty. Indeed, when we see how large a part of the oration is taken up with the praises of the Imperial virtue of clemency, we begin to understand the reason of its being uttered, and can almost forgive the baseness of its adulation.

As far as we can form a judgement from the very contradictory materials before us, we should conclude that Valens showed at first great and unexpected moderation in the punishment of the Procopian faction. Having dealt thus leniently with the great offenders, Valens should have issued promptly a wide and general amnesty for the humbled crowd of his rival's followers. But this amnesty came not, and as the Eastern Augustus grew more secure in his seat, fear, the most cruel of passions, asserted itself more savagely in his deeds. A trifling circumstance, the discovery of a purple robe in the possession of Marcellus, which Procopius had given to him as Julian was said to have given a similar robe to Procopius, set the weak brain of Valens on fire. The base trade of the informer began again to flourish. The maxim, so unwise and so impossible to enforce after a time of successful revolt, that whosoever has heard of treasonable designs and failed to denounce them is guilty of treason was rigorously acted upon. Torture was freely applied, and men free from all crime, who would rather have died ten times over on the battlefield, were stretched upon the rack or felt the cruel stroke of the executioner's leaded scourge. The relations of Valens and the vile herd of informers were enriched with the estates of men thus forced by torture to confess uncommitted crimes. From all ranks and conditions of men went up a sorrowful cry that a just victory had been foully abused, and that civil war itself had been more tolerable than the daily horrors thus perpetrated under the forms of law.

The insurrection of Procopius had the effect, and this is its especial interest for us, of bringing the Empire into collision with the imperfectly organized Gothic communities north of the Danube. As soon as the civil war was ended, and when Valens was hoping that his troubles from foreign and domestic foes were over, his Ministers brought before him the perplexing question what was to be done with the Gothic auxiliaries of the late usurper. They had arrived apparently too late to assist Procopius in the field, but they were not disposed to return empty-handed to their own country. A fragment of the contemporary historian Eunapius furnishes us with an interesting picture of the outward appearance of these unwelcome visitors, as beheld by the officials of Byzantium. "These men were insufferably haughty and contemptuous of all that they beheld, insolent even to lawlessness, and treating all conditions of men with the same lordly arrogance. The Emperor at once ordered that the barbarians, caught as it were in a net, should be commanded to give up their arms. They did so, but even in doing it, showed by the very toss of their long locks their disdain for the Roman officials. They were then dispersed through the various cities and kept under guard, but without bonds. When the inhabitants of these cities were thus enabled to observe them more closely, they saw that their bodies though tall were not of a serviceable make, that their feet were slow and heavy, and that their waists were pinched in, as Aristotle says is the case with the bodies of insects. Thus making proof of their weakness they could not help laughing at the mistaken fear which they had formerly entertained of them".

Possibly we may find that the Thracian citizens were laughing too soon at the discovered weakness of these wasp-waisted barbarians. But in the meantime, in the summer of 366, their presence and their detention in the Empire led to the mutual dispatch of embassies between Scythia and Romania. On the one hand Athanaric, the chief of the Visigothic Judges, demanded to know by what right the warriors of his nation, sent at the request of Procopius, Emperor of Rome, were now detained in captivity, having been distributed by Valens among the cities on the southern shore of the Danube. On the other hand, Victor, the most eminent general of the Eastern Empire, was sent to enquire wherefore the Goths, a nation friendly to the Romans and bound to them by the obligations of an honourable alliance, had given assistance to an usurper who waged war against the legitimate sovereigns of the Empire. The Gothic reply to Victor was the same as the ground-work of the Gothic complaint to Valens. They showed him the letters of Procopius, asserting that he had regularly succeeded to the Imperial dignity as the nearest representative of the family of Constantine, and they pleaded that if they had done

wrong, they had, at the worst, only committed an error of judgement, for which no further punishment should be exacted from them.

Not thus, however, thought Valens and his counsellors. All the machinery of the law had been already set in motion against the domestic abettors of the Procopian revolution. Now the Roman legions should march in order to take vengeance upon its foreign supporters. In the spring of 367 an army was assembled at Daphne under the command of Victor, Master of the Cavalry, and Arintheus, Master of the Infantry. They crossed the Danube by a bridge of boats, such as may yet be seen depicted on Trajan's Column at Rome; and marched hither and thither without resistance over the Wallachian plains, the Goths having retired to the fastnesses of the Transylvanian Alps. Some of the families of the barbarians, slowly moving in their wagons towards the mountains, were overtaken and carried into captivity by the skirmishers of Arintheus. This trifling affair was the only event that marked the campaign of 367.

In the next year the scene of the war seems to have been shifted eastwards to the country near the mouths of the Danube, which is now known as the Dobrudscha. Marcianople was made the base of the Imperial operations, and here the active and honest Praetorian Prefect Auxonius contrived to collect a large magazine of provisions and to make arrangements for distributing them by capacious merchant-ships to the various bodies of troops stationed near to the mouths of the Danube. We have a valuable convergence of testimony to the point that all these measures were taken in a prudent and efficacious manner, and that, owing to the absence of corruption in the Prefect, the great expenses of the war were defrayed without adding to the financial burdens of the state, nay that on the very eve of the war the provincials found to their joy a considerable diminution made in the taxes.

Notwithstanding all these preparations however, the Campaign of 368 was not marked by any signal success against the barbarians. The reason of the failure of the Roman troops was to be found in the peculiar character of the theatre of war, intersected as it is by all the countless channels through which the Danube pours itself into the sea. Almost all of these channels were too shallow to be navigated by the war-ships of the Romans, though the little piratical barks of the Goths impelled by only one tier of oars could traverse them with ease. The intervening land was covered with a fine and fertilizing mud, through which the legions could not march. The innumerable islands afforded invaluable lurking places to the barbarians, while the Romans were continually losing their communication with one another in the flat, dyke-intersected country.

In order to remedy these evils and provide a safe base of operations and a secure watch-tower from which to observe the movements of the barbarians, Valens determined to re-erect a fortress in the very heart of the Dobrudscha which had been raised by one of the earlier Emperors (perhaps Trajan or Hadrian), but which had long since fallen into utter ruin, its very lines of fortification being barely discernible. It stood on a narrow promontory of hill overlooking the surrounding marshes. Stones bricks, lime, were none of them to be found on the spot, but all had to be brought a distance of many miles on the backs of numberless beasts of burden. The work however was well planned, the division of labour carefully arranged, and the common soldier saw with pleasure even the messmates of the Emperor bringing in their quotas of pounded tile as a contribution to the much-needed cement of the building. Thus, in a few months probably, or (as the Emperor's flatterers said) swiftly and harmoniously as the walls of Thebes to the music of Amphion, arose the fortress which was intended to curb the lawlessness of the Goths of the Dobrudscha.

In the campaign of 369 all these elaborate preparations were crowned with success. The Emperor crossed the Danube by a bridge of boats at Novidunum and marching north-eastward through the country of the disheartened and dispersed Visigoths, reached and fought with their

powerful kinsmen the Ostrogoths, though we do not hear of his having faced in battle the mighty Hermanric himself.

Along with the movements of the regular army there seems to have been practiced an irregular and somewhat discreditable warfare against those Goths who, lurking in their swamp-surrounded ambuscades, would not venture forth into open fight, but still continued their predatory excursions. Valens (according to Zosimus), while ordering his soldiers to remain in quarters, collected the sutlers and camp-followers and those who had charge of the baggage, and promised them a certain sum for every head of a barbarian that they might bring in. Stimulated by the hope of such gains they all plunged into the forests and morasses, fell upon any barbarians whom they might meet, exhibited their heads, and received the promised reward.

The result of this guerilla war, of the march of the legions across the Wallachian and Moldavian plains, and above all, of the entire cessation of that commercial intercourse upon which the Goths, as a nation emerging from barbarism, had begun to depend even for some of the necessaries of life, was that towards the close of 369 the Goths sent ambassadors humbly begging for the Emperor's pardon and for the renewal of the treaty with Rome. At first Valens, perhaps with feigned severity, refused to listen to these overtures, which however he appears to have communicated to the Senate at Constantinople. A deputation from that body, including the orator Themistius, advised that the petition of the barbarians should be listened to, and the Emperor acted on the advice which he may have himself suggested.

Victor and Arintheus, the successful generals in war, were successively sent to arrange the terms of peace, terms glorious for the Empire and decidedly humiliating for the barbarians. The gifts of gold, silver and raiment, which had been till now the almost invariable accompaniments of a treaty with barbarians, were withheld. Withheld too were the grain-largesses which had hitherto been granted in abundance to the chief men of Gothia and their followers. One exception only was made in this respect. The chief interpreter still received his rations, his services being rendered no less to the Romans than the Goths. The barbarians were forbidden to cross the great river.

There on the further shore were they collected, a humbled and tractable multitude, casting themselves on the ground in the attitude of suppliants and raising their voices in unanimous entreaty; so many thousands of Goths on whom for the first time the Romans could look without fear of their violence. Here upon the nearer shore stood the Roman army, drawn up in shining ranks, calm in the consciousness of irresistible strength.

“Unlike the Eastern potentate who reclined in his tent overshadowed by a golden roof, to watch the battle with the Greeks, our Emperor showed himself able to endure hardship even in the act of concluding peace. For, standing there on the ship's deck, in the full blaze of the sun at that time of the year when the sun burns most fiercely, he remained in the same attitude from dawn till late twilight. In the discussions of that day the Emperor, unaided by general, centurion, or soldier, was sole victor. His prudence, his subtlety, his flow of words, dignified yet gentle, and greater than I have ever observed even in an orator by profession, won for him an intellectual victory. Yet was his antagonist no contemptible foe. Athanaric is no barbarian in mind, though he is in speech, but is even more remarkable for his intelligence and prudence than for his skill in war. This is indicated by his refusing the title of king, and claiming that of judge, since the chief attribute of the former is power, of the latter wisdom. Yet this man, so renowned as a judge, failed ridiculously as an advocate for his nation. So great was his awe of the Emperor's presence that words altogether failed him, and he found the labour of speech harder than the toil of battle. Then looking upon him in his prostration and despair, the Emperor kindly proffered him his hand, raised him from the ground, made him by that act his friend, and sent him away with a storm of contending emotions in his soul, confident yet full of

fear, despising his own subjects yet suspecting them of enjoying his humiliation, crest-fallen when he remembered his failure, yet elated by the thought that he had obtained the renewal of the treaty with Rome.

“By this war and this peace a complete change has been wrought in the relative position of the Empire and the barbarians. Heretofore, on account of the neglected state of our defences, the barbarians used to consider that peace and war depended on their pleasure. They saw our soldiers not only without arms, but even in many cases without decent clothing, and not less squalid and poverty-stricken in mind than in body. They saw that our prefects and centurions were hucksterers and slave-dealers rather than generals: their one business to buy and sell as much as possible, and claim a profit on each transaction : the number of garrison-soldiers dwindling, while these impostors drew the pay for soldiers who did not exist, and put it into their own pockets. They saw our fortresses themselves falling into ruin, and equally destitute of arms and men. Seeing all this, they naturally resorted with those predatory inroads which they glorified with the name of war.

“But now, along almost all the frontiers of the Empire, peace reigns, and all the preparation for war is perfect; for the Emperor knows that they most truly work for peace who thoroughly prepare for war. The Danube-shore teems with fortresses, the fortresses with soldiers, the soldiers with arms, the arms both beautiful and terrible. Luxury is banished from the legions, but there is an abundance of all necessary stores, so that there is now no need for the soldier to eke out his deficient rations by raids on the peaceful villagers.

“There was a time when the legions were terrible to the provincials, and afraid of the barbarians. Now all that is changed: they despise the barbarians and fear the complaint of one plundered husbandman more than an innumerable multitude of Goths.

“To conclude, then, as I began. We celebrate this victory by numbering not our slaughtered foes but our living and tamed antagonists. If we regret to hear of the entire destruction even of any kind of animal, if we mourn that elephants should be disappearing from the province of Africa, lions from Thessaly, and hippopotami from the marshes of the Nile, how much rather, when a whole nation of men, barbarians it is true, but still men, lies prostrate at our feet, confessing that it is entirely at our mercy, ought we not instead of extirpating, to preserve it, and make it our own by showing it compassion?

“The generals of old Rome used to be called Achaicus, Macedonicus, Africanus, to commemorate their victories over devastated lands and ruined nations. With far more right shall our Emperor be called Gothicus, since he has permitted so many Goths to live, and compelled them to become the friends of Rome!”

Notwithstanding the grossness of its flattery, some wise and statesmanlike thoughts were expressed in this oration, and the occasion of its delivery was one which might cause the heart of a loyal subject of the Empire to thrill with justifiable pride. The Goths under their 'most powerful Judge' had tried conclusions with the Romans under one of their least warlike Emperors, and had been ignominiously defeated. True, the victory was chiefly due to two great captains, Victor and Arintheus, formed in the school of Julian; but Valens had also shown respectable qualities as a strategist and a director of the efficiency of other men. Yet we, looking below the surface, and using the knowledge which subsequent events have given us, can see that there were two reasons why the war of 367-369 should not represent the final issue of the contest between Romania and Gothia.

1. The Goths, relaxed in their energies by a long peace and by close commercial intercourse with Rome, had lost, to a great degree, their feeling of national unity, and had lost altogether their institution of kingship which gave expression to that unity, and made them terrible to their foes. A loose tie of vassalage to the distant King of the Ostrogoths, Judges with ill-defined powers and ill-marked frontiers, full doubtless of mutual jealousies and suspicions,

and ever on the brink of civil war : —this was no sufficient organization wherewith to face the mighty Empire of Rome; this was a miserable substitute for the compacted might of the irresistible Cniva. Yet should adversity once more harden the nation into a single mass, and should a king arise capable of directing their concentrated energies against the Empire, the result might prove to be something very different from the peace dictated by Valens to the crouching and moaning suppliants on the Danubian shore.

2. The hints let fall by Themistius as to the corruption of prefects and tribunes, the pay drawn for non-existent soldiers, the fortresses unarmed and crumbling into ruins, reveal the existence of a canker eating deeply into the life of the Roman state. By spasmodic efforts a Julian, or even a Valens, might do something towards combating the disease and repairing the ruin which it had caused. But could any Emperor, however wise, strong, and patriotic, permanently avert the consequences of widespread corruption, and the general absence of what we call ‘public spirit’ in the official classes of a bureaucratically governed Empire? That question has presented itself for answer on many subsequent occasions in the history of the world. It was an all-important question for the Roman Empire towards the close of the fourth century of our era.

The effect on the Gothic people of the unsuccessful war with the Empire was to deepen their divisions, and to intensify the bitterness of the religious discord which had already begun to reveal itself in their midst. We can imagine Athanaric on his return from that humiliating interview with Valens, growling over the growing degeneracy of his people, and swearing by all the dwellers in Walhalla that the worshippers of the crucified God of the Romans should be rooted out of his dominions. Scarcely had the peace with Rome been concluded when Athanaric began to persecute—as his predecessors twenty-two years before had persecuted—the Christians of Gothia, and continued that persecution certainly for two years, probably for six, until he himself became an exile and a fugitive.

Many have been the discussions and the controversies as to the exact theological position held by the Gothic martyrs in this persecution. The Catholic Church has naturally been anxious to claim them as her own sons; but the orthodox Church-historian Socrates candidly confesses that “many of the Arianising barbarians at this time became martyrs”. Probably the Christians upon whom fell the wrath of the moody Athanaric belonged both to orthodox and to heretical communions, and were chiefly recruited from three theological parties.

(1) In the first place, we are distinctly told that Ulfilas laboured at this time among the Gothic subjects of Athanaric as well as among those of a rival chief named Fritigern, on the barbarian side of the Danube. The great personal influence of the Apostle of the Goths, the perusal of his translation of the Scriptures, the persuasions of his loyal and devoted Gothic Minors, would certainly cause many of the barbarians to adopt his—the Arian—form of Christianity.

(2) There seems reason to think that the Church which had been formed in the Crimea, and which consisted of Goths professing the Nicene faith, exercised some influence on their countrymen north of the Danube, and contributed some soldiers to the noble army of martyrs under Athanaric.

(3) But besides these two elements, the Arian and the Orthodox, in the growing Christianity of Gothia, a third was contributed by one of those strange heretical sects which every now and then spring up, live their short life of contest and contradiction, and then wither away. This was the sect of the Audians, who first appear in Syria about the middle of the fourth century, and whom we might call the Covenanter-Mormons of their time. Like the Mormons, they held the marvellous opinion that the Almighty has possessed from all eternity a body, in shape like the body of a man, and fills only a certain definite portion of space. Like the Manicheans, they averred that He created neither darkness nor fire. Like the Quartodecimans,

they celebrated Easter on the day on which the Jews kept the Passover. Like the Scotch Covenanters and the African Donatists, they utterly refused all religious association with those outside their own sect, alleging as the reason for their exclusiveness the corruption of faith and morals which had crept into the Catholic Church.

Audius their founder, a man of admitted zeal and piety, was banished in his old age by an emperor (possibly Constantius) to the regions of Scythia. He remained some years among the barbarians, penetrated to the innermost recesses of Gothia, and instructed many Goths in the Christian faith. The monasteries which he founded in that land were, by the confession of their orthodox adversaries, places of pure and holy living, except for the depraved custom of keeping Easter on the 14th of Nisan. But at length, in a persecution, which, as we are told, was commenced by “a Gentile king who hated the Romans because their emperors were Christians”, the great majority of the Audians, along with their fellow believers of other denominations, were driven forth from Gothia, so that there remained on the Gothic soil no root of wisdom nor plant of faith. Evidently the fantastic heresy of the Audians played an important part in the early development of Christianity among the Goths.

As to the manner of Athanaric’s persecution it was as fierce, stern, and brutal as we might have expected from that sullen votary of Wodan. Some Christians were dragged before the rude tribunals of the country, and, after making a noble confession of their faith, were put to death: while others were slain without even this pretence of a judicial investigation. The Pagan inquisitors are reported to have carried round to the tents of the Christians a statue, doubtless of one of the old Teutonic gods, to which the suspected converts were commanded to offer sacrifice, and on their refusal to do this they were burned alive in their tents. Men, women, and children fleeing from these inquisitors sought refuge in a church, which, however, proved to be no asylum from the fury of the oppressor, for the Pagans set fire to it, and all who were therein, from the old man to the babe at the breast, perished in the flames.

This deed of horror made a deep impression on the suffering Church. In an old Gothic Calendar, of which one or two fragments have been preserved, we find this entry: “October (?) 29th. Remembrance of the Martyrs among the Gothic people who were burnt with priest (*papa*) Vereka and Batvin in a Catholic church”.

Life and Martyrdom of Saint Sabas (334-372)

A letter, apparently a genuine contemporary letter, from the Church which was in Gothia to the Church of Cappadocia, gives some interesting details concerning the martyrdom of St. Sabas, which took place on the 12th of April, 372. This Gothic saint, born in the year 334, had been, we are told, a Christian from his childhood. A sweet singer in the choir and an eloquent opponent of idolatry in the market-place, he led an austere and ascetic life and laboured to convert all men to righteousness. When the persecution broke out, the battleground between idolaters and Christians was, as it had been in the days of St. Paul, the question as to the eating of meats offered in sacrifice to idols. Some of the Goths who remained Pagans sought to save the lives of their Christian relatives by bringing them meat which had ostensibly been so offered, but which was really free from idolatrous pollution. This meat was eaten in the presence of the king's officers, and the apparent compliance saved the lives of the pusillanimous converts. St. Sabas, however, boldly protested against this dishonest artifice, and was accordingly hunted out of the village by the Pagans who had invented it. After a little lull the persecution broke forth again: and again the friendly Pagans interposed with their proffered oath, “There is no Christian in our village”. St. Sabas burst in with a loud voice, “Let no one swear on my behalf. I am a Christian”. Then the Pagan mediators were forced to modify their oath: “No Christian in our village save one, this Sabas”. He was brought before the prince, who

asked the bystanders what property he possessed, and being told “Nothing save the robe which he wears”, drove Sabas scornfully from his presence. “Such a man”, said he, “can do neither good nor harm”.

A third time the persecution was set on foot, and now Sabas was keeping his Easter Feast with a presbyter named Sansala, just returned to Gothland, to whom he had been directed by a heavenly vision. While he was thus engaged Atharidus, son of King Khotesteus, broke in upon the village with a band of wicked robbers, dragged Sansala and Sabas from their beds, bound them, and carried them off to punishment. Sansala was allowed to ride in a chariot, but Sabas, all naked as he was, was dragged over the lately burned heather, his captors urging him onward with cruel blows.

When day dawned the saint said to his persecutors, “Have ye not been dragging me all night through thorns and briars, yet where are the wounds upon my feet? Have ye not been striking me with whips and cudgels, yet where are the wales upon my back?”. No trace could be found of either.

When the next night came he was laid prostrate on the ground with his outstretched hands tied to one shaft of the wagon, and his feet similarly fastened to the other. Near morning a woman, touched with pity, came and unbound him, but he refused to escape and assisted her in preparing breakfast for his captors. In the morning Atharid ordered him to be hung by his bound hands from a rafter in the room of a cottage.

The servants brought some meat offered to idols, saying, “See what the great Atharid has sent you that ye may eat and not die”. Sansala refused to eat and said that he would rather suffer death upon the cross. Sabas said, “Who has sent these meats?”. When the servant answered, “The lord Atharid”, he replied, “There is only one lord, the lord of heaven and earth. These meats are tainted and unholy like Atharid who has sent them”. At this, one of the servants, enraged at the insult offered to his master, struck him on the breast with the point of a dart. The bystanders thought he must be killed, but he said, “You think you have dealt me a grievous blow, but I felt it no more than a snow-flake”. Nor was there in fact any mark found on his body.

When Atharid heard of these things he ordered that Sabas should be put to death by drowning. As he was being hurried off alone to his execution he said, “What evil has Sansala done that he is not also to be put to death?”. “That is not your business”, said the officers of Atharid. “It is not for you to give us orders”. Then the saint gave himself up to prayer and to praising God, until they reached the banks of the river Musaeus. And now some relenting began to stir in the hearts of his persecutors. “Why should we not let this man go”, said they, one to another. “He is innocent, and Atharid will never know”. “Why are you loitering?” said the saint, “instead of doing that which is commanded you? I see that which you cannot see, those waiting on the other side who shall receive me to glory”. Still praising God he was thrown into the river, with his neck tightly bound to a beam, so that he seems to have been strangled rather than drowned. His body, untouched by beast or bird, was brought to Julius Soranus, the Roman Duke of Scythia, and by him sent as a precious gift to his native country of Cappadocia.

It is from the letter accompanying the relics that these details —almost our only indication of the manner of life led by the Goths in Dacia— have been taken. A somewhat later and less interesting document contains the history of the martyrdom of Nicetas, a young Gothic nobleman, who on account of his shapely body and his generous soul had obtained one of the foremost places in the nation. He is represented as having been a disciple of Theophilus, the Bishop of the Crimean Goths who subscribed the Acts of the Council of Nicaea; and he was therefore doubtless one of the Catholic, not one of the Arian converts to the new faith. “At length” says the record, “the blood-thirsty Athanaric broke out into cruel persecution of the

Christians and urged those who were about him to do the same. Threatened by these enemies of God, Nicetas heeded them not, but continued to preach the true religion. At length, breaking forth into open violence they attacked him in the act of preaching, forcibly haled him away and ordered him to abjure his faiths. He persistently confessed Christ, and honoured him as God, mocking at and scorning all their outrages. Having hacked his body with knives—ah what madness—they then flung him into the fire. Still through all these sufferings the saint ceased not to sing the praises of God and to confess his faith in him. Thus witnessing a good confession to the end, he, with many of his countrymen, received the crown of martyrdom, and gave up his spirit into the hands of God". This execution took place according to the martyrologist when the pious and gentle Gratian was exercising hereditary rule over Rome.

It is plainly an error to speak of Nicetas as having himself subscribed those acts, since an interval of forty-four years intervened between the Council and Athanaric's persecution, and the whole drift of the story implies that Nicetas was at any rate not an old man at the latter date. As we shall see in the next chapter, Gratian son of Valentinian was associated in the Empire in 369, and came into full possession of power on his father's death in 375. As far as this indication of time goes—we cannot attach to it any great authority—it would seem to show, what is not in itself improbable, that the persecution of the Christians, commenced by Athanaric in 369 or 370, was still raging in 375.

This outburst of zeal on behalf of the old idolatries by no means restored unity or peace to the Gothic Commonwealth. There was another Judge of the nation, named Fritigern, younger apparently than Athanaric, of noble, and what in a later age would have been called chivalrous, temper, probably imbued with some degree of Roman culture, and inclined to look favourably on the arts and the religion of the Empire. Whether the civil war which broke out between him and Athanaric was cause or effect of the persecutions we cannot now determine; probably the political and the religious motives acted and reacted upon one another. Fritigern, however, was defeated, and as his territory bordered on the Danube, he crossed that river and sought succour from his Roman friends. We are told that the troops of Valens defeated those of Athanaric and compelled him to seek safety in ignominious flight. The silence of Ammianus, who is our best authority, inclines us to doubt whether any such signal victory was gained by the Romans over the Goths; but the subsequent course of events shows that by the year 376 Fritigern was again ruling over Visigoths on the northern shore of the Danube, and apparently at peace with Athanaric.

But the condition of Gothia at the opening of that year certainly seemed to forebode but little danger to the peace of South-Eastern Europe. The Goths had made that movement which the prophetic soul of Julian foresaw, and had failed. Even civil war in the Empire had not enabled them to gain any firm footing within it. After three year's fighting they had been fain to consent to an ignominious peace. Since that time, civil war among themselves, the contest of opposing faiths and civilizations, cruel persecutions inflicted and endured, had grievously weakened the Visigothic state. Even the far-away Ostrogoths had witnessed, and had apparently not avenged, the presence of the Roman eagles on their plains. To an accurate and impartial observer it must have been clear that at any rate from the Gothic race no danger need be feared by the mighty Empire of Rome. But the iron nature of that race had not yet been passed through the fire.

CHAPTER III

VALENTINIAN THE FIRST

The character of this Emperor is one which perplexed contemporary historians, and which at this distance of time it is perhaps impossible to paint correctly; so strangely were great virtues and odious vices blended in its composition. He was strong, he was chaste, he was diligent: not sparing himself in his labours for the Empire : desirous to rule his subjects justly : terrible to the enemies of Rome. But, on the other hand, he was cruel, with that delight in watching the infliction of suffering which reminds us of the Emperor Nero or a bullying schoolboy. He carefully husbanded the resources of the State, and did his best to lighten the burdens of the provincials: yet he often showed himself quite unscrupulous in the confiscations which he ordered or permitted. He seems to have honestly desired to be a terror to evil-doers, yet some of his prefects displayed a wild license of injustice such as must have recalled the worst days of Commodus or Caracalla; and the deep terror which Valentinian had struck into the hearts of his subjects caused them to lie down and die in silence. Yet, for all this, so great a merit was strength in the supreme ruler that, more than a century after his death, when the Romans wished to praise their just sovereign, Theodoric the Ostrogoth, they likened him to two men, Trajan and Valentinian, and said that he had brought back to Italy their days of happiness.

In the year 367, when the Gothic war was just beginning in the East, Valentinian, who had recently recovered from a severe illness, determined to strengthen his dynasty by associating his son Gratian with him in the Empire. As the new Augustus was still but a boy, this so-called association could evidently, for the present, bring the elder partner no relief from the cares of government. The account of the ceremony brings before us in an interesting way the process by which a theoretically elective was being converted into a hereditary monarchy. The scene was laid at Amiens. There by the banks of the Somme the legions were assembled, after they had been privately sounded as to the proposition which was about to be made to them. A high tribunal had been erected, upon which stood Valentinian and his son, surrounded by the heads of the military and civil administration of Gaul, in all the splendour of their official equipments. Taking the boy by his hand and leading him forth into the midst of the tribunal, the Emperor spoke to the soldiers in that vein of manly and simple eloquence which had served him so well in the assembly at Nicaea. "Gratian", he said, "has played as a child with your children. He has not led from the very cradle that hard life which was my lot in infancy, nor is he yet able to endure the dust of Mars. But he comes of a stock which has won for itself some renown in feats of arms: in your companionship he will learn to bear the summers sun, the winters frost and snow, the toilsome watches of the night; he will aid in the defence of the camp should foes attack it; he will expose his own life to save the lives of his comrades; and he will regard it as the first of duties to cherish the Republic as his sire's and his grandsire's home".

At these words and even before the Emperor's speech was finished, the soldiers, each eager to be beforehand with the other in complying with the wishes of their chief, shouted "Gratiane Auguste! Gratiane Auguste!". They clashed their arms together, and the trumpets sounded a long, full, harmonious strain. Rejoicing in the success of his appeal, Valentinian invested his son with the diadem and the purple robe, kissed the Imperial boy, and thug addressed him :

“Thou hast now, my Gratian, by my decision and that of my comrades, received in an auspicious hour those Imperial robes which we have all hoped to see thee wear. (According to the Description Consulium Idatio adscripta, Gratian was born on the 18th April, 359, and was therefore only eight years old when he was elevated as Augustus on the tribunal of Amiens by his father on the 24th August, 367). Now therefore begin to fortify thy soul to receive a share of the burden which weighs upon thy father and thine uncle. Prepare to cross with dauntless soul the Danube and the Rhine, made pervious by frost, to stand firm in the battle with thine armed friends, to shed thy blood and yield up thy breath for the defence of thy subjects, to think nothing an intrusion on thy cares which tends to the safety of the Roman Empire. So much I say to thee for the present : the rest as thou shalt be able to bear it. To your care, my gallant defenders, I commit the growing Emperor, and beseech you to keep him ever guarded by your faithful love”.

At these words Eupraxius, the Imperial Remembrancer (a Moor from Caesarea on the north coast of Africa), led the cheers, crying with loyal enthusiasm, “the family of Gratian deserves this at our hands”. Then the officers and soldiers broke up into little groups which began to celebrate the praises of the two Emperors, old and young, but especially of the princely boy, whose bright eyes, comely face and figure, and sweet disposition had already endeared him to their rough hearts, and seemed to promise a fairer future than truly awaited him in the chambers of destiny. No doubt the proclamation of the new Emperor was accompanied with a donative to the legions, at any rate to those stationed in Gaul, though we are not informed of its amount.

It was observed that Valentinian was departing Gratian from the maxims of state handed down from Diocletian in naming both his brother and now his little son, not Caesar, but Augustus. This was praised by servile orators as a mark of the generosity of the senior Emperor, who would make no distinction in outward seeming between his partners and himself. Considering the absolute devotion with which Valens "like an orderly" obeyed the commands of the author of his greatness, and the interval of years which separated both from the child Gratian, we may well believe that Valentinian's supremacy was quite unaffected by the titles which he chose to bestow upon the associated Emperors; and the excuse for greater pomp and a more expensive court, given by the assumption of the higher title, might, in the exhausted state of the treasury, have been wisely avoided.

Valentinian's life as an Emperor was chiefly passed in the province of Gaul. Most of his laws are dated from Trier, some from Paris and Rheims, several from Milan, an exceedingly small number from Rome, which had practically at this time ceased to be an Imperial residence. The work to which he mainly devoted himself was the defence of the frontier of the Rhine and the Upper Danube, and this work he successfully performed. The barbarians, by whom the safety of Gaul had been chiefly threatened during the century preceding the accession of Valentinian, were the two great confederacies of the Franks and the Alamanni, the former of whom were settled along the right bank of the Rhine from Rotterdam to Mainz, while the latter, having broken down the feeble barrier, whose ruins are now called the Pfahlgraben, settled themselves in the fertile *Agri Decumates*, where for something like two centuries the Roman civilization had been dominant. Thus the Alamanni filled up all that south-western corner of Germany and Switzerland, which is naturally bounded by the Rhine, as it flows westwards to Bale and then makes a sudden turn at right angles, northwards to Strasbourg, Worms and Mainz. The territory of these two great confederacies is constantly spoken of by contemporary writers as *Francia* and *Alamannia*. We feel that we are standing on the verge of modern history when we recognized in these two names the France and the *Allemagne* of a French newspaper of today. Though other elements have been abundantly blended with each confederacy, it is not altogether forbidden us to recognize in these two

barbarous neighbours of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, the ancestors of the two mighty nations which in our own day met in thunder on the plains of Gravelotte.

Both of these Teutonic confederacies had for many years after the death of Constantine wasted the provinces of Eastern Gaul, but both had been effectually repulsed and driven back across the Rhine by the student-Emperor Julian. The Franks had taken the lesson to heart and remained till long after this time at peace with Rome. But the Alamanni, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, having rejected with scorn the meagre subsidies of Valentinian, crossed the Rhine soon after Procopius had donned the purple in Constantinople. They spread themselves through the north-eastern districts of Gaul, robbing and murdering, penetrated as far as Châlons-sur-Marne and defeated an army that was sent against them. Dagalaiphus, the faithful counsellor of Valentinian, who was ordered to march from Paris to the seat of war, did not display his old energy against the barbarian invaders, but Jovinus, the Master of Horse, came up with them near the river Moselle, and hiding his own soldiers in an umbrageous valley watched the barbarians, who little suspected his approach. Some were bathing in the stream, some were anointing their hair with a pigment which was to give it a yet deeper dye than it had received from Nature, and some were quaffing from their deep horns of beer. The Romans rushed forth from their place of concealment, and before the foe could resume their arms, had wrought terrible havoc on the bewildered barbarians. In a series of engagements of this kind, some of them fiercely contested, the Alamanni were forced back out of Gaul in the year 366. Jovinus took their king prisoner, and on his own authority condemned him to the gallows. The result of this campaign seems to have been to effectually deter the Alamanni from appearing on the left bank of the Rhine, or at any rate from penetrating far into the interior of the Gaulish province. Rando, one of their kings, did indeed surprise the city of Mainz, while the inhabitants, thrown off their guard, were celebrating one of the great festivals of the Church, and carried off a great number of male and female captives and a vast quantity of booty. But this insult was avenged, when in the summer of that year Valentinian himself crossed the Rhine and, laying waste the territory of the barbarians with fire and sword, came up at length with their collected force at a place called Solicinium in the valley of the Neckar.

The barbarians had occupied a hill which rose abruptly on every side but one, that which faced the north, where it sloped down gently to the plain. Count Sebastian was ordered to occupy this side of the hill with a strong body of troops, in order to cut off the retreat of the Alamanni. Gratian, who was present on the field, but was still too young for actual battle, was put in a place of safety in the rear, close to the standards of the household troops called Joviani. Then Valentinian started off with a small chosen band of followers to explore the base of the mountain, thinking that he could discover some better way than that on which the scouts had already reported. His somewhat too arrogant confidence in his own powers of investigation was doomed to meet with humiliation. Instead of discovering a surer road, he was attacked by a band of barbarians in ambush, and in his flight found himself floundering in the thick oozy mud of a marsh. With difficulty, by spurring on his steed, he extricated himself from the slimy morass, and succeeded in rejoining the legions. His chamberlain, who was following him, bearing his Imperial helmet richly adorned with gold and gems, was less fortunate than his master. He and his precious charge were swallowed up in that dismal swamp, and there in all probability they yet remain, awaiting the spade of the fortunate discoverer who shall rescue from its long entombment the helmet which once gleamed on the head of an Emperor of Rome.

A short interval of rest was given to the troops, and then they were summoned to the task of charging up the height by the paths which the scouts had revealed. A desperate undertaking truly, and one which reminds us of the terrible charge of the German troops up the heights of Spicheren in 1870. The fact that it was made, and that at length after a bloody struggle it was successful, shows that the soldiers of the Empire—no doubt many of them of barbarian

extraction—had not lost all that stubborn courage which once animated the legions. The heights once gained, the superiority of the Roman arms over the rude weapons of the Alamanni soon asserted itself. The spear and the *pilum* wrought deadly havoc in their ranks. They turned to fly, and their backs and the calves of their legs were exposed to the storm of Roman missiles. Then Sebastian and his men came upon them from their northern ambushade and intercepted their flight. The greater number of the barbarians seem to have perished, but a few escaped to the shelter of their woods. The Roman loss also, as their own historian admits, was very considerable; but it was as undoubted conquerors that Valentinian with his boyish colleague returned to winter-quarters at Trier.

In his wars with the barbarians, however, Valentinian did not show himself eager for their extermination. He knew, probably none better, how greatly the dwindling Empire was in need of men, and one of his favourite maxims was that it was better to rule the barbarians by military discipline than to drive them out of his dominions. For the purpose, however, of exercising this military discipline it was necessary to have a strong frontier, and Valentinian's one absorbing care was to strengthen his border all round by the erection of forts. Every stronghold that he could build to guard the frontier of the Danube or the Rhine was another clasp fastened in the robe of the Empire to prevent it from being rudely torn away by barbarian hands. Yet this passion for castle-building, however praiseworthy in itself, was in the case of Valentinian sometimes carried to excess, and then it involved the Empire in the very dangers which it was meant to avert.

One of the strongest of these fortresses of Valentinian was erected on a hill overlooking the river Neckar. That rapid stream, however, threatened by its strong current to undermine the foundations of the castle, and the Emperor therefore determined to divert its course into another channel. Huge timber frames, probably filled with stones, were thrown into the river, which, time after time swept away these presumptuous obstacles to its career. But the Emperor of Rome was determined not to be beaten by a German river; and his resolution, seconded by the grand and patient obedience of the Roman soldiers (who had often to work standing up to their necks in water, at length prevailed. The channel of the stream was changed, and the castle was still standing strong and secure some years afterwards when the soldier-historian to whom we are indebted for these facts wrote his history. When, in the following year, Valentinian, in his palace at Trier, assumed for the third time the striped robe of a Roman consul, the courtly orator Symmachus introduced into the panegyric which he pronounced before him an allusion to his having thus bridled the Neckar: "The Rhine", said he, "swollen by the Alpine snows, did not attack but softly flowed over the Roman territory, coming gently like a suppliant to adore her conqueror; and with her she brought the Neckar, offering this neighbour stream as a hostage for the 'Roman peace' which the great river longed for".

The precise position of this stronghold on the Neckar erected by Valentinian is not described to us; but we may indulge the fancy, if it be nothing more, that it may have stood on the hill of Heidelberg; and we may imagine the contrast between the stern square fortress of the Pannonian soldier, and that glorious monument of the Renaissance, dear to the memory of so many travellers, which witnessed the pageants of the ill-fated Frederick and Elizabeth of Bohemia, and whose ruins tell of the ravages of Louis XIV.

In Valentinian's dealings with the barbarian chiefs there was a singular mixture of kindness and perfidy. We have already seen that he thought it better to rule barbarians than to expel them. Symmachus praises him for not having ordered his soldiers to lay waste the humble hovels of the Alamanni with hostile fire, nor to drag the wild-looking mother from her bed before the dawn of day, but rather for having suffered them to flit away to the shelter of their forests, like timid deer across the lawns. So, too, we find an Alamanni king, Fraomar by name, whose district (*pagus*) had been wasted in a campaign, sent as tribune to command a

regiment of his countrymen in the island of Britain. Bitherid and Hortar, nobles in the same clan, also received high military commands in the Roman army. All this looks like a certain degree of confidence and mutual understanding between the strong Pannonian Emperor, in whose own veins there probably ran a strain of barbarian blood, and his German antagonists. But then he also ordered or sanctioned the perpetration of some acts of disgraceful treachery towards them, such as must have been long remembered in the Teutonic folk-songs, and must have made it hard for the barbarians ever again to trust the word of a Roman Emperor. Vithicab, the son of Vadomar (that Alamannic king whom we met with ruling Roman provinces, and upholding the standard of the legitimate Emperor against Procopius), had not followed his father's example, but preferred the rough independence of a Teutonic chieftain to the gilded servitude of a Roman official. His weak and sickly frame was animated by a heroic spirit, and he was ever on the watch for an opportunity to stir up his countrymen against the Empire. Many times was his life vainly sought in fair and open fight; and at length some butler or seneschal in his barbaric household was bribed with Roman gold to assassinate his master. When the crime had been perpetrated the murderer took refuge on Roman soil, and for a time the inroads of the enemy ceased. The historian's unimpassioned recital shows us, on the one hand, how great a part German kingship played in successfully maintaining the struggle of the barbarians against Rome; and on the other, how utterly the Roman conscience — notwithstanding its nominal acceptance of Christianity— had become depraved since the glorious days of Aemilius and Fabricius.

Again, in the year 370, a multitude of Saxons, “a race”, says Ammianus, “which had often been gorged with Roman blood”, having safely steered through the waters of the German Ocean fell upon one of the Gaulish provinces, probably in that part of the country which we now call Normandy and Picardy. Count Nannenus, the Roman governor, overmatched by the barbarians, and wounded in battle, applied to the Emperor for help, which was sent him under Severus, the Master of the Infantry. The approach of the Roman reinforcements, the glitter of the arriving ensigns and eagles, terrified the Saxons, who stretched out their hands and prayed for peace. Peace was granted them on condition that they should furnish a certain number of tall young recruits to the Imperial army, and should depart leaving their plunder behind them. The Saxons faithfully complied with these conditions, but the Romans with outrageous treachery fell upon them unawares as they were marching through a sequestered valley, and after meeting with a desperate resistance destroyed them to a man. The Roman historian does here condescend to remark that a just judge would have to condemn the disgraceful perfidy of the deed; but adds that in weighing the whole transaction he would not take it amiss that so murderous a band of robbers was at length taken and destroyed when a suitable opportunity presented itself.

Perhaps even worse than either of these crimes as a violation of those rites of hospitality which even the most savage nations have held sacred, was the murder of Gabinius, king of the Quadi. His people were known to be already stirring in uneasy discontent, because of the erection of one of Valentinian's favourite fortresses in their territory. The young Marcellian, son of the Prefect Maximin, an evil scion of an evil stock, had recently by his father's influence been appointed Duke of the Pannonian province of Valeria, and anxious to distinguish himself by some striking exploit, when Gabinius came, modestly urging the grievances of his people, he with false courtesy invited him to a banquet. After Gabinius had partaken of his hospitality, and when, not suspecting guile, he was leaving the Praetorium, the caitiff Duke of Valeria caused him to be murdered. Deeds of foul treachery like this perpetrated by the officials of a civilized state upon its ruder neighbours are even greater follies than crimes. The fame of them spreads far and wide, wherever barbarians meet to exchange thoughts concerning the men of cities and of strange arte, beyond the great river. That instinctive belief in the higher morality

of the more cultivated race which is part of the spiritual capital of civilization is foolishly frittered away. In its place comes a settled persuasion that craft and cunning are the natural weapons of these effeminate foes; and a spirit of contemptuous hatred is engendered which, should Fortune open a way for its gratification, will wreak a terrible revenge.

Turning from the relations of the Empire with its barbarian neighbours to the internal policy of Valentinian, we find its most striking and noblest characteristic to have been his determination not to interfere as civil governor in the religious disputes of his subjects. After the fussy eagerness of Constantius to force his precise shade of heterodoxy on all his subjects, after the almost equally ridiculous anxiety of Julian to efface the worship of the Crucified One by that of Jupiter and Apollo, it must have been a relief to all reasonable inhabitants of the Empire, Christian or Pagan, to have at the head of the State a ruler who at the very outset of his reign declared that he gave free opportunity to every man for practising that form of worship which he had imbibed with his soul. If there was some touch of hidden sarcasm in his reply to the orthodox bishops of Bithynia and the Hellespont, when they sought his permission to call an Ecclesiastical Council—"I am but a layman and have no right to interfere in such matters: let the bishops assemble where they please"—the sarcasm was easily borne for the sake of the liberty which it gave. Yet Valentinian, who had already, as we have seen, endured some loss of Court favour in consequence of his Christianity, was not going to allow any of the anti-Christian edicts of Julian to remain on the statute-book. "The opinions", says he, "which prevailed in the last days of the late Christian Emperor Constantius are still to prevail; nor are those things to have the sanction of a feigned authority which were either done or decreed when the minds of the Pagans were stirred up against our most holy law by certain depraving influences". In other words, the whole of the legislation of the Imperial Apostate against the men whom he called in scorn 'Galileans', was by this act abolished.

But while thus abrogating all that had been done aggressively on behalf of the old religion of Rome, Valentinian could show himself tolerant towards superstitions which he did not share. He had proposed that the ancient rite of nocturnal sacrifice to the Genius of the domestic hearth should be forbidden by law and stigmatized as a loathsome superstition. But when Vettius Praetextatus, the Proconsul of Achaia, a Roman noble of virtuous life and cultivated intellect, who adhered to the old superstitions, besought him to modify the edict as far as Greece was concerned, saying that "life would be unlivable to the Greeks, if they were not allowed to celebrate after their ancient fashion these rites which knitted mankind together in one common bond of reverence to the gods", Valentinian repented of his purpose and allowed the law to pass silently into oblivion.

Again, when the Emperor was legislating against those magical practices, which, as we shall shortly see, inspired him with something like the fury of a persecutor, he made an especial exemption in favour of the old heathen rite of augury, saying that "neither this nor any other practice of the religion handed down from our forefathers is to be deemed a crime". Those elaborate observations, therefore, of the flight of birds which, as we learn from the Eugubine Tables, had been practised by the races of Italy, perhaps for centuries before Rome was founded, and which still prevailed when Horace declared that he would pray that neither the woodpecker flying from the left nor a wandering crow should hinder the departure of his beloved, might still be practised even under a Christian Emperor.

Two classes of persons seem to have been excepted from the general toleration, Manicheans and Mathematicians. In an age when Christian Theology was general travelling further and further away from the facts of human consciousness, and entangling itself in a labyrinth of speculations as to the Essence and Substance of the Divine Being—speculations which could hardly be even expressed in any other language than that used by the subtle Greek—it is no wonder if many minds reverted to the older and more awful problems, old as

the existence of a human soul capable of feeling the difficulties of the World in which we live. It is no wonder that such minds should have asked those questions which possess such a fascination for the brooding Eastern intellect, "Is the All-good indeed Almighty? Is Love creation's final Law? or is there not another dark Almighty warring for ever against the Lord of Love, and having had at least an equal, perchance a superior, share to His in the creation of the world?". Such were the questions asked by the followers of Manes, and answered by them in accordance with the principles of Dualism, questions doubtless far older than the Book of Job and yet new as modern Pessimism. We know from the Confessions of St. Augustine how great an attraction such speculations as these possessed of a keen and restless intellect, biased by outward circumstances against a belief in the final triumph of righteousness. It was probably the conviction that Manichaeism, whatever might be its pretensions to superior holiness, must in the end work against morality, which induced the sternly moral Valentinian to exempt its votaries from the general religious toleration, and to decree that wherever a meeting of this sect was discovered, the teachers were to be heavily fined, the disciples to be treated as outcasts from human society, and the places of assembly to be forfeited to the State.

Even more severe was the sentence passed against the hapless Mathematicians. In words which would now carry terror through the pleasant places by the Cam, the imperial brothers decreed: "Let the discourse of the Mathematicians cease. For if in public or in private, by night or by day any one shall be caught [instructing another] in this forbidden error, both [teacher and taught] shall be sentenced to capital punishment. For it is no less a crime to teach than to learn forbidden arts". By Mathematicians were doubtless here meant Astrologers: and the law was thus aimed at that morbid curiosity as to future events, especially future political events, of which, as we shall soon have occasion to remark, the Emperors of this dynasty had an equally morbid horror. But whatever the conventional, legal, meaning of the term Mathematicians, it is difficult not to believe that so sweeping a denunciation of their craft must, especially in the hands of ignorant and overzealous officials, have often molested the innocent sons of Science.

The general toleration practised by Valentinian in the West was not imitated by Valens in the East. For this the elder brother, considering his powerful influence over the mind of the younger, must be held partly responsible. Valentinian was an adherent—though not apparently a very fervid adherent—to the creed of Nicaea, while Valens was a bigoted and acrid champion of that form of Arianism which was called the *Homoion* (The Son is like unto the Father in such manner as the Scriptures declare). The opportunity was a splendid one for passing a common act of amnesty for religious dissensions throughout the whole Empire, both East and West, for providing that the Arians should not be troubled at Rome, nor the Athanasians at Alexandria. But unfortunately the opportunity was not taken, and while Valentinian was upon the whole consistently pursuing his policy of religious toleration in the West, Valens continued in the East those petty and harassing persecutions against the Homoousian Bishops and Congregations which had been begun by Constantius. Still, notwithstanding this great and lamentable omission, Valentinian fairly deserves the fame of having made a greater and more successful attempt than any other Roman Emperor, so to use the power of the State as not to interfere with the inherent right of his subjects to worship God in that manner which each one in his own innermost conscience believed to be acceptable to Him. With his death the great experiment came to an end. It was again tried 120 years later, with equal singleness of purpose, by the Ostrogoth Theodoric, and for one generation it was signally successful. Then came Chaos and the thick Night of the Middle Ages. The very thought of a conscience free to decide for itself as to its relations to the unseen world, faded out of the minds of men; and it was not till the 16th, nay not till the 17th century, that it was again to assert its imprescriptible rights against the stern ecclesiastical domination alike of Rome and of Geneva.

The character of Valentinian as an administrator, described to us by contemporary historians, is such a mingled web of good and evil that, as has been already said, it is almost impossible to describe it except by a string of contradictory epithets. Just, yet tyrannical, willing to spare the pockets of his subjects, yet allowing them to be drained dry by rapacious governors, with a strong feeling of the duties of a ruler, yet delighting in deeds of cruelty—such are some of the paradoxes of this man's nature, paradoxes which, one fears, must be partly accounted for by the fact that the good in him gradually yielded to the evil, and that the longer he wielded the uncontrolled power of a Roman Emperor the more the inhuman element in his character prevailed. From one point of view we may see in him the strong, brave, chaste Illyrian peasants son, endowed with absolute authority over the luxurious, demoralized Roman nobility, determined to correct their vices, to bring back the vigour and the purity of older days, and firmly applying the cautery to the social and moral sores of the Empire. This view of his character explains, and in a measure justifies, even some of the harshest deeds which Ammianus chronicles as having been done under his orders by stern Pannonian ministers like-minded with himself. But there are some stories told concerning Valentinian which will not fit in with this explanation, and which, unless we resort to the facile hypothesis of a strain of madness in his intellect, will force us to the conclusion that after all, the occupant of the Imperial throne was a barbarian at heart, with a barbarian's ungovernable temper and a barbarian's sensual pleasure in the sight of human suffering. The strangest of all these stories must be told in the very words of Ammianus, for it is not quite easy to understand how much he means us to infer from them.

The mind shudders at the remembrance of all cruel deeds, and at the same time fears lest we should seem to be purposely seeking for the vices of a sovereign who was in other respects most useful to the State. But there is one thing which it would not be right to pass over in silence, that he had two fierce bears, devourers of men, named Golden Darling and Innocence, which he treated with such extraordinary fondness that he kept their cages near his own bedchamber, and gave them faithful guardians whose business it was, anxiously to provide lest by any chance the ghastly vigour of those wild beasts might be destroyed. "Innocence, at last, after many entombments of lacerated carcasses, which the Emperor had himself witnessed, was sent unharmed back to the woods as having well deserved her freedom".

These pompous and obscure sentences may mean only that the Emperor regaled his favourite beasts on the flesh of men (presumably slaves or criminals) who were already dead; but perhaps it accords better with the general tenor of the passage to suppose that he enacted in his own palace on a small scale the bloody sports of the amphitheatre, and ordered his victims, perhaps his barbarian captives, to engage in deadly combat with Innocentia and Mica Aurea. On any interpretation of the passage, more than mere sternness, absolute inhumanity must be attributed to the sovereign of whom such tales could be told.

Other stories were related of Valentinian's ungovernable temper. A page, stationed to watch some game, let slip too soon a Spartan hound that had sprung up, and bitten him. The enraged Emperor ordered him to be beaten to death with clubs, and he was buried on the same day. A foreman in the Imperial workshops brought for the Emperor's acceptance a beautifully polished steel breastplate, which he had made to order. It wanted a little of the stipulated weight, and the too clever craftsman, instead of receiving even a diminished payment, was ordered off to instant execution. An eminent advocate, named Africanus, desired to be removed from one province, the affairs of which he had administered, to another, and Theodosius, the Master of the Horse, favoured his suit. The petition happened to be presented to the Emperor when he was in one of his surliest moods. "Go", said he, "Count Theodosius, and change his stature by a head, who wants to change his province". To this grim joke of the moody sovereign was sacrificed the life of an eloquent man who was believed to be on the way to high

office in the state. A ruler of this savage temper, even though desirous in the main to govern justly, was sure to be often ill served by the men to whom he delegated his power, and whose oppressions his subjects would be too terrified to reveal to him. Valentinian inclined to the employment of military officers in the great civil governments of the Empire, and he also showed a marked predilection for his own Pannonian countrymen as administrators. There was probably good reason for both preferences, as it is likely that the whole bureaucratic hierarchy under Constantius had become enervated and corrupt: but Valentinian seems to have been unfortunate in his choice of subordinates. Strong men they were, doubtless, those Pannonian vicegerents of his, but also atrociously severe: and the soft citizens of Rome and Carthage trembled before them, as the subjects of James II trembled at the roar of Jeffreys.

One of these cruel ministers of Valentinian was Maximin, born at the little town of Sopianae, now Fünfkirchen in Hungary, who from a very humble station (his father was a clerk in the quarter-master's office) rose to the great positions, first of Vicarius, and afterwards of Praetorian Prefect, of the City of Rome. His assessor was Simplicius, who had formerly been a schoolmaster at Aemona (now Laybach on the Save): and the two upstarts, master and man, seemed to vie with one another which could lay the heaviest hand on the ancient and noble families of Rome. But even the historian who execrates their cruelty shows by his history of the poisonings, peculations, adulteries which furnished the pretext for their outburst of violence, the deep demoralization of the Roman aristocracy.

The favourite topic of accusation against these Roman nobles and many of their humbler fellow-subjects, was the practice of unhallowed arts. Whether men's minds were in an unusually excited state on religious questions, owing to the recent duel between Heathenism and Christianity¹,—whether Neo-Platonism, with its tendency to dabble in spells and incantations, had infected the minds of many of the upper classes,—whatever the reason may have been, it is clear that there was during this period an epidemic of witchcraft and poisoning on the one hand, and a yet fiercer epidemic of suspicion of these practices on the other. For instance, an advocate named Marinus was accused of having attempted by wicked arts—magic—to bring about his marriage with a lady named Hispanilla. The proof offered was of the slenderest kind, but Maximin condemned him to death. Hymetius, Proconsul of Africa, a man of especially honourable character, was charged with having induced a celebrated soothsayer named Amantius to perform some unholy sacrifice for him. The soothsayer was tortured, but denied the accusation. In some secret place, however, in his house was found a letter in the writing of Hymetius begging him to perform some strange rites, whereby the gods might be prevailed upon to soften the hearts of the Emperors towards him. The end of the letter, so it was said, stigmatised Valentinian as a bloody and rapacious tyrant. Upon the production of this letter, and the establishment of some other accusations against him, Amantius the soothsayer was condemned to death by Maximin. Hymetius the proconsul was near meeting the same fate, but escaped by a well-hazarded appeal to the Emperor. Lollianus, the son of a prefect, a youth who had the first down of manhood on his cheeks, was convicted of having copied out a book of incantations. He, too, appealed to the Emperor, but in his case the appeal only ensured his condemnation, and he died by the executioner's hand. Thus lawlessly did law rage in the West. In the East, Festinus, an obscure adventurer from Trient (in the Tyrol), a friend and admirer of Maximin, having attained the high position of Proconsul of Asia, imitated but too successfully the cruelty of his patron. He had called in the services of a simple old woman to cure his daughter of intermittent fever, by a soft charm-like song which she was wont to sing. The spell succeeded, and the monster put the poor old creature to death, as a witch. A philosopher, named Coeranius, writing to his wife, had added a postscript in Greek, "Take care and crown the gate with flowers". This expression was generally used when some great event was about to happen. Coeranius evidently, in the judgement of the proconsul, was expecting a change in the

government. He too must be put to death. In one instance the horrible and the ludicrous seem to meet together. A young man in the public baths was seen to be pressing his fingers alternately on the marble of the bath and his own chest, muttering each time one of the seven vowels in the Greek alphabet. The poor youth's real motive for this performance was that he imagined it would cure a pain in his stomach. Nevertheless he was led away to the judgement-seat of Festinus, put to the torture, and slain by the sword of the executioner.

Maximin, notwithstanding the bitter hatred with which he was regarded by the people of Rome, succeeded in maintaining his hold on office, and on the Imperial favour so long as Valentinian lived. In 373 apparently, he was made Prefect of Gaul, and about the same time he succeeded in obtaining the appointment of Duke of Valeria for his son Marcellian, whose foul murder of Gabinius, king of the Quadi, has been already described. Justice, however, was not finally defrauded either in his case or in that of his base tool Simplicius. Soon after the death of Valentinian both these tyrannical governors were put to death by the sword of the executioner.

Another instance of misgovernment, vainly protested against by its victims, was exhibited in the career of Romanus, Count of Africa. He was not a personal adherent of Valentinian, having been appointed to his office under the reign of one of his predecessors, but he had a friend at Court in Remigius, Master of the Offices, through whose hands all the reports prepared by the provincial governors, and all complaints against their rule, had to pass before they reached the Emperor. Remigius was connected by marriage with Romanus, and the Count of Africa, relying on his protection, plundered his subjects without mercy. At length, however, barbarian competitors in this trade of pillage appeared on the scene. The Austoriani, a people of the desert, taking advantage of the governor's indolence, broke in upon the province of Tripolis, whose long thin strip of fertile territory, lacking in its eastern portion the defence of the mountain chain which parted Numidia and the Carthaginian province from the interior, was always unusually difficult to guard. Goaded into fury by the punishment inflicted on one of their tribe who had been burned alive as a punishment for some lawless proceedings, they poured into the Tripolitan province, laid waste the country up to the walls of the strong city of Leptis, encamped for three days in the fruitful and highly cultivated suburban district, burned all the property which they could not remove, slew those of the peasants who had not had time to flee to the shelter of the caves, and then returned to their distant oases in the desert, carrying with them an immense mass of plunder and an important captive, a Senator of Leptis named Silva, whom they had the luck to find with his family at his villa in the country.

The citizens of Leptis naturally called on Count Romanus for help. He came with a sufficient body of troops: he calmly surveyed the ruin wrought by the barbarians: and he said, "Prepare me so many thousand rations for my soldiers" (naming an enormous number) "and a corps of 4000 camels, and then I will march against your enemies". The citizens pleaded that in their distressed and devastated condition, such requisitions as these were hopelessly beyond their power to comply with. Count Romanus accordingly, having tarried for forty days in the Tripolitan territory, returned with nought accomplished for its deliverance.

All this had occurred, apparently, during the short reign of Jovian, and was one of the many indications of the courage given to all the enemies of the Empire by the failure of the Parthian expedition. On receiving the news of the accession of Valentinian, the Tripolitan senate at its annual gathering, after passing a vote for the golden wreaths of victory which it was usual to present to a new Emperor on his accession, determined to send their offering by the hands of two envoys who should be charged to lay before Valentinian the lamentable state of the Tripolitan province. Romanus, informed of their decision, dispatched a swift messenger to warn his confederate Remigius, who took care to lay before the Emperor a report utterly different from that of the envoys. This diversity furnished an easy pretext for delay: and meanwhile the Austoriani again and again invaded the hapless province, laid waste the districts

round Leptis and Oea with fire and sword, and shook the very walls of Leptis with their battering-rams, while a howl of terror went up from the women within, who had never seen an armed foe before. Again many of the wealthy decurions were caught in their pleasant country homes and slain. One unfortunate and gouty citizen-noble, deeming escape impossible, threw himself headlong into a well. He was drawn up by the barbarians with a rib broken, taken to the gates of the city, ransomed at a great price by his horror-stricken wife, and hoisted up by a rope over the battlements into the city, where he died two days afterwards. After eight days the besiegers found that they could not make any permanent impression on the defences of Leptis, and returned disappointed to their homes.

Meanwhile there arrived in the province a notary of the Emperor named Palladius, with the double commission of distributing to the soldiers the donative to which they were entitled on the proclamation of Valentinian and his brother, and bringing back to the Emperor a report of the true state of the province of Tripolis. As soon as Romanus heard of the intended arrival of the commissioner, he gave a secret intimation to the officers in command of each legion stationed in the province, that they would do wisely for their own advancement by returning to this powerful servant of the Emperor part of the donative which he had brought for each of them. They complied with the advice; Palladius accepted the gift, and, thus unexpectedly enriched, proceeded on his way to Leptis. There could be no doubt as to what he saw there; the evidences of the misery and devastation of the province were patent to all men, and it needed not the eloquence of Erechthius and Aristomenes, two of the leading citizens of Leptis, to convince him that the Count of Africa had scandalously neglected the duty which he owed to these loyal subjects of the Empire. On his return to Carthage, Palladius told Romanus plainly what sort of report as to his sloth and incompetence he was about to make to Valentinian. "And I too", said Romanus in a towering passion, "shall have my report to make to the Emperor. I shall have to tell him that his incorruptible notary has embezzled the greater part of the donative which was entrusted to him, and appropriated it to his own use". Palladius saw that he was at the governors' mercy, and on his return to Court reported that the complaints of the provincials of Tripolis were all utterly devoid of foundation, and that Romanus was unjustly calumniated by them.

Then the wrath of Valentinian blazed forth against the men whom he honestly believed to be false accusers of a faithful servant. A second deputation from Tripolis had meanwhile visited his Court. One of the two envoys died on the road; the other was sent back in disgrace to Tripolis and forced to confess that he had been the messenger of falsehood. The cowed and trembling citizens disavowed the commission which they had entrusted to him. He and four other eminent members of the local senate were condemned to death: and Erechthius and Aristomenes, the orators who had pleaded the cause of Tripolis before Palladius, were sentenced to have their tongues torn out, but escaped from the executioners who were charged with this cruel mandate.

So did the wrathful Emperor, with all his desire to deal justly, wreak cruel injustice on his unoffending subjects. Many years afterwards, when Palladius had received his dismissal, when the misgovernment of Romanus had reached its height, and when Count Theodosius had been sent to supersede him, he found among his papers the letter of a certain Meterius, which ended thus: "Palladius the castaway salutes thee, who says that he is a castaway for no other reason than because he told lies to the sacred (Imperial) ears in the business of the Tripolitans". This expression led to further enquiry; Meterius confessed the authorship of the letter. Palladius was arrested, but on the journey to Court escaped from his guards who were celebrating the vigil of some Christian festival, twisted a noose round his neck and hanged himself. The same fate overtook Remigius, who was now no longer Master of the Offices, but was living in retirement at Mainz. He too terminated his life with the cord to avoid a public execution. Romanus, the

arch-criminal of all, seems to have escaped with life, though deprived of office, but his later fortunes are wrapped in obscurity. The two eloquent Tripolitans, Erechthius and Aristomenes, emerged from their long hiding-place and the cruel sentence against them remained unexecuted. A full report was drawn up to the Emperor clearing the characters of all the Tripolitans, and the injustice that had been committed was, as far as possible, atoned for. But much had been done that was irreversible.

We have seen how Italy groaned under the tyranny of Maximin, how Africa was pillaged by its governor Romanus. Now we turn to Illyricum. There again, in the history of the administration of Probus (which connects itself with the closing scenes of the Emperor's life), we shall observe, not only the weakness of the Roman official aristocracy, but also the extreme difficulty with which even a sovereign who wished to rule righteously—and this with all his faults was the desire of Valentinian—escaped being made a partaker in the oppression of his subjects.

Petronius Probus, allied by marriage to the great Anician *gens*, one of the very few families which combined wealth, official distinction, devotion to Christianity, and a really ancient descent from ancestors conspicuous in the great days of the Republic, was himself a man marked out, in the constitution of the state as it then existed, for the frequent enjoyment of high office. Of vast wealth, with estates in almost every province of the Roman world, with his ancient lineage, his relationship to all the noblest families of Rome, and his reputation for orthodox faith, he had as strong a claim on Countships and Prefectures under the dynasty of Valentinian as the Spencers and Pelhams and other members of the great Revolution families had on Secretaryships and Lord Lieutenancies in the days of the early Georges. And these claims he was not slow to enforce. He had a vast tribe of dependents, his liberality to whom kept him needy, notwithstanding his enormous wealth, and whose misdeeds, though not himself a cruel or unjust ruler, he was all too ready to condone. Hence it came to pass that Petronius Probus, though neither soldier nor statesman, was almost perpetually in office, being translated from Africa to Italy, and from Italy to Illyricum; and, as Ammianus sarcastically remarks, in the short intervals when he held no prefecture he gasped and languished like one of the denizens of the deep expelled from its own element and laid upon the shore. This was the man who held the responsible post of Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum in the year 374, and who had to stem the torrent of barbarian invasion caused by the righteous indignation of the Quadi at the treacherous murder of Gabinius their king. The enraged barbarians crossed the Danube, appeared suddenly among the unsuspecting Pannonians, who were engaged in the labours of the harvest, slew great numbers of them and drove back vast multitudes of sheep and cattle to their homes. They were very near carrying off a more splendid prize, and one the loss of which would have more deeply wounded the pride of Rome. The daughter of the late Emperor Constantius, the same whom as a child of four years old Procopius had so often exhibited to the applauding legions, was now on her way to Gaul where she was to be married to the young Emperor Gratian. She was resting at a post-house, about twenty-six miles west of Sirmium, when the wandering bands of the Quadi were seen in the distance. Most fortunately Messalla, Duke of Pannonia Secunda, was near at hand, and hearing of her danger hurried to the post-house, placed the young bride on his official chariot, and lashing his horses to a gallop soon reached with his precious charge the friendly shelter of the walls of Sirmium.

Barbarians, however, of various origins were now roaming over the desolate province. The Teutonic Quadi were mingled with the Sclavonic Sarmatians, and all brought terror to the subjects of Rome. Men and women were being driven off together with their cattle into the squalid servitude of barbarian homesteads. Many a spacious villa, the center from which the Roman lord had issued his commands to the hundreds of *coloni* who cultivated his lands, was now laid in ashes, and its tessellated pavements dyed with the blood of its late inhabitants,

while the savage invaders mocked at the trail of misery which they left behind them, and probably vaunted to one another that King Gabinius was now indeed avenged. All this time, in the Praetorium at Sirmium, which should have been the home of manly counsels and the center of brave resistance, there was panic and bewilderment. To the middle-aged Probus this was a first experience of the terrors of war. He sat sighing in his palace, scarcely raising his eyes from the ground; and at last he made up his mind that when night fell he would escape with fleet horses from the city. Some faithful counsellor, however, informed him that, if he took flight all the defenders of the city would inevitably follow his example, and that the disgrace of abandoning Sirmium, the first city of Illyricum, to the barbarians, would irretrievably ruin his career. Upon this he plucked up a little courage from necessity, cleared out the fosses which surrounded the city from the ruins that encumbered them, and repaired the breaches which in the long years of peace had weakened the circuit of the walls. Concentrating his whole attention on this work of rebuilding, and devoting to it a large sum of money which had been collected, but had fortunately not been expended, for the construction of a theatre, he before long was able to confront the barbarians with a circuit of lofty fortifications, perfect from base to summit. When the Quadi who had lingered too long over the congenial work of plunder at length appeared before the walls, they found them too strong to be taken by their rude appliances, and retreated, hoping to meet with and punish the general to whom they attributed the slaughter of their king. In their disorderly march two Roman legions came up with them and might easily have won a signal victory, but their first success was turned into defeat by the jealousies of the two bodies of troops and their want of concerted action. However, when things seemed at their worst for the cause of the Empire in the Illyrian provinces, a victory won over the "Free Sarmatians" by the brave young Duke of Moesia, Theodosius, restored the fortune of war, and together with the rumoured approach of legions from Gaul, caused the barbarians at last to sue for peace and to withdraw from the scene of their ravages.

In his terror at the barbarian invasion Probus sent the messengers to Valentinian to beg for assistance. The messengers found him in the neighbourhood of Bale, where it need hardly be said that he was engaged in the construction of a fortress. The first impulse of the warlike Emperor was at once to march from the Rhine to the Danube in order to chastise the insolent barbarians who had dared to violate the Roman frontier. The advice of his trusty counsellors persuaded him to postpone the campaign of retaliation till next spring. They pointed out that the autumn was now far spent, that the plains, hardened by frost, would afford no pasture for the beasts of burden which accompanied the army, and that Macrianus, king of the Alamanni, an old enemy of the Empire, who had fought with Julian fifteen years before, was hovering, angry and menacing, on the frontiers of Gaul, and would certainly seize the opportunity of the Emperor's absence to make an inroad into the wealthy province, perhaps even to storm some of its cities.

Having decided to postpone his eastward march till next spring, Valentinian determined to employ the interval thus left him in establishing a league of friendship with Macrianus. The Alamannic king, who had an unending quarrel with his Burgundian neighbours on the north, about the possession of the salt-springs on the Kocher, was not sorry to accept the proffered friendship of Rome. He came to meet the Emperor near Mainz, accompanied by a multitude of his countrymen, who clashed their shields and swords together with barbarous dissonance, while Macrianus stood by the swiftly-flowing Rhine, holding his head high, and swelling with pride, real or assumed, as if he were the arbiter of peace or war. On the side of the Romans appeared the great Augustus, moving slowly up the stream in the Imperial galley. Disembarking, he took up his station on the shore with the eagles and dragons of the legions glittering above his head, and the brilliantly accoutred officers of his camp, some of whom probably came from the plains of the Euphrates and others from beneath the shadow of the

Pyrenees, all clustering around him. It was the meeting of Valens and Athanaric repeated, not on the Danube but on the other great frontier-stream of the Empire, and with a more lordly presence than that of Valens to represent the majesty of Rome. With a few well-chosen words and significant gestures Valentinian repressed the insolence of the barbarians, then discussed the mutual rights and wrongs alleged between them and the Empire, and finally exchanged the solemn oath of perpetual friendship with Macrianus. This treaty was not an empty form: the vanity of the Alaman had been flattered, his anger soothed, his self-interest enlisted on the side of peace with Rome. He faithfully observed the treaty to the end of his days, and finally perished, we are told, in "Francia" (which at that time meant probably the country on the right bank of the Lower Rhine), having fallen into an ambush laid for him by the King of the Franks, the warlike Mallobaudes.

After the treaty with Macrianus, Valentinian entered his winter-quarters at Trier, and with the early spring set out for Illyricum to put in order the things which had been disarranged by the feebleness of Probus. He marched quickly by the well-known military roads into his native province, and, when arrived there, was met by an embassy of Sarmatians who, falling at his feet, besought his favour and protested their innocence of any share in the barbarian inroads. "That question", said he, "I shall settle after an accurate investigation on the scene of the outrages", and dismissed them from his presence. Almost immediately after this interview he reached Carnuntum, once the great city of Pannonia and a colony, now represented only by the ruins of Petronell, on the Danube, about thirty miles below Vienna. Desolated by the barbarians, probably in their latest inroad, it had lost its importance as a station of the Danubian fleet and the head-quarters of the fourteenth legion, both of which had been transferred to Vindobona, now Vienna. Thus the worldwide fame of this latter city, the city of the Habsburgs, is derived by no doubtful ancestry from these movements of obscure barbarian tribes under the prefecture of Petronius Probus. Carnuntum, when Valentinian visited it, was still what our Saxon forefathers would have called "a waste Chester", lying in squalid loneliness by the sullen Danube; but the Emperor repaired it sufficiently to make it a place of arms, from whence he might sally forth to repel the incursions of the barbarians.

The arrival of Valentinian in the province of Pannonia struck terror into the hearts of the officials of that misgoverned province, and gave hope to the oppressed. Now at length, thought they, this stern but upright ruler will enquire into the whole series of tyrannical and cowardly acts by which this noble province has been brought to the brink of ruin. Unhappily, however, the Emperor had already begun to show signs of that weakness which often marks the later years of a monarch's reign: undue leniency towards great criminals, coupled with undue severity towards the little ones. No enquiry was instituted into the iniquitous murder of Gabinius, the source of all these later troubles; and it seemed as if even the mal-administration of Probus would pass unchallenged. It was notorious that in his eager quest for money, to gratify the greed of his dependents and to prolong his own tenure of office, Probus had frequently driven rich citizens into crime, had multiplied taxes, and had increased their weight till in some cities the wealthier inhabitants had passed years in prison at the suit of the tax-gatherer, while others had committed suicide to escape his extortions. All this was well known to the whole Roman world except the Emperor; but to him came deputation after deputation from one province of Illyricum after another, offering hollow congratulations, and thanking the Imperial providence for blessing them with such a ruler as Petronius Probus. At length, when the deputation from Epirus was announced, with Iphicles, rhetorician and philosopher, at its head, some fortunate chance led the Emperor to enquire "Do you come of your own accord, on this errand of panegyric: do your fellow-citizens in their hearts think so well of the prefect?", "No, indeed", said the truthful philosopher, "most reluctantly do I come from my groaning countrymen". On this hint Valentinian acted. He enquired what had happened to the chief

citizens of the Illyrian towns. He found that one wealthy burgess had fled across the sea; that another, the chief of his order, had perished under the cruel strokes of the *plumbatae* (the leaded scourge with which criminals were tortured); that another, renowned and beloved above his fellows, had hanged himself. All these discoveries kindled Valentinian's wrath against the avaricious governor, slack against the barbarian, and terrible only to his own countrymen, by whom Pannonia had been brought into such calamity. Probus had to face the anger of the terrible Emperor, and would probably have been ordered to lay down his prefecture in disgrace but for the event which soon after left the Roman world without its highest ruler.

Valentinian spent the three summer months at Carnuntum. In the autumn he moved his forces to Acincum (close to the modern city of Buda), crossed the Danube on a bridge of boats, and laid waste the houses and lands of the Quadi with fire and sword. Winter came on early, and he took up his quarters at Bregetio on the Danube, close to the strong rock-fortress of Komorn, where [the Hungarians in 1849 made their last gallant stand against the overwhelming and united armies of the Habsburg and the Czar. But now, in the dreary Pannonian winter days, the superstitious courtiers and officers of the camp began to whisper to one another all sorts of omens of impending calamity. Comets had trailed their portentous length along the sky; at Sirmium a flash of lightning had set the palace, the senate-house, and the forum on fire; at Sabaria where the Emperor took up his residence for a time, an owl seated on the roof of the Imperial bath-house had given utterance to dismal hootings, and had remained unharmed and unterrified by all the arrows and stones which the soldiers had hurled at her. One night (the last, as it proved, of Valentinian's life) he saw in a dream his absent wife, the beautiful Justina, sitting with dishevelled hair and arrayed in mean attire as if some change in her fortunes were at hand. He rose next morning depressed and saddened by his dream, and with lowering brow ordered his horse to be brought round. The animal reared up on its hind legs; the right hand of the young groom who was helping his master to mount came somewhat roughly in contact with the Imperial person: in his rage Valentinian ordered the offending member to be cut off, but Cerealis, Tribune of the Imperial Stable and brother-in-law of the Emperor, ventured to postpone for a little space the execution of the order, and thereby, as the event proved, saved the lad's limb and perhaps his life.

A little later in the day came the long-expected embassy of the Quadi, and was admitted to an audience. The contrast was a striking one between the Emperor of the Romans, tall, erect, with limbs of admirable symmetry, with steel cuirass, and helmet adorned with gold and gems, a stern gleam in his blue-gray eyes, and "looking every inch an Emperor", and over against him the squalid forms of the ambassadors of the Quadi, with their breastplates of horn sewn upon linen jackets, so that the pieces overlapped one another like the feathers of a bird, shrinking, bending, seeking by every motion of their bodies to appease the anger of the terrible Augustus. They had not intended to declare war against the Empire. No assembly of the chiefs had been convened. Nothing had been done by the regular council of the nation. A few robber-hordes close to the river had done deeds which they regretted, and for which they must not be held responsible. But indeed that fortress (apparently one of Valentinian's many fortresses, erected on the left bank of the Danube) should not have been built upon their territory, and it stirred the clownish hearts of their people to frenzy to behold it. At the mention of the fortress the Emperor struck in with terrible voice, upbraiding the barbarians with ingratitude for all the benefits of Rome. They continued to endeavour to soothe him. His voice faltered, but not from softened feeling. His attendants saw that he was about to fall, wrapped his purple round him, and bore him to an inner room, that the barbarians might not look upon the weakness of an Emperor. In the full torrent of his rage he had been seized with some sudden malady, probably apoplexy, and after a terrible struggle with death the strong, tempestuous man died, apparently before nightfall. He had lived fifty-four years, and reigned nearly twelve. His body was

embalmed and taken to Constantinople, and there laid in the Church of the Apostles, now the recognized burial-place of the Christian Emperors.

According to the system of partnership and succession which had been devised by Diocletian and accepted in a modified form by Valentinian, Valens and Gratian should now have peaceably taken up the sovereignty the chief share in which had fallen from the dead Emperor's hands. But there were complications, both in the Imperial family and in the camp by the Danube, which led to a strange result. Some seven or eight years before his death Valentinian had put away his wife, Severa, and married the beautiful Sicilian, Justina, widow of the usurper Magnentius, who lost both the diadem and his life in his struggle with Constantius (353). Justina had borne to her husband three daughters, one at least of whom when she grew up to womanhood reproduced the loveliness of her mother, and one son who, when his father gasped out his life in the tent at Bregetio, was a little child of four or five years old. The Empress and her children were not at the camp, but at a villa called Murocincta, a hundred miles distant from Bregetio, when the event occurred which made them a widow and orphans.

In the camp there was an uneasy feeling stirring that the occasion was a good one to acclaim a new Emperor. Gratian, princely and popular, but after all only a lad of some sixteen years of age, was absent at distant Trier; Valens, disliked and despised, was at the yet more distant Antioch. Why should not the army proclaim some one of its own most trusted generals Emperor, and in so doing at once save the State from misgovernment by feeble rulers and enrich itself by the handsome donative which the new Emperor was sure to bestow on the authors of his greatness?

There were three officers in high command in the Danubian army on one of whom the choice of the tumultuary electorate, if that electorate were assembled, seemed certain to fall. These were Sebastian, Aequitius, and Merobaudes. Count Sebastian, who had formerly held the high military command of Duke of Egypt, and had been, together with Procopius, in charge of the troops which were to cooperate from the direction of Armenia in Julian's invasion of Persia, was now engaged in ravaging the country of the Quadi. The heathen historian, Ammianus, describes him as a man of even temperament and a lover of repose, but the Church historians charge him with the Manichean heresy and with the infliction of cruel tortures during the reign of Constantius on the confessors of the Catholic Church at Alexandria. Aequitius, whom we have already seen during the Procopian rebellion, faithfully holding the Illyrian provinces for the house of Valentinian, and who had shared the honours of the consulship in the preceding year with Gratian, was still apparently *Magister Militum per Illyricum*, the highest military officer between the Rhine and the Danube. Merobaudes was probably a Frankish chief who had taken service under the Empire, and owing to his skill in military matters had risen to high command, and to the yet higher honor of an alliance by marriage with the Imperial house.

But for his barbarian extraction the choice of the soldiery might very possibly have fallen on Merobaudes. Aequitius, whose surly temper had caused him to be rejected as a candidate for the purple eleven years before, had probably not grown less surly with advancing age. It was generally understood that the choice of the soldiers and of the inferior officers favoured Sebastian, and that if he appeared in camp he would be acclaimed Emperor.

The elevation of Sebastian would probably have meant the depression, perhaps the ruin, of Aequitius and Merobaudes. Self-interest therefore cooperated with loyalty to the family of Valentinian and dread of civil war to make them conspire against his election and their measures were taken with much dexterity. Merobaudes was absent with Sebastian in the land of the Quadi when the great Emperor closed his eyes at Bregetio. A message was sent, as if in Valentinian's name, concealing the fact of his death to Merobaudes, commanding his

immediate return. The keen-witted Frank, suspecting the real state of the case, announced to his soldiers that a barbarian invasion of Gaul necessitated their return to the banks of the Rhine. Having recrossed the Danube, and broken down the bridge of boats to prevent the Quadi from following him, he sent Sebastian, his inferior in command, on some errand which removed him far from the theatre of events. The returning in haste to the camp, he caused the child Valentinian and his mother to be sent with all speed from Murocincta. Appealing to that half formed instinct of loyalty to the children of a dead emperor, upon which Procopius had traded when he ostentatiously nursed the little Constantia in his arms, Merobaudes an Aequitius presented the beautiful Empress and her child to the assembled soldiery and obtained their acclamation for Valentinian II. Some fear was felt as to the manner in which the news of this further division of the Imperial heritage might be received at Trier and at Antioch; but whatever may have been the feelings of Valens, Gratian at all events recognized the loyalty to his house which had prompted the deed, welcomed his infant brother as a partner of his throne, and showed no disfavor to the author of his elevation. In the division of the Empire Gratian reserved for himself the three great Dioceses of Britain, Gaul, and Spain; Justina, in the name of the little Valentinian, and with perhaps some undefined subordination to Gratian, governed Italy, Africa, and Illyricum. The share of Valens remained such as it had been in the lifetime of Valentinian.

The soldiers, of course, obtained their donative, as large a one doubtless as if they had strengthened the Empire by the election of a wise statesman or a valiant soldier. But the curious mixture of elective and hereditary right which characterized this "family partnership in Empire" was certainly not producing beneficial results for the State. The one strong and capable ruler, Valentinian, having fallen, there were left at the head of affairs an incapable and undignified rustic, lately the lackey of his brother, a bright and winning lad in his teens, and a child under five years of age, necessarily in the leading strings of his beautiful but foolish and impetuous mother. These were not the kind of pilots that the vessel of the State required in the troubled and perilous waters which she was rapidly approaching.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAST YEARS OF VALENS

By the premature death of Valentinian, his brother, the small-souled, unkingly-looking Valens, obtained the foremost place in the Empire of the world.

Not unnaturally, considering the recent fateful encounter between the two monarchies, and the many great qualities of its ruler, Sapor, Persia was the country towards which at this time the eyes of all Romans, at least of all Eastern Romans, were turned with the most anxious apprehensions. Hence it was that, at any rate after the Gothic war was ended, Valens gave the largest share of his time and attention to the affairs of Armenia and Mesopotamia, and resided generally at Syrian Antioch rather than at Thracian Constantinople.

As has been already hinted, the zeal shown by Valens in the persecution of those who practised unlawful arts was even fiercer than that of his brother in the West. This persecution raged furiously in the province of Asia and its capital Ephesus, where those which used curious arts were compelled to bring their books together by an influence very different from the persuasive teaching of the Apostle Paul, at the bidding of a fierce proconsul named Festus, who slew and banished relentlessly those suspected of such dark practicings with the infernal powers. There is reason to fear that not only there, but over the whole Roman world, many books which would now be of priceless value, as illustrating the philosophy and theology of the classical nations, perished at this time.

One reason why the Emperors and the Provincial governors who did their bidding waged such fierce war against the professors of divination doubtless was that their art was connected with a certain feverish anxiety as to the political future of the Empire. The one question of most intense interest to the reigning Emperors as well as to millions of their subjects was, "How long shall we be Emperors, and who will succeed us?". Nor will the nervous interest both of governors and governed in this question seem unnatural, when we remember that the Emperor was the source of all promotion and of all legislation—a Prime Minister, as it were, appointed for life, unchecked by Parliament, and with a chance, but not a certainty, of transmitting his power to his son. Or, to go across the Atlantic for an analogy to his position, if the quadrennial election of the President of the United States raises to fever-pitch the passions of all the army of office-holders, past, present, and to come, much more would the dark possibilities and the dramatic surprises of a change in the Imperial dynasty, stir the hopes or rouse the fears of a population, among whom office of one kind or another was rapidly becoming the only barrier which separated the happy from the destitute.

A few years before the death of Valentinian, his younger brother was driven into an agony of cruel terror by the discovery of a meeting somewhat resembling a *séance* of modern Spiritualists, the object of which was to extort from the unseen powers the name of his future successor. There was a certain young man at Antioch, named Theodorus, descended from an ancient family in Gaul, highly educated, modest, self-controlled, one who had reached the important position of an Imperial notary, but who always seemed greater than his office, and marked out by Fate for some higher station than that to which he had already attained. Some persons of rank and influence at Antioch met together, probably under cover of night, to

consult the diviners as to the name of the future Emperor. A little tripod (like a Delphic cauldron), made of laurel wood and consecrated with mysterious songs and choral dances, was set in the middle of the house, which had been purified by the burning of Arabian spices. The tripod was placed upon a round dish made of diverse metals, and with the twenty-four letters of the alphabet marked upon its circumference. Thereafter entered a person clad in linen and with linen socks upon his feet, bearing in his hand branches of an auspicious tree, who, after again singing a magic song, leaned over the sacred tripod and shook up and down a flaxen thread, very fine, to which a ring was attached. As the ring danced up and down, it touched the letters of the metal dish, and thus words, and sentences, and even hexameter verses like those uttered by the priests of Apollo at Miletus, were delivered to the bystanders. The question was put, "Who shall succeed the present Emperors?". The ring spelt out the letters "Theod", and, without waiting for more, all the bystanders agreed that the high-born and accomplished Theodorus would be the future Emperor.

Theodorus himself had not been present at this performance, but when he was informed of it by Euserius, a man of great literary attainments, and who had formerly been Prefect of Asia, his own earnest desire was at once to go and report the whole affair to the Emperor. In an evil hour for himself he was dissuaded from doing so: for as Euserius said to him, "You are guiltless of any lawless desire to rule: and if Fate have ordained for you that great advancement, nothing that you can do will either help or hinder it". However, there seems reason to think that the dazzling prospect which the dreams of these diviners opened before Theodorus did in some degree divert him from his duty as a subject, and that the capital sentence which was pronounced and promptly executed upon him was justified by real acts of *laesa majestas*. But when Valens discovered that many of the nobles, officials, and philosophers of Antioch had been engaged in speculations on the contingency of his death, and endeavours to wrest from futurity the name of his successor, his suspicious rage became almost madness. A perfect reign of terror followed. As Theodorus had been a heathen and a friend of the philosophers, the most eminent philosophers of Asia were put to death, the chief among these heathen martyrs being that same Maximus who, years before, had called the attention of his master Julian to Valentinian's contempt of heathen ordinances. A governor of Bithynia, an ex-vicarius of Britain, a proconsul of Asia, two consuls related to the family of the Emperor Constantius, notaries, officers of the palace, and multitudes of smaller officials were accused, and not a few of them were put to death. According to one authority many absolutely innocent men, whose names began with the three fated letters, such as Theodorus, Theodotus, Theodosius, Theodulus, and the like, were sacrificed to the Emperor's fears: and many, to avoid the danger to which they found themselves suddenly exposed; changed the names which they had borne from infancy.

While the leaders in the spiritualistic adventure were suffering the torture to which even Roman citizens were now liable to be subjected when the safety of the Emperor was at stake, the taunting question was put to them, "Did the divination which you practised foretell your present tortures?". Upon which they uttered some oracular verses which seem almost to have passed into a proverb clearly foretelling death as the penalty for those who like them had sought to pry into futurity, but also containing dark hints of retribution at the hands of the Furies, of fire and blood-stained garments awaiting the Emperor and his servants. The last three lines of the oracle gasped out by the groaning victims ran thus :

"Not unavenged our blood shall sink to the ground, for against you
Glooming Tisiphoné shall array portentous destruction,
All in the plains of *Mimas* when Ares rages around you".

At the time of Valentinian's death, the fury of this persecution of the philosophers and the diviners had already abated, but, especially at Antioch, it had left a peculiar mental reaction behind it. The dwellers in the soft and licentious city by the Orontes seem to have settled down into a state of apathetic discontent, varied by anticipations, to themselves only half intelligible, of some terrible approaching doom. In after time, when the doom had fallen, men remembered what presages might have been drawn from the dismal cry of birds at night, from the howls of wolves, and the unusual mists which had so often blotted out the sunrise. Nay, the mouths of men, as on so many previous occasions of impending disaster to the State, had uttered unconsciously the plainest prophecies. When any of the common people of Antioch imagined himself wronged, he would cry out in the meaningless slang of the streets, "May Valens be burned alive [if I will put up with this]!". And as the Emperor had presented the city with one of those usual tokens of Imperial munificence, a magnificent range of *Thermae* (hot baths), one might hear every morning the voices of the town-criers calling to the people, "Bring wood, bring wood, bring wood, to heat the baths of Valens". Men looked back afterwards upon these and similar presages, and wondered that they had been so blind to the signs of coming woe.

Meanwhile, in the steppes of Astrakhan, and on the northern slopes of the Caucasus, events were progressing among unknown and squalid barbarians, which, cooperating with the internal rottenness of the Empire, were to bring about not only the violent death of Valens, but many another change of more enduring consequence. The Huns, a nation whom we may, with sufficient, if not with scientific accuracy, describe as a vast Tartar horde, allured or impelled from Asia by some unknown force, fell first upon the Tartar or semi-Tartar nation of the Alani, who dwelt between the Volga and the Don, slew many, and made vassal-confederates of the rest, and with forces thus swollen pressed on toward the broad domains of Hermanric, king of the Ostrogoths.

It will be necessary, when the descendants of these invaders in the third generation dash themselves upon the Roman legions, to consider their ethnological position somewhat more closely. At present the collision is only Hun against Goth, and therefore it is sufficient to learn from the pages of Jordanes what the Goth thought of these new and unexpected enemies. This is what he says in the twenty-fourth chapter of his book "on Gothic affairs".

"We have ascertained that the nation of the Huns, who surpassed all others in atrocity, came thus into being. When Filimer, fifth king of the Goths after their departure from Sweden, was entering Scythia, with his people, as we have before described, he found among them certain sorcerer-women, whom they call in their native tongue Haliorunnas (or Al-runas), whom he suspected and drove forth from the midst of his army into the wilderness. The unclean spirits that wander up and down in desert places, seeing these women, made concubines of them; and from this union sprang that most fierce people [of the Huns], who were at first little, foul, emaciated creatures, dwelling among the swamps, and possessing only the shadow of human speech by way of language.

According to Priscus they settled first on the further [eastern] shore of the Sea of Azov, lived by hunting, and increased their substance by no kind of labour, but only by defrauding and plundering their neighbours. Once upon a time, when they were out hunting beside the Sea of Azov, a hind suddenly appeared before them, and having entered the waters of that shallow sea, now stopping, now dashing forward, seemed to invite the hunters to follow on foot. They did so, through what they had before supposed to be trackless sea with no land beyond it, till at length the shore of Scythia [Southern Russia] lay before them. As soon as they set foot upon it, the stag that had guided them thus far mysteriously disappeared. This, I trow, was done by those evil spirits that begat them, for the injury of the Scythians [Goths]. But the hunters who had lived in complete ignorance of any other land beyond the Sea of Azov were struck with admiration of the Scythian land and deemed that a path known to no previous age had been

divinely revealed to them. They returned to their comrades to tell them what had happened, and the whole nation resolved to follow the track thus opened out before them. They crossed that vast pool, they fell like a human whirlwind on the nations inhabiting that part of Scythia, and offering up the first tribes whom they overcame, as a sacrifice to victory, suffered the others to remain alive, but in servitude.

“With the Alani especially, who were as good warriors as themselves, but somewhat less brutal in appearance and manner of life, they had many a struggle, but at length they wearied out and subdued them. For, in truth, they derived an unfair advantage from the intense hideousness of their countenances. Nations whom they would never have vanquished in fair fight fled horrified from those frightful—faces I can hardly call them, but rather—shapeless black collops of flesh, with little points instead of eyes. No hair on their cheeks or chins gives grace to adolescence or dignity to age, but deep furrowed scars instead, down the sides of their faces, show the impress of the iron which with characteristic ferocity they apply to every male child that is born among them, drawing blood from its cheeks before it is allowed its first taste of milk. They are little in stature, but lithe and active in their motions, and especially skilful in riding, broad-shouldered, good at the use of the bow and arrows, with sinewy necks, and always holding their heads high in their pride. To sum up, these beings under the form of man hide the fierce nature of the beast”.

Such was the impression made upon the mind of the European barbarian by his first contact with the Asiatic savage. The moment was an eventful one in the history of the world. Hitherto, since the great migration of the Aryan nations, Europe had arranged her own destinies, unmolested by any Asiatic invaders save the great armaments which at the bidding of Darius and Xerxes marched onwards to their doom. Now the unconscious prototypes of Zinghis Khan, of Timour, and of Bajazet had come from the steppes of Turkestan to add their element of complication to the mighty problem.

It need not be said that the narrative of Jordanes is not here offered as trustworthy history. The battles with the Alani must in all probability have been over before the Huns first saw the Sea of Azov, and the latter squalid tribe were no more descended from Gothic women than from demon-fathers. But the passage is worth reading, and even reading again, for the vividness with which it brings the new incomers into Europe before our eyes, and contrasts them with other tribes, like them in the deadliness of their onset against Rome, but unlike in all else.

The fair-haired, fair-skinned, long-bearded and majestic Goth on the one hand, the little swarthy smooth-faced Tartar Hun on the other: here the shepherd merging into the agriculturist, there the mere hunter: here the barbarian standing on the very threshold of civilization, there the irreclaimable savage: here a nation already in great measure accepting the faith of Christ and reading the Scriptures in their own tongue, there brutal heathens. Such was the chasm which separated the Goths and the Teutons generally from the Huns.

After the Alani of the Don were beaten down into subjection, the Huns with a sudden rush broke in upon the wide-spreading and comparatively fertile districts which owned the sway of Hermanric, king of the Greuthungi or Ostrogoths. The great King, the new Alexander, as his Greek neighbours called him, when they wished to propitiate his favour, was now in extreme old age, verging, if we may believe Jordanes, on a hundred years and ten. His rule over the nominally subject tribes around him was probable loose and ill compacted, and some of them eagerly caught at the opportunity afforded by the Hunnish invasion to break loose from his empire. Among the revoltors was the faithless nation of the Rosomoni, whose king seem to have deserted the Ostrogothic standard on the field of battle, perhaps in the first skirmish with the Hunnish invaders. In his rage Hermanric took a cruel and cowardly revenge. As the king has escaped from his power, he ordered Sunilda, his wife, to be torn in and pieces by wild

horses. Her brothers, Sarus and Ammius, took up the blood-feud, and though they failed to kill Hermanric, wounded him severely in the side. The wound prevented him from going forth to battle: his warriors everywhere yielded to the terrible Asiatics : the Visigoths came not to help their Ostrogothic overlord : in despair at having lived so long, only to see the ruin of his empire, the aged Hermanric escaped from his troubles by suicide. The power of the Ostrogoths was broken, and Balamber, king of the Huns, was now supreme in Scythia. Hunimund, son of Hermanric, was permitted to become king of the Ostrogoths, but on condition of accepting the over-lordship of the Huns: and for the following eighty years his people had no other position than that of a subject race in the great and loosely-knit Hunnish confederacy.

There was, indeed, a small section of the community which chose Withimir (or Winithar) of the royal race of the Amals, but not a son of Hermanric, for their king, and under his leadership attempted a brave but hopeless resistance to the overpowering enemy. After much slaughter he was slain in battle, and the remnant of the people, under the nominal sovereignty of the boy Wideric, son of the late king, but really led by his guardians, Alatheus and Saphrax, made their way westwards to the Dniester, and joined apparently in the defence which their Visigothic kinsmen were making by that river.

For the refusal of the Visigoths to answer the call of Hermanric had brought them no immunity from the attacks of the terrible invaders. The swarthy riders on their little ponies had soon swept across the plains traversed by the Dnieper and the Boug, and Athanaric found that he had to fight for his kingdom and his life against an enemy very different from the warily marching legions of Valens. He pitched his camp by the margin of the Dniester, and apparently fortified an earthen rampart which marked the confines of the Ostrogothic and Visigothic territory. He sent forward Munderic (who afterwards entered the Imperial service and was a general on the Arabian frontier) with a colleague named Lagariman and other Gothic nobles, to a distance of twenty miles, to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy, and meanwhile he drew up his army in battle-array. All was leisurely, calm, and apparently scientific in the movements of the Gothic 'Judex': but, unfortunately, he had to deal with an utterly unscientific foe. The Huns, cleverly conjecturing where the main bulk of the Gothic army was posted, avoided that part of the river, found out a ford at some distance, crossed it by moonlight, and fell upon the flank of the unsuspecting Athanaric before a single scout gave notice of their approach. The Goth, stupefied by their onslaught, and dismayed by the death of several of his chiefs, withdrew to the territory of his friendly neighbours, the Taifali, and began to construct a fortified position for the remnant of his army between the mountains of Transylvania and the river Sereth. The Huns pursued him for some distance: but, loaded with spoil and, perhaps, well-nigh sated with killing, they soon relaxed the eagerness of their pursuit.

Meanwhile, the tidings that a new and hitherto unknown race of men had fallen like an avalanche upon the supposed invincible Hermanric and Athanaric spread far and wide throughout the region of Gothia, and everywhere seems to have produced the same feeling, "We must put the Danube between us and the foe". It was one of those epidemics of terror which are sometimes found among half-civilized races, unworthy, certainly, of a brave and high-spirited people, but due in part to the superstitious imaginations described by Jordanes. A Visigothic chief, named Alavivus, was the leader of the new migration, but Fritigern was his second in command, and seems gradually to have obtained the foremost place. If the Goths were to obtain a footing on the Roman side of the broad and strong stream, watched as it was by the legions and ships of the Emperor, it could be only as the result of friendly negotiations with Valens; and who so fitting to commence these negotiations as Fritigern, the convert to Christianity, and the faithful advocate of the Roman alliance?

So now was seen by those who looked across from the Bulgarian to the Wallachian shore (from Moesia to Dacia, if we use the contemporary geographical terms) a sight the like of

which has not often been witnessed in history since the dismayed armies of the Israelites stood beside the Red Sea. It is thus described by the contemporary historian Eunapius.

The multitude of the Scythians [Goths] escaping from the murderous savagery of the Huns, who spared not the life of woman or of child, amounted to not less than 200,000 men of fighting age [besides old men, women, and children]. These, standing upon the river-bank in a state of great excitement, stretched out their hands from afar with loud lamentations, and earnestly supplicated that they might be allowed to cross over the river, bewailing the calamity that had befallen them, and promising that they would faithfully adhere to the Imperial alliance if this boon were granted them.

The authorities of the province to whom this request was made, answered, reasonably enough, that they could not grant it upon their own responsibility, but must refer it to the Emperor at Antioch, in whose council the question was long and earnestly debated. The statesmen of the Empire had indeed come, though they knew it not, to one of the great moments in the history of Rome, to one of those crises when a Yes or a No modifies the course of events for centuries. There was danger, no doubt, in keeping two hundred thousand warriors, maddened by fear and famine, at bay upon the frontiers of the Empire; yet, encumbered as they were by the presence of their wives and children, they would hardly have succeeded in crossing the river in the Emperor's despite. There was danger in admitting them within that river-bulwark: yet, for the greater part of a century, they had been the faithful allies of Rome; they recognized the binding force of a solemn covenant; they were rapidly coming under the influence of civilization and Christianity. Bringing, as they proposed to bring, their wives and children with them, they gave some pledges to Fortune, and, if they had been justly dealt with, might probably in the course of years have become attached to their Moesian homes, and have formed an iron rampart for the Empire against further barbarian invasion. Or, if this attempt to constitute them armed defenders of the Roman soil were too venturesome, they might possibly, in that extreme need of theirs, have been constrained into peaceful pursuits, if the surrender of their arms had been made an indispensable condition of their entrance upon Roman territory.

Unfortunately, in that supreme crisis of the Empire, the mediocre intellect and feeble will of Valens, guided by the advice of men who were accomplished only in flattery, decided upon a course which united every possible danger, and secured no possible advantage. His vanity was gratified by the thought that so many stalwart warriors did but crave permission to become his servants. His parsimony—the best trait in his character—discerned a means of filling the Imperial treasury by accepting the unpaid services of these men, while still levying on the provinces the tax which was supposed to be devoted to the hire of military substitutes for the provincials. His unslumbering jealousy of his young and brilliant nephew, Gratian, suggested that in the newly enlisted Goths might one day be found a counterpoise to the veteran legions of Gaul. Moved by these considerations, he decided to transport the fugitives across the Danube. At the same time he laid upon them conditions hard and ignominious, but which if once named ought to have been rigidly enforced; and he himself, by the necessity of the case, contracted obligations to them which it would have required the highest degree of administrative ability to discharge. All these details—and it was a case in which details were everything—he left in the hands of dishonest and incapable subordinates, without, apparently, bestowing on them a day of his own thought and labour; and those subordinates, as naturally as possible, brought the Empire to ruin. Notwithstanding the often-quoted saying about “the little wisdom with which the world is governed”, the Divine Providence does generally, in administration as in other brandies of conduct reward human foresight with success: and it branded the haphazard blundering of Valens with signal and disastrous failure.

The conditions upon which the Emperor permitted, and even undertook to accomplish, the transportation of the Goths to the territory of the Empire, were, first, that all the boys who

were not yet fit for military service (that is, no doubt, all those whose fathers were men of influence in the Gothic host) should be given up as hostages, and distributed in different parts of the Empire; and second, that the weapons should be handed over to the Roman officials, and that every Goth who crossed the river should do so absolutely unarmed. Later and ecclesiastical historians have added, and laid great stress upon, a third condition, that they should all embrace Christianity, of course in its Arian form; but this stipulation, which is not mentioned by any contemporary authority, and is in itself unlikely, has been probably introduced from some confused remembrance of the previous dealings between Valens and Fritigern, dealings in which the weight of the Imperial name does seem to have been thrown into the scale of Christianity, as understood by the Arians. We may probably, however, conclude with safety, that the only Goths to whom liberty to cross—the river was voluntarily conceded by the Emperor were these Christian clients of his, the followers of Fritigern.

The conditions which were imposed destroyed all the grace of the Imperial concession, wounded the home-loving Goth in his affections and his pride, and brought him, with a rankling sense of injury in his heart, within the limits of the Empire. But having been imposed, these conditions should have been impartially enforced. As it was, the one stipulation which had now become all-important was disgracefully neglected by the two officers, Lupicinus, Count of Thrace, and Maximus (probably Duke of Moesia), who had charge of the transportation of the barbarians. All day and all night, for many days and nights, the Roman ships of war were crossing and recrossing the stream, conveying to the Moesian shore a multitude which they tried in vain to number. But as they landed, the Roman centurions, thinking only of the shameful plunder to be secured for themselves or their generals, picking out here a fair-faced damsel or a handsome boy for the gratification of the vilest lust, there appropriating household slaves for the service of the villa or strong labourers for the farm, elsewhere pillaging from the wagons the linen tissues or costly fringed carpets which had contributed to the state of the late lords of Dacia—intent on all these mean or abominable depredations, suffered the warriors of the tribe to march past them with swelling hearts, and with the swords which were to avenge all these injuries not extracted from their scabbards. This hateful picture of sensuality and fatuous greed is drawn for us, not by a Goth, but by two Roman historians; and in looking upon it we seem to understand more clearly why Rome must die.

As the expressed condition on the part of the Goths—the surrender of their arms—was recklessly left unenforced, so the implied condition on the part of the Romans—the feeding of the new settlers—was criminally ignored. It did not require any great gift of statesmanship to see that so large a multitude, suddenly transplanted into an already occupied country, would require for a time some special provision for their maintenance. Corn should have been stored ready for them in the centre town of each district, and those who could not buy, as many could have done, the food needful for their families, should have been permitted to labour for it at some useful work of fortification or husbandry. But everything was left to chance: chance, of course, meant famine; and, according to the concurrent testimony of Goths and Romans, even famine itself was made more severe by the forestalling and regrating of Lupicinus and Maximus. These men sold to the strangers at a great price, first beef and mutton, then the flesh of dogs (requisitioned from the Roman inhabitants), diseased meat and filthy offal. The price of provisions rose with terrible rapidity. The hungry Visigoths would sell a slave—they evidently still possessed slaves—for a single loaf, or pay ten pounds of silver (equivalent to 40*l.* sterling) for one joint of meat. Slaves, money, and furniture being all exhausted, they began—even the nobles of the nation—to sell their own children. Deep must have been the misery endured by those free German hearts before they yielded to the cruel logic of the

situation. “Better that our children live as slaves, than that they perish before our eyes of hunger”

Through the winter months of 376-377, apparently, this systematic robbery went on, and still the Goths would not break their plighted faith to the Emperor. Even as in reading the ghastly history of the Terror in 1793 we are bound to keep ever in memory the miserable lot of the French peasant under the *ancien régime*, so the thought of this cold and calculated cruelty, inflicted by men who had agreed to receive them as allies, and who called themselves their brothers in the faith of Christ, should be present to our minds when we hear of the cruel revenges which in Thrace, in Greece, and in Italy, ‘Gothia’ took on Rome. At length murmurs of discontent reached the ears of Lupicinus, who concentrated his forces round the Gothic settlements. The movement was perceived and taken advantage of by the Ostrogothic chieftains, Alatheus and Saphrax, who, with the young King Wimeric under their charge, after sharing in Athanaric’s campaign against the Huns, had fled to the Danube shore and had asked in vain for the same permission that was accorded to the Christian-Visigoths. Watching their opportunity, they made a dash across the Danube, probably lower down the stream than the point where their countrymen had crossed. Thus the peril of Moesia, already sufficiently grave, was increased by the arrival of a new and considerable host, who were bound by no compact with the Empire, and had given no hostages of their fidelity. Fritigern, who was not yet prepared for an open breach with the Romans, but nevertheless would fain fortify himself by an alliance with these powerful chiefs, slowly marched towards Marcianople, the capital of the Lower (or Eastern) division of Moesia. When he arrived there, with his comrade in arms Alavivus, an event occurred which turned discontent into rebellion, and suspicion into deadly hate. The story is thus told by Jordanes, with some added details from Ammianus.

“It happened in that miserable time that the Roman general, Lupicinus, invited the kings Alavivus and Fritigern to a banquet, at which, as the event showed, he plotted their destruction. But the chiefs, suspecting no guile, went with a small retinue to the feast. Meanwhile the multitude of the barbarians thronged to the gates of the town, and claimed their right as loyal subjects of the Empire to buy the provisions which they had need of in the market. By order of Lupicinus the soldiers pushed them back to a distance from the city. A quarrel arose, and a band of the soldiers were slain and stripped by the barbarians. News of this disturbance was brought to Lupicinus as he was sitting at his gorgeous banquet, watching the comic performers and heavy with wine and sleep. He at once ordered that all the Gothic soldiers, who, partly to do honour to their rank, and partly as a guard to their persons, had accompanied the generals into the palace, should be put to death. Thus, while Fritigern was at the banquet, he heard the cry of men in mortal agony, and soon ascertained that it proceeded from his own followers shut up in another part of the palace, whom the Roman soldiers at the command of their general were attempting to butcher. He drew his sword in the midst of the banqueters, exclaimed that he alone could pacify the tumult which had been raised among his followers, and rushed out of the dining-hall with his companions. They were received with shouts of joy by their countrymen outside; they mounted their horses and rode away, determined to revenge their slaughtered comrades.

Delighted to march once more under the generalship of one of the bravest of men, and to exchange the prospect of death by hunger for death on the battlefield, the Goths at once rose in arms. Lupicinus, with no proper preparation, joined battle with them at the ninth milestone from Marcianople, was defeated, and only saved himself by a shameful flight. The barbarians equipped themselves with the arms of the slain legionaries, and in truth that day ended in one blow the hunger of the Goths and the security of the Romans: for the Goths began thenceforward to comport themselves no longer as strangers but as inhabitants, and as lords to lay their commands upon the tillers of the soil throughout all the Northern provinces.

After war had been thus declared, Fritigern, elated with his success, marched across the Balkans, and appeared in the neighbourhood of Hadrianople. There the incredible folly of the Roman officials, who seem to have been determined not to leave one fault uncommitted, threw another strong Gothic reinforcement into his arms. There were two chieftains named Sueridus and Colias, possibly belonging to the ‘Gothi Minores’ of Ulfilas, who had long ago entered the service of the Empire, and who were now from their winter-quarters at Hadrianople placidly beholding the contest, without any disposition to side with their invading kinsmen. Suddenly orders arrived from the Emperor that the troops under their command were to march to the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles. The leaders prepared to obey, but made the perfectly reasonable proposal that they should receive an allowance for the expenses of the march, rations for the journey, and be allowed a delay of two days to complete their preparations. Some old grudge connected with depredations committed by the Goths on their property in the suburbs prompted the magistrates of the city to refuse the request; nay more, to arm the smiths, of whom there was a large number in Hadrianople, the chief arsenal of Thrace, to sound the trumpets, and to threaten Sueridus and Colias with instant destruction unless they immediately obeyed the Emperor’s orders. The Goths at first stood still, unable to comprehend the meaning of this outburst of petulance, but when scowling looks were succeeded by taunting words, and these by actual missiles from the armed artisans, they willingly accepted the offered challenge and fought. Soon a crowd of Romans were lying dead in the streets of Hadrianople. According to the usual custom even of Roman warfare the Goths despoiled the corpses of their arms, and then they marched out of the town to join their countryman Fritigern. The united forces attempted a siege of the city, but in vain; and with an exclamation from Fritigern, “I do not make war on stone walls”, they broke up their camp and streamed westward and southward through the Rhodope valleys and over the rich province of Thrace. From every quarter the enslaved Goths hastened to the uplifted standard of the bravest of men, eager to avenge upon their oppressors the insults and the blows which they had received since that shameful day of the passage of the Danube.

These, and some deserters from among the poorer Provincials, were of great service to the barbarian leaders in guiding them to the lurking-places of wealthy Romans, and the secret stores of corn and treasure. Pillage, conflagration, murder, were universal in all the country districts of Thrace. Little children were slain before the eyes of their mothers, and old men, stripped of all their wealth, lamenting their ruined homesteads, and crying out that they had already lived too long, were dragged away into slavery among the barbarians.

When the news of this disastrous issue of the Gothic migration reached the Emperor at Antioch, it naturally plunged him in the deepest anxiety. Yet he left the campaign of 377 to be fought out by his generals, and did not that year appear himself upon the scene. He at once patched up a peace with Persia, withdrew his troops from Armenia, and sent them straight to the field of action in Thrace under two generals, Profuturus and Trajan, whose self-confidence, we are told, was greater than their capacity. Gratian also spared some troops from Gaul, under the command of Richomer, who held the high office of Count of the Domestics, but their numbers were considerably lessened by desertion before they reached the foe.

Ammianus blames the strategy of the generals of Valens, who, he thinks, should have avoided anything like a pitched battle with the Goths, and should have gradually worn them down by frequent and harassing encounters. But it is plain that they succeeded in clearing first the Rhodope country, and then the line of the Balkans, of the Gothic army (though detached bands of plunderers still loitered in the south), and at last the three generals sat down before the barbarian camp at a place called “The Willows” (Ad Salices), in the region which we now call the Dobrudscha, between the Danube and the Sea. That the tide of battle should have rolled so far northward seems to show that the Roman generals had not greatly failed in their campaign.

A bloody but indecisive battle followed, of which Ammianus has given us a striking if somewhat turgid description. We see the Goths in their great round encampment of wagons which they themselves called *carrago*; and with which their Dutch kinsmen in South Africa have lately made us familiar under the name of “the laager camp”. Those fiery spirits hoped to win the battle on the previous evening. They now pass the night in sleepless excitement, varied by a prolonged supper. The Romans also remain awake, but rather from anxiety than hope. Then with the dawn of day the barbarians, according to their usual custom, renew to one another their oaths of fidelity in battle. The Romans sing a martial song, rising *crescendo* from the lower notes to the higher, which is known to their nation as the *barritus*. The barbarians, with less of harmony, make the air resound with the praises of their martial ancestors. (Would that the historian could have taken down for us from the mouth of some captive Goth a specimen of one of these ancestral songs!) Then the Goths try, but not with great success, to gain some rising ground from which they may rush down in fury on the foe. The missile weapons fly, the Romans, joining shield to shield, form the celebrated *testudo*, and advance with firm step. The barbarians dash down upon them their great clubs, whose blackened ends are hardened in the fire, or stab those who resist most obstinately with the points of their swords. Thus for a time they break the left wing of the Imperial army, but a strong support comes up, and the Roman line is restored. The hail of flying javelins rattles on unceasingly. The horsemen on both sides pursue the fugitives, striking at their heads and backs; the foot-soldiers follow, and hamstring the fallen to prevent their continuing their escape. So, while both nations are fighting with undiminished ardour, the sun goes down upon scenes whose ghastliness our historian describes with unnecessary minuteness, and after all the battle of the Salices is neither lost nor won. Next day the bodies of the chiefs on both sides are buried. Those of the common soldiers are left to the vultures, which at that time fed fat upon human flesh. Years after, Ammianus himself appears to have seen the heaps of whitened bones which still denoted the site of the great battle

After this indecisive battle the Goths remained “in laager” for seven days. The Romans retired to Marcianople, but succeeded, owing to the inactivity of the barbarians, in shutting many detached parties of the Goths into sequestered valleys among the Balkans, where they perished of famine. Richomer, however, in the autumn returned to Gaul, which was believed to be in danger of invasion; and, perhaps in consequence of this diminution of the Imperial forces, before the close of the year, we find the Goths again holding the Balkan line against Saturninus, Master of the Horse, who had been sent to reinforce Trajan and Profuturus: and not only so, but having sent invitations to some of Coalition of their late enemies, the Huns and the Alani—for by this time the Roman was even more hateful than the Hun—they again burst into Thrace, where they committed a fresh series of outrages, the heightened brutality of which seems to be due to the presence of their Tartar auxiliaries.

In the mournful procession that followed in the train of the invaders might be seen mothers with their newborn children in their arms, scarred by the lash of the slave-driver, tender and delicate women longing in vain for death to free them from foreseen dishonour, wealthy nobles hurried away from the smoking ruins of their villas and bewailing the caprice of Fortune, which in a moment had given them in exchange for lordship and luxury, the prospect of the barbarian torture-chamber, the ignominy of the barbarian master's scourge.

The Teutonic invaders, however, were by no means uniformly victorious. A general named Frigeridus (probably of Frankish extraction) had been sent by Gratian into the Thracian provinces, and had strongly entrenched himself near Berea. He had shown hitherto but little energy, being, as his friends said, at times incapacitated by cruel attacks of gout, while his enemies insinuated that the gout was rather the consequence than the cause of his inactivity. Now, however, by one successful stroke he redeemed his military character. The Taifali, a

satellite-tribe of the great Gothic confederacy, had crossed the undefended Danube, and under the leadership of a Gothic noble named Farnobius, were roaming over Thrace and Macedon, doing the usual work of devastation. Frigeridus waited till they came near his entrenchments, then sallied forth and inflicted upon them a well-aimed and successful stroke. Farnobius was slain, and the whole band of Taifali and accompanying Goths might have been cut to pieces. But Frigeridus, when they were at his mercy, granted their prayer for life, and sent them into Italy to cultivate as *coloni* the rich alluvial plains in the neighbourhood of Modena, Reggio, and Parma. We do not hear again of these involuntary emigrants, but the fact that such a settlement was desirable or even possible in the fertile valley of the Po shows what desolations had begun to reveal themselves even in the very heart of the Empire. After this victory Frigeridus, who seems to have thoroughly shaken off his former lethargy, got himself to work to fortify the passes of the Balkans, and especially that most important pass then known as the pass of Succi, in later times as the Iron Gate or Trajan's Gate, over which runs the road from Sophia to Philippopolis. Could his wise defensive policy have been maintained, Thrace at any rate would have been kept clear from the Gothic ravagers, even if Moesia were abandoned to their devastation. But, apparently in the winter of 377, Frigeridus was relieved of the command of the Western troops, which was given to Count Maurus, a fierce, fickle, and corrupt officer, of whom history has nothing memorable to relate, except that seventeen years before this time he was at Paris, serving as one of the front-rank men in the legion of the Petulantes when Julian was proclaimed Augustus by the insurgent soldiery, and that he, when no diadem was at hand, and when the necklace of Helena, Julian's wife, and a horse's collar had both been proposed and rejected as unsuitable, took from his neck the torque which he wore as bearer of the dragon ensign of the regiment, and placed it on the head of the new Emperor. Maurus appears to have been defeated by the barbarians at the pass of Succi and fresh hordes of them probably poured southward into Thrace over the undefended barrier.

Still upon the whole, the campaign of 378 seems to have opened auspiciously for the interests of Rome along the whole line. In the West, Gratian, who had found his barbarians upon the Rhine and in the Tyrol perceptibly more restless and excited on account of the rumours of Rome's reverses on the Danube, succeeded in winning an important victory near Colmar in Alsace, and in reducing to obedience, after some operations of extraordinary difficulty, the Lentienses, a barbarous tribe who dwelt among the mountains of the Black Forest, in the East.

In the East, Sebastian, who had been so lately an unconscious candidate for the purple of Valentinian was summoned from Italy at the earnest request of Valens and assumed the supreme command of the infantry in the room of Trajan. With a small and select detachment of troops he fell by night upon a large body of marauding Goths who had settled themselves to sleep by the banks of the river Hebrus (Maritza), and only a few nimble-footed ones among them escaped the slaying sword of the Roman general.

But these two victories were in fact not the precursors merely, but the causes, of a greater and far more terrible defeat. The Emperor Valens had now appeared upon the scene, having removed his court from Antioch to Constantinople. Deep down in that man's heart, the secret motive it may be believed of many of his worst and most unwise actions, was the conviction that he had been chosen by fraternal partiality for an office for which he was not fitted, and that all men, citizens, soldiers, generals, were ever reflecting upon that unfitness. The victory of his nephew, the gallant and brilliant Gratian, was gall and wormwood to his spirit, and he nourished a petulant and morbid craving for a triumph in which that nephew should have no share, and which Sebastian's success, somewhat magnified in the general's report of it, persuaded him would be an easy one.

The few days of the Emperors stay at Constantinople had been clouded by an outbreak of popular sedition, partial indeed, and soon suppressed, but unpleasantly indicating the adverse judgment of the multitude on his recent policy. Valens withdrew in displeasure to his villa of Melanthias (eighteen miles from the capital), where, since he knew himself to be unpopular with the citizens, he set himself to gain the affections of the soldiery by the well-worn devices of donative and extra rations, and affable gossip with the men. In this way the early summer passed on, while Sebastian won his victory by the Maritza and Gratian his by the Rhine. Roused by these tidings, Valens set forth from his villa with a large and well-appointed army, containing no small number of veterans, and many experienced officers, among them Trajan, the late Master of the Soldiers. On his march an incident occurred, which at the time was probably remarkable only as furnishing an illustration of the lamentably devastated condition of the country, but to which later generations added a touch of the supernatural, and then beheld in it a portent.

“The body of a man”, says Zosimus, “was seen lying by the roadside, seeming as if it had been scourged from head to foot, and utterly motionless, except as to the eyes, which were open, and which it moved from one to another of the beholders. To all questions who he was, or whence he came, or from whom he had suffered these things, he answered nothing. Whereupon they deemed the sight to be somewhat in the nature of a portent, and showed it to the Emperor. Still, when he questioned it, it remained equally dumb: and you would have said that it could not be living, since the whole body was motionless, nor yet utterly dead since it still had the power of vision. And while they were gazing, suddenly the portentous thing vanished. Whereupon those of the bystanders who had skill to read coming events, conjectured that the apparition foreshadowed the future condition of the commonwealth, which, like that man, should be stricken and scourged, and lie for a space like one who is about to give up the ghost, until at length by the vileness of its rulers and ministers it should be utterly destroyed. And this forecast, as one after another all these things have come upon us, is seen to have been a true one”

After three days' march the army reached Hadrianople, where they took up their position in the usual square form of a Roman camp strengthened by ditch and *vallum* and palisade. The scouts who had seen the Gothic forces, by some incredible error brought back word that they only numbered 10,000 men. Before the battle was joined, the Emperor must have been undeceived on this point, but it is probable that to the last he underestimated the strength of his foe. While they were still in camp Richomer, the Count of the Domestics, arrived with a letter from his young master Gratian, who had been detained by fever at Sirmium, stating that he was again on the road, and would shortly join his uncle with powerful reinforcements. A council of war was held to decide between instant battle and a delay of a few days in order to effect a junction with Gratian. Sebastian, fresh from his easy victory by the Maritza, advised immediate action. Victor, Master of the Cavalry, a Sarmatian (Sclavonian) by birth, but an excellent and wary general and true to Rome, advised delay. The absurd miscalculation of the enemy's forces, joined to the Emperor's unconcealed desire to win his victory without Gratian, carried the day, and it was decided to fight forthwith.

Scarcely had this resolution been arrived at when a singular embassy arrived from Fritigern. A presbyter of the Christian worship, with other persons of somewhat humble rank, brought a letter, in which the Gothic king entreated that he and his people who were driven forth from their homes by the inroad of the savage Huns, might have the province of Thrace assigned to them for a habitation, with all the cattle and crops which yet remained in it. On this condition, which, as it may have been represented, was justified by the precedent of Aurelian's cession of Dacia, they promised to remain everlastingly at peace with Rome. According to a camp-rumour, which Ammianus believed, but which to a modern historian seems highly

improbable, this same messenger brought confidential letters from the Goth to the Emperor, advising him apparently not to concede the terms openly asked for, but to hurry up his army close to the barbarian host, and thereby enable Fritigern to extract from his too arrogant followers terms more favourable to the Roman commonwealth.

Such an embassy, with such a request, especially in the existing mood of the Emperor and his officers, was of course disregarded: and at dawn of the following day the Emperor and his army set forward, leaving their baggage, military chest, and the chief of the trappings of the Imperial dignity, under the shelter of the walls of Hadrianople.

It was not till about two o'clock in the afternoon that the wagons of the Goths, arranged in their usual circular form, were seen upon the horizon. The Romans drew up their line of battle, putting the cavalry, contrary to their usual custom, in front of the heavy-armed infantry. While this was going on, the barbarians, according to their custom, says Ammianus, raised a sad and savage howl, which however was probably meant for melody. Then followed, not the fight, but a perplexing series of embassies and counter embassies between Fritigern and Valens. The Goth seems to have had really some doubt as to the issue of the combat. His Ostrogothic allies, Alatheus and Saphrax, with the chief of the barbarian cavalry, were from some unexplained cause absent, but he knew that they were hastening to join him. He knew also that with the Roman troops, hot, exhausted, and thirsty after a long march under the noon-day sun of August, and with their horses unable to graze—for the Goths had set the dry grass on fire and it was still blazing around them—an hour or two of delay would tell for him against the Emperor. Why Valens lingered is less easy to explain, unless, after all, he, though eager for a victory all his own, had little inclination for the fight.

The negotiations turned on the quality of the hostages who were to be exchanged in order that Fritigern might be sufficiently secure of peace to impose it on his followers. Aequitius, who held the high office of *Cura Palatii* and was a relation of Valens, was named: but Aequitius had before tasted the discomfort of captivity among the Goths, and having escaped—perhaps broken his parole, was not sure what kind of welcome he would be met with by the barbarians. Then Count Richomer nobly volunteered for the unpleasant task, and had actually started for the wagon-encampment, but before he reached it the impatience of the Roman soldiers put an end to this irritating suspense. Some light-armed troops (archers and shield-bearers) under the command of Bacurius the Armenian, came up to the Gothic rampart and actually engaged the enemy at the very moment when Richomer was starting on his mission. Doubtless, however, even then Fritigern would have found means to spin out again his interminable negotiations, had not his chief end already been attained. Alatheus and Saphrax were come, and their cavalry swept down upon the hot and hungry Roman soldiers like a thunderbolt. The battle which followed is described with much minuteness but no great clearness by Ammianus. What the professional Roman soldier has failed to make clear, a modern and unprofessional writer may be excused from attempting to explain. Something is said about the right wing of the cavalry having reached the ground before the left, which straggled up in disorder by various roads to the field of battle. It has also been suggested that the Romans, in putting their cavalry before their infantry, showed that they intended to attack, and that the battle was necessarily lost when Fritigern by his crafty negotiations and by the well-timed charge of Alatheus and Saphrax wrested from them the offensive. The left wing of the cavalry actually pushed up to the Gothic wagons, and had they been supported by their comrades, would perhaps have stormed the camp, but isolated as they were from the rest of the army, they were powerless. Far behind them the maniples of the infantry were so tightly jammed together that they could scarce draw their swords or reach back a once-extended hand, and their spears were broken by the swaying to and fro of their own unmanageable mass before they could hurl them against the enemy. There they stood, raging but helpless, an easy mark to

the Gothic missiles, not one of which could fail to wound a Roman soldier, while the cavalry, which should have covered their advance, far forward on the battlefield, but separated from the main body of the army by an intervening sea of furious barbarians, stood for some time a brave but broken bulwark. At length, after hours of slaughter and after some hopeless charges over the heaps of slain, in which the Romans tried to get at the enemy with their swords and to avenge the destruction which they could not avert, the ranks of the infantry gave way and they fled in confusion from the field.

Where meanwhile was Valens? When the day was irretrievably lost, finding himself surrounded on all sides by scenes of horror, he rode, leaping with difficulty over heaps of slain, to where two legions of his guard still held their ground against the surging torrent of the barbarians. Trajan, who was with them, shouted out, "All hope is gone unless a detachment of soldiers can be got together to protect the Emperor's person". At these words a certain Count Victor rode off to collect some of the Batavian cohort, whose duty it was to act as a reserve to the Imperial Guard. But when he reached their station he found not a man there, and evidently deeming further efforts to save his master's life hopeless, he and Richomer and Saturninus hurried from the field.

Trajan fell where he was fighting, and round him fell presumably the two still unbroken legions, while the miserable Valens wandered on between heaps of slain horses and over roads made nearly impassable by his dead and dying subjects. Night came on, a moonless night, and, when the dreadful day dawned, the Emperor was not to be found. Some said that they had seen him at twilight flying from the field, in the crowd of common soldiers, sore wounded by an arrow, and that he had suddenly fallen, faint from the loss of blood. Others told a more circumstantial tale. According to them, after he had received his wound, a small company of eunuchs and soldiers of the bodyguard who still surrounded him, bore him off to some miserable out-house of timber, which they saw nigh at hand. There, while they were trying to assuage his pain, a company of Goths came by, ignorant whom they were pursuing, and demanded admission. As the door was kept tightly barred against them, and they were assailed by a shower of arrows from the roof, the barbarians, impatient at being so long hindered from their work of depredation, piled straw and logs against the cottage and set it on fire. One young alone escaped from the conflagration to tell the Goths what they had done, and of how great a prize they had defrauded themselves by their cruel impatience.

This last version of the story, though only half credited by Ammianus, is the one which obtained most currency with posterity. The ecclesiastical historians, in whose eyes the heresy of Valens was his greatest crime, were never tired of remarking that he who, by seducing the Gothic nation into Arianism, had caused so many of their number to burn eternally in hell, was himself, according to the righteous retribution of God, burned on earth by the hands of those same barbarians.

Upon the field of Hadrianople fully two-thirds of the Roman army were proved to have perished. Among them were thirty-seven officers of high rank, besides Trajan and Sebastian. "Though the Romans" says Ammianus, "have often had experience of the fickleness of Fortune, their annals contain no record of so destructive a defeat since the battle of Cannae". And we, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, can perceive that while even the terrible disaster of Cannae was repairable, the consequences of the battle of Hadrianople could never be repaired.

CHAPTER V

THEODOSIUS AND THE FOEDERATI

A. D.

346. Theodosius born.

367. Served in Britain under his father

374. Fought in Moesia against Quadi and Marcomanni

376. Execution of Theodosius, senior

379- *Proclaimed Emperor* at Sirmiurn, Jan. 16

380. Illness at Thessalonica Baptised by Ascholius, Bishop of Thessalonica. Edict *De Fide*

Catholica

381. Reception of Athanaric at Constantinople, Jan. 11-25

Council of Constantinople (Second General Council) May-July

383. Arcadius proclaimed Augustus, Jan. 16 Usurpation of Maximus. Murder of Gratian, August 25

384. Treaty with Persia. Birth of Honorius

387. *Quinquennalia* of Arcadius. Sedition at Antioch. Flight of Valentinian II from Italy

.Marriage of Theodosius and Galla

388. Maximus defeated and slain

389. Theodosius at Rome

390. Destruction of Temple of Serapis at Alexandria. Massacre at Thessalonica, Exclusion from the Church by Ambrose.

392. Valentinian II slain by order of Arbogast. Usurpation of Eugenius, May 15. War with Eugenius and Arbogast

394. Battle of the Frigidus, Sept. 5, 6

395. *Death of Theodosius* .

THE course of events in the provinces south of the Danube during the year 378 was an illustration of the fact, abundantly proved by many other passages in the history of the world, that a barbarous race fighting against a civilized one may win victories, but scarcely ever knows how to improve them. Such a calamity as that of Hadrianople, had the king of Persia been the antagonist, must surely have involved the ruin at any rate of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire. In the hands of the Goths its *direct* results were ridiculously small—a little more ravaging and slaughtering, two or three years of desultory war, and then a treaty by which the barbarians bound themselves to be the humble servants of the Emperor.

With the dawn which followed the terrible night of the 9th of August, the victors, excited and greedy of spoil, marched in compact order to Hadrianople, where, as they knew from the reports of deserters, were to be found the insignia of the imperial dignity and a great accumulation of treasure. At first it seemed not impossible that they might carry the place by a *coup de main*. Fugitives from the beaten army, soldiers and camp-followers, were still swarming around the gates and blocking up the road, by their disorderly eagerness preventing themselves from obtaining an entrance. With these men the Gothic squadrons kept up a fierce fight till about three in the afternoon. Then three hundred of the Roman infantry—possibly themselves enlisted from among the Teutonic subjects of the Empire—went over in a body to the barbarians. With incredible folly as well as cruelty the Goths refused to accept their surrender, and killed the greater part of them, thereby closing the door on all propositions of a

similar kind during the remainder of the war. Meanwhile the defenders of the city had succeeded in firmly closing the gates, had stationed powerful catapults and balistae on the walls, and finding themselves well supplied with all things necessary for a long defence, except a good stock of water, as the first day wore away to its close leaving the city still no nearer to its capture, their spirits began to rise, and the hope that all might yet be retrieved grew brighter.

Contrary to the advice of Frigidern, whose authority, though he bore the name of king, was evidently not absolute over followers hungering for booty, the Goths determined to continue the siege, but, dismayed by the sight of so many of their bravest warriors slain or disabled, they determined to employ stratagem. Not all, apparently, of the deserters of the previous day had been slain by the Gothic sword. Some of the late Emperor's own guard of honour, conspicuous by their white tunics, as English guardsmen by their bear-skin caps, and known throughout the Empire as *candidati*, had been admitted to surrender by the barbarians, and were now to be employed in the fresh attempt upon Hadrianople. They agreed to feign flight from their new friends and to set the city secretly on fire. In the bewilderment and confusion of the fire it was hoped that the walls would be stripped of their defenders, and that the Goths might rush in to an easy victory. The *Candidati* appear to have been true in their treachery. They stood in the fosse before the walls and stretched out suppliant hands entreating for admission. A suspicious diversity, however, in their statements respecting the plans of the Goths, caused them to be kept close prisoners, and when torture was applied they confessed the scheme in which they had made themselves accomplices.

The Gothic stratagem having thus miscarried, there was nothing for it but to try another open assault. Again the bravest and noblest of the barbarians pressed on at the head of their people, each one hoping that his should be the fortunate hand which should grasp the treasure of Valens. Again the engines on the walls played with fearful havoc upon the dense masses of the besiegers. The cylinders and capitals of stately columns came crashing down upon their heads. One gigantic engine, called the Wild Ass, hurled a mass of stone so vast that though it chanced to fall harmlessly upon a space of ground which was clear of the hostile ranks, all who fought by that part of the wall were demoralized by fear of what the next bray from the Wild Ass might signify. At length, after a long weary day of unsuccessful battle, when the assault of the besiegers had degenerated into a series of ill-organized rushes against the walls, brave but utterly hopeless, their trumpets were sadly sounded for retreat, and every survivor in the host said, "Would that we had followed the counsel of Frigidern". They drew off their forces. Hadrianople was saved, and its defenders, a larger host than was needed for its protection, withdrew by devious ways, some to Philippopolis and some to Sardica. They still hoped to find Valens somewhere hidden in the ravaged country, and they probably bore with them his treasure and his crown.

The Goths meanwhile, with many of their new allies, the Huns and the Alani, in their ranks, after from an unsuccessful attempt upon Perinthus by the Sea of Marmora, marched upon Constantinople. Destitute as they were of all naval resources, it must surely have been but a forlorn hope for men who had failed in the moment of victory to take the inland city of Hadrianople, to attempt the strongly fortified peninsula of Byzantium. At any rate their attack was repulsed, and that partly by a race whom after ages would have wondered to behold among the defenders of *Christian* Constantinople. A band of Saracens, the wild and wandering inhabitants of Arabia, as yet unorganized and unreclaimed by the fervent faith of Mohammed, "a nation", as Ammianus says, "whom it is never desirable to have either for friends or enemies", had been brought to the capital among the auxiliary troops of Valens, and upon them now fell the chief lab our of its defence. With barbarian confidence and impetuosity they issued forth from the gates and fell upon the squadrons of the Goths. At first the event of the battle seemed doubtful, but at length the Teutonic host became demoralized and retired in disorder.

According to our Roman historian's account the determining cause of their defeat was the horror inspired by the ghastly proceedings of one of the Saracen warriors. Completely naked except for a girdle round his loins, with that long floating black hair which Europe afterwards knew so well, uttering a hoarse and melancholy howl, he sprang with drawn dagger upon the Gothic hosts, and having stabbed his man proceeded to suck the life-blood from the neck of his slaughtered foe. The Northern barbarians, easily accessible to shadowy and superstitious terrors, and arguing perhaps that they had to do with demons rather than with men, began to waver in their ranks, and withdrew from the field. Who that witnessed that confused jostle between the Northern and Southern barbarisms could have imagined the part that each was destined to play in the middle ages beside the Mediterranean shores; that they would meet again three centuries later upon the Andalusian plain; that from these would spring the stately Khalifats of Cordova and Bagdad; from those the chivalry of Castille?

The Gothic army, with heavy losses and somewhat impaired hope, retired from Constantinople. Since they could take no important city it was clear that they could not yet conquer, if they wished to conquer, the Empire of Rome. They could ravage it, and this they did effectually, wandering almost at pleasure over the countries that we now call Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia, and up to the very spurs of the Julian Alps on the north-eastern confines of Italy. Incapable of resistance except behind walls, the Romans took a cruel and cowardly revenge. It will be remembered that when the Goths were ferried across the Danube they had been compelled to surrender all the youthful sons of their chief men as hostages for their good behaviour. These lads had been dispersed through all the cities of the East, where their rich attire and the stately forms which seemed to tell of the temperate northern climates in which they had their birth, excited the admiration and fear of the populations among whom they were placed. Three years had now passed since the fatal treaty, and these youths were rapidly maturing into men. The brave deeds, the victories and defeats of their fathers on the Thracian battlefields, had reached their ears. Clustering together in the unfriendly streets they muttered to one another —so at least the Romans thought— in their barbaric tongue, counsels of revenge for their slain kinsmen. Julius, the Master of the Soldiery, to whom tidings were brought of this real or supposed movement among the hostages, determined to strike the first blow. Having obtained full powers from the Senate at Constantinople, and communicated his plans under pledges of inviolable secrecy to the commandants of the garrisons, he caused a report to be circulated through the provinces that all the hostages who should present themselves at the chief cities on a given day should receive rich gifts and an allotment of lands from the bounty of the Emperor. Laying aside all thoughts of vengeance, if they had ever entertained them, the Gothic lads trooped in, each one, to the capital of his province. When they were thus assembled, unarmed and unsuspecting, in the Thracian and Asiatic market-places, the soldiery at a given signal mounted the roofs of the surrounding houses, and hurled stones and darts upon them till the last of the yellow-haired striplings was laid low. A brave deed truly, and one worthy of the Roman legions in those days, and of the Master of the Soldiery —bearing alas, the great name of Julius— who commanded them! It is with sorrow that we observe that Ammianus Marcellinus, who closes his history with this event, speaks with approbation of the “prudent counsel of the Master, the accomplishment whereof without tumult or delay saved the Eastern provinces from a great danger”.

That dastardly crime, however, was not committed with the sanction of the new Emperor of the East, whose permission Julius expressly forbore to seek. To him, to the well-known figure of the Emperor *Theodosius*, it is now time to turn. He inherited from his father a name ennobled by great services to the state, and shaded by the remembrance of a cruel wrong. Of all the generals who served the house of Valentinian none had earned a higher or purer fame than Theodosius the Spaniard.

His birthplace was probably the same as that of his Imperial son, namely, the little town of Cauca (now Coca), situated near the confines of Old Castile and Leon, on the upper waters of the Douro, twenty-nine miles from the city of Segovia. He was of illustrious birth, sprung from one of those powerful provincial families—which now formed the true aristocracy of the Empire. We are not informed of the year of his birth (which was probably about 320), nor of the earlier steps in his upward career. We first hear of him in Britain, and as three of the Camps on the line of the Roman Wall in Northumberland were garrisoned by detachments of cavalry and infantry from the north-west of Spain, it is possible that Theodosius the Elder may have learnt the rudiments of war in defending that bleak barrier. This, however, is merely a conjecture. Our first authentic information concerning him brings him before us not as a Tribune or Prefect, but as holding the high military office of Duke of Britain. In the year 368 tidings had been brought to Valentinian of the melancholy state of the British Island. The Franks and the Saxony were harassing the eastern coast with their pillagings, burnings, and murderings. On the northern border of the province the Picts, divided into two branches, the Dicalydones and Verturiones, the warlike nation of the Attacotti and the wide-wandering Scots, were marching up and down whither they would, carrying desolation with them. The Count of the Saxon shore was slain; the Duke of Britain (the predecessor of Theodosius) was apparently a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. The Emperor chose Theodosius who had already earned a high military reputation, and sent him with a selected body of young legionaries, proud to serve under such a commander, to deliver Britain from the spoiler.

Theodosius landed at Richborough, and went first to a city which in old times used to be called Lundinium, but which the moderns—that is to say, the moderns of the fourth century—persisted in calling Augusta. Making this city his basis of operations, but avoiding any great pitched battle, he divided his forces into small but nimble detachments, whose business it was to intercept the plundering hordes, to fall upon them when encumbered with spoil, and thus to pillage the pillagers, and slay the slayers. In this way he gradually cleared the country of its invaders, and recovered the greater part of the booty which they had taken and which, except a small portion reserved as a reward for his weary soldiers, was all returned to the provincials. In the words of Claudian, the court-poet of the Theodosian family,

“What did the stars avail, the seas unknown,
The frost eternal of that frigid zone?
The Saxons’ life-stream steeped the Orcadian plain,
Thule with blood of Picts grew warm again,
And icy Erin’ mourned her Scotsmen slain”.

The result of the campaign of Theodosius was that the wanton insolence of the various barbarian tribes who thought to find the British province an easy prey was checked, the ruined cities and camps were rebuilt, and the foundations of what promised to be a long peace—it lasted, in fact, for something like forty years—seemed to be securely laid. In his civil administration of the province, Theodosius showed himself equally successful, detecting and repressing a dangerous conspiracy and effecting a reformation in the corps of *Areani*, who having been originally organized as a kind of secret intelligence department to gain information of the movements of the enemy, had been largely engaged in underhand trade with the bands of the spoilers, virtually becoming receivers of stolen goods, and far more often revealing the movements of the legions to the barbarians than those of the barbarians to the Roman officers.

In the following year (369) Theodosius, now Master of the Cavalry, led an army through the Grisons to a successful attack upon the Alamanni, many of whom he slew, while the

remainder were transported to the north of Italy, where they cultivated the fruitful plains watered by the Po, as tributaries of the Empire.

His greatest services to the State, however, were rendered in the province of Africa, where he spent the last three years of his life (373-376). During the cruelly oppressive government of Count Romanus, a Moorish chieftain named Firmus, the lord of a large tract of country, had openly revolted against Valentinian and assumed the purple. The Emperor naturally turned to Theodosius, the most distinguished of his generals, the man who then occupied the same place in the minds of men which Corbulo had filled in the reign of Nero, and sent him with the dignity of Count of Africa, to suppress the Moorish revolt. A difficult but victorious campaign was ended by the suicide of Firmus, and Theodosius remained to govern, equitably and wisely, the province which his arms had saved from the barbarian. "Africa", wrote the orator Symmachus to him, "has recovered from her disease, and though our invincible Emperors were her physicians, you were the remedy which they applied. Your true palm-wreath is the happiness of the province".

To a life distinguished by such eminent services to the state, if not the Imperial diadem, at least an old age of dignified repose would have seemed the fitting crown. But an unexpected change in his fortunes was at hand. In the year 376, a few months probably after the sudden death of the Emperor Valentinian, a scaffold was erected at Carthage, and Theodosius was ordered to ascend it. "He asked", we are told, "that he might first be baptized for the remission of his sins, and having obtained the sacrament of Christ, which he had desired, after a glorious life in this world, being also secure of the life eternal, he willingly offered his neck to the executioner". History asks in vain for the motive of such well-nigh unexampled ingratitude. The only one that is assigned is creeping envy of the fame of the old general. It is possible that the party of the late governor Romanus, scotched but not killed by that oppressor's removal from office, may have found means to calumniate him successfully at the Court of Milan. Possibly too his adherence to the orthodox creed may have rendered him obnoxious to Justina, widow of Valentinian, who governed Africa as well as Italy in the name of her infant son, and whom we know to have been a bitter Arian. But it is probable that the hand which prepared, and the voice which counselled the stroke, were the hand and the voice of Valens, the most powerful member for the time of the Imperial partnership. Those four ominous letters *THEOD* began the name of Theodosius as surely as that of Theodorus, and it seems therefore allowable to suppose that the incantation scene at Antioch four years previously—the laurel tripod, the person in linen mantle and with linen socks, who shook the magic cauldron and made the ring dance up and down among the twenty-four letters of the alphabet—were links in the chain of causation which led the blameless veteran to his doom.

Such, briefly sketched, was the career of the elder Theodosius. His son and namesake, born in Spain about the year 346, was like him, a man of noble and commanding presence, affable in his demeanour, but of slender literary attainments, as might naturally be expected in one who had been a man of war from his youth. He certainly had the power of inspiring enthusiastic loyalty in his soldiers, and terror in his enemies. From the hints both of friends and foes we may perhaps conjecture that his large handsome countenance in the earlier years of his reign wore an expression which the former called good-tempered, the latter heavy and indolent; but that after some years of despotic power, the scowl on the brow grew darker and the angry flush on the cheek more often visible. Having learned the elements of the military art under his father, doubtless in Britain, Germany and Africa, he had shown such evidences of good soldiery that already in the year 373 he filled the high office of Duke of Moesia. In this capacity he won several victories over the 'Free Sarmatians' and by the terror of his name checked the torrent of barbarian invasion which was overflowing Pannonia. On the death of his father (376) he retired into private life, lived among his own people on his Spanish estate,

and—so says his panegyrist—often encouraged his peasants by taking a turn with them in the labors of the farm, so that his martial limbs might not grow flabby by disuse. His retirement lasted less than three years. Then Gratian, finding himself, at the age of twenty, left by the death of his uncle Valens, the oldest of the Emperors, with only his impetuous and unwise stepmother Justina nominally assisting in the administration of the Empire, looked around him for help, and wisely determined by one act to associate with himself a colleague of riper experience than his own, and to repair, as far as it could be repaired, the cruel injustice which had been committed by the house of Valentinian. He summoned Theodosius from Spain, and on the 19th of January, 379, proclaimed him Augustus at Sirmium on the Save. The new Emperor was probably in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

To his new colleague Gratian assigned the share of the Empire which had formerly been governed by Valens, but with considerably enlarged limits. It had doubtless been perceived in the recent campaign that the division between Oriens and Illyricum which split what is now called the Balkan Peninsula into two unequal parts, by a line running north and south from the Danube to the Aegean, was ill adapted for purposes of defence against the Gothic invaders. Now, therefore, Gratian handed over to Theodosius not only Oriens (that is Moesia and Thrace, with Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt) but also the eastern part of Illyricum, comprising the two Dioceses of Dacia and Macedonia, or, speaking in terms of modern geography, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania and Greece. Nearly the whole of that territory which recently belonged to Turkey, except Moldavia and Wallachia, thus became subject to the sway of the Eastern Emperor. This arrangement undoubtedly worked well for the defence of the provinces, now consolidated under the rule of Theodosius : and it had important bearings on the after-history of Europe, as the line now traced was practically the abiding frontier between the Eastern and Western Empires.

From Sirmium, the scene of his accession, the new Emperor of the East seems to have marched up the valley of the Morava, and down the valley of the Vardar to Thessalonica, which he made his headquarters for the two following years. It is not difficult to discern the reason for his choice. All over the plains of Thrace and Macedonia, on the south of the Balkan range as well as on the north of it, the Gothic marauders were swarming. The walled cities, it is true, everywhere repelled their attacks, but in the open country they were irresistible. Far and wide the burning villas, the ravaged vineyards, the long trains of captives, in which the nobleman as well as the colons was led off into miserable bondage, told the tale of the ruin wrought by the terrible day of Hadrianople. The first duty of Theodosius manifestly was to clear the provinces south of the Balkan range, and when that was accomplished it would be time enough to consider how to deal with the Gothic settlers in Moesia. Till this was done the new Emperor would not even enter his capital. The right place for commencing the work was Thessalonica, with its strong situation on the Aegean, commanding the passes into Thessaly, and the shortest line of communication with Gratian's Illyrian capital, Sirmium.

Thessalonica itself had been only lately hard pressed by the Gothic marauders, but a pestilence had broken out in their host which the Christians within the walls attributed to the prayers of their great bishop Acholius, who thus like another Elisha scattered by spiritual weapons the host of the invaders; and thus, probably before the spring of 379, the neighbourhood was cleared of their unwelcome presence. Here then, in this old Macedonian city, Theodosius fixed his camp and court, and hither streamed all the high dignitaries of the State, the officers of the army, the Senators of Constantinople, the members of the great Civil Service of the Empire, zealous to pay court to their new sovereign, and keen to receive promotion from his hands. The language, even of a hostile historian like Zosimus, shows the favourable impression which the new Emperor made upon his subjects. Instead of the jealous, suspicious, timid Valens, here was a frank, genial soldier, of florid face and sanguine

temperament, affable to all who wished to approach him, well known for his courage in the field, and ready (only too ready for the State's necessities) to bestow, office, honours, emoluments on all who approached him as candidates for his favour. He is accused by his critic of having increased the number of the highest military commands (Mastership of the Cavalry, and Mastership of the Infantry) from two to five, and doubled all the lower grades held by generals, tribunes, and so forth. Though Zosimus affirms that this was done without adding to the strength of the army, we may well believe that it was upon the whole a wise policy on the part of Theodosius to surround himself with a large number of active and zealous officers, more than sufficient to replace the terrible losses sustained at Hadrianople. In the *guerilla* war which he had now for some time to wage, leadership was more important than great masses of men. He had to restore the shaken confidence of the Roman troops and to terrify the barbarians into retreat by a series of daring expeditions such as Gideon in old time conducted against the Midianites; and now, as in the days of Gideon, courage and mutual confidence between general and army were the first and essential conditions of success. Probably too, he already revolved in his mind the scheme which he afterwards so successfully matured, of enlisting the barbarians themselves in the service of the Empire; and, if that were to be done, it was all-important that he should draw round his Council-table a group of brave and experienced officers, whom the Goth would obey because he had found terrible on the battlefield. Still it is obvious that this policy rendered necessary heavy demands on the exhausted treasury of the State, exhausted by the very ravages which it was meant to terminate. Every one of the five new *Magistri* received, we are told, as liberal allowances for his staff as had been formerly bestowed upon each of his two predecessors. The Emperor's own table was spread with a magnificence which formed an unpleasant contrast to the misery of the ruined villages of Thrace. Cooks and butlers and eunuchs, a list of whom would fill a volume, swarmed around the princely Spaniard, and those among them who were distinguished by their handsome presence and courtly address might hope to supplant the responsible Ministers of the State. Already, it may be, in the first flush of the new Emperor's popularity, it was possible to discern the harbingers of future storms: already a veteran statesman might surmise that the open-handedness of this affable soldier would one day make the men sigh for the parsimony of the jealous Valens.

However, for the time, the comparisons were all in favour of Theodosius. It was probably early in 379 that the orator Themistius presented himself at Thessalonica in order to offer his tribute of florid panegyric to the new Emperor, and at the same time to hint the desire of the senators and nobles of Constantinople that the fountain of honour, which had in their opinion been kept of late too closely sealed, might now be set running freely. An earlier deputation had been sent by the Senate of Constantinople with formal congratulations on the accession of Theodosius, but Themistius had been prevented by sickness from taking part in that deputation. At the time he bitterly regretted this absence, but now, he says, he almost rejoices over it, since the ardour of his spirit has conquered the infirmities of his body, and he is enabled to behold with his own eyes the return of the golden age. Was the orator thinking of the crooked legs and mean appearance of the predecessor of Theodosius when he said, "It is now permitted me to behold an Emperor whom I can only describe in the words of Homer —

Ne'er have these eyes of mine beheld so noble a presence,
Never one so majestic: in truth thine aspect is king-like"

Then with a touch of something which looks like genuine enthusiasm he breaks forth. "Thou art the one man who outweighest all others to us. Instead of them we look to thee. You are to us instead of Dacia, instead of Thrace, instead of Illyria [the provinces torn from us by

the barbarians], instead of our legions, instead of all our other warlike equipment, which vanished more swiftly than a shadow. Now we who were erewhile pursued are driving our foes headlong. By the new hopes which you have kindled in us we stand, we take breath, we are confident that we shall arrest the Goths in their prosperous career, and shall extinguish the wide-spreading conflagration which they have kindled and which hitherto neither Haemus, nor the boundaries of Thrace, or of Illyria, rough of passage as they are to the traveller, have been able to arrest. It was no fiction of the poet when Homer represented Achilles as by his mere battle-cry repelling the conquering barbarians: for those accursed ones, ere a battle was yet joined, when you had merely moved up thine outposts to theirs, lost their old audacity. This have they felt already. What more shall they feel when they see thee brandishing thy spear, shaking thy shield, when they see dose to them the gleam of thy burnished helmet?"

Fulsome as is the praise which the orator bestows on the possessor of supreme power, it is clear that the new Emperor's accession had in a notable manner raised the spirits of his subjects, and was beginning to depress those of the barbarians. And herewith agrees the calm judgment of the Gothic historian recorded after the lapse of a century and a half. "When Theodosius was associated in the Empire by Gratian in the room of Valens, the Goths soon perceived that military discipline was replaced on a better footing, the cowardice and sloth of former Emperors being laid aside : and when they perceived it they were struck with terror. For the Emperor, keen in intellect, strong in courage, and wise in counsel, tempering the severity of his orders by liberality and an affable demeanour, was ever rousing his demoralized army to brave deeds: and the soldiers observing the favourable change in their leader soon recovered their lost self-confidence".

Of the actual events of the campaign of 379 we hear but little. The dates of his laws enable us to trace the movements of Theodosius, keeping his line of communication open with Gratian at Sirmium, in July at Scupi, 100 miles north of Thessalonica, in August apparently on the southern shore of the Danube, in January (380) back again at Thessalonica. We are told that not only did courage, owing to the successful operations which Theodosius commanded, return to the Imperial infantry and cavalry, but that even the peasants became formidable to the barbarians, and the workers in the mines, at the Emperor's orders, threw down the gold-ore and took the iron of the soldier into their hands.

The honours of this campaign, however, as far as Zosimus may be trusted to award them, fell not to Theodosius himself so much as to Modar, one of those generals with whom, as we have seen, he wisely surrounded himself. This man, a Goth by birth and even of royal lineage, but a Christian and of the orthodox faith, had recently deserted from the cause of his countrymen and taken service under the Roman eagles. He had given striking proofs of his fidelity to his new lords, and had accordingly been appointed one of the five Masters of the Soldiery. He selected a bit of high table-land among the Balkans, upon which, unknown to the Goths, he pitched his camp, concealed doubtless by surrounding eminences. There he watched his opportunity, and when the barbarians, revelling in the plunder which they had gathered from the villages and unwallied towns of Thrace, were indulging in a drunken debauch in the plains below, he armed his soldiers with sword and shield, the coats of mail and heavier armour being left behind, and led them stealthily down the mountain to the Gothic camp. Surprised and unarmed, the barbarians for the most part awoke from their stupor only to find themselves transfixed by the swords of the Romans. In a short time the whole of this host was slaughtered, and their arms and ornaments became the spoil of the conquerors. Then the soldiers of Modar rushed forward to the rude wagon-encampment, where the women and children were quartered. No fewer than 4000 Gothic wagons, so we are told, were taken possession of, and all the women, the children, and the captive slaves who were accustomed on

the march to walk and ride upon the wagons by turns, fell into the hands of the legionaries. The Roman captives were no doubt released, and the Gothic women and children sold into slavery.

The success of this murderous undertaking of Modar's—a success which was perhaps partly due to his knowledge of the moral weaknesses of his countrymen—and the fear of its repetition, seem to have determined the fortunes of the campaign of 379. The Goths were probably for the most part driven to the north of the Balkans, and some successful battles must have been fought, perhaps on the southern bank of the Danube, not with the Goths only but with other wild tribes which had swarmed over the great river. On the 17th of November Theodosius was able to send official messengers to all the great cities of the Empire announcing a series of victories over the Goths, the Alani and the Huns. Still, even the region south of the Balkans can hardly have been entirely cleared of the invaders, for we find the Emperor yet delaying to take up his abode in his capital, and instead thereof fixing his headquarters for the winter at Thessalonica.

It is a proof how much of the recent success had been due to the energy of one man, that the temporary suspension of his powers changed the whole aspect of affairs. In the early part of the year 380 Theodosius fell sick at Thessalonica. Probably the same morbid influences which had previously broken up the camp of the Gothic besiegers, now laid low their energetic enemy. The crisis of the illness lasted apparently somewhat less than a month, as we find edicts bearing his signature both on the 2nd and 27th of February, but none in the intervening period. There is reason to think, however, that during many months of the year 380 he was unable to take the field in person. Meanwhile a change of vast importance to the internal politics of the Empire had been caused by this illness. Theodosius, who like his father had postponed the rite of baptism, with its supposed mysterious efficacy for the washing away of past sins, to as late a period as possible, now, believing himself to be at the point of death, received the lustral water from the hand of Bishop Acholius. He laid himself down on his sick bed a lukewarm, if not actually heterodox Christian: he arose from it a zealous champion of Athanasian orthodoxy.

Postponing for a short time the fuller consideration of the religious policy which Theodosius henceforward adopted, let us observe the effect which his sickness produced on the struggle between the Empire and the Goths. The provinces south of the Balkans, if they had been cleared of the barbarians during the preceding year, were now again overrun by their desolating swarms. Fritigern, satiated apparently with the ravage of Moesia and Thrace, directed his course southward to Epirus, Thessaly and Achaia: while his old allies, the Ostrogothic chiefs Alatheus and Saphrax, marked down a new prey, crossing over the Danube where it flows from north to south, and attacking the Western Empire in its frontier province, Pannonia.

With all these barbarous hordes pouring in upon the devastated Empire, and himself still unable from physical weakness to ride forth at the head of his legions, Theodosius was constrained to call upon his Western colleague for help. Gratian did not himself take the field against the Goths, but he seems to have journeyed from Trier to Milan and Aquileia. From the latter place he doubtless superintended the defence of Pannonia (as to which our authorities tell us nothing), and the attack upon the Goths in Thessaly and Macedonia. The latter duty was entrusted to two Frankish chiefs named Bauto and Arbogast. It is a striking proof of the extent to which Teutonic soldiers had already succeeded in establishing themselves in the service of the Empire, to find such a high command as this, at a most critical period for the State, entrusted to two Franks from the forests beyond the Scheldt. Both were destined to rise even higher in the Roman commonwealth. Bauto was to be an Emperor's chief minister, and his daughter was—after his death—to be hailed as Augusta; Arbogast was to place one of his humble friends and dependents on the Imperial throne. But both were at this time steadfastly loyal to the great civilized Empire under whose eagles they had enlisted, and the fact that they

were men of war, whose hands were soiled by no ignoble gains, not venal hucksterers like Lupicinus and Maximus, had gained for them the enthusiastic love and confidence of their soldiers.

We hear little or nothing as to the details of the campaign conducted by the two Frankish generals, but from its result we may conclude that it was entirely successful Macedonia and Thessaly appear to have been freed from their barbarian invaders, who were now probably for the most part ranged along the southern shore of the Danube, in the regions where four years previously they had been peacefully settled by Valens. About this time Fritigern seems to have died, perhaps slain in battle with Bauto or Arbogast. And now, by one of those strange changes in men's minds which so often occur when civilised and barbarous nations meet in battle, there came to Gratian (who by this time had marched eastward as far as Sirmium and was therefore close to the theatre of events) an opportunity for concluding a safe and honourable peace.

Fritigern being dead, the one dauntless spirit which had hitherto breathed hope and mutual loyalty into the Gothic kinships, was gone. There were among them troubles and dissensions (which will shortly be alluded to) in connection with Fritigern's old rival, Athanaric. And after all, every Gothic warrior in the ranks might well ask himself what he was fighting for. To take the walled cities and make himself master of all their strange delights, the Goth had found impossible. It was easy to wander wide over the plains of Thessaly and Thrace, burning villas, driving off cattle, carrying away the provincials into captivity. But this process could not go on for ever, and with every year that the war lasted it became harder to procure a bare subsistence, much more the luxuries which were the earlier prize of rapine, in the thrice desolated valleys through which the barbarians roved. Were it not better, now that they had proved their might, and done deeds of daring which would be told of in song by generations yet unborn, to settle down once again within the limits of the Empire as the friends, not the foes, of a generous Augustus?

This, or something like this, was the calculation on the barbarians' side : and on the other hand the conclusion of the offered peace was for the Emperors a piece of most wise statesmanship. The fatal policy of Valens could not now be undone. The Gothic nation was within the borders of the Empire: to destroy and to expel it were both impossible. The mistake of Hadrianople must not be repeated, nor the fortunes of the Empire hazarded upon the cast of a single battle. What war there was must be of the tedious Fabian kind, harassing the invaders, cooping them up in the mountains, falling upon them in small detachments, and wearing them out by hardship and famine. But, all this while, the once wealthy and flourishing provinces of Moesia, Thrace and Macedonia would be slowly bleeding to death. It was surely better that there should be peace between the Empire and her new visitors, peace on terms not dissimilar to those which Fritigern had asked for, perhaps insincerely, before the battle of Hadrianople, but which his people, tired of those winters in the snowy Balkans, might now be willing loyally to accept. These terms involved a settlement of the Goths south of the Danube resembling that which they had previously possessed in Dacia; only that the barbarians should be more blended with the Roman inhabitants, and should more distinctly hold their lands on condition of military service in the armies of the Empire, becoming in the political language of the day *foederati*.

Thus it came to pass that in the language of the Gothic historian (which is in the main confirmed by the Roman chroniclers), "Gratian, though he had collected an army, did not nevertheless trust in arms, but determining to conquer the Goths by gifts and favour, and bestowing provisions upon them, entered into a covenant with them and so made peace. And when, after these things, the Emperor Theodosius recovered his health and found that the contract which he himself had wished for was concluded between the Goths and the Romans, he accepted the fact with very grateful mind, and gave his own consent to that peace".

This reconciliation between the Visigoths and the Empire was connected, partly as cause and partly as effect, with another most important event which marked the beginning of 381, the submission of the sturdy old chief Athanaric, who had so long upheld among his countrymen the banner of defiance to Rome, and refusal to amalgamate with Roman civilization. Five years before, when his kinsmen were praying for admission into the Empire, he too appeared with his warriors and his wagons on the Wallachian shore of the Danube. When he heard that his old enemy Fritigern was admitted, but that the Ostrogoths under Alatheus and Saphrax were excluded, the proud and sensitive chief, mindful of his own past discourtesy to Rome, would not run the risk of a similar rebuff, but retired into the recesses of Dacia to a region of mountains and forests called Caucaland, and there, from behind the mountain-wall of the Carpathians, bade defiance to his enemies the Huns. An unexpected foe roused up the old lion from his lair. The Ostrogothic chiefs, Alatheus and Saphrax, retreating before the now better disciplined army of Theodosius, recrossed the Danube, and avenging perhaps some old grudge of pre-Hunnic days, expelled Athanaric from his kingdom.

He fled into the territory of Theodosius, who received him courteously, loaded him with presents, and escorted him into Constantinople. Let Jordanes describe for us the effect produced by the sight of New Rome upon the man who had been all his life the ideal Rome-hater. As he entered the royal city he said, wondering, "Lo, now I behold what I have so often heard with unbelief, the splendour of this great city". Then turning his eyes this way and that way, and beholding the glorious situation of the city, the array of ships, the lofty walls, the multitudes of various nations all formed into one well-ordered army (like a fountain springing forth through many holes, yet collected again into one stream), he exclaimed, "A God upon earth, doubtless, is this Emperor, and whoever lifts a hand against him is guilty of his own blood".

The Emperor continued to treat his barbarian guest with high courtesy, and the guest remained in the same state of awe-struck admiration at all that he beheld. But his residence beside the Bosphorus was not to be of long duration. His entry into Constantinople was made on the 11th of January 381, and on the 25th of the same month he died broken-hearted, it may be, at the collapse of his barbarian State, or more probably pining away, as the American Red-skin pines, in contact with a higher and more complex civilization. Theodosius honoured him almost more in his death than in his life, provided for him a funeral of extraordinary magnificence, and himself rode before the bier as they carried the corpse of the old Gothic chieftain to the grave.

It was wisely as well as courteously done, this homage to Rome's old enemy. The heart of the Visigothic nation was touched by the respect shown by the great Augustus to the man who by the death of Fritigern had become their unquestioned king and leader. Not only his own personal followers, but the great mass of the people, accepted gladly the terms which Gratian's generals had offered to so many of their nation in the preceding year, and became *foederati* of the Empire.

As to this important change we have not so many details as we could desire, and our account of it must be framed from scattered and fragmentary notices, to some extent helped out by conjecture. Doubtless one condition of the *foedus* was that all the ravaging inroads which had been made into the provinces south of the Balkans since the day of the banquet at Marcianople should cease, and that the Goths should return to the settlements assigned them in Moesia Inferior by Valens, and earn their bread by the cultivation of the soil. But, though we have little or no information on this point, it seems reasonable to suppose that the high-spirited Gothic warriors were not called upon again to submit themselves to the degrading rule of such governors as Lupicinus and Mazimus. More probable is it that they now stood outside of the whole administrative system of the Empire, paying no taxes, and free from obedience to the

Roman judges, except when disputes arose between them and the Provincials. Thus (though it must be again repeated that we speak here only from conjecture) we may conceive of the Goths as reproducing in Moesia some of the characteristic features of German life as described to us by Tacitus, with its public meetings of the men of the village and the county, its strong, but not unlimited power vested in the chiefs and kings; perhaps (but here our conjectures must become even more hesitating than elsewhere) with its peculiar agricultural system and periodical redistribution of the land.

In return for the privileges thus conceded, and for the (probable) immunity from taxation which must have practically rendered almost the whole province of Moesia useless to the Imperial exchequer, what was the Gothic contribution? Whenever they were summoned by the Emperor they were to muster under their own chiefs, with their own horses, arms, and accoutrements, and to fight under the supreme command of the Roman Master of the Soldiery, for the defence of the Empire. The amount of pay (*stipendium*) which was to be given to each barbarian warrior, noble or simple free-man, was probably fixed in the original contract entered into between Theodosius and the chieftain who may have succeeded Athanaric. This contract was the *Foedus* which constituted the Goths *Foederati*.

In this arrangement there was, besides much present statesmanship, a certain curious reversion to some of the oldest traditions of the past in the Roman state. The Allies (*Socii*), consisting first of the soldiers of the Latin cities and then of warriors from the various provinces of Italy, always formed an important part of the hosts of the Republic, somewhat outnumbering the regular Roman legionaries, and fighting for the most part on the wings of the army, while the legions were drawn up in the center. When the Italian provincials acquired the full rights of Roman citizens, the separate organization of the *Socii* died away, the Samnite and the Marsian taking their place in the legions side by side with the soldier born in sight of the Capitol. But their places were virtually taken by the *Auxilia*, bodies of troops raised in those provinces beyond sea, which became successively the theatres of war. Under the Empire, as the rights of citizenship were more liberally granted, this distinction also became less important; and when at length, in the reign of Caracalla, those rights were bestowed on all the freeborn males throughout the Roman world, it really lost all its original meaning. But the two divisions of the army, *Legiones* and *Auxilia*, still existed side by side, the latter word being apparently used to designate a somewhat lower class of soldiers, employed in more irregular, skirmishing warfare than the legionaries. In our own country, for example, while three legions, the Second, the Sixth, and the Twentieth, remained for generations permanently stationed at the three great nerve-centres of Roman power, Caerleon, York, and Chester, the outpost duty of defending the wall which stretched from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway was entrusted to less dignified bodies of troops, such as the First Cohort of Batavians or the *Second Ala* of Asturians, who all passed under the generic name of *Auxilia*.

Still, as has been said, the old distinction between Roman and Ally had practically vanished, for the Gaul, the Spaniard, or the Illyrian felt himself as much a Roman citizen, and had as good a chance of one day wearing the purple as a man born on the banks of the Tiber. But it reappeared, when Theodosius and Gratian, making a virtue of necessity, granted permanent settlements within the Empire to the followers of Fritigern and Athanaric, on condition of their mustering round the eagles in the day of battle.

As this institution of the *foederati* reproduced some of the features of the military system of the Republic, so it foreshadowed some of the features of the military systems of the Middle Ages. Though in the fourth century we are still separated by a vast tract of time from the establishment of the feudal system, it is easy to see how this contract between Emperor and *foederati*—so much land for so much service on the battlefield—will one day ripen into regular feudal tenure.

In more modern days it might be possible to find analogies to the position of the *foederati* in that occupied by the Cossacks under their Hetman in the wars of Peter the Great and Charles the Twelfth, in the constitution of the 'Military Frontier' of Austria and Hungary under the Habsburgs, or in the place assigned to Sikhs and Ghoorkas in the armies of the Empress of India. Like these latter troops (as we shall see hereafter) the foes turned friends and enlisted under the banner of their conqueror, did him good service in the crisis of his fortunes.

In order to understand more fully the policy thus adopted by Theodosius towards the Goths, it will be well to hear the allusions made to it by Themistius in his Oration on the choice of Saturninus for the Consulship (383). The grey old rhetorician, who was by this time the tutor of Arcadius, son of the Emperor, and was soon after to be raised to high official position by that Emperor's favour, would of course represent the Imperial policy in the most favourable light to his hearers; and we may consider that in listening to his speech we are reading a leading article in the official newspaper of the Empire.

It seems that the honour of the Consulship for the year 383, the *quinquennalia* of the accession of Theodosius, had been offered by Gratian to his Eastern colleague. Themistius can hardly find words to express his admiration of the magnanimity of Theodosius in not only declining the brilliant honour for himself, but forbearing to claim it for Arcadius or some other member of his family, and handing it on to Saturninus, a stranger in blood, to reward him for the services which he had rendered to the state.

"What are those services?" says Themistius. "I might enumerate his great deeds in war, but as I am a lover of peace and of peaceful, harmonious words, I will rather turn to these and describe the benefits which the forethought of our Emperor has provided for us through the instrumentality of the new Consul. After that terrible Iliad of ours by the Danube, fire and sword were carried wide over Thrace and Illyricum; our armies vanished like a shadow: no Emperor presided over the State, and no mountains seemed high enough, no rivers deep enough, to prevent the barbarians from swarming over them to our ruin. Celts and Assyrians, Armenians, Africans, and Iberians, upon every frontier of our territory stood armed and threatening. Things had come to such a pass that we were prepared to hail it as a signal success, if only no worse evil might befall us than those which we had already undergone.

"Then in the midst of the general despair came that impulse from on high by which Gratian was moved to invite Theodosius to share his throne; and at once over land and sea there spread a hope unknown before. Theodosius, as soon as he had grasped the reins of the Empire, began, like a skilful charioteer, to consider what lay within the capacity of his horses; and he first dared to note this fact, that the strength of the Romans now lies not in iron, not in breastplates and shields, not in countless masses of men, but in Reason. He perceived that we possess that other kind of force and equipment which, to those who reign according to the mind of God, comes down silently from above, and makes all nations subject to us, which tames the savage soul, and before which arms and artillery and horses and the obstinacy of the Goth and the audacity of the Alan and the madness of the Massagete (*Huan*) all give way. This is that divine gift the praises of which we learned in our boyhood from the poets. So too Aesop in his fable of the Wind and the Sun set forth the superiority of persuasion to violence; and the bards who sang of the wars in heaven declare that the giants, engaging in battle with the gods, were all able to stand up against Mars, but were lulled to sleep by the Caduceus of Mercury.

"Deliberating with himself to whom he should entrust this message of reconciliation, he found none so fit as Saturninus, his old comrade in arms, whom he knew to be like-minded in this matter with himself. Even as Achilles sent out Patroclus to deliver the Greeks in the extremity of their peril, so, but with far happier auguries, did Theodosius send forth Saturninus; and as the son of Peleus arrayed his friend in his armour, so did the Emperor equip his messenger with his own arms of gentleness, of patience, and of persuasion. Saturninus came to

the camp of the Goths, and as soon as he saw he conquered. He offered them an amnesty for the past, he rooted out of their minds the suspicions germinating from their own misdeeds, he set before them the benefits which they might enjoy as friends and servants of the Empire. Thus did he win a peaceful victory and lead their chiefs back in triumph to his master. Unarmed, except with their swords which they held out like olive-branches; with sad faces and downcast eyes, they walked with shame through the provinces which they had ravaged, and kept their hands religiously from the remnants of property which they had left there. They were tamed, they were softened, they were subdued by the wise words of their conductor. I might almost say that he led them with their hands bound behind their backs, so that one looking upon them would have doubted whether he had persuaded, or had conquered, them.

“It was considered a great thing when Corbulo induced Tiridates, King of Armenia, to submit to Nero, but the knowledge of the vile character of his master must have saddened even that success to Corbulo. How much greater the happiness of Saturninus who serves such a master as Theodosius! And the Armenians are a race easily lifted up with pride and soon cast down again, a race whose very liberty differs not much from slavery. Whereas these barbarians with whom we have to deal are men of most inflexible souls, men to whom the thought of humbling themselves ever so little is far more bitter than death. Yet this is the nation whose chiefs we have seen offering, not some tattered flag, but their very swords, their victorious swords, as a tribute to the Emperor; yea, and humbling themselves before him and clasping his knees as Thetis clasped the knees of the Thunderer, that they might hear from his lips the word, the irrevocable word of peace and reconciliation.

“Now, that name Scythian [Goth], which was so hateful in our ears, how pleasant, how friendly it sounds! Now the Goths celebrate together with us the festival of our prince [the Quinquennialia], which is in truth one of rejoicing for the victories gained over themselves. Do you complain that their race has not been exterminated? I will not ask, ‘Could they have been exterminated?’. I will concede that they might have been easily destroyed without loss to ourselves, though certainly the history of the Gothic war makes that concession an improbable one. Still, I say, which of the two is better, that Thrace should be filled with corpses or with cultivators of the fields; that we should walk through ghastly desolation or through well-tilled corn-lands? that we should count up the dead men lying there or the ploughers ploughing? Is it better that we should bring Phrygians and Bithynians to settle in the waste lands, or that we should dwell there in peace with the men whom we have subdued? Already I hear from those who have visited those parts that the Goths are working up the iron of their swords and breastplates into mattocks and pruning-hooks, and, bidding a long goodbye to Mars, are paying all their devotions to Ceres and to Bacchus.

“The course now pursued by Theodosius is not without a precedent in the history of the Republic. Masinissa, once the ally of Carthage, taken prisoner by the Romans and not put to death, became their steadfast friend and a strong defence against the enemies who afterwards attacked them. In our case the State which, like some mighty merchantman strained by wind and wave, was leaking at every seam, is brought into dock and is once more made sea-worthy. The roads are again open. The mountains are no longer terrible to the traveller. The plains are now bringing forth their fruits. No longer is the shore of the Danube a stage for the bloody dance of war, but seeds are being hidden in it and ploughs do furrow it. Villas and farm-buildings are again raising their heads. A delightful atmosphere of rest pervades the land; and the Empire, like some great living creature, feeling no more the laceration of its wounded members, draws one deep breath of delight for ended sorrow”.

With further praises of the generosity and clemency of Theodosius and with anticipations of a victory over Persia, no less complete than his bloodless and tearless victory over the Goths, Themistius ended his oration. The loss of the Mesopotamian provinces (the Alsace and

Lorraine of the Empire) still rankled in the hearts of all true Roman citizens, and no motive for loyalty to Theodosius could be stronger than the hope that he would one day recover them. Even after the defeat at Hadrianople, not the barbarians of the North in their trackless forests, but the great autocrat of Persia was looked upon as the dangerous, the hereditary enemy of Rome.

After the reconciliation of the Visigoths to the Empire and their acceptance of the position of *foederati*, there seems to have been almost unbroken peace between Theodosius and the barbarians on his northern frontier. The only exception that is distinctly mentioned is the invasion of the Greuthungi or Ostrogoths five years after the submission of the Visigoths. What commotion in the anarchic Empire of the Huns may have caused another swarm of their Ostrogothic subjects to leave their homes in the Ukraine we know not; but they appear, a numerous horde, with many barbarous confederates of unknown origin, on the northern shore of the Danube in the summer of 386. The old men, the women and children, were with them. It was therefore a national migration, not a mere plunderer's foray, and the leader of the movement was Odotheus, whom we may possibly identify with that Ostrogothic chief Alatheus, the comrade of Saphrax on the field of Hadrianople. They came in such vast numbers that (according to the perhaps exaggerated language of the poet) three thousand barks were needed to transport them across the river: and they asked, perhaps at first in friendly guise, for permission to settle within the limits of the Empire. Promotus, a brave and experienced officer, at that time commanding as Master of the Infantry in Thrace, refused the required permission, and drew up his troops along the southern shore of the Danube to dispute the passage. Not content with merely defensive measures, he devised a skill if not very honourable stratagem in order to entice the Ostrogoths to their destruction. He secretly instructed some men who were acquainted with their language (possibly Visigothic *foederati*) to steal across the river and open negotiations for the betrayal of the Imperial army by night to their enemies. The apparent traitors demanded a high price for their treason: the chiefs hesitated and tried to reduce it: the deserters stuck to their terms and at length the compact was sealed :—so much blood-money to be paid at once on the conclusion of the bargain and the balance when the barbarians had the Roman army in their power. Odotheus then made his dispositions for reaping, as he supposed, an easy harvest of victory. His best and bravest warriors, the flower of his troops, were to be sent over at once to environ the sleeping host; then the troops of secondary quality; then lastly the men who were too young or too old for fighting, to do the shouting when the victory was won.

Meanwhile Promotus, guided by the concerted signals of the pretended traitors, was making his arrangements in the deepening dusk of the autumn evening. Along the shore he ranged his ships—probably the heavy provision-ships of his army—in three lines, extending for a distance of two miles and a half. Some swifter fighting ships he kept apparently to manoeuvre in mid-channel. The Ostrogoths embarked in their little canoes, small, and made for the most part out of the trunk of a single tree, but multitudinous in number. While they were rowing silently across the black river, the Roman general, still guided by the fire-signals of his confederates, charged in upon them with his powerful war-ships. The momentum of the Roman galleys, joined to the force of the impetuous Danube, was at once fatal to the little skiffs which contained the flower of the barbarian army. On all sides were heard the crash of broken barks, the groans of dying men, the despairing cry of some strong swimmer borne down beneath the eddying Danube by the weight of his cumbrous armour. If some wearied swimmer or the rowers of some disabled bark straggled on towards the southern shore, they were there confronted by the triple line of the Roman merchantmen, the soldiers on board of which assailed the hapless fugitives with whatever missile lay nearest to their hands. The affair was

not so much a battle as a massacre, and soon the Danube was covered with the floating carcasses of Gothic warriors and the splintered fragments of Gothic spears.

When the destruction of the army was complete, the Roman soldiers were permitted to swarm across the stream in order to plunder the barbarian camp. Much spoil they found there, but the chief prizes were the wives and children of the deluded and annihilated host. However, the revenge of the Empire was on this occasion wisely softened by mercy. Theodosius, who had fixed his head-quarters at some little distance from the scene of the battle, being sent for by Promotus to behold the fresh footprints of victory, when he gazed on the multitude of prisoners and the heap of spoils, set all the captives free from their bonds and comforted them with gifts and soothing words. To the Greuthungi of Odotheus he would pursue the same wise policy as to the Thervingi of Fritigern. Having once thoroughly beaten them and convinced them that Rome must be mistress, he would let them live, he would even accept their services. Most of the survivors of that terrible night—and notwithstanding the large words of the poet and historian, we are evidently not to suppose that all perished—became *foederati* of the Empire, and followed the standards of Theodosius in that civil war against the usurper Maximus, which will hereafter be described.

On the 12th of October, 386, Theodosius entered Constantinople in triumph, with his young son, Arcadius (who had now been for three years associated with him as Augustus), by his side. The captive, or the willingly subjected, Greuthungi graced his triumph, and (if this be not a poet's fancy) he deposited in the palace, as the old Roman kings used to deposit in the temple of Capitoline Jupiter, the *spolia opima* of their slain leader.

Hitherto we have seen the more favourable side of the policy of Theodosius towards the barbarians, as it is represented to us by Themistius and the Chroniclers. But there is no doubt that it was often commented upon in a different spirit, especially by the heathen subjects of the Emperor and those who felt themselves called upon to uphold the military traditions of the people of Romulus. We are still able to trace some of these hostile comments in the pages of Zosimus, the persistent enemy of Theodosius, and the pitiless critic of all his policy. This part of his history is more than usually unsatisfactory, destitute of order and chronological arrangement, weak and gossiping, an anecdote-book rather than a history. Still, some even of these anecdotes are worth studying, for the illustrations which they afford of the temper of the times and the relations of Romans and barbarians to each other at the close of the fourth century.

“The Emperor Theodosius” (says Zosimus, speaking apparently of the time immediately after his accession) “seeing the hopeless inferiority of his troops, gave leave to any of the barbarians beyond the Danube who were willing, to come to him, promising to enrol the deserters in the ranks of his army. Having received this offer, they came to him and were blended with his soldiers, secretly cherishing the thought that if they but outnumbered the Romans they could easily throw off their disguise and make themselves masters of the Empire. But when the Emperor saw that the number of the deserters exceeded that of his own soldiers in those parts, casting about for some means to keep them in check if they should try to break their bargain with him, he thought it best to transfer some of them to the legions then serving in Egypt, and to bring some of the soldiers in those legions to his own camp. In the marches and counter-marches which this transference rendered necessary, the Egyptians made their passage peaceably through the Empire, buying at a fair price all things that they had need of: but the barbarians marched in no order at all, and helped themselves in the markets to whatsoever they pleased. When the two bodies of troops met at the Lydian city of Philadelphia, the Egyptians, who were much inferior in number to the barbarians, observed all the rules of military discipline; but the latter were encouraged by their numerical superiority to put forward the most arrogant pretensions. When a stall-keeper in the market ventured to ask a barbarian to pay

him for something which he had bought, the man drew his sword and wounded him, and so he did also to a neighbour, who, alarmed by his cries, came running to the stall-keeper's help. The Egyptians, who pitied the sufferers, exhorted the barbarians to refrain from such excesses, which were not becoming in men desirous to live according to the laws of Rome. Then they turned, and began to use their swords against them also, on which the Egyptians, losing all patience, fell upon the barbarians and slew more than two hundred of them, some by blows of their swords, and the rest by hunting them into the caves beneath the city, where they perished [of hunger]. After giving them this lesson in good behaviour, and showing them that there were some men left who would stand up for the citizens against them, the Egyptians set forward on their way and the barbarians marched to their appointed rendezvous in Egypt, their commander being Hormisdas the Persian, son of the Hormisdas who shared the Emperor Julian's campaign in Persia".

"When these Egyptians arrived in Macedonia and were enrolled in the cohorts there, no order was observed in the camps, nor was there any discrimination between Roman and barbarian, but all were jumbled up confusedly together, no record being kept of those who were enlisted in the several legions. Moreover the deserters [from the barbarian service], when they were now enrolled in the cohorts, were permitted to return to their own country and send substitutes instead of themselves, and then whensoever it pleased them, to re-enlist in the Roman service. When the barbarians saw such utter disorder prevailing in the Imperial armies (for the deserters kept them informed of all that was going on, and there was perfect freedom of intercourse both ways) they thought their time had come for striking a blow at the State which was so negligently administered. Accordingly they crossed the river (Danube) without any trouble, and penetrated to Macedonia, for no one hindered them, and the deserters even facilitated their passage. Here they found that the Emperor had come to meet them with all his army, and as it was now the dead of night, observing one especially bright fire burning they conjectured that that fire marked the Emperor's quarters; a guess which was confirmed by the reports of the deserters who joined themselves to them. They therefore directed their course straight for the Emperor's tent, being guided by the bright watchfire. As some of the deserters had joined them, only the Romans and the remainder of the deserters resisted their onset. These were few against many, and were barely able to cover the Emperor's flight, having done which, they all fell fighting like brave men, amid a vast multitude of slain foes. If then the barbarians had followed up their victory and pursued the Emperor and those who fled with him, they would at the first shout have made themselves masters of everything. But, contented with their present victory, they overspread the undefended provinces of Macedonia and Thessaly, but spared the cities, doing no ungentle deed towards one of them, because they hoped that from them they should receive tribute".

It will be seen that even in this narrative, penned by one who hated both Theodosius and his *foederati*, it is admitted that some of the Goths who had enlisted in the Imperial service, died fighting bravely round the eagles, in order to facilitate the escape of the Augustus. The great services, already described, which the royal Goth, Modar, rendered to the cause of the Empire in the campaign of 379, are another phenomenon of the same kind. In fact, all things being considered, the fidelity of many of the barbarians (Goths, Franks, and even Huns) to Rome, when they had once accepted her *mizdon*, is more extraordinary than their occasional treachery.

The next story illustrates the effect produced on the minds of the born subjects of the Empire by the favour shown to the new recruits. We may safely assume that the historian tells the tale in very much the same shape in which Gerontius himself would tell it to his discontented comrades.

At the Scythian town of Tomi (Ovid's place of banishment, now Kustendje in Bulgaria, about sixty miles south of the Sulina mouth of the Danube), some Roman troops were stationed under the command of Gerontius, a man of great strength of body and skill in war. Outside the town was a detachment of barbarian auxiliaries, the very flower of their nation in courage and manly beauty. These men saw that Theodosius provided them with richer equipments and larger pay than he gave to the Roman soldiers inside the town, yet they repaid the favour, not with gratitude to the Emperor, but with arrogance towards Gerontius and unconcealed contempt for his men. Gerontius could not but see this and suspected moreover that they intended to seize the town and throw everything into confusion. He consulted with those of his officers on whose judgment he placed most reliance, how to check this increasing wantonness and insolence of the auxiliaries. But when he found them all hanging back through cowardice, and dreading the lightest movement among the barbarians, he donned his armour, bid open the gates of the city, and with certain of his guards—a number that you could very soon have counted—rode forth and set himself against all that multitude. His own soldiers meanwhile were either asleep, or palsied with fear, or else running up to the battlements of the city to see what was about to happen. The barbarians sent up a great shout of laughter at the madness of Gerontius, and dispatched some of their bravest against him, thinking to kill him out of hand. But he closed with the first who came, clutched hold of his shield, and fought on bravely till one of his guards with a sword lopped off the barbarian's shoulder (he could do no more, the two men's bodies were so closely intertwined) and dragged him down from off his horse. Then the barbarians began to be struck with awe at the splendid bravery of their foe, while Gerontius dashed forwards to fresh encounters; and at the same time the men who were looking on from the walls of the city, seeing the mighty deeds wrought by their commander, were stung with remembrance of the once great name of Rome, and rushing forth from the gates slew many of the barbarians, who were already panic-stricken and beginning to quit their ranks. The rest of them took refuge in a building held sacred by the Christians and regarded as conferring immunity on fugitives. Gerontius, then, having by his magnificent courage freed Scythia from the dangers impending over it, and obtained a complete mastery over the barbarians, naturally expected some recompense from his sovereign. But Theodosius being on the contrary deeply irritated by the slaughter of the warriors whom he so highly prized, peremptorily summoned Gerontius before him and required him to give a reason for his late conduct. The general pleaded the intended insurrection of the barbarians and their various acts of pillage and murder; but to all this the Emperor gave no heed, insisting that his true motives had been envy of the rich gifts bestowed on the auxiliaries, and a desire to have them put out of the way in order that his own robberies from them might be concealed. He alluded especially to some golden collars which had been given them by way of ornament. Gerontius proved that these, after the slaughter of the owners, had all been sent into the public treasury; yet, even so, he with difficulty escaped from the dangers which encompassed him, after spending all his property in bribes to the eunuchs about the court. And such were the worthy wages that he received for his zeal on behalf of Rome”.

The history of this debate belongs to the latest years of the reign of Theodosius, but is introduced here as illustrating the precarious tenure by which Rome held the services of her Gothic auxiliaries. When the news came of the probability of a second civil war [on the murder of Valentinian II and the usurpation of Eugenius], there arose a difference of opinion among the chiefs of the tribes whom Theodosius had at the commencement of his reign admitted to his friendship and brotherhood in arms, whom he had honoured with many gifts, and for whom he had provided a daily banquet in common in his palace. For some of the chiefs loudly asserted that it would be better to despise the oaths which they swore when they gave themselves up to the Roman power, and others insisted that they must on no account depart from their plighted

faith. The leader of the party who wished to trample on their oath of allegiance was Eriulph (or Priulph), while Fravitta (or Fraustius) headed the loyal party. Long was this internal dissension concealed, but one day at the royal table after long potations they were so carried away with wrath that they openly manifested their discordant sentiments. The Emperor understanding what they were talking about, broke up the party, but on their way home from the palace the quarrel became so exasperated that Fravitta drew his sword and dealt Eriulph a mortal blow. Then the soldiers of the murdered man were about to rush upon Fravitta and kill him, but the Imperial guards interposed and prevented the dispute from going any further.

In the midst of the conflicting accounts which have come down to us of the character of Theodosius, one fact can be clearly discerned, that he was bent upon reversing the fatal policy of Valens, and while he dealt severely with those barbarians whose only thought was plunder, he was determined to enlist all that was noblest and in the best sense of the word most Teutonic, among them in the service of Rome. Engaged in this enterprise one may liken him to a far-seeing statesman, who, seeing an irresistible tide of democracy setting in and threatening to overwhelm the State, goes boldly forth to meet it, with liberal hand extends the privileges of citizenship to the worthiest of those who have been hitherto outside the pale, and from the enemies of the constitution turns them into its staunch defenders. Or he is like the theologian who, instead of attempting an useless defence of positions which have long since become untenable, questions the questioning spirit itself to discover how much of truth it too may possess, and seeks to turn even the turbulent armies of doubt into champions of the eternal and essential verities of faith.

Such, viewed on its intellectual side, was the policy of Theodosius towards the barbarians; and though it was a policy which led to complete and utter failure, it is not therefore to be condemned as necessarily unsound, for had his own life been prolonged to the ordinary period, or had his sons possessed half his own courage and capacity, it is likely enough that his policy would have proved not a failure, but a success.

But probably another and less noble motive conduced to the very same course of action. His soldier's eye may have been pleased with the well-proportioned frames and noble stature of those children of the North. His pride as a sovereign may have been gratified by enlisting those fair-haired majestic Amali and Balti among his household guards, instead of the little, dark-featured, supple inhabitants of the lands bordering on the Mediterranean; and he may have indulged this fancy to the full, without considering the deep wound which he thus inflicted on what yet remained of Roman dignity by assigning these offices to foreigners, nor the heavy demands which he was obliged to make on an exhausted exchequer in order to provide the double pay, the daily banquets, the golden collars for his Gothic favourites.

Thus the acceptance of the services of the Goths connects itself with another subject, which will have to be referred to later on, the financial policy — or want of policy — of Theodosius

CHAPTER VI

THE VICTORY OF NICAEA

WE have now to consider the effect of the sickness and baptism of Theodosius on the religious legislation of the Empire.

The Sixteenth and last Book of the Theodosian Code is entirely occupied with legislation on religious affairs. The First Title of that Book, 'Concerning the Catholic Faith', begins with an edict of Valentinian (365) severely threatening any judge or minister of justice who should dare to impose upon men of the Christian religion the duty of guarding a heathen temple. After this check given to the officious zeal of some of Julian's friends who might still be endeavouring to carry on his hopeless attempt to turn back the tide of human enthusiasm into the old and dried-up channels of Paganism, the next decrees, those which may be considered the portals of the stately fabric of the Imperial-Church legislation, are two which bear the great name of Theodosius.

The first, which was dated at Thessalonica on the 27th of February in the first year of his Consulship (380), was probably signed soon after he had been baptized by Bishop Acholius, and when he was still lying in the chamber of sickness, where the Bishop had visited him. It is to the following effect:—

"An Edict of Theodosius, concerning the Catholic Faith, to the people of the city of Constantinople. We wish that all the nations who are subject to the rule of Our Clemency shall adhere to that religion which the divine Apostle Peter handed to the Romans (as is sufficiently shown by its existence among them to this day), and which it is obvious that Pope (Pontifex) Damasus follows, as well as Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, a man of apostolical holiness: namely, that *according to the apostolical discipline and the evangelical doctrine we believe the One Godhead of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, with equal Majesty, in the Holy Trinity*. We order those who follow this law to assume the name of Catholic Christians: we pronounce all others to be mad and foolish, and we order that they shall bear the ignominious name of heretics, and shall not presume to bestow on their conventicles the title of churches: these are to be visited first by the divine vengeance, and secondarily by the stroke of our own authority, which we have received in accordance with the will of Heaven".

The next edict bears date the 30th of July, 381, and carries into practical effect the principles announced seventeen months before:—

"We order that all churches be at once handed over to those Bishops who confess the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, of one majesty and power, of the same glory and of one brightness, making no discord by profane division but [holding] the order of the Trinity, the assertion of the Persons, and the unity of the Godhead: who shall prove that they are joined in communion with Nectarius the Bishop of the Church of Constantinople and with Timotheus, Bishop of the city of Alexandria in Egypt".

Then follow the names of nine other orthodox prelates, chiefly in the dioceses of Asia Minor.

"And all those who shall be proved to be in communion with these men shall be entitled to be admitted to and to hold the Catholic Churches on the ground of their communion and fellowship with approved priests. But all those who dissent from the communion of the faith of those who have been here expressly mentioned, shall be expelled as manifest heretics from the

Churches. Nor shall there hereafter be permitted to them any opportunity of obtaining the Pontifical office in the churches: in Order that the ranks of the Priesthood may remain unpolled in the true faith of Nicaea. Nor after this dear expression of our command shall any place be left for the cunning of malignity”

The stiff and cumbrous phraseology of the Imperial edicts may hide from the reader the importance of the revolution ejected by them. In order to understand their effect on the hearts of contemporary listeners, how by them triumph was turned into despair, and mourning into rejoicing, we will briefly review the fortunes of a man who at this time was brought into close contact with Theodosius and shared some of his most secret counsels, the famous Gregory Nazianzen.

Born at Nazianzus (a little town of Cappadocia, on the banks of the river Halys), and the son of the Bishop of that place, who held the orthodox Nicene faith, Gregory, at an early age, set his heart on acquiring renown as a Christian orator. Having studied at Caesarea, in Palestine, and at Alexandria, he went, while still a youth, to Athens, and spent ten years at the university in that city. There was cemented his lifelong friendship with his fellow-countryman, Basil: and there he sat on the same benches with the young Julian, cousin of the Emperor Constantius, in whom Gregory even then discerned the germs of that alienation from Christianity which was one day to be made manifest to the world in the brilliant but blighted career of the great “Apostate”.

Returning at the age of thirty to his Cappadocian home, Gregory was entreated by his father to undertake the duties of a priest, in the hope of thus eventually securing him as his coadjutor in the see of Nazianzus. Gregory was more attracted by the life of monastic contemplation which his friend Basil was leading in the neighbouring province of Pontus. He wavered, however, and it was apparently in one of his moments of wavering that his father ordained him, an almost involuntary priest. No sooner was the step taken than it was repented of, and instead of discharging his priestly functions at Nazianzus he betook himself again to his solitude in Pontus, thus earning the unconcealed disapproval of his father and his friends.

Eventually Gregory seems to have settled down at Nazianzus, living his life on the lines which his father had marked out for him; but in the year 372 came his consecration to the Episcopate. His elevation to this dignity was marked by the same conflict between his own and the stronger natures round him, perhaps we might say the two opposing tendencies, the speculative and the practical, in his own nature, which had marred his acceptance of the priestly functions. His friend Basil was by this time a Bishop, having been elected, partly through the influence of Gregory and his father, Metropolitan of the Cappadocian Caesarea. Owing to a division, for civil purposes, of the province of Cappadocia into two parts, Prima and Secunda, Basil found his claims as Metropolitan of the whole province contested by those of the Bishop of Tyana, the capital of the new province of Cappadocia Secunda. In order to carry on successfully the spiritual campaign it was important for Basil to secure an adherent in the enemy’s territory, and he accordingly decided to plant a bishopric at the little town of Sasima, and to consecrate his friend Gregory as its first Bishop. In this measure Gregory’s father concurred, and though he afterwards bitterly repented of the step, it is difficult to suppose that Gregory himself at the time refused his consent. Sasima was a *mansio* (lodging place) on the high-road from Angora to Tarsus, and as it was only twenty-four Roman miles from Nazianzus, Gregory must have known perfectly well the character of the place from which he was to take his episcopal title. Here, however, is the description—doubtless the too depreciatory description—which he gives of it when he is reviewing the mistakes and failures of his life:—

There is a posting-place for travelers planned

Where three ways meet, in Cappadocian land.
 This squalid hamlet is the home of slaves,
 No spring refreshes it, no foliage waves.
 There ever dust, and the car's rattle reigns,
 Wails, groans, the exactor's shout, the clank of chains.
 Its people—strangers who benighted roam:
 And this was Sasima, my Church, my home.
 This in his goodness had to me assigned
 The Lord of fifty Bishops: wondrous kind!
 To this new see, this fort must I repair
 That I might fight my patron's battle there.

Bitter as is the lamentation, we are almost ready to forgive the poet the querulousness of his tamper for the sake of the vivid picture which he has preserved for us of a village on one of the great highways of the empire, its inhabitants so harassed by the demands of the officers of the *cursus publicus*, so impoverished by *angaria* (services on the road), so constantly called upon to furnish *paraveredarii* (extra post-horses) for governors proceeding to their provinces, or Bishops returning from their synods, that their condition was practically little better than that of slaves.

What made the sacrifice that was asked for at his hands all the more painful was that Gregory was under no illusion as to the meanness of the strife in which he was expected to engage:—

“Souls were the pretext: but I grieve to say
 The love of rule it was that caused the fray.
 This and the vulgar claims for tax and toll
 That o'er the wide world vex the weary soul”.

Such was the profound disgust with which Sasima inspired its new Bishop that he apparently never attempted to discharge the obligations which he had assumed. After a very short residence, if indeed he ever resided there at all, we find him back at Nazianzus, where the increasing weakness of his father excused the helpful presence of a coadjutor. Two years after his consecration to the see of Sasima, both Gregory's parents died. It seems that it was the general wish that the son should succeed the father, and that the canonical difficulty arising from his being already wedded to the see of Sasima would have been in some way surmounted. But again that strange irresolution, that attitude of “he would and he would not” which is so characteristic of this father of the Church, displayed itself. He refused to be consecrated Bishop of Nazianzus, yet lingered on at that place of which he had now been for several years virtual Bishop. He declares that he performed no episcopal function, laid his hands on no priests' head, nor even prayed publicly in the Church. But Basil refused to consecrate any other Bishop, hoping always that his reluctance to accept the office might be overcome, and Gregory, to show that this was impossible, made another retreat, this time to the monastery of Saint Thekla, at Seleucus.

And now at length, after the death of Basil, and seven years after his own consecration to the see of Sasima, another prospect opened before him, one which appealed to all the higher and lower motives of his nature, to his enthusiastic zeal for the doctrine of the Trinity, and to his personal vanity: to his desire to stir great masses of men by his persuasive eloquence, and to his disgust with the dullness of Cappadocia. The thought suggested itself—or, as he believed, was suggested to him by the Spirit of God—that he should go to the capital and

undertake the oversight of the little flock of adherents of the Nicene theology, which still remained in Arian Constantinople. The proposition had perhaps been originally made to him by some of the leaders of the Trinitarian party: it was at any rate warmly approved by them, and to Constantinople he accordingly departed.

The religious condition of the New Rome, the great city of the East, was at this time a most peculiar one. Heathenism had far less hold here than in the Old Rome by the Tiber: we may perhaps say that it had less hold than in any other city of the Empire. Christianity of one kind or another was the fashionable religion; but it was, and remained for long, whether it assumed the garb of orthodoxy or heterodoxy, a Christianity of the vain, disputatious, shallow kind, doing little to purify the lives of its professors, and making little response to the deep spiritual yearnings of humanity as expressed either in preceding or succeeding ages.

For a generation and a half Arianism had been the dominant creed in court and camp and council-chamber, and Arians accordingly the majority of the citizens of Constantinople proclaimed themselves, looking down upon those who held fast to the Nicene Creed as heretics. But in addition to the professors of Arianism themselves divided into Homoousians, Homoeana, Anomoeans—there were the partisans almost of every strange opinion concerning the Godhead that the brooding spirit of the East had given birth to. Manicheans, who solved the riddle of the universe by proclaiming it to be the work of two equally strong co-enduring powers, Good and Evil: Gnostics, who worshipped Depth and eternal Silence and a wonderful family of Aeons, half male, half female in their attributes: men who believed in the magical efficacy of the letters composing the mystical name of God: men who derived the Old Testament and the New from two deeply opposed and hostile powers—the Puritan Novatian, the ecstatic Montanist—all were mingled in this great tide of humanity which swayed to and fro, wrangling, disputing, bargaining by the shores of the Bosphorus.

Against all these opponents of the orthodox faith and against the Apollinarians who, though they accepted the Nicene Creed, were by their too daring speculations on the union of the Human and the Divine in the person of Christ, preparing the way for the long and terrible Monophysite controversy of the next century, Gregory waged earnest and eloquent, but not bitter war. He began to preach in the house of a relation (the Arians having still possession of every basilica in Constantinople), and the church which grew out of this little conventicle received the name of Anastasia, a name which to the minds of Gregory and his hearers fittingly expressed the resurrection of the true doctrine of the Trinity after its long apparent death during the Arian ascendancy. From the accounts which are given us of the multitudes that Rocked to Gregory's preaching, we may perhaps infer that large additions were made to the single house which had at first received him. Later on the Emperor Theodosius erected there a magnificent basilica which was adorned with beautiful marbles. The Mosque of Mehmed Pasha on the south-west of the Hippodrome, and overlooking the sea of Marmora, still marks the site of this church of the Resurrection, where Gregory with rapt face expounded the mysteries of the Trinity, and where, a hundred years later, the Scriptures were read in the Gothic tongue, in order to keep alive the memory of Aspar and Ardaburius, Gothic embellishers of the sacred building.

The intense earnestness with which Gregory pleaded for the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine which was to him no philosophical abstraction but the centre of all his spiritual life, joined to his great and undoubted oratorical gifts, obtained for him an enthusiastic and an increasing band of adherents, but he also met with much and bitter opposition. He himself tells us that his previous training and his personal appearance were against him. His life, which had been spent for the most part among the rustics of Cappadocia had but little prepared him to face the scrutiny of the delicate aristocrats of Constantinople:—

For "that the poorest of the poor", said they
 Wrinkled, with downcast look and mean array,
 Whose fasts, and tears, and fears had left their trace
 Deeply on what was ne'er a comely face,
 A wandering exile from earth's darkest nook
 That such should rule, no well-born souls could brook

The lower classes of the capital were easily roused by the cry that the Cappadocian was bringing back the many gods of heathenism, so completely had the doctrines of Nicaea faded from the popular memory during the long ascendancy of Arianism. He was stoned by the rabble in the streets ('Would that those stones had not missed their mark!' wrote he afterwards in the bitterness of his spirit), and he was dragged 'like a murderer' before the tribunal of the Prefect. But however dangerous the fury of the mob might be, if they gave chase to a Trinitarian in the streets of Constantinople, from the legal tribunals he had nothing to fear. Six months at least had passed since the last Arian Emperor had fallen on the Reid of Hadrianople, and though Theodosius, the new Augustus of the East, had not yet received baptism at the hands of the Trinitarian Acholius, enough doubtless was conjectured as to his bias, and enough was known as to the bias of his young colleague, Gratian, in favour of the creed of Nicaea, to make a judicious Praetorian Prefect hesitate before he put in force any of the anti-Nicene decrees of Valens which might perchance be slumbering in the statute-book.

But though little molested by the officials at Constantinople, Gregory was sorely troubled by dissensions and rivalry in the Church of Anastasia itself! The consecration of Maximus the Cynic as Orthodox Bishop Constantinople was an event which Riled Gregory's soul with bitterness and to which he devotes three hundred passionate lines in the poem of his life; but we may pass lightly over it, as no principle of any kind was involved in the contest.

About the same time when Gregory himself arrived in Constantinople, there appeared there another visitor, from Egypt; a man whose long hair, hanging down in curls over his shoulders, and whose staff carried in his hand proclaimed him a Cynic philosopher. This was Maximus, a Cynic still according to his own profession, but also an adherent of Christianity and of the Nicene form of that faith, one who had written well against the Arians and who—so he said—had suffered four years' banishment to an oasis in the Egyptian desert for his faith. This man professed and perhaps felt keen admiration for the great oratorical gifts of Gregory, and he was repaid by an elaborate oration in his praise pronounced before the congregation of Anastasia. At this time Gregory took the cynic-saint at his own valuation, and found his rhetorical vocabulary all too small to describe the union of religion and philosophy in the mind of the Egyptian convert, or to paint the exile, the stripes, the ignominy which he had endured for the faith of Christ. At a later time, when the ambition of Maximus had collided with his own, his vocabulary of abuse was even more severely taxed to describe the vices of his rival. The exile and the stripes, he hinted, had been the punishment of vulgar crimes. Maximus was so destitute of literary culture that it was nothing less than impudence for him to presume to write verses. He understood as much about oratory as a donkey understands of playing the lyre, or fishes of driving a chariot; whereas Gregory himself whom he would provoke to a literary encounter, could no more help writing eloquently than water can help flowing or fire burning.

Above all, however—and the emphasis laid on this offence makes us doubt the reality of the graver charges—Maximus made himself odious by wearing his hair long. It was partly golden-coloured, partly black (probably like the dandies of the period he dyed it, not with entire success, in imitation of the yellow hair of the Goths); it was curly; old and new fashions were combined in the dressing of it; it was tied up into a round knot like a woman's; and so on, through many an angry line, runs the invective of the elderly rustic who saw this 'curled

darling' stealing into the hearts of his female votaries, and silently supplanting him in his hardly-earned throne.

In all this we greatly miss the calm summing up of an impartial judge. The career of Maximus was a strange one, and the proceedings which have next to be related with reference to his consecration were undoubtedly irregular; but there seems no reason to think that he was guilty of disgraceful crimes, and he was apparently a man of sufficient eminence as a philosopher to cause his accession to the ranks of the orthodox to be considered a valuable conquest by others beside the preacher of Anastasia.

In the year 379, while Gregory was confined to his house by illness, a mob of Egyptian sailors (says Gregory), hired for the purpose by a priest of Thasos, who had come to Constantinople to buy marble from Proconnesus for his church, rushed a little before dawn into the church of Anastasia. They seated Maximus in the marble chair of the Bishop and began to intone the service of Consecration. Other ecclesiastics were with them beside the marble-seeking priest from Thasos, and all alleged that they were acting in accordance with a mandate received from Peter, Bishop of Alexandria. Already Alexandria, as the most important Church of the East, was claiming to exercise that right of interference in the ecclesiastical affairs of Constantinople which was so grievously to trouble the peace of the Church in the following century.

But day dawned, and the rite of consecration was not ended. Even the necessary tonsure was not completed, when the faithful adherents of Gregory, having learned what was doing, came pouring into the church and found the Cynic, with half his curls still untouched by the shears, sitting in the marble chair. To escape the wrath of the shouting multitude, the Egyptians glided from the church into the adjoining house of a band-master, and there cut off the remaining curls and completed the consecration of their new Bishop.

These events must have occurred in the summer of 379, and it was probably in the autumn of that year that Maximus, finding the tide of popular opinion running strongly against him, sought the camp of Theodosius and entreated his help to secure for him the episcopal throne of Constantinople. Let the Bishop's Muse seated on her ambling pad, tell what followed:—

“But when the Eastern Caesar, brooding ill
 For the barbarian tribes who roamed at will,
 Mastered in Macedonia his array,
 What does this vilest dog? Attend, I pray;
 Gathering the refuse of the Egyptian crowd,
 (Those 'neath whose shears his yellow ringlets bowed)
 He hastens to the camp with nimble feet
 By royal edict to reclaim his seat.
 Ejected thence by Caesar's anger dread
 With fearful implications on his head,
 (For Theodosius still to me was kind,
 And none had poisoned yet the Imperial mind),
 The pestilential creature seeks once more
 (His wisest course) the Alexandrian shore;
 For Peter played throughout a double game,
 A facile promiser, to each the same”

If Constantinople could not be persuaded to own him as Bishop, Maximus insisted that Peter should abdicate for him his own see of Alexandria. This modest request was refused, nor

when Peter soon after died—Feb., 380—,perhaps his death may have been hastened by the shame and annoyance of the affair of Maximus—did the Cynic succeed in obtaining the vacant throne. His further movements need not be recorded. He went to Italy; he succeeded in enlisting in his cause the Italian Bishops with the great Ambrose at their head; but his election was pronounced utterly invalid by the council of Constantinople, and he soon disappears from history. A strange and presumptuous man doubtless, but perhaps hardly deserving of all the contempt which has been poured upon him, the usual portion of unsuccessful pretenders to thrones civil or ecclesiastical.

The glimpse which we have obtained of Theodosius driving the Cynic aspirant from his presence with anger and curses, shows us already the tendency to outbursts of passion in the florid full-habited Augustus, which was to lead to such a terrible result in the later years of his reign. To Gregory the affair of Maximus brought deep humiliation and keen annoyance, humiliation that he had so imperfectly understood the character of the man whom he had taken into his confidence, annoyance that any considerable number of the orthodox believers at Constantinople should put the dandy-philosopher's claims to spiritual authority in comparison with his own. He desired—or told himself that he desired—to abdicate his doubtful position at Constantinople, and preached a sermon in which he exhorted his congregation to hold fast the doctrine of the Trinity which he had taught, and not to forget his labours among them. The note of farewell which sounded in the sermon was perceived by his flock; and the response, we may perhaps say the desired response, broke forth. "There was a stir like the hum of bees disturbed in their hive. Men and women, youths and maidens, old men and boys, gentle and simple, magistrates and soldiers on furlough, were all stirred, by the same passions of anger and regret, regret at the thought of losing their pastor, anger at the machinations which were driving him from among them". They implored him not to desert his Anastasia, "most precious of temples, the Ark of Noah which had alone escaped from the Deluge, and which bore in its bosom the seeds of a regenerated world of orthodoxy". Still Gregory, as he tells us, hesitated, but at length a voice was heard from the congregation, "Father! in banishing thyself thou art banishing also the Trinity", and that voice decided him to remain.

Thus passed the year 380, the year of the illness of Theodosius and of his long residence at Thessalonica, of Gratian's campaign and of the final ratification of the *foedus* with the Goths. And now, by the labours of Gregory in the Church, by the strategy of Theodosius in the mountain passes of the Balkans, by his and Gratian's policy in the Gothic army-meetings, all was prepared for the Emperor's triumphal entry into his capital, which took place on the 24th of November, 380.

One of the earliest acts of Theodosius was to summon Demophilus the Arian Bishop of Constantinople to his presence, and ask if he were willing to subscribe to the Nicene Creed and thus restore the peace of the Church. Demophilus, a man apparently of respectable character though not of brilliant abilities, who had for ten years sat in the episcopal chair of Constantinople, teaching the doctrines of a moderate Arianism, refused even at the bidding of an Emperor to renounce the profession of a lifetime. "Then", said Theodosius, "since you reject peace and unanimity, I order you to quit the churches". Demophilus left the Imperial presence, and calling together his adherents in the Cathedral thus addressed them: "Brethren, it is written in the Gospel, 'if they persecute you in one city flee ye to another'. The Emperor excludes us from our churches: take notice therefore that we will henceforth hold our assemblies without the city".

"Thus then", says the ecclesiastical historian with beautiful simplicity, "the Arians, after having been in possession of the churches for forty years, were, *in consequence of their opposition to conciliatory measures of the Emperor Theodosius*, driven out of the city in

Gratian's fifth consulate, and the first of Theodosius [380] on the 26th of November. The professors of the Homousian faith in like manner regained possession of the churches.

The Arians, henceforward a proscribed and persecuted sect, meeting outside the walls of Constantinople, were known by the contemptuous name of Exocionitae, because they met outside the pillar which marked the extreme westward limit of the city.

At this point Gregory shall resume the narrative, as the glimpse which he affords us of the character of Theodosius when seen from an orthodox point of is too precious to be lost:—

“In this position did my fortunes stand
 When came the tidings : Caesar is at hand;
 From Macedon he came, where he the cloud
 Of Goths had scattered, menacing and proud.
 A man not evil is he, one whose rule
 The simple-minded for the faith may school;
 A loyal servant of the One in Three,
 So says my heart: and with its voice agree
 All who hold fast Nicaea's great decree.
 Yet zeal is not in him nor purpose high
 To compensate the wrongs of years gone by
 With answering sternness, nor the ruins raise
 Wrought by the Emperors of earlier days.
 Or was there zeal enough, but lacked he still
 Courage! or rashness! Answer it, who will.
 Haply 'twere better take a kindlier tone
 And say, the Prince's *forethought* here was shown.
 For of a truth persuasion and not force
 For us and ours I hold the worthier course.
 Since thus we lead the converts' souls to God,
 Not sway their conscience by the Sovereign's nod.
 The tight-bent bow springs back. If dams restrain
 The prisoned stream 'twill one day Hood the plain,
 E'en so a faith constrained will lose its sway:
 A faith enwrought lasts till Life's latest day”.

Theodosius has not by the verdict of history been found guilty of too tender a regard for liberty of conscience in his subjects. Gregory, who here blames him for his lukewarmness, was certainly, whatever his other faults, one of the most tolerant ecclesiastics of the age, and even these lines reveal the divided councils of his own spirit on the subject of religious toleration. But that Gregory was even inclined to call Theodosius half-hearted is a valuable indication of the direction in which the stream of public opinion was flowing in that age, a direction exactly opposite to that in which it has been flowing with us since the days of Locke.

Demophilus being cast out from his basilica, the next thing was to enthrone Gregory. The Cathedral Church of these days was not the magnificent temple of the Divine Wisdom, the St. Sophia of Justinian and Anthemius: but it was the Church of the Twelve Apostles, the Westminster Abbey of Constantinople, where all the Eastern Emperors were buried, and where a year later Theodosius was solemnly to entomb his predecessor Valentinian. This great Church rose upon the fourth hill of Constantinople, overlooking both the Golden Horn, and the Sea of Marmora; but now no vestige of it is left; for there Mohammed the Conqueror exercised the right which only conquering Sultans may justly claim, the right of building a mosque and

calling it after his name. In the spacious courtyard adjoining it are the gushing fountains required for the ablutions of Mohammedan worshippers: within is the tomb of the victorious Sultan covered with tawdry ornaments, and by the gate is inscribed in letters of gold on a tablet of lapis lazuli the prediction of the Prophet. "They will capture Constantinople. Happy the prince, happy the army which shall accomplish this". Everything about the place now tells of the conquering sons of Ishmael, nothing of the *Heröon* in which the Caesars of New Rome once lay in glory. Yet for this not so much the Mussulman as the Christian must bear the blame, for the spoliation of the Imperial tombs took place, not when Mohammed stormed the city, but two hundred and fifty years before, when the warriors of the Fourth Crusade committed the stupendous blunder and crime of the capture of Constantinople.

When Theodosius, who at this time had only kind looks and words for Gregory, said to him, "God, through my hands, will give you the cathedral as a reward for your toils", the heart of the new Bishop sank within him as he thought of the serried ranks of the Arians that would have to be beaten down before such a consummation could be attained. However he took courage in remembering the sufferings of Christ, which he might be called upon to share if he should fall into the hands of the multitude.

The appointed day dawned. The cathedral and all the approaches to it were lined with soldiers; but the streets were thronged by a mob of excited and angry citizens. At the windows of the second and third stories their faces were seen; they filled the roads, the square, the hippodrome. Men and women, grey beards and little children were there, all thrilled with sorrow and indignation. Passionate prayers were put up to the Emperor that he would even yet desist from his design; passionate threats were addressed to Gregory as to the vengeance that would descend on his head. The appearance of Constantinople, he himself tells us, was like that of a city taken by the enemy. And yet the Emperor, who dared all this for the sake of the creed of Nicaea, was accused of lukewarmness in its service.

The procession moved towards the cathedral. Gregory, weak and suffering from his recent sickness, walked between the Emperor and his soldiers. A dark cloud hung over the city, and seemed, to the excited imaginations of the people, to denote the divine displeasure at the deed which was that day to be accomplished. But no sooner had the procession entered the church and reached the railings which separated the nave from the choir, than the clouds disappeared and a blaze of sunlight filled all the place. The *Te Deum* was intoned at the same moment: triumphant shouts drowned the angry murmurs of the crowd without: hands were waved in pious exultation. Joy and gladness shone in the countenances of the orthodox believers, a moment ago depressed and mournful: and it seemed to all that the glory of the Lord Riled the house as it did the tabernacle of old.

Such were the scenes which marked the return of the Church of Constantinople to that Nicene form of the faith which was thereafter dominant throughout Christendom. Many a conflict was to arise on other points of doctrine between the Old Rome and the New, but to the creed of Nicaea both cities remained steadfast till at Constantinople all Christian creeds went down before the war-cry of Allah and the Prophet.

To Gregory, the day, so much dreaded, of the procession to the cathedral, proved the one supreme day of joy and triumph in a life of disappointment and apparent failure. After the singing of the *Te Deum* and the outburst of sunlight kindling the mosaic faces of the Apostles in the church which was dedicated to their honour, there arose from the congregation a sound which seemed like the roar of thunder, but in which articulate words were audible. Grave officials in the body of the church, excited women in the gallery on high, joined in the earnest cry addressed to the Emperor, "Thou have given us back the Church. Give us also Gregory for our Bishop". So loud and so importunate were the voices that some reply must be promptly made to them; but Gregory, unnerved by the rapid alternations of fear and triumph on that day,

distrusted his own powers of utterance. At his request a neighbouring presbyter arose and said: "Cease your clamour. For the present we have only to think of thanksgiving. Hereafter we shall see greater things than these".

From this time, however, there seems, from Gregory's own narrative, to have been a slight but steady decline in the favour with which he was regarded by Theodosius. He attributes it, himself to his lack of sedulous and obsequious attendance at Court. "Let others", he says, "crouch before the frown of power, let them cultivate the favour of chamberlains who show themselves men only in their lust for gold, let them lie down before the doors of royalty, let them use the glib tongue of the informer, let them open the hand of the beggar, let them take their very piety to market and sell it for a price. I have practiced none of these arts, and will leave the doors of princes to those who like to haunt them". These are noble and manly thoughts, but they were partly suggested to the Cappadocian bishop by that 'rusticity' of which he was himself fully conscious, and which made him no congenial companion of prefects and chamberlains. But besides this, Theodosius, who was a good judge of character, had probably discovered, as Basil had, in this fervent, impulsive, sensitive nature, an absence of those gifts which are required in him who would bear rule among men. Gregory's was essentially the oratorical temperament: and the men who are born to rule are generally men of silence.

Gregory's fall from power was hastened by an event which seemed at first to add lustre to his office, the Convocation of a general Council at Constantinople. This assembly, which has almost by accident obtained the second place among the great Councils of Christendom, was summoned by Theodosius in May 381. Its composition did not entitle it to the name of Ecumenical, for it consisted of 150 Bishops, drawn entirely from the eastern portion of the empire. It had, however, the glory of closing, practically, the Arian controversy, which for fifty years had distracted Christendom. It formulated no new creed: there had been enough and too many of these published at the endless councils assembled by Constantius and Valens. It did not even, as is generally stated, republish the creed of Nicaea with those additions concerning the Holy Spirit which now appear in the Latin and Anglican liturgies. But it reaffirmed that creed as the authoritative exposition of the faith of the Church, and by anathematizing the doctrines of the various schools of its opponents from the Anomoeans up to the Semi-Arians, it secured victory to those champions who, through good report and evil report, had followed the flag borne aloft by Athanasius, and after his death by Basil and Gregory. It further declared that henceforward the See of Constantinople, the New Rome, was to take precedence after that of Rome itself thus settling theoretically a dispute between Constantinople and other Eastern patriarchates, which was not practically to be terminated for more than a century.

As to all the proceedings connected with the consecration of Maximus the Cynic, and the disorder introduced by him into the Church of Constantinople, the Council declared that he neither was nor ever had been Bishop, and that all ordinations performed by him were invalid.

So far all the legislative acts of the Council had been distinctly in Gregory's favor: but besides this it took the further, administrative, step of formally installing Gregory in the Episcopal throne of Constantinople. He resisted, he tells us, even with shouts and lamentations, but yielded eventually, hoping that he might be the means of restoring peace to the distracted Church. The solemn consecration was performed by the venerable prelate who presided over the Council, Meletius, Bishop of Antioch. He was a man, who, having been appointed to that see as a supposed Arian by the Emperor Constantine, suffered exile and persecution for his bold profession of the Nicene faith. He was an ideal president of an ecclesiastical assembly, a man whose sweet temper corresponded to the meaning of his name, whose very countenance spoke of calm within and whose hand, stretched forth with mild authority, secured calm without. According to a tradition which was prevalent in the Church in the fifth century, Theodosius, before his accession to the throne, had seen in a dream a venerable man, whom he

instinctively knew to be the Bishop of Antioch, enter his room, invest him with the Imperial mantle, and place upon his head the Imperial crown. When the 150 fathers of the Church were summoned to Constantinople, Theodosius expressly enjoined them not to tell him which among them was Meletius. They were all ushered into the palace, and at once the Emperor, leaving the others unnoticed, ran up to the great Meletius, kissed him on the eyes, the lips, the breast, the head, and on the right hand which had conferred upon him the Imperial crown. The recognition was altogether like that between a father and a long separated son, and Theodosius rehearsed to the wondering prelate the vision which made his face familiar.

Such was the prelate who placed Gregory in the episcopal chair, and who presided over the earlier sittings of the council. But the good old man died before the council had been many weeks in session, and though his death brought an accession of dignity to the Bishop of Constantinople, for he was naturally chosen to succeed Meletius as president, it brought him also no small accession of labour and sorrow. For the See of Antioch had been for the last twenty years in the peculiar position of having two rival bishops, both orthodox, one of whom was generally recognized by the Nicene party in the West, and the other by the same party in the East. The venerable Meletius, notwithstanding his bold profession of faith in the Trinity, was repudiated by the stricter members of the orthodox party as having received consecration at the hands of Arian prelates, and eventually, nineteen years before the date of the Council of Constantinople, Paulinus, a steadfast adherent of the Nicene Creed, had been consecrated as a rival Bishop to Meletius, and had received the recognition of Rome and of most of the Churches of the West. Various attempts had been made to heal this senseless schism, which arose from no difference of doctrine but simply from personal antagonism. These attempts, however, had failed, owing to the obstinacy, not so much of the two bishops themselves, who were both high-minded and saintly men, as of the subordinate ecclesiastics of each party; "vile place-hunters", says Gregory, "who were always blowing the flame of contention and who cleverly fought their own battle under the pretext that it was their chief's". Some of the leading presbyters had, however, sworn not to seek election on the occasion of the death of one of the two claimants, but to accept his rival as bishop of the whole Church.

Now, upon the death of Meletius, the time had come for adopting this reasonable mode of terminating the schism. To this conclusion, to the recognition of Paulinus as the canonical Bishop of Antioch, Gregory now endeavoured to lead the Council. He has preserved to us the purport of his oration on this subject. "It would not be worthwhile", he said, "to disturb the peace of the world, for which Christ died, even for the sake of two Angels, much less on account of the rival claims of two Bishops. During the lifetime of the venerable Meletius, it was perhaps right that we should stand up for his claims against the opposition of the West: but now that he is dead, let Paulinus take the vacant see. Soon will death cut the knot, for Paulinus is an aged man: and meanwhile we shall have regained the affections of the estranged churches of the West and restored peace to Antioch. Now the faith itself is in danger of perishing through our miserable squabbles: and rightly, for men may reasonably ask what the faith is worth which permits of our bearing such bitter fruits. If anyone think that I am influenced by any fear or favour in giving this counsel, or that I have been prompted thereto by the rulers of the State, I can only appeal to the Judgment of Christ at the Last Day to disprove such a charge. For me, I care not for my episcopal dignity, and am quite ready, if you wish me to do so, to lead a throneless life without glory but also without danger, in some retirement where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest".

As soon as Gregory had ended his oration there arose from all the younger Bishops a sound like the croak of jack-daws. Without reverence for his years, for the dignity of his presidential office, for the place in which they were assembled, they spluttered out their indignant ejaculations, in a tempest of windy wrath, or like wasps whose nest had been

disturbed, so they buzzed angrily against the daring bishop who had dared to lift up his voice on behalf of common sense and Christian forbearance. The older prelates, who ought to have checked the young men's excesses, followed ignobly in their train: and the war-cry of all, both old and young, was "The East against the West". The East had championed the cause of Meletius: it must not stoop to acknowledge defeat by accepting Paulinus the candidate favoured by the West. It was in the East that Christ had wrought His miracles, had suffered death on the cross, had risen from the dead. "Let not Rome or any other western See presume to dictate to the sacred East in matters of Church government". On this argument, which reveals disruptive tendencies that were ultimately to manifest themselves on a larger scale and to exert a fatal influence on the destinies of the Empire, Gregory remarks, with some cleverness, that this geographical view of the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven involves its upholders in some difficulties. If we are to look to the lands of the sunrise for our spiritual light, and if the East is essentially religious and the West irreligious, what is to be said of the points North and South where the sun stops and turns in his yearly orbit? And as for the argument that the East is holy because Christ died there, it may be replied that since Christ must needs suffer, the East was chosen as the scene of his manifestation in the flesh, because only in the East could a people be found wicked enough to crucify Him.

Sick at heart with all the wranglings of the ecclesiastics, and sick in body from confirmed and chronic disease, Gregory absented himself from many meetings of the Council, and rumours of his intended abdication began to circulate, arousing among his flock, especially among the poorer members of it, passionate lamentations and earnest entreaties that he would not leave them. Such was the posture of affairs when a crowd of Egyptian and Macedonian Bishops arrived to share the deliberation of the Council. Some of these may possibly have taken part in the earlier Alexandrian intrigue for the elevation of Maximus. With Gregory's doctrine they could find no fault: in fact they were, like himself, zealous champions of the faith of Nicaea. But they came, as he says, "like boars with whetted tusks", eager for battle with the Bishops of Asia, especially with the followers of the party of Meletius, and they perceived in the consecration of Gregory by Meletius a point of attack against the memory of that prelate too advantageous not to be occupied. For by one of the Nicene Canons, never formally abrogated, if in practice little regarded, it was forbidden to translate a Bishop from one see to another. As Gregory therefore had certainly been consecrated Bishop of Sasima, if he had not also virtually officiated as Bishop of Nazianzus, his consecration as Bishop of Constantinople was irregular, and the dead Meletius must be censured for having performed it.

The Egyptian Bishops assured Gregory that it was not against himself personally that these proceedings were aimed: but they filled full the measure of his disgust with Bishops and Councils, and ecclesiastical intrigues. He tells us that he was like a steed chained to the stall, but stamping with its hoof and whinnying for freedom and its old pastures: and in this technical point raised by the Egyptian bishops he saw the means of his deliverance. Dragging himself from his sickbed to the Council, he begged them not to interrupt those deliberations to which God had summoned them by the discussion of anything so unimportant as his position in the Church. Though guiltless of the storm he would gladly offer himself like Jonah, for the safety of the ship. His glory would be to renounce an Episcopal throne in order to restore peace to the Church.

"I depart: to this conclusion my weary body also persuades me. I have but one debt still to pay, the debt of mortality, and that is in the hand of God".

The resignation of Gregory was accepted with a readiness and unanimity, which, he admits, surprised him: and he returned to his home with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, joy that he had obtained a surcease from unwelcome toil, sorrow that he was leaving his dock to unknown guidance through the unknown dangers of the wilderness.

It remained only to visit the Emperor and announce to him the vacancy of the Metropolitan See. With a certain proud humility Gregory appeared before the wearer of the purple and said, "Let others ask of you, oh great Prince, gold for themselves, or beautiful mosaics for their churches, or office for their kinsfolk; I ask a greater gift than these, leave to withdraw from the unreasonableness and jealousy of the world, and to reverence thrones [whether episcopal or imperial] from a distance and not nigh at hand. You have quelled the audacity of the barbarians: may you now win a bloodless victory over the spirit of discord in the Church". The Emperor and all his courtiers applauded the eloquent words of the prelate, but the command (if such command were expected) to reconsider his decision, came not: and Gregory, after doing his utmost to reconcile his faithful flock to his departure, quitted Constantinople. He had preached in that city during a space of two years and a half, but had been only for about three months the recognized occupant of the episcopal throne.

He returned to his native Cappadocia, endeavoured, not altogether successfully, again to guide the affairs of the Church of Nazianzus, retired to a little estate at the neighbouring village of Arianzus, and died there about 389, having attained, probably, the 65th year of his age. His premature old age was harassed by the vexations of a relative and neighbour named Valentinian, and saddened by great bodily weakness and spiritual depression. He longed after his flock at Constantinople, and in pathetic poems expressed his yearnings after the beloved Church of Anastasia, which the visions of the night brought with sad reality before him.

With all the obvious weaknesses of his character, there is something strangely attractive in the figure of this great champion of orthodoxy. In his mixture of zeal and tenderness, in his rapid transitions from triumph to depression, there is something which reminds us of the Apostle Paul: yet if we put the two lives side by side, and compare the utterances of the two men, we feel, perhaps, more vividly than in the case of more obviously unworthy successors of the Apostles, how great was the moral descent from the Christianity of the first to that of the fourth century, how ennobling and exalting to the whole character of man was the power, the indefinable quality which was possessed by Paul of Tarsus, but which was not possessed by Gregory of Nazianzus.

Soon after the departure of Gregory the Council of Constantinople ended its labours. Flavian, a presbyter who belonged to the party of Meletius, was chosen as his successor in the See of Antioch. For the all-important See of Constantinople, Theodosius selected Nectarius, a man of high birth—he belonged to a senatorial family—and filling at the time the office of Praetor, but unknown in the ecclesiastical world, and still only a catechumen. His mild and conciliatory temper, and the knowledge of the world which he had acquired in his political career, were his chief recommendations, and in fact, during his long episcopate he contrived to steer the bark of the Church of Constantinople with more skill than either of the far more famous theologians by whom he was preceded and followed.

And thus it was, to return to the laws of Theodosius for the suppression of heresy that on the 30th of July, 381, the Emperor ordered all the churches throughout his dominions to be handed over to those Bishops whose orthodoxy was guaranteed by the fact of their holding communion with Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, and Timotheus, Bishop of Alexandria.

The old expedient of requiring subscription to a creed was abandoned: and communion with men of ascertained orthodoxy was substituted in its place.

If there were any of that reluctance which Gregory discovered in Theodosius to force the consciences of his subjects into compliance with his own belief it soon disappeared under the influence of the exhortations to more zeal which he received from his Bishops and from his wife, the devout Flaccilla, and also doubtless under the increasing intolerance of opinions different from his own which is wont to be engendered in the breast of the possessor of

absolute power. Fifteen stern edicts against heresy, one on an average for every year of his reign, were his contribution to the Imperial Statute-book.

Already on the 10th of January, 381, Theodosius had launched the first of these imperial thunderbolts with an energy which one would have thought might have rendered it unnecessary for Gregory of Nazianzus to apologize for his too great moderation. "Let there be no place left to the heretics for celebrating the mysteries of their faith, no opportunity to exhibit their stupid obstinacy. Let popular crowds be kept away from the assemblies, now pronounced unlawful, of all heretics. Let the name of one supreme God be everywhere glorified, let the observance of the Nicene faith, handed down to us from of old by our ancestors, be for ever confirmed. Let the contaminating plague of Photinus, the sacrilegious poison of Arius, the criminal misbelief of Eunomius, and the unutterable enormities of the other sects which are called after the monstrous names of their authors, be banished from our hearing. He is to be accounted an assertor of the Nicene faith and a true Catholic who confesses Almighty God and Christ the Son of God, one in name with the Father, God of God, Light of Light: who does not by denying the existence of the Holy Ghost insult that Spirit through whom comes whatsoever we hope to receive from the great Father of us all: whose unstained faith holds fast that undivided substance of the Incorruptible Trinity which the Orthodox Greeks assert under the name of Ousia. These doctrines are abundantly proved to us: these are to be revered. Let all who do not obey them cease from those hypocritical wiles by which they claim for themselves the name—the alien name— of the true religion, and let them be branded with the shame of their manifested crimes. Let them be kept entirely away from even the thresholds of the churches, since we shall allow no heretics to hold their unlawful assemblies within the towns. If they attempt any outbreak, we order that their rage shall be quelled and that they shall be cast forth outside the walls of the cities, so that the Catholic Churches throughout the whole world be restored to the orthodox prelates who hold the Nicene faith".

So began the campaign which ended in the virtual extinction of Arianism in the Roman world, and the acceptance of the Nicene Creed as part of the fundamental constitution of the Empire. The contents of the fifteen edicts against heretics may be summarized thus. No Arians were to be at liberty to build a church either in city or country in which to celebrate the rites of their dire communion; and houses devoted to this purpose in defiance of the law were to be confiscated by the State. Nor were they to be allowed to ordain priests; and if they transgressed this command "all who should dare to take the polluted name of priests among these sectaries and who pretended to teach that which it is disgraceful to learn, should be hunted without mercy out of the city of Constantinople, to live in other places apart from the intercourse of good men". A few years later, the limits within which the Arians were suffered to live were yet further restricted. They were to be banished not from the capital only but from all the cities of the Empire. "Let them resort to places which may most effectually, as if with a rampart, shut them off from all human fellowship. We add that they shall be altogether denied opportunities of visiting and petitioning Our Serenity".

In order to enforce the edicts for the suppression of heretical meetings, a series of laws were passed by Theodosius and his sons with the object of enlisting the instincts of the possessors of property on the side of orthodoxy, by making these "dens of wild beasts" subject to confiscation either by the State, or, in the later legislation, by the Catholic Church. "The place in which the forbidden rites are attempted shall, if the thing were done with the connivance of the owner, be added to the possessions of our treasury. If it can be proved that the owner of the house was ignorant of the transaction [he shall not forfeit his property, but] the tenant who allowed it to be so used shall pay 10lbs. of gold, or if poor and sprung from servile filth, shall be beaten with clubs and banished. We especially order that if the building in question form part of the Imperial property, the procurator who has let it and the tenant who

has hired it be each fined 10 lbs. of gold. A similar fine is to be exacted from any who shall dare to usurp the name of clergyman and assist at the mysteries of heretics”.

Occasionally a gleam of mildness darts across the thundercloud of the Imperial anger. “The Taxodrocitae”, says Theodosius, “need not be turned out of their dwellings, but no crowd is to be permitted to assemble at any church of this heretical superstition; or if by chance it should come together there it is to be promptly dispersed”. The sect with this barbarous name, for which an Emperor of Rome condescended thus specially to legislate, was, we are told, a set of men who prayed with the forefinger held under the nose to give themselves an appearance of sadness and holiness.

Upon the Manicheans the orthodox Emperor was especially severe, but this is not surprising since, as we have seen, even the tolerant Valentinian thought himself bound to suppress their teaching, as tending to the subversion of morality. Any bequest to or by a Manichean, male or female, was declared void, and the property which it was attempted thus to pass lapsed to the treasury. But by a curious anticipation of the “Irish Penal Laws” of the eighteenth century, it was ordered that any children of Manichean parents who might be found professing the true faith should escape the operation of this edict and, presumably, enter into the immediate possession of property for which they must otherwise have awaited their father’s death. And then reverting to his former denunciation of the heretics: “They shall not escape”, says the Imperial legislator, “by taking other names which seem of more pious sound than that of Manichean. Such are they who call themselves the Continent ones, the World-renouncers, the Water-users, and the Sackcloth-wearers. All these, with whatever names they may seek to cloak themselves, are to be execrated as men branded with the crime of heresy”.

In the next decree but one it seems to be ordered that the sectaries who bear these names of pretended holiness be capitally punished; and it is added that all those who do not concur in the celebration of Easter at the usual time shall be considered equally guilty with the heretics at whom the law is expressly aimed.

Certainly there was no need to complain of Theodosius’ lack of persecuting zeal. Whatever arguments might be alleged for the suppression of the awful doubt of the Manicheans, no such defence can be made for the desperate servility with which an Emperor of Rome placed all the vast powers of the State at the disposal of the Catholic Bishops, in order to enforce the observance of the festival of the Resurrection on a certain artificially calculated Sunday rather than on the 16th of Nisan. It was with an appearance of gracious liberality that Theodosius allowed freedom of worship to all who delighted in worshipping God in the beauty of holiness and with true and right observance; but it was clear that right observance meant compliance, in the minutest particular, with the commands of the Bishops who stood round the Imperial throne; and the very sentence which seemed to announce this tolerant maxim declared that all the members of the anathematized sects who should dare to come together in crowds, to fit up their houses in the likeness of churches, or to do any act public or private which could interfere with Catholic holiness, should be expelled [from the cities] by the concerted action of all good men.

No doubt it was long before the theoretical severity of the persecution of heretics could be translated into fact in all the cities of the empire. The frequent repetition of almost identical edicts shows how easily they lapsed into disuse, either through the inherent difficulty of enforcing them or through the venality, the good nature or the secret inclination to heresy of the provincial governors who were charged with their execution. Indeed, we are expressly told by one of the Church historians that great as were the punishments ordained by the laws against heretics, they were not always inflicted; for the Emperor had no wish to persecute his subjects; he only desired to enforce uniformity of religion by means of intimidation;—an apology, it may be remarked in passing, which is as good for Diocletian or Galerius as it is for

Theodosius. But none the less was the Theodosian religious legislation ultimately successful in the suppression of all teaching opposed to the creed of Nicaea, and the victory thus won exerted an immense and, in my view, a disastrous influence on the fortunes of the Empire, of Christianity, and even of Modern Europe.

The Empire suffered alike from the strength and the weakness of the Imperial persecutor. Such edicts as those which we have been considering must have loosened the bonds of loyalty in many regions of the empire, must have sent many sectaries to the mountains and the wilderness, with savage hearts, ready to cooperate with the first barbarian invader who would avenge their cause upon the orthodox Augustus and his Bishops. But even the imperfect execution of the decrees must also have done harm to the State. The obligations of discipline were relaxed, the muscles of the administration lost their firmness, when edict after edict issued from the Imperial *secretum*, which could not be, or at any rate was not, literally obeyed by more than a small minority of the officials of the provinces.

To Christianity there might seem to be a temporary gain in the cessation of the wearisome and profitless talk concerning the nature of the Godhead. But nothing was further from the subtle intellect of the Grecian East than giving up the dispute as to the relation of Jesus Christ to the Father of whom He spoke, and setting to work to practice His precepts. Shut out henceforward from the Arian controversy, the Orientals plunged with all the more eagerness into the Nestorian and Monophysite controversies. The stream of interminable babble still flowed on, eddying now, not round the doctrine of the Trinity, but round the doctrine of the Person of Christ. Faith died and Theology was occupied in garnishing her sepulchre with elaborate and fantastic devices, when, from the burning plains of Arabia the harsh war-cry of another faith, narrow and poverty-stricken in comparison with the earlier faith of the Christians, but still a living Faith in the Unseen, was heard, and the Mosque of the Moslem, with its sublime motto "Allah Wahdahu" (God Alone), replaced the Christian Church with its crosses and mosaics of the saints. Had the State not endeavoured to enforce one uniform creed in Constantinople, in Antioch, in Alexandria, it is possible that Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt might at this day be owning the teaching of Christ rather than that of Mohammed.

But most fatal of all was the direction given by so great an Emperor as Theodosius to the energies of European rulers during the period—not far short of a millennium and a half—during which the Roman empire was the model proposed for imitation by all the half-barbarous states which arose upon its ruins. Following the example which he had set, every European ruler during the Middle Ages deemed it one of his duties to enforce the Catholic unity upon his subjects. It was a duty which no doubt was often neglected, but still it was a duty, for the great Caesars of Rome had practiced it; and therefore we have among these princes the same paradox which meets us in the case of the Roman Caesars, that the best sovereigns were often the most relentless persecutors. Sometimes however, especially in the later days of pre-revolutionary Europe, a king atoned for his own lax morality by zeal in the punishment of heretics. Almost into our own age the baneful influence lasted. Eight years after the accession to the throne of the grandfather of our present sovereign, an old Frenchwoman named Marie Durand was liberated from the Tour de Constance at Aigues Mortes, in which she had been imprisoned for thirty-eight years. The only crime which was alleged against her (and even that falsely) was that her marriage had been solemnized by her brother, a Huguenot minister, who, by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, had been forbidden to exercise any religious function. This was the crime for which thirty-eight years of imprisonment were not considered too severe a punishment, and the monarch in whose name the sentence was inflicted was the eldest son of the Church, the most Christian and most Infamous Louis XV. The chain of causes and effects is a long one, but we shall probably be safe in asserting that if Theodosius had elected to follow the wise example of Valentinian, and had refused to enforce religious

uniformity by the power of the State, that hapless daughter of Provence would not have languished for a lifetime in the dreary dungeon of *Aquae Mortuae*.

CHAPTER VII

THE FALL OF GRATIAN

BARBARIAN invasion and religious controversy have compelled us to devote a large share of attention to the fortunes of the Eastern Empire. The scene now shifts from Thrace to Gaul, from the sea which flowed like a river past the churches and palaces of Constantinople, to the river which widened into lakes under the vine-clad hills of Gallia Belgica. Here, on the banks of the beautiful Moselle, stands the August city of the Treveri now called by its German possessors, Trier,— by its French neighbours, Trêves; a city which claims to have been founded by Assyrian emigrants at the time of the Call of Abraham, but which has more substantial titles to the veneration of the archaeologist, as possessing undoubtedly finer remains of Roman architecture than any other city north of the Alps. Here the traveller can still see the massive buttresses which once supported the Roman bridge over the Moselle,— the Amphitheatre in which the young Constantine made the Frankish kings, his captives, fight with the lions of Libya,—the massive walls of the building which was once probably the Palace of the Praetorian Prefect, perhaps of the Emperor himself when he resided at Augusta Treverorum. Here is the Basilica or Hall of Judgment of Constantine, now used as a Protestant Church, and here is another Basilica, begun probably by Valentinian and completed by Gratian himself whose four gigantic columns, with the vast arches springing from them, formed the nucleus round which the cathedral of the Prince-Bishops of Trier has strangely crystallized. But beyond all other wonders of this most wonderful city is the huge mass of the Porta Nigra, a fortress-gateway, far surpassing in size any structure of the same kind at Rome itself, and probably built by Valentinian or by one of his immediate predecessors. This mighty pile, the lower stories of which were throughout the Middle Ages choked with rubbish, while its upper part was turned into a church, or rather into two churches, has now by the Prussian Government been cleared of all these incongruous additions, and frowns down on the breweries and the gas-works as it frowned down on the Court, the Camp, and the Basilica in the days of Gratian.

Augusta Treverorum appears to have become the regular official residence of the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul towards the end of the third century. Constantine enriched it with many fine buildings, often abode in its palace, and as has been said, celebrated the games in its Amphitheatre. His son, Constantine II, Valentinian, and Gratian, all treated it as their chief capital city. Here then Gratian dwelt for the greater part of his seven years' reign, except when his presence was needed at Sirmium to direct the operations of his generals against the Goths during the sickness of Theodosius, or at Milan to guide the counsels of his impulsive step-mother, Justina. The beginning of his reign was full of promise. Besides the successes which his arms achieved against the Lentienses and the Visigoths, successes the glory of which of course rested chiefly with his generals, he had the more personal merit of mitigating the harshness of his father's policy and of punishing some of the chief instruments of his cruelty. Thus, as has been already said, both Maximin and his assessor Simplicius were, apparently at the outset of the reign of Gratian, handed over to the sword of the executioner.

Much of the credit of Gratian's early popularity is doubtless due to the two wise counsellors by whom his policy was chiefly guided. The first of these was Merobaudes the

Frank, who for his surpassing military talents had been made Master of the Soldiery by Valentinian and who had protected the interests of the family of the deceased Emperor in the stormy debates which followed that Emperor's death. He shared the honours of the consulship with Gratian in 377, and was probably his chief adviser in all military matters during the eight years of his reign. Notwithstanding a passage in one of the chroniclers which throws a doubt on his fidelity, there is reason to believe that the old general remained true to the house of Valentinian to the end, and perished because of that fidelity.

A very different character from that of the martial Frank was borne by the other chief counsellor of the young prince, once his tutor, now his minister, Decimus Magnus Ausonius. This man's history was a good illustration of the way in which the profession of rhetoric might even under so autocratic a system of government as the Roman Empire, lead a person of modest birth and fortune to the most brilliant prizes of the civil service.

Ausonius was born at Bordeaux in the early years of the fourth century, and was the son of an eminent physician named Julius Ausonius. Decimus Ausonius studied rhetoric, taught grammar, and in middle life was appointed tutor to the young Gratian. The pupil seems to have truly loved his preceptor, who describes himself as "tranquil, indulgent, mild of eye, of voice, of countenance": and the stern Valentinian respected him. Hence honors and emoluments Rowed in upon himself and his family. His aged father was made Prefect of Illyricum: he himself was successively count, *quaestor*, and Praetorian Prefect, ruling in the latter capacity Gaul, Illyricum, and Italy. Prefectures and proconsulates were also bestowed on a son, a son-in-law, and a nephew of the favoured tutor, and in the year 379 he himself was raised to the supreme, the almost overwhelming honour of the consulship.

To subsequent generations Ausonius has been chiefly interesting as representing the late autumn of Roman poetry. It is true that he cannot be classed above the third-rate poets, that many of his works are mere metrical conceits, of no literary value, that he has no striking thoughts nor especially melodious diction: but there is in this "tranquil and indulgent man with his mild voice and eye" a certain gentle susceptibility to the beauties of Nature which makes him a not altogether unworthy successor of Virgil, a not entirely futile forerunner of our modern school of poetry. His most celebrated poem is an "Idyll", in which he sings the praises of the Moselle. The vine-covered hills above, reminding him of his native Garonne, the villas which lined both sides of the valley, the happy labourers at their harvest toil, the stream itself "like the sea bearing mighty ships, like a river rushing along with whirling waters", the white pebbles of its bed clearly seen through its transparent tide, and the grassy mounds reflected in its still pools : all these are described, if with rather too obvious a desire to imitate Virgil, still by one whose eye was open to behold the beauties of Nature. It must be admitted, however, that there is much vapid mythological allusion, even in this short poem, and that when the bard enumerates the various kinds of fish that might be caught in the Moselle, and the different streams that helped to swell its waters, he does not rise much above the level of a catalogue in verse.

A poem of more personal interest, but one of which we unfortunately possess only the beginning, is the *Ephemeris*, or story of a day in the author's life. The poet begins in soft Sapphics, calling his lazy slave Parmeno to awake :—

"Now the bright-eyed Mom re-illumes the window;
Now the wakeful swift in her neat is chirping;
You, my slave! as though it were scarcely midnight,
Parmeno! sleep still.
Dormice sleep, 'tis true for a livelong winter;
Sleep, but feed not. You, like a lazy glutton,

Drink deep drafts before you lie down to slumber;
 Therefore you snore still.
 Therefore voice of mine cannot pierce those ear-flaps,
 Therefore slumber reigns in your vacant mind-place,
 Therefore Light's bright beams with a vain endeavour
 Play on your eye lids.
 Bards have told the tale of a youth whose slumbers
 Lasted on, unbroken, a mortal twelvemonth,
 Nights and days alike, while the Moon above him
 Smiled on his sleeping.
 Rise! you dawdler; rise! or this rod corrects you.
 Rise! lest deeper sleep, when you least expect it,
 Wrap your soul: your limbs from that couch of softness,
 Parmeno! lift now.
 Ah! perhaps my gentle harmonious Sapphics
 Soothe his brain and make hut his sleep the sweeter.
 Drop we then the Lesbian tune, and try the
 Sharper Iambus.
 Here: boy! Arise! My sandals bring
 And fetch me water from the spring,
 That I may wash hands, eyes and face;
 And bring my muslin robe apace;
 And any dress that's fit to wear
 Bring quick, for I abroad would fare.
 Then deck the chapel, where anon
 I'll pay my morning orison.
 No need of great equipments there,
 But harmless thoughts and pious prayer;
 No frankincense I need to bum;
 The honeyed pastry-cake I spurn.
 The altar of the living sod
 I leave to others, while to God
 The Father with coequal Son
 And Spirit, linked in unison,
 I pray in this my morning hour.
 I think upon the present Power:
 My spirit trembles. He is here,
 Yet what have Hope and Faith to fear!"

Then follows a prayer consisting chiefly of an anxiously orthodox invocation of the Trinity, but with something more than mere orthodoxy in its closing sentences. The poet desires to be kept in goodness and purity, to be neither truly accused nor falsely suspected of crime, to have the use of his faculties and the love of his friends preserved to him, and when the last hour comes, neither to fear death nor yet to long for it.

Here unfortunately the best part of the poem ends. Ausonius has asked five guests to dine with him, and gives some directions to the cook as to the preparation of the repast: but the dinner itself, the talk of the guests, the *siesta*, the games which might have followed it—all these are absent from this record of a day: and after a long break we have only a humorous description of the nightmare dreams which follow the too luxurious banquet. Knowing what

caused the ruin of the poet's Imperial pupil, Gratian, we notice with some interest that one of the worst of these dreams is that in which Ausonius sees himself dragged away, helpless and unarmed, among bands of captive Alans.

At an epoch of transition such as that which we are studying, we look attentively to see what was the mental attitude of the chief writers of the day towards the religious questions which stirred the minds of the multitude and evoked the edicts of emperors. The general tone of Ausonius' poetry seems to be monotheistic but Pagan. He corresponds on intimate terms with Symmachus, the great supporter of Paganism at Rome: and the Professors of Rhetoric at Bordeaux, Toulouse, and other cities of Southern Gaul, whose fame he commemorates in a poem specially dedicated to their honour, seem to have been for the most part followers of the old religion. On the other hand, as we have seen, he is anxious to show himself not only a Christian, but an orthodox Trinitarian, in his *Ephemeris*. Probably the fact is that he was sprung from a family which was either heathen, or indifferent to religious controversy, that in his profession as a rhetorician he was brought into contact chiefly with the votaries of the Olympian gods, but that in middle life he professed, and perhaps possessed, a sufficient amount of faith in Christianity to make it not unsuitable that he should be appointed tutor to a Christian Augustus. The important point to notice, and that which justifies us for having spent a few pages on the character and career of this third-rate poet, is that what is now called Culture was still for the most part loyal to the old gods of Greece and Rome. Christianity, such as it was, had conquered in the forum, in the army, and in the council-chamber; but it had not yet succeeded in establishing its dominion in the author's study or the professor's lecture-room.

Very different from Ausonius in character, in mental fibre, and in his influence on his own and succeeding ages, was another adviser who, though not a minister of state like Merobaudes or Ausonius, still did much to mould the mind of Gratian. This was the far-famed bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose. Sprung from one of the great official families of the Empire, Ambrose passed the years of infancy in the palace of the Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, for that was the high office (carrying with it dominion over Britain, Gaul, and Spain), which was wielded by his father and namesake. We are not informed where the elder Ambrose was dwelling when his son was born to him; but it is at least a plausible conjecture that it was at Augusta Treverorum; and if so the ruined pile on the outskirts of Trier, which went till lately by the name of the 'Roman Baths', is probably the building in which the child, who was to be one day the greatest theologian of the West, first saw the light, and through the open windows of which, according to his biographer's story, the swarm of bees came dying, which crept in and out of the open mouth of the slumbering infant—a presage of his future sweet and golden eloquence.

Like his father, Ambrose seemed destined to be a great Imperial official. He pleaded as an advocate in the Court of the Praetorian Prefect of Italy, and (probably about the 30th year of his age) was advanced to the dignity of *Clarissimus Consularis Liguriaie et Aemiliae*. Here while he was discharging the duties of his office with impartial industry, and thus winning the esteem of the provincials to whom a just governor was not one of the ordinary blessings of life, he was one day summoned to the great Basilica of Mediolanum in order to quell what seemed likely to be a bloody tumult arising out of a disputed episcopal election. Auxentius, the just deceased Bishop, had been an Arian. A strong and clamorous party wished to give him an Arian successor; but other voices, probably more numerous, shouted for the election of one who would uphold the creed of Nicaea. While Ambrose, surrounded by his guards, was addressing the excited multitude, and seeking to persuade or awe them into stillness, suddenly a voice was heard—the voice of a little child said the poetic imagination of those who had afterwards to tell the story—clear and distinct, through the eloquent speech of the young Consular: "Ambrose is

Bishop". The voice was hailed as an omen from heaven. Probably as Ambrose was still but a catechumen, each party hoped that he might be persuaded to enlist under its banner. The determination of the people to have Ambrose for their Bishop was only increased by the strange and repulsive expedients to which he resorted in order to give force to what was perhaps in his case a genuine utterance "*Nolo episcopari*". After an attempted flight he surrendered himself to the will of the people, was baptized as a Christian, and on the eighth day sat in the marble chair of the Basilica, a consecrated Bishop.

Not for long were the two parties left in doubt which of them Ambrose would join. He soon showed himself an earnest, an eloquent, and a somewhat highhanded votary of the faith of Nicaea, to the final victory of which creed he contributed as effectually in the West as Basil and Gregory had done in the East.

It was he who in the year 381 procured the assembling of a Council at Aquileia for the deposition of Palladius and Secundianus, two aged semi-Arian Bishops. He conducted the bitter cross-examination which preceded their condemnation, refusing their appeals to a General Council, taking them point by point through all the heresies of Arius, and calling upon them either to anathematize, or to prove the theses of the arch-heretic. Finally it was Ambrose who, reciting the "blasphemies" of the two defendants, obtained the unanimous anathemas of the Bishops (collected chiefly from the cities of Northern Italy, and Gaul) who were assembled in the Aquileian Basilica, and it was Ambrose who drew up the report of the Council addressed to the Emperors, praying that the deposed prelates might be kept from entering the churches, and that holy men might be appointed in their places.

Upon the young and ardent mind of Gratian, St. Ambrose, in the fervour of his zeal for Nicene orthodoxy, and with that wealth of experience which he had collected both from his political and his ecclesiastical career, seems to have exercised an extraordinary influence. When the Emperor was moving his troops eastward to help his ill-fated uncle against the Goths, he besought the Bishop of Milan to give him some treatise concerning the Catholic Faith, by which he might strengthen his heart for the combat. Probably Gratian was thinking of the apparently inevitable discussions with the Arian Valens and the Bishops who surrounded him, but Ambrose understood him to allude to the battle with the Goths, and in the treatise *De Fide* which he composed in answer to the request, remarked that victory was often won rather by the faith of the general than by the valor of the soldiers. "Abraham with only 318 trained servants had conquered an innumerable multitude of his enemies [in his pursuit of Chedorlaomer]": and as the same number of prelates, the 318 fathers of Nicaea, had erected an eternal monument of divine truth, it should be his business to set up the trophy thus erected in the mind of his Imperial disciple.

These then were the manifold influences that had helped to form the character of the young Augustus of the West, for whom both friends and flatterers might not unreasonably anticipate a long and brilliant tenure of the rule of the universe. In order to see him thus in the splendour of his prime, it may be worth our while to accompany two of his professed panegyrists into his presence and listen to their praises, fulsome indeed, but not devoid of some traces of truthful portraiture.

It was perhaps in the early part of 376 that the orator Themistius, who had been dispatched by Valens on an embassy to his nephew, and who had visited his court in Gaul, returning with him as far as Rome, pronounced there a solemn panegyric in presence of the Emperor and the Senate. The title of the oration was "A Love-speech, concerning the Beauty of the Emperor". Striking the keynote by a reference to the discussion *on Love* in the Banquet of Plato, Themistius declares that he never could understand, aforesaid, Socrates' description of the pleasing torments endured by the lover; but all is now made plain to him, now in his old age, since he has fallen in love with the beauty of Gratian. "Oh! so rare a being do I behold

before me: a fair mind in a fair body, and a promise of greater loveliness to come. I sought my ideal of beauty and virtue in the dwellings of the poor, and found it not. Then I turned again to the *Phaedrus* of Plato, and learned from it that beauty has in it something divine, and I bethought me that it was to be looked for amongst kings and emperors who are like gods on earth. So I went, in my quest of beauty, to the palaces of the Augusti. Constantius was beautiful, and beautiful too was Julian; but neither of them entirely satisfied my longings. But now I am come to see thee, oh boy-emperor, boy-father, boy who surpassest hoary virtue; oh blessed prize of my long pilgrimage from one end of the earth to the other; and all my heart rejoices”.

Mindful of the jealous master whom he serves, Themistius here inserts a little laudation of Valens who has wedded Philosophy to Power, and has made barbarians civilized: he praises his care for the supply of the Eastern capital with corn, and the labour with which he has constructed the aqueduct which from a distance of 120 miles brought water over hill and dale to Constantinople. Then he touches on a more delicate theme of praise, the contrast between Gratian and his father. “It was not indeed my fortune ever to behold the savage beauty of Valentinian, but I now see it softened and made loveable in the heavenly face of his son. The evil that was done by the harsh counsellors of his father, Gratian cannot entirely undo, for he cannot raise the dead, but—an almost greater marvel—he repays the sums unjustly exacted by their oppressions. The Treasury was formerly a very lion’s den, with all the footsteps pointing towards the home of the king of beasts, and none emerging from it: but now, far more splendid because more righteous, are the marks of the gold that issues from the Treasury than of that which enters it. Titus thought that day lost in which he had done good to no one. Gratian misses not one hour from his benevolent labours. Entering into his *secretum* at the beginning of the day he asks himself, ‘Whom today shall I rescue from death? To whom shall I grant a pardon? To whom can I preserve his paternal abode?’”

“The character of the Prince transmits itself through all the ranks of his subordinates. As the satraps of Alexander the Great imitated the slight deformity of his person (his neck inclining somewhat more to the left shoulder than to the right), so the Prefects of Gratian have their minds turned to noble deeds by the example of their lord. Groans are no longer heard in the court-house. The rack, unused, is falling to pieces with age. Those calculators of ruin, those sleuth-hounds of the Treasury who hunted up its long-forgotten claims, have all disappeared, and the records which they left behind them, the fire has destroyed!”.

Themistius then proceeds to praise the young Emperor’s love of peace and his power of fascinating the barbarians. “Not philosophers only but barbarians love this beautiful Emperor; they gladly bow their heads before him, vanquished by his genius. Not the horse and his rider covered with complete mail ever fought so powerfully for Rome against the barbarians, as the beauty of Gratian and his symmetry of soul. Those who used to ravage our fields are now crossing the Rhine in multitudes, only to sue for his favour. They bring gifts who used to plunder, and their fierce spirit melts away under the magic charm of this young man’s attractiveness”.

After some more compliments of this kind to the Emperor, the orator, reverting to his first thought, declares that his quest of beauty ends in that vast, that infinite sea, of beauty, Rome. With some words of real eloquence he praises her Senate, her effigies of the gods, her nation of sculptured heroes, and with no obscure allusion to the ascendancy of the heathen party in Rome he declares, “To you we owe it, oh ye happiest of men, that the gods have not yet left this world of ours. It is you who have till now successfully resisted the attempt to sever the human nature from the divine. Let us then rejoice in white garments on this whitest of days. Come, oh Senators! invite your young warriors to return from their tents. Let not Rhine, or Tigris, or Euphrates delay their homeward march. Rome delights in the return of her sons, bearing gory

spoils, but bearing also the holier, bloodless trophies of gentleness and love of man. May the father of gods and men, Jupiter founder and preserver of Rome, and may Minerva our mother, and Quirinus the divine guardian of the Roman dominion, grant to me and mine ever to love this sacred City, and to be loved by her in return”.

Such was the panegyric pronounced by the Byzantine orator upon the young Emperor of the West, in the Senate-house at Rome. Nearly four years later, when Valens had lain for more than a year in his undistinguished Thracian grave, and when Gratian was holding the first place in the Imperial partnership, his old tutor, Ausonius, stood before him in the palace at Trier to express his thanks for an honour (still the highest which any but an emperor could hold), the consulship which he had received at the hands of his Imperial pupil. About a twelvemonth before, when Gratian was at Sirmium, anxiously watching the movements of the triumphant Gotha, and arranging for the association of Theodosius in the Imperial dignity, he still found leisure to remember his former preceptor by the banks of the Moselle, to ordain that he should be Consul for the year, first in dignity of the two, and to send him, in order to lend glory to his installation, the very same robe, adorned with embroidered palm-branches, which Constantine the Great had worn when he bore the office of Consul. With the same courteous condescension to the wishes, we may perhaps say to the vanity of his elderly preceptor, Gratian arranged to return by forced marches from Thrace to Gaul, in order to hear the oration which he uttered on divesting himself of the much-prized dignity. With a droll mixture of abject veneration for his Imperial pupil and delight in having attained the supreme honour of a consulship, Ausonius tells over again the story of Gratian’s epistle, in which he announced that “he was going to pay a long-due debt and still remain a debtor”. “Thus you wrote : When I was revolving in my mind, alone, the question of the creation of consuls for the year, according to my usual custom, with which you are acquainted, I asked counsel of God, and following his guidance I have designated and declared you as consul, and have announced you as foremost in rank”. These words are commented upon by the grateful poet through a whole paragraph of adoring adulation. But we may pass over these painful self-prostrations and need not follow Ausonius in the comparison which he institutes between himself and other Imperial tutors who had been honoured with consulships. It is more to our purpose to enquire what hints the orator lets fall of the character of him whom, with a natural play upon the words, he delights to call the ‘gracious’, the ‘grateful’ and the ‘gratitude-inspiring’ Gratian. Ausonius, like Themistius, contrasts the rule of the son with that of the father. “The Palace”, says he, “which you received so terrible, you have rendered loveable.... You, the son of Valentinian, whose goodness was so exalted, whose affability so ready” (this sounds almost like satire), “whose severity so restrained; you, having established the welfare of the State, have understood that it is possible to be most gentle without any injury to discipline”. Ausonius commemorates the destruction of the taxing-registers, “those trees of ancient fraud, those seeds of future injustice”. He too, like the Eastern orator, reminds his hearers of the celebrated saying of Titus about his ‘lost day’, and declares that every moment of Gratian’s time is devoted to alleviating the pressure on his subjects. In words which recall the opening of his own *Ephemeris* he sketches the daily life of the young sovereign, who from his boyhood has never begun the day without a prayer to Almighty God, and Men with cleansed hands and a pure heart has gone forth to his business or his pleasure. “Whose gait was ever seen more modest than yours? Whose familiar intercourse with his friends more condescending, or whose attitude on parade more erect? In athletics who ever showed himself so swift a runner, so lithe a wrestler, so lofty a leaper? No one has hurled the javelin further, or showered his darts more thickly or more certainly reached his mark. We have seen you like the Numidian cavalry, at the same time stretching the bow and relaxing the reins of your steed, with one and the same blow urging on the lazy horse and correcting the restless one. But then what restraint you exercise over yourself! At the table what priest is more

abstinent? In the use of wine what grey-beard is more sparing? Your chamber is holy as the altar of Vesta, your couch is chaste as the couch of a Pontifex. We have heard much of the affability of Trajan who was wont to visit his friends in sickness. You not only visit but heal: you procure nurses, you make ready the food, you administer the fomentations, you pay for the drugs, you comfort those who are stricken, you rejoice with those who are convalescent. Often, if anything untoward had happened in war, I have seen you going round the tents of a whole legion, asking each man how he fared, examining the soldiers' wounds and urging the prompt and continuous application of the proper remedies. I have seen some who had no appetite for food take it when you commended it to them. I have heard you utter the words which gave courage for recovery. I have seen you conveying this man's baggage by the mules of the court, giving that one a horse for his special accommodation; making up to one for the services of a missing horse-boy, Riling at your own charges the empty purse of another, or covering his nakedness with raiment. All was done kindly and unweariedly with the greatest sympathy, but with no ostentation. You gave up everything to the sick: you never reproached with your benefits those who had recovered. In discharge of an Emperor's duty you gave easy access to your person to those who invoked your aid: but you did more than this, for you never even complained of the interruption".

The picture which is drawn by the two orators of the young and brilliant Emperor, beautiful in person, affable in manners, generous with his purse and excelling in all manly exercises, is one which has certainly many lines of truth; but there were other elements in Gratian's character, other causes tending to overcloud the early brightness of his popularity, which we can learn from no panegyric and only dimly infer from the tragedy of his fall.

At Rome, which though it had ceased to be the main residence of the Emperors could yet exercise some influence on their fate, Gratian's uncompromising Christianity lost him the favour of many powerful citizens. Heathenism died hard under the shadow of the Capitol. Intertwined as it was with all the traditions of the world-conquering City from Numa to Augustus, it seemed, to many a Roman patriot that the preservation of the worship of Jupiter and Mars, of Rhea and Vesta and Ceres, was absolutely essential to the safety of the State. While the Pagans were at this time a small and discredited remnant in the new Christian city by the Bosphorus, they were probably an actual majority in the Senate of Old Rome: at any rate they were numerous enough to make a formidable resistance to the policy of suppression, which Gratian, admonished by Ambrose and fired by the example of Theodosius, was eager to apply to the ancient religion.

A striking proof of the ascendancy of Ambrose was afforded by the young Emperor's action in reference to the Altar of Victory. After the battle of Actium, Augustus, now sole master of the Roman world, erected in the Senate-house an altar, above which stood a statue brought originally from Tarentum, representing Victory in her usual attitude of eager forth-reaching speed, standing on a globe. On this altar, for nearly four hundred years, the senators had been wont, before commencing their deliberations, to burn incense to the goddess whose faithful companionship had borne the standards of the legions from the little city by the Tiber to the Atlantic and the Euphrates. Constantius, an Arian, but strong in his zeal against heathenism, removed the altar on the occasion of his visit to Rome (A.D.357). Julian, of course, replaced it; and the tolerant Valentinian appears to have suffered it to remain. Fresh from his communings with Ambrose, and with the treatise *De Fide* accompanying him on his journeys, the young Gratian ordered the removal of the idolatrous altar. A further proof of his zeal for Christianity was afforded by an edict which appeared in the year 382, forbidding the people to contribute to the expenses of the heathen sacrifices and confiscating to the use of the Imperial treasury the rich revenues which were appropriated to the service of the temples, and even to the support of the noble maidens, whose duty it was to tend the sacred fire of Vesta.

These successive blows aimed at the ancient religion, roused the indignation of the Roman senators. A deputation, headed by the orator Symmachus, set forth to wait upon the Emperor and remonstrate against the recent edicts. Pope Damasus of Rome, however, sent a counter-petition, which professed to utter the sentiments of many Christian senators and innumerable other private citizens, and which disavowed the prayer of the heathen remonstrants. This counter-petition, backed by the powerful word of Ambrose of Milan, attained its end, and the young Emperor sent away unheard the members of the ancient nobility of Rome who had travelled from the Tiber to the Moselle for the sake of an audience.

This rebuff to the heathen senators may perhaps have occurred about the same time with an equally conspicuous proof of Gratian's zeal for Christianity, given to the College of Priests. The emperors of the family of Constantine, though presiding in the councils of Bishops and settling disputed points of Christian doctrine, had yet on some occasions bowed themselves in the house of Rimmon, and had humoured the heathenism of Old Rome by accepting some of the titles, and perhaps even performing some of the sacrifices which marked the semi-religious character of the Pagan emperors. Not so, however, the young and enthusiastic Gratian. He had never donned the pontifical robe, nor had he ever, since he assumed the reins of power, allowed himself to be described as Pontifex Maximus. It was perhaps with a faint hope of inducing him to reconsider his decision against Paganism that the College of Pontifices now appeared before him, beseeching him to accept from their hands the long white linen robe with purple border which belonged to him of right, and like one of the old Caesars of conquering Rome, to appear before the people as the greatest of the priestly order, the Pontifex Maximus.

Their prayers were vain: Gratian utterly refused to receive the robe, saying emphatically that it was unlawful for a Christian to wear such a garment. The priests retired, but he who was first in rank among them was heard to mutter, "If the Emperor does not choose to be called Pontifex, there will nevertheless very speedily be a Pontifex, Maximus". There was perhaps a pause between the last two words, and men not long after thought they discovered in them somewhat of the nature of a prophecy.

The discontent of the fossil Pagan Conservatives of Rome would perhaps not have greatly endangered the throne of Gratian had his administrative qualities and his popularity with the army fulfilled the promise of the earlier years of his reign. Unfortunately this was not the case. There are signs that the counsellors who surrounded him, and who had advised the punishment of the ministers of Valentinian, were themselves wanting in firmness, perhaps in integrity, and that under their lax rule the exchequer was becoming exhausted and the judgment-seat corrupt. Gratian himself with all his amiable and admirable qualities, with his personal beauty, his eloquence, and even his poetical gifts, his courage, his frugality, and his unspotted chastity, lacked the one virtue indispensable to the ruler of an autocratic empire, diligence. Men saw him with dismay at a time when the defence of the tottering realm would have well-nigh overtaxed the industry of Marcus Aurelius, imitating instead the athletic frivolities, certainly not the cruelty of the unworthy son of Aurelius, Commodus. His vast game preserves (*vivaria*), rather than the camp or the judgment-hall, were the almost constant resort of the young Augustus. Night and day his thoughts were engrossed with splendid shots, made or to be made, and his success herein seemed to him sometimes to be the result of divine assistance. The statesmen in his councils may have mourned over this degeneration of an able commander into a skilful marksman; but a more powerful cause of unpopularity with the rank and file of his army existed in the favour with which he viewed the barbarians, formerly his enemies, now his allies. Doubtless he saw that both in stature, in valour, and in loyalty, the Teutonic antagonists of Rome were superior to her effete offspring; and surrounding himself with a guard selected from the nation of the Alani, whose prowess he had tested as an enemy in his Pannonian

campaign of 380, he bestowed on them rich presents, entrusted to them confidential commands, and even condescended to imitate the barbarous magnificence of their attire.

The preference of these few Alani to the so-called Roman soldiery (themselves perhaps, if the truth were known, the sons and grandsons of barbarians) alienated from the Emperor the hearts of his old comrades. The fire of discontent went smouldering through the army of Gaul, and at length reached the legions of Britain, who, doubtless in a state of chronic discontent at their exile to a misty and savage island, where the sun warmed them not nor could wine be purchased out of the pay of a legionary, surrounded also by that abiding atmosphere of anarchy, in which it is the delight of a Celtic population to live, were always ready on the slightest provocation to forswear the oaths which bound them to the reigning Augustus and proclaim a new Emperor, under whose standards they might march to pleasure and the South.

The aspiring officer who made the discontent of the army the lever of his own ambition, was a certain Maximus, a Spaniard, like Theodosius, variously represented to us as the comrade and as the butler of that Emperor. It has been already said that certain detachments of Spanish troops were regularly detailed for service in Britain : for instance, the camps of Cendercum and Cilumum in Northumberland were garrisoned by the first and second 'ala' of the Asturians respectively. It is possible that Maximus may have originally entered the island as a private soldier in one of these detachments; may have held some inconspicuous place in the military household of the elder Theodosius, and having recommended himself to that general by some deed of daring, may have been promoted by him to the place of tribune or centurion. However this may be, he appears at the time of the mutiny to have borne the reputation of an able and trustworthy officer. By repeating and magnifying the calumnies against Gratian, and by the adroit use of hints which were perhaps not quite unfounded, that Theodosius had not forgiven the house of Valentinian for his father's death, and would behold its downfall and his fellow-countryman's elevation with pleasure, he seems to have persuaded the mutinous soldiers to invest him with the Imperial purple. There was, however, some show of reluctance on his part, and it is possible that he was rather the instrument than the author of the mutiny

Maximus, at the head of his army, consisting probably of the greater part of three legions stationed in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and landed at the mouth of the Rhine. Gratian, who was engaged in hostile operations against the Alamanni, found on his return to headquarters that many of his soldiers had gone over to the standards of his rival. He had still however a considerable army, and his veteran counsellor and general, Merobaudes, remained faithful, as did another loyal and brave barbarian officer, Count Vallto. The armies met in the neighbourhood of Paris, but there was no pitched battle. For five days there were slight and indecisive skirmishes, but during all this time Maximus and his right-hand man Andragathius, the commander of his cavalry, were tampering with the fidelity of Gratian's troops, recounting, doubtless, and aggravating the grievances of the Roman soldiers, postponed as they were to the pampered Alani, magnifying the frivolity and the incapacity of the new Commodus, and insisting that this young Emperor of barbarians must be displaced to make way for one who was loyal to the genius of Rome.

Too late the unhappy Gratian found that his soldiers' fidelity was a broken reed, that battle with the enemy was out of the question, and that his only safety lay in flight. This fatal termination of the struggle was partly due to his own generosity and improvidence, which had so exhausted the Imperial treasury that he had no power of winning back the lost affections of the soldiery by a lavish donative. When he saw the Mauritanian cavalry crossing the plain with loud shouts of acclamation to Maximus Augustus, and other legions and squadrons preparing to follow their example, he knew that the game was lost, and with three hundred horsemen he hurried from the field.

Andragathius pursued the Imperial fugitive with a picked body of horsemen. Gratian hurried southward, hoping to reach the friendly shelter of his brother's court at Milan. No city would open her gates to the hunted wayfarer, who but yesterday was "lord of the universe". We have a pathetic picture of his journey from the hand of Ambrose, the friend whose name was constantly on his lips in these melancholy days, and the thought of whose grief for him made his own grief more bitter. Deserted by all those on whose devotion he had a hereditary claim, with no friend to share the dangers of the way, the splendours of the Imperial table replaced by the hardships of actual hunger and thirst, Gratian still found comfort and support in that Christian faith, the reality of which in him was far more powerfully attested by the help which he drew from it in his hour of ruin, than by all the edicts for the repression of heresy which he had launched in the day of his prosperity. "Surely", said he, "my soul waiteth upon God. My enemies can slay my body, but they cannot extinguish the life of my soul". His flight was at length arrested by a cruel stratagem. As he drew near to Lyons he perceived a litter being borne, apparently by unarmed domestics, along the opposite bank of the Rhone. It was reported that the litter contained his newly-wedded wife's, and the eager husband hastened across the river to welcome her. Forth from the litter stepped, not the longed-for wife, but the traitor Andragathius, who carried Gratian a prisoner within the walls of Lyons. Some show of outward respect was paid to the unhappy captive, who was even pressed to resume the Imperial purple, and was invited to a sumptuous banquet. His apprehensions of danger were soothed by a solemn oath that no harm should happen to him; and then, apparently in the midst of the feasting, the purple-robed Emperor was struck down by the hand of an assassin. With his last breath the victim called upon Ambrose.

CHAPTER VIII

MAXIMUS AND AMBROSE

THE short but eventful life of Gratian had ended in the twenty-fifth year of his age, and Magnus Maximus the Spaniard, 'a man worthy of the purple if he had not broken his plighted oath in order to obtain it', ruled the three Western countries of Europe from the Cheviots to the Straits of Gibraltar, and Morocco as far as the slopes of the Atlas. After the murder of Gratian there does not seem to have been any extensive proscription of his friends. Merobaudes, who held the high dignity of Consul in the very year of his master's ruin, was compelled to put himself to death. Count Vallio, a man of great renown as a warrior, saw his house surrounded by some of the British soldiers of the usurper. They twisted a cord round his neck and hung him, and then spread abroad the rumour that he had perished by his own hands, and had chosen 'this womanly form of death,' a fiction which imposed upon none who knew the stout old soldier as 'ever a lover of the steel blade,' and who were persuaded that had his death been self sought the sword, not the halter, would have been its instrument. After these two deaths capital punishment of the adherents of the lost cause seems to have ceased; and now began between the Imperial Courts the game of mutual menace and intrigue, to decide whether Maximus should add Italy and Africa to his dominions, or should lose the Gauls, which he had won with scarce a sword-stroke.

There was of course consternation as well as grief in the palace at Milan when the boy-Emperor, his mother, and their faithful adviser, Bauto the Frank, heard of the death of Gratian, and conjectured that soon the great and warlike army of the West would be marching southward to sweep the dynasty of Valentinian from the earth. The common danger drew the Arian Empress and the orthodox Bishop of Milan together. While Bauto sent soldiers to guard the passes of the Alps, Ambrose generously undertook the labours and discomforts of an embassy to the Court of the usurper to plead for peace, a hard and humiliating commission truly for the polished and eloquent ex-governor of Liguria to have to stand as a suppliant before the upstart Spanish boor, who had wrapped himself in the Imperial purple, and to receive the kiss of peace from the brutal lips which had ordered the murder of his own dearly-loved pupil, Gratian.

Instead of being admitted, as his rank and character gave him a right to expect that he would be, into the *secretum* of the new Emperor, Ambrose was received in full consistory, courteously but coldly, and told to declare his errand. He asked for the return of the dead body of the murdered Emperor: this was firmly denied. He expressed the willingness of Valentinian and his mother that there should be peace: this was made in some measure dependent on the answer to be brought back by Count Victor, an envoy whom Maximus had dispatched to the Court of Milan. Then the usurper took up the discourse, and strongly urged that the child-Emperor should come himself and consult with him 'as with a father' concerning the welfare of the State. But hardly by such an easy crime as the murder or imprisonment of a confiding child was Maximus to gain a second share of the mighty heritage. Ambrose remarked that he had no authority to treat concerning the visit of Valentinian, but only concerning peace, nor did it seem reasonable that in that bitter winter weather, a little boy with his widowed mother should cross the Alps to seek an interview with a hardy soldier.

The embassy led to no immediate result. Ambrose waited in Gaul for Victor's return, passing the winter at Trier, but refusing all approach to intimacy on the part of Maximus. The invasion of Italy, if ever seriously thought of by the usurper, was postponed for the present—probably Count Bauto's soldiers, garrisoning the passes, interposed a serious obstacle—and meanwhile all eyes were turned towards the East, where lay the true key of the position; and that key was in the hands of Theodosius.

The Eastern Emperor had in the beginning of the year associated with himself as Augustus his little six year old son Arcadius, thus following the example of Valentinian in his association of Gratian. In fact, from this time forward this device for turning an elective into a hereditary monarchy became almost the rule in the Roman state. Eight months after the soldiers had acclaimed 'Arcadius Augustus', came the terrible news of the dethronement, the captivity, the death of Gratian. We can well believe that it was with somewhat mingled emotions that Theodosius heard the tidings. His benefactor and his colleague had fallen, the victim of calumny and foul treason, and Theodosius might feel himself called upon by the loud voices of gratitude and honour to avenge his death. On the other hand, the house of Valentinian had done grievous wrong on that melancholy day at Carthage to the house of Theodosius, and the ruin of the Illyrian dynasty by a Spanish usurper might seem heaven's chastisement for the unjust execution of the Spanish general. The effect of the recent revolution was to give Theodosius increased rank and precedence in the Imperial partnership, in some degree to smooth the way for the eventual appropriation of the sovereignty of the universe as the appanage of his family. These were the ignoble arguments dissuading Theodosius from avenging the blood that had been shed in the banqueting-hall at Lyons; but there were others on the same side more worthy of being listened to and obeyed by a Roman Emperor. Thrace and Moesia needed rest after the long agony of the Gothic campaigns. The Persian king was beginning to move uneasily on the other side of the Euphrates. The Saracens—some tribe known by that indefinite appellation—had appeared in arms on the south-east corner of the Euxine. The Ephthalite Huns were invading Mesopotamia, and had reached Edessa. Perhaps, too, within the limits of the Empire itself, the stern edicts against Arianism were not being enforced without trouble and commotion. All these considerations seemed to counsel peace, and a courteous reception of the ambassador whom Maximus sent, about the end of 383 or the beginning of 384, to the Court of Constantinople.

The envoy of Maximus was his Grand Chamberlain, an old and trusty comrade of the Emperor, contrasting favourably with the eunuchs who, since the days of Constantius, had generally held the office of Chamberlain in the Eastern Court. The message which he bore was no humble deprecation of the Eastern Emperor's anger. Maximus tendered no apology for Gratian's murder (the guilt of which he probably threw off on over-zealous subordinates), but he offered to Theodosius firm friendship, and an alliance offensive and defensive against all the enemies of the Roman name. This, if he were willing to accept it; if not, hatred and wax to the bitter end. Theodosius listened to the ambassador; and moved by some or all of the considerations which have been referred to, accepted openly the proffered alliance, though perhaps in his secret heart only postponing the day of vengeance.

It was agreed that the name of Maximus should be mentioned in the edicts of the Emperors, and that his statues should be erected side by side with those of the already recognized Augusti, throughout the Empire. Cynegius, the Praetorian Prefect, who was just starting on a mission to Egypt, in order to close all the temples that were dedicated to heathen worship, received an additional charge to raise a statue to Maximus in the city of Alexandria, and to make a formal harangue to the citizens, announcing that he was received as full partner in the Empire.

Whether formally stated or not, it was evidently one of the conditions of the peace thus arranged between under the Theodosius and Maximus, that the boy Valentinian of should be left in the undisturbed possession of Italy and Africa. From this time forward Theodosius assumed towards the young prince that position of elder brother, counsellor, and friend, which had been hitherto held by Gratian. The relation was indeed complicated by theological differences, Justina being as keen in her partisanship for the Arians, as Theodosius was resolute in his defense of orthodoxy, but in the end it might safely be predicted that in all important matters Constantinople would give the law to Milan.

Such scanty details as we possess concerning the character of Maximus as a civil ruler, will be best reserved for the close of his five years' reign. It happens that the events by which the attention of men was most attracted during this time were ecclesiastical rather than political. They related to the conflict between old and new religions, the struggle of the priest for supremacy, the unsheathing of the sword of the civil ruler for the extirpation of religious error, rather than to the march of armies, or the invasions of barbarians. In almost all of these debates Ambrose took a conspicuous part, and it may safely be said that in the minds of contemporaries as of posterity, the figures of the coarse soldier-Emperor of the Gauls and the boy-Emperor of Italy, were dwarfed beside the mighty personality of the eloquent Bishop of Milan.

Scarcely had the excitement caused by the news of the death Gratian subsided, when the heathen party in the Roman Senate began to agitate for the repeal of his legislation against the old faith of Rome, and for the replacement of the Altar of Victory in the Senate-house. Not unnaturally they pointed to the untimely end of the young enemy of the gods as a proof that the deities of the Capitol were still mighty to avenge their wrongs, and to add emphasis to this argument, they reminded the listeners of the dwindled crops which had been reaped throughout Italy in the summer after the impious edicts had been passed.

The chief advocates of the old religion in the Senate were the two men who in the year 384 held the highest civil offices in Italy, Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, Praetorian Prefect of Italy, and Q. Aurelius Symmachus, Prefect of the City of Rome. We have met with the former official in the reign of Valentinian interposing successfully to save some of

‘The fair humanities of old religion’

for the Nature-worshipping sons of Hellas. He was a fine specimen of the heathen Senators of Rome, a man able to rule with firmness yet without undue severity, honest and upright, and not without a pleasant vein of humour, which he often showed in cheerful banter with Pope Damasus. An Illustrious Prefect might still please rather than offend the Bishop of Rome by condescending to banter with him. ‘Yes, truly, oh Damasus,’ said he, ‘I too will become a Christian if you will make me Pope’. So much had Praetextatus seen in his official career of the power and splendour which now surrounded the chair of St. Peter, and so keen was the competition between rival claimants for its possession, a competition which in the disputed election of Damasus and Ursinus led to riot and bloodshed in the streets, and the very churches of Rome. Praetextatus was named as Consul for the year 385, but died before he had assumed the Consular robe, in the midst of the discussion which is about to be described.

Much fuller ought to be our information concerning Symmachus, the other champion of the religion of Jupiter. This high official of the Empire, Proconsul, Prefect, Consul, an orator and a historian, of high birth, vast wealth, and untarnished character, has left about 950 letters, many of them addressed to the chief statesmen and authors of the day. These letters ought to be a mine of information as to the social life of Rome in the fifth century: they should reveal to us the inmost thoughts of the dying Paganism of the Empire: they should help us to understand

how the last men of that antediluvian world looked upon the wild barbarian flood which was everywhere rising around them. Unhappily for us, though there are some grains of gold in this correspondence, they are scanty and widely scattered. It would perhaps not be too much to say, that half of them are filled with excuses for not writing earlier or oftener to his correspondents. The word which perpetually rises to the lips of the impatient reader as he turns over page after page of the letters of Symmachus is 'vapid.' It is in comparing the utter moral sterility of the correspondence of this most respectable and on the whole amiable Pagan with

‘The questings and the guessings
Of the soul’s own soul within’

revealed to us in the marvellous ‘Confessions’ of his young contemporary and fellow-orator, Augustine, that we feel most strongly why Paganism was bound to die, and why Christianity was sure to succeed to its vacant inheritance.

The least uninteresting part of the correspondence of Symmachus is the tenth book, which consists chiefly of the *Relationes* or Official Reports to the Emperors, made during his tenure of office as Prefect of the city. The most celebrated of these Reports is that in which he pleads the cause of the dismantled Altar of Victory. The Report is addressed to our ‘Lords Valentinian, Theodosius, and Arcadius ever August’. They are approached with every epithet of deferential homage. They are ‘the glory of our times,’ and ‘my renowned Princes’: they are addressed as ‘Your Clemency’, and ‘Your Eternity’; but when Rome herself is personified as appearing before them pleading her grey hairs as a reason why she should be exempted from insult, and begs ‘these best of Princes, these Fathers of the Republic’, to reverence her years, it seems hard not to suppose that some feeling of the inappropriateness of the designation must have crossed the soul of the orator. For, of these renowned Princes and Fathers of the State, one indeed was a stout soldier of thirty-eight, but the others were a boy of thirteen and a little child of seven, strange recipients of the solemn compliments of the elderly Senator. The most eloquent passage in the Report is the following paragraph in which Rome personified makes her appeal:

‘Reverence my many years, to which I have attained by these holy rites; let me use these ancestral ceremonies, for I have no desire to change them. Let me live after my own manner, for I am free. It is this worship which has brought the whole world under my sway; it was these sacrifices which repelled Hannibal from my walls, the Gaulish host from the rock of the Capitol Have I been preserved through all these centuries only that I should now be insulted in my old age?’.

Then, dropping the figure of suppliant Rome, the orator pleads for toleration on broader and more philosophical grounds:

‘We ask for a quiet life, for the indigenous gods, the gods of our fatherland. It is right to believe that that which all men worship is *the One*. We look forth upon the same stars, the sky above us is common to us all, the same universe encloses us. What matters it by what exact method each one seeks for Truth? It is not by one road only that you will arrive at that so mighty Secret.’

Arguments more personal to the Emperors are dwelt on at some length. It is for their interest that the sanctity of the oath should be upheld; but who will have any fear of perjury now that the venerable altar on which the Senators were wont to swear is removed? Then the orator passes on to another grievance, the withdrawal of the subsidies from the priestly Colleges and from the sisterhood of the Vestal Virgins. Here the excavations of recent years give a new emphasis to his words. Under the shadow of the Imperial Palatine, and within a few yards from the Arch of Titus, we have seen the long inviolate Atrium of the Vestals laid bare to

view. The site of the innermost shrine, where in all probability the mysterious Palladium was guarded, the chambers of the six recluses, the round temple in which the eternal fire was preserved, the statues of two of the Virgins, one of whom, a woman of sweet and noble countenance, was the Vestalis Maxima, the Mother Superior of this heathen convent—all these recently disinterred relics of the past help us to reconstruct the life of dignified seclusion led by these women, who were chosen from among the noblest and most austere families in Rome for the guardianship of the sacred fire. What lends especial interest to this discovery is, that the statue of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus—the only male who even in sculptured semblance was suffered to enter that chaste abode—has been also found in the Atrium Vestae. Both he and his wife, Fabia Aconia Paullina, were zealous patrons of the Vestals, who erected this statue in their hall to show forth their gratitude. As has been said, he seems not to have lived to see the end of the controversy; possibly his indignation at the contempt poured, on the holy maidens, may have hurried the old Senator to his grave.

The arguments employed by Symmachus in defines of his venerable clients, strongly resemble those which have been used in later ages by the orators who have deprecated the spoliation of convents. The ruler should be ashamed to eke out the poverty of his treasury by such unjust gains as these. The will of the “pious founder” should be respected. Who will have any confidence in bequeathing property to public objects if such dear and manifest testamentary dispositions as those by which the Vestals hold their funds are set aside? It is not true that they give no return for the revenues which they receive. They dedicate their bodies to chastity; they support the eternity of the Empire by the heavenly succours which they implore; they lend the friendly aid of their virtue to the arms and the eagles of your legions. You have taken the money of these holy maidens, the ministers of the gods, and bestowed it on degenerate money-changers, who have squandered on the hire of miserable porters the endowments sacred to chastity. And well have you been punished, for the crops of whole provinces have failed, and vast populations have had to live, as the first race of men lived, on the acorns of Dodona.

‘Finally,’ says the orator, ‘do not be ensnared by the argument that because you are Christians, it is your duty to withhold pecuniary support from every faith but your own. It is not really you who give these allowances to the Virgins. The dedication of the funds took place long ago, and all that you are asked to do is to respect as rulers the rights of private property. Your late brother Gratian erred through ignorance, for the evil counsellors who surrounded him would not suffer him to hear of the Senate’s disapprobation of his proceedings; but now that you are fully informed, we call upon you with confidence to remedy that which has been unjustly ordered.’ So, without any more distinct allusion to the fate of Gratian, ends the *Relatio* of Symmachus.

The Bishop of Milan had heard some rumour of the renewed attempts of the heathen party, and must have feared that through the weakness of Justina, or the policy of Bauto, they were likely to prove successful. He addressed ‘to the most blessed Prince and most Christian Emperor Valentinian’ a letter, not so much of counsel as of menace, denouncing the wrath of God and of all Christian Bishops if the petitions of the Senators were complied with. He demanded a copy of the *Relatio*, that he might reply to it. He insisted that in this, as in other matters, Valentinian should seek the advice of his ‘father’ Theodosius. He declared that if, without waiting for his own advice and that of Theodosius, the Emperor allowed the altar to be restored, ‘the Bishops would not be able calmly to accept the fact, and to dissimulate their indignation. You may come to church if you please, but you will find no priests there, or only priests who resist your entrance, and scornfully refuse your gifts, tainted with idolatry’. The whole tone of the letter, addressed as it is by a mature man of the world, and dignitary of the Church, to a helpless boy on whom an evil fate has laid the burden of an empire, is harsh and

ungenerous; and with rulers of a high spirit it would probably have brought about the very concession to the opposite party which he desired to avert. But Ambrose probably knew well the natures with which he had to deal, and felt that in any case the appeal to Theodosius would ensure the obedience of the young Prince and his advisers. The *Relatio* was sent to the Bishop, and he replied to it in a long letter, less fiery but much duller than that which he had first written. There is no need to go point by point through his reply to the arguments of Symmachus. Perhaps his best party is that which he makes to the allegation that the gods of the elder faith had saved Rome from Hannibal, and the Capitol from the Gauls. 'Indeed! Yet Hannibal came close up to the walls of the city, and long insulted it by the presence of his army in its neighbourhood. Why did the gods suffer that, if they were so mighty? And the Gauls, as we have always heard, were repelled not by divine aid, but by the cackling of the geese of the Capitol. Pray did Jupiter Capitolinus speak through the goose's gullet?'

But whatever might be the faults of taste, or the deficiencies of argument in St. Ambrose's letters, they produced the desired effect on the mind of the young Emperor and his mother. When the deputation from the Senate preferred their request to the Imperial Consistory, all the members of that body, Christians as well as Pagans, gave their vote for the restoration of the altar and the priestly revenues. Valentinian alone (so we are assured) opposed the prevailing current. His one stock argument was, 'Why should I restore what my brother took away? I should thus injure the memory of my brother as well as the cause of religion, and I do not wish to be surpassed in piety by him'. Then the politic ministers suggested that he might follow the example of his father, who had left the altar untouched. 'No,' said the boy, 'the cases are not parallel. My father did not remove the altar: neither am I removing anything. But there was nothing to restore, and he did not restore aught: neither will I restore it. Both my father and my brother were Augusti, and as far as may be I will follow the example of both, but if there be anything to choose I will rather be an imitator of my brother than of my father. Let our great Mother Home ask anything else that she may desire. I owe a duty to her, but I owe a yet heavier duty, to the Author of our Salvation'.

Whether he spoke his own opinions, or those which had been instilled into him by his mother, it must be admitted that the youthful wearer of the purple showed some trace of Caesarian dignity and self-possession in the manner in which he imposed his will (even if it were in truth the will of Ambrose) on the grey-headed soldiers and ministers of State who stood around his throne. The discussion was at an end. Symmachus was defeated. The Altar and Statue of Victory were left in some dusty hiding-place, from which they have probably been long ago drawn forth to feed the insatiable lime-kilns of Rome; and the Vestal Virgins, pacing up and down their stately Atrium, and looking with wistful faces on the statue of the friendly Praetextatus, bewailed the decay of their fortunes, and looked forward with well-grounded fear to the impending extinction of their order.

The hand of Ambrose, so heavy in this affair on the party of heathenism in Rome, was next to be felt pressing with equal weight on the Arian Empress at Milan. When Justina had somewhat recovered from the first terror of the threatened invasion of Maximus, and felt the support of Ambrose less necessary to the safety of her son's throne, she began once more to urge the claims of the Arians to some measure of toleration. Milan had been, not many years ago, pretty evenly divided between the Arians and the maintainers of the Nicene Creed; many of the courtiers still professed the faith which Justina's example rendered fashionable; the Gothic troops, of whom there was a large number in the Imperial city, perhaps sent by Theodosius for the defence of his young colleague, followed as a matter of course the Arian (or at least the Homoean) standard, which had been raised among them by the venerable Ulfilas. It was not perhaps unreasonable, in these circumstances, to ask that one out of the many Basilicas of Milan should be handed over to the Empress and her coreligionists, that they might there

celebrate with the rites of an Arian communion the Easter of 385. To us, with our ideas of religious toleration, Ambrose's stubborn refusal to comply with Justina's request savours of priestly intolerance. On the other hand, we must remember that the Nicene faith was only just emerging from a life and death struggle with Arianism, which certainly had shown little tolerance or liberality in its hour of triumph; that under Constantius and Valens the eunuch-chamberlains of the Courts, playing on the fretful vanity of theologizing Emperor, had wrought unspeakable mischief to the cause of Christianity : that Ambrose had the voice of the multitude with him, and all that was most living in the Church on his side; that if the faith of Christendom was not absolutely to die of the logomachy which Arius had commenced in the baths and *fora* of Alexandria, it was perhaps necessary that the sentence of the Fathers of Nicaea should be accepted as the closing word in the controversy.

But more than the theological propositions of Arius and Athanasius was at issue in the contest. The whole question of the relations between the Spiritual and Temporal powers, a question which was logically bound to arise as soon as a Roman Augustus sought admission into the Christian Church, but which had been perhaps somewhat shirked both by Constantine and his Bishops, now began to demand a logical answer. Valentinian II (or his mother Justina for him) said virtually, 'All the edifices for the public worship of the Almighty belong to me as head of the Roman Republic. In my clemency I leave to the Nicenes all the other Basilicas in Mediolanum, but I claim this one for myself and those who hold with me to worship in.' Such was the theory by virtue of which Gratian and Theodosius had actually wrested multitudes of churches, both in Italy and in Thrace, from the Arian communion, and had handed them over to Bishops like-minded with Gregory and Ambrose; and such was also the theory on which Valentinian himself, acting under Ambrose's advice, had just been confirming the confiscation of the revenues of the Vestal Virgins and the priests of Jupiter. But not deterred by any logical difficulty of this sort, the uncompromising Bishop of Milan said, 'Let the Emperor take my private property, I offer no resistance. Let him take my life, I gladly offer it for the safety of my flock. But the churches of this city are God's, and neither I nor any one else can or shall surrender one of them to the Emperor to be polluted by the worship of the Arians.' It is clear that we have here already formulated the whole question by which the Middle Ages were tormented, under the name of the question of Investitures. Ambrose opens the pleadings which Anselm, Hildebrand, Becket, Innocent will urge, through long centuries, with all the energy that is in them. Nor can it be said that either the Middle Ages, or the ages that have followed them, have truly solved the problem. Perhaps the formula of Ricasoli, 'Libera Chiesa in libero Stato,' may prove to be at least one root of the difficult equation. But at any rate it is clear that in the Fifth Century after Christ men's minds were not yet ripe for this solution.

The first request, or demand, made by the Court party was that the Porcian Basilica, which was in the suburbs of Milan, should be handed over for Arian worship. This was refused: then 'the new Basilica,' a larger building within the walls, was demanded. The populace began to show signs of irritation: and the 'Counts of the Consistory,' in other words, the Cabinet Ministers of the Emperor, falling back on their old position, entreated Ambrose to use his influence with his flock to secure the peaceable surrender of the Porcian Basilica, which, as being outside the walls, might be given up without admitting the Arians to full equality with the orthodox party. This, however, the Bishop steadfastly refused to do. On the following day, which was Palm Sunday, while Ambrose was administering the Communion, tidings came that the servants of the Palace were hanging round the Porcian Basilica the strips of purple cloth, which (like the Broad Arrow on a Bonded Warehouse in England) implied that it was the property of the Sovereign. At these tidings the Catholic population of Milan grew frantic with rage. A certain Castulus, who was pointed at as an Arian, was seized in the great square by an angry mob, and was dragged violently through the streets of the city. With

genuine earnestness Ambrose prayed that no blood might be shed in the cause of Christ, and by a deputation of priests and deacons, rescued Castulus from the hands of the mob.

It was not, however, only the lower orders who sympathized with the eloquent Bishop. The merchants of Milan made some manifestation in his favour, which was met by the Court party with sentences of fine and imprisonment. 'The gaols,' says Ambrose, doubtless with some exaggeration, were full of merchants and the fine imposed on their guild was 200 lbs. of gold, to be paid within three days. They answered that they would gladly pay twice or thrice that amount if only they might keep their faith untainted. At the same time, so little dependence could the government place on the loyalty of its own subordinates, that the whole throng of Court messengers, and what we should call sheriff's officers, were ordered to suspend for a time the execution of civil process, in order to withdraw them from the streets, and prevent their mingling with the mob.

The next step taken by the Court was to send a band of soldiers to occupy the church. The tension of men's minds was growing tighter, and Ambrose tells us that he began to fear that there would be bloodshed and perhaps civil war. His national pride as a Roman, as well as his pride of orthodoxy, was wounded by the proceedings of the Empress, for the officers, probably many of the privates in the detachment of troops by which the church was garrisoned, were Arian Goths.

'Wherever that woman [the Empress] goes,' he said, in writing to his sister, 'she drags about with her a train of followers, who dare not show themselves in the streets alone. These Goths used to live in wagons: now they are making our church into their wagon and their home.' To the Gothic officers who came to exhort him to yield obedience to the Emperor, and to persuade the people to acquiesce in the surrender of the Basilica, he said, angrily, 'Was it for this that the Roman State received you into its bosom, that you should make yourselves the ministers of public discord? Whither will you go next when you have ruined Italy?'

In such scenes the days of Holy Week wore on. Ambrose spent all day in the great Basilica, preaching, exhorting, receiving conciliatory messages from the Court, and returning answers of haughty defiance. The Gothic soldiers lived in the Porcian Basilica as in a wagon, surrounded by a weeping, groaning, excited multitude. A crowd also assembled in the 'new' intramural Basilica, and there, apparently on Maundy Thursday, occurred one of the most exciting scenes of the drama. Some soldiers appeared in the sacred building. They were known to be of those who had occupied the Porcian Basilica, and it was believed that they had come for bloodshed. The women-worshippers raised an outcry, and one rushed out of the church. It was soon seen, however, that the soldiers were come, not for fighting, but for prayer. Ambrose had sent a deputation of Presbyters to warn them that if they continued to occupy the Porcian Basilica for the Emperor, he should exclude them from the ceremonies of the Church; and, terrified by the threat, they had come to make their peace with the orthodox party and to share in their worship. In fact—and this seems to have been the turning point of the crisis—the soldiers had deserted the Emperor and enlisted under the Bishop.

A great cry arose in the church for the presence of Ambrose, and he accordingly proceeded thither and preached a sermon on the lesson for the day, which was contained in the Book of Job. He told his hearers that they had all imitated the patience of the patriarch of Uz. As for himself, he too had been tempted, like Job, by a woman. 'Ye see how many things are suddenly set in motion against us, Goths, arms, the Gentiles, the fine of the merchants, the punishment of the saints. Ye understand the meaning of the command "Hand over the Basilica;" that is, "Curse God, and die."' Ambrose then proceeded to remark that all the worst temptations to which human nature is subject come through woman, and gently reminded them that Justina belonged to the same sex which had already produced an Eve for the ruin of mankind, a Jezebel, and an Herodias for the persecution of the Church. 'Finally, I am thus

commanded, "Surrender the Basilica." I answer, "It is not lawful for me to surrender it, nor is it for thy advantage, oh Emperor, to receive it. By no right canst thou violate the house of a private man, and dost thou think that thou mayest take away the house of God?" It is alleged that all things are lawful for the Emperor, that he is master of the universe. I answer, "Do not magnify thy power, oh Emperor, so as to think that thou hast any imperial power over the things which are divine. Do not lift thyself up, but if thou wishest for a long reign, be subject to God." It is written "Render unto God the things which are God's, and to Caesar the things which are Caesar's." Palaces belong to the Emperor, Churches to the Priest. To thee is committed the guardianship of public buildings, not of sacred ones. Again, we are told that the Emperor says, "I too ought to have one Basilica." I answer "No, it is not lawful for thee to have that one. What hast thou to do with the adulteress? And an adulteress is that Church which is not joined to Christ in lawful union."

Again, there came a messenger from the Court, commanding Ambrose to yield to the Emperor's will, and calling him to account for the message which he had sent by the Presbyters to the Porcian Basilica. 'If you are setting up for Emperor, let me know it plainly, that I may consider how to prepare myself against you'. Ambrose answered, somewhat ineptly, that Christ fled lest the people should make Him a king, and that it was commonly reported that Emperors coveted the Priesthood more than Priests coveted the Empire. He continued with more justice, 'Maximus would not have said that there was any danger of my setting up as a rival to Valentinian, when he complained that it was my embassy which prevented his crossing over into Italy to rob Valentinian of his throne'.

'All that day,' says Ambrose, 'was passed by us in sorrow: but the Imperial curtains were cut to pieces by boys at their play. I was unable to return home, because all round us were the soldiers who guarded the Basilica. We recited Psalms with our brethren in the Lesser Basilica.'

Next day, Good Friday, the battle was ended. Ambrose was preaching, again from the lesson for the day, which happened to be the Book of the prophet Jonah. Scarcely had he reached the words which told how, in God's compassion, the threatened destruction had been averted from the city of Nineveh, when news was brought that the soldiers had been ordered to depart from the Porcian Basilica, and that the fines of the merchants were remitted; in fact, that the Court party had surrendered the whole position. The soldiers themselves came emulously into the church to announce these joyful tidings; they rushed to the altars, they gave the kiss of peace to the worshippers. Thanks to God, and the eager plaudits of the multitude, resounded through the church. The suspense of the last terrible six days was over; the hated Arians were defeated; and Ambrose was triumphant.

As high, however, as was the exultation in the Basilica, so deep was the depression in the purple chambers of the Palace. The Counts of the Consistory besought the Emperor to go forth to the church, in order to give a visible token of his reconciliation with the orthodox party, and they represented that this petition was made at the request of the soldiers. The vexed and worried youth who called himself Augustus, fretfully answered, 'I believe you would hand me over bound to Ambrose, if such were his orders.'

The eunuch Calligonus, who held the high office of 'Superintendent of the Sacred Cubicle,' said angrily to Ambrose, 'While I am alive dost thou dare to scorn Valentinian? I will take off thy head.' To whom Ambrose proudly answered, 'God may suffer thee to fulfil thy threats. Thou wilt do what eunuchs are wont to do [deeds of cruelty], and I shall suffer what Bishops suffer.'

It was a truce only, not a solid peace, which had been thus concluded between the diadem and the mitre; and in the following year (386) the dispute broke out afresh. An Arian priest, named Mercurinus, from the shores of the Black Sea, was brought to Milan, took the venerated name of Auxentius, and was consecrated as Bishop of the Arian community. On the 23rd of

January an edict was promulgated, bearing as a matter of form the orthodox names of Theodosius and Arcadius, as well as of Valentinian, but really the sole work of the boy-monarch, or rather of his mother. By this decree liberty of assembling was granted 'to those who hold the doctrines put forth by the Council of Ariminum, the doctrines which were afterwards confirmed at Constantinople, and which shall eternally endure.' 'Those who think that they are to monopolize the right of public assembly' [that is, of course, the Nicene party, and pre-eminently Ambrose] are warned that if they attempt anything against this precept of Our Tranquillity, they will be treated as movers of sedition, and capitally punished for their offences against the peace of the Church and against Our Imperial Majesty'.

The reference to the Council of Ariminum, the only one in which the orthodox party had been persuaded to abandon the stronghold of the word 'Homoousion,' the Council after which, as St. Jerome said, 'The whole world groaned in astonishment to find itself Arian', was a clever, but shallow artifice. The day for such attempts to bridge over the yawning chasm which separated the Athanasian from the Arian had long passed by. Meanwhile, however, it must be observed in fairness to Justina and her ministers, that it was toleration only, not supremacy, that they sought to obtain for their co-religionists. In this very year a letter went forth from the Emperor for the rebuilding and enlargement of the stately Basilica of St. Paul outside of the Ostian gate of Rome, a Basilica which was in the hands of the Catholics and owned the sway of the orthodox Pope Damasus. Perhaps we may say that the situation was not unlike that which prevailed in England in 1688. At Milan, as at Windsor, the sovereign, in the interests of a small and unpopular Church, strove to secure toleration by an exercise of his princely prerogative. In both countries the Edict of Toleration was profoundly disliked by the people: in Italy one Bishop, and in England seven Bishops, headed the popular opposition; and the tumults which followed, in one case shook, and in the other overturned, the throne of the monarch, who, whatever were his ulterior designs, fought under the standard of religious liberty.

The next step taken by Valentinian was to summon Ambrose to appear in the Consistory, there to conduct an argument with Auxentius on the points in controversy between them. The judges were to be laymen, perhaps an equal number chosen on either side, and the Emperor was to be the final umpire. The prize of this ecclesiastical wrestling-match was doubtless to be the episcopal throne of Milan. If Ambrose refused the summons he was, as a disobedient subject, at once to quit the country. In a letter full of splendid scorn Ambrose refused either to accept the challenge or to enter upon a life of exile. The Emperor was young yet. All his subjects prayed that he might one day attain to years of discretion: and he would then know how utterly unsuitable it was for laymen to judge in matters relating to the Church. Not thus had the elder Valentinian acted, who had expressly left the decision as to all points of doctrine to ecclesiastics. As for Ambrose's bishopric, that was not in dispute; it had been conferred upon him by the unanimous voice of the people, and confirmed by Valentinian I, who had promised that he should have undisturbed possession of the dignity if he would, in spite of his reluctance, accept the office to which he had been chosen. For the judges who were to decide in this wonderful debate, Auxentius showed a prudent silence as to their names. Ambrose strongly suspected that if the day of the trial dawned, they would be found to be all Jews or heathens, who would equally delight to favour the Arian heretic by depreciating the divinity of Christ. The whole proceeding was of a piece with the recent Edict of the Emperor. The Edict is entirely in the interest of the Council of Ariminum. "That Council I abhor: and I follow unflinchingly the decisions of the Council of Nicaea, from which neither death nor the sword shall ever separate me. This faith also the most blessed Emperor Theodosius, the colleague of your Clemency, follows and approves. This faith Gaul holds fast, this both the Hither and the Further Spain, and they will guard it safely in pious dependence on the Holy Spirit's help".

The immediate answer of the Court to this bold harangue of the Bishop's is not recorded. There does not seem any clear proof that the Empress either resorted, or intended to resort, to violence: but it was enough that a belief spread through the city that the next step would be the forcible removal of Ambrose. He took up his abode as before, or even more continuously, in the great Basilica, and a great multitude thronged its portals prepared to die with their Bishop. How long this strange blockade may have lasted we are not informed. The court seems to have abstained from the high-handed action to which it had resorted in the previous struggle and to have pursued a somewhat Fabian policy. Ambrose, perceiving that the spirits of his adherents were flagging, and that there was a danger of their giving up the strife from weariness, occupied their minds and braced their nerves by frequent psalmody. A poet as well as an orator, he expressed in beautiful words some of the aspirations of the human soul after God, and marrying them to simple, but sweet melody, bade his ecclesiastical garrison sing them antiphonically after the manner of the Eastern Church.

A young African teacher of rhetoric named Augustine, who was at this time being strongly attracted to Christianity by the magnetic influence of Ambrose, has preserved to us two of the verses which he especially admired.

Oh God! who mad'st this wondrous Whole,
Upholder of the starry Pole,
Thou clothest Day with comely light,
Thou draw'st the soothing veil of Night.
Thus, our tired limbs sweet Slumber's peace
Prepares for toil, through toil's surcease,
To wearied souls brings hope again,
And dulls the edge of sorrow's pain.

But in time even the new psalmody probably began to pall upon the worshippers, as they spent day after day in the beleaguered church. Then came that well-known event, which has perhaps given rise to more discussion than anything in the history of Milan, the finding of the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius. The new Basilica, of which we have already heard, was ready for consecration, and there was a general request that it should be consecrated 'after the Roman custom.' 'I will do so,' said Ambrose, 'if I find any relics of martyrs to place in it.' Warned in a dream, or else guided to the place by some unaccountable instinct, he ordered excavations to be made in front of the lattice-work which separated nave from chancel in the church of SS. Felix and Nabor. Mysterious heavings of the earth followed; and soon the diggers came on two bodies 'of men of wonderful stature, such as the olden age gave birth to.' The bones were perfect, and there was a quantity of blood in the grave. The bodies were removed in the evening to the Basilica of Fausta, where they were watched through the night by a crowd of worshippers. On the following day they were transferred to the new Basilica, which, perhaps, now received the name of Ambrosiana. There Ambrose preached a sermon to the excited multitude, in which he informed them that old men remembered to have read an inscription on the stone under which the bodies were found, recording that there lay buried Gervasius and Protasius, sons of Vitalis, who had suffered martyrdom (at Ravenna, some said) in the reign of Domitian. Miracles followed the miraculous discovery. Evil spirits were cast out, crying as they went, to the martyrs, 'Why have you come to torment us?', and a blind man, named Severus, a butcher by trade, received his sight on touching the fringe of the martyrs' shroud.

The Arians laughed at the newly-discovered saints, and denied the miracles wrought at their shrine: but in their hearts they felt that the victory was won. The eloquent sermons, the

crowded Basilica, the chaunted antiphones had done much, but the bodies larger than the ordinary stature of men, and the blood preserved through three centuries, completed the victory. Henceforth Valentinian and his mother meekly bore the Ambrosian yoke, and nothing more was heard of an Arian Basilica in Milan.

After all the dull folios that have been printed on the subject of the discovery of the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius it is still difficult, perhaps impossible, to arrive at a conclusion as to the real nature of that event. The attempts to rationalize away the marvel are not very satisfactory, and we seem shut up to one of two alternatives, miracle or fraud, either of which is almost equally unacceptable. Without attempting to decide so thorny a question here, this one observation may be made, that in the Bishop of Milan we are dealing, not with a Teuton knight of the Middle Ages, nor with a trained and scrupulous student of Nature in the 19th century. Though a noble representative of his class, Ambrose was after all a Roman official of the Empire. Even under the republic the Romans had more than once shown themselves "splendidly mendacious" (the very phrase came from a Latin poet) on behalf of their country. Centuries of despotism had not, probably, strengthened the moral fiber of the Roman official classes. In the strife with principalities and powers in which Ambrose was engaged, his mind was so entirely engrossed with the nobility and holiness of his ends that he may have been—I will not venture to say that he was—something less than scrupulous as to his means.

In connection with these miracles allusion has been made to one name which was to be even greater and of more world-historical importance than that of Ambrose, the name of Augustine. Though Church History is not our present concern, we may observe in passing that it was in 383, the year of Gratian's death, that he who was one day to be the greatest father of the Latin Church crossed the sea from Carthage to Rome. Still a Manichean by creed, and a teacher of rhetoric by profession, he came to the capital chiefly in order to find a more peaceable set of students than those who at Carthage turned his class-room into a Babel of confusion.

The students at Rome, though more orderly, behaved more shabbily than their African contemporaries. It was a frequent practice with them to migrate from one professor to another just as the fees of the first were falling due, and thus Augustine discovered that though his existence was peaceful, his means of support were likely to be somewhat precarious. Soon however, on the receipt of a petition from the people of Milan for a State-appointed teacher of rhetoric, he was sent to that city. The Prefect of Rome who made this appointment, and who gave him his free pass at the public expense to Mediolanum, was none other than Symmachus, greatest and most eloquent of the advocates of heathenism. It was a strange coincidence that such a man should set the wheels in motion which brought about the conversion to Christianity of her mightiest champion in the western world. But so it proved : Augustine at Milan soon came under the magnetic influence of Ambrose. He had already dropped Manichaeism: he now embraced Christianity. He was doubtless in the Basilica when the enthusiastic multitude sang their nightly hymns in the ears of the blockading-Gothic soldiers. In that year (386) he was baptized. In the following year came the memorable parting scene at Ostia with his mother Monica, who uttered her 'Nunc dimittis' as she looked across the peaceful Tyrrhene Sea. Thenceforward Augustine's life was passed in Africa, where, after many memorable years, we shall see his sun set amid the storm and stress of the great Vandal invasion.

From Mediolanum we turn to Augusta Treverorum, where Maximus reigned by the banks of the Moselle. Of that reign we possess scarcely any account except that contained in the Panegyric of Pacatus. This oration, pronounced not many months after his death in the presence of his destroyer, is of course one long diatribe against the fallen tyrant. 'We, in Gaul,' he says, 'first felt the onset of that raging beast. We glutted his cruelty with the blood of our

innocents, his avarice by the sacrifice of our all. We saw our consulars stripped of their robes of office, our old men compelled to survive children and property and all that makes life desirable. In the midst of our miseries we were forced to wear smiling faces, for some hideous informer was ever at our side. You would hear them saying, "Why is that man so sad-seeming? Is it because he is reduced to poverty from wealth. He ought to be thankful that he is allowed to live. What does that fellow wear mourning for? I suppose he is grieving for his brother. But he has a son left." And so we did not dare to mourn our murdered relatives for the sake of the survivors. We saw that tyrant clad in purple stand, himself, at the balances, gaping greedily at the spoil of provinces which was weighed out before him. There was gold forced from the hands of matrons, there were the trinkets of childhood, there was plate still tarnished with the blood of its last possessor. All was weighed, counted, carted away into the monster's home. That home seemed to us not the palace of an Emperor, but a robber's cave.' And so on through many loud paragraphs.

It is difficult to deal with such rhetoric as this, so evidently instinct with the very bitterness of hate. But probably the fact is that Maximus was neither better nor worse than the majority of those who have been before described as the Barrack-Emperors; like them making the goodwill of the soldiery the sheet-anchor of his policy, like them willing to sacrifice law and justice and the happiness of all other classes of his subjects, not precisely to his own avarice, but to the daily and terrible necessity of feeding and pampering the Frankenstein monster, an army whom he himself had taught to mutiny.

Strangely enough, even here we find ourselves again brought face to face with the problems of ecclesiastical history. The one event in Maximus' reign which is described to us in some little detail is his persecution of the sect of the Priscillianists, a persecution which excited the horror even of orthodox Christians, and which was apparently, notwithstanding the growlings of Imperial legislators and their threats of what they would do unless their subjects conformed to their rule of faith, the first real and serious attempt to amputate heresy by the sword of the executioner.

In the later years of the reign of Gratian, the Spanish Church had been agitated by the uprising of the heresy of the Priscillianists. A strange and enthusiastic sect, they had received from the East some of those wild theories by which the Manicheans strove to explain the riddle of this intricate world, more especially the origin of evil, and they had based upon these theories some of those ascetic practices as to which the Catholic Church seemed to hesitate whether she should revere or should denounce them. Like persons who had been present at the making of the world, they talked with the utmost confidence of the shares which God and the Evil One had respectively borne in its formation; and they told a romantic story of the existence of certain happy, but over-bold spirits in heaven, who promised the Almighty that they would descend into the hostile realm of Matter, take bodily shape and fight for Him. Once having descended through all the spheres they came under the fatal influence of the malign spirits of the air, forgot or only partially remembered their vow of combat, and became estranged from the Lord of Light. These deserters from the Heavenly armament are we or our progenitors.

To these Manichean speculations they joined an absolute belief in the astrologer's creed of the influence of the stars upon human fortunes. And, discouraging or prohibiting marriage, they also forbade the eating of flesh, and fasted rigorously on the great feast-days of the Church, Christmas and Easter, in order to signify that these days, in which the Saviour by his birth and resurrection entered and re-entered the world of Matter, were no days of joy to the enlightened soul.

The most famous expounder, though not the original propagator, of these doctrines was a man of high birth, large wealth, and considerable mental endowments, named Priscillian. From

him the new sect took its name, and he was in course of time consecrated one of its Bishops. The doctrines which the Priscillianists professed, seem to have exerted a peculiar fascination on men and women of literary culture and high social position. Several Bishops joined them, one of whom—Hyginus of Cordova,—was an aged and venerable man who had begun by denouncing them. When, in the course of a few years, the new heresy crossed the Pyrenees it found one of its most earnest adherents in Eudocia, the widow of Delphidius, a celebrated poet and professor of rhetoric at Bordeaux, who possessed large landed estates in the neighbourhood of that capital.

Such were the kind of persons who accepted the Priscillianist teaching. On the other hand, its chief opponents were, by the confession of an orthodox historian, two coarse, selfish and worldly ecclesiastics. Their names were Ithacius, Bishop of Sossuba (in the south of Lusitania), and Idatius, Bishop of Merida, men of like names and like despicable natures. Idatius was a narrow and passionate bigot: Ithacius was a preacher of some eloquence, but he was coarse and sensual, and his gluttonous devotion to the pleasures of the table was an open scandal to the Church. The motives of such a man's dislike to the self-renunciation of the pale-faced and studious Priscillianists could easily be read by all men, while on the other hand the lives of such priests as this gave emphasis to the pleadings of Priscillian for a further purification of the Church.

With the earlier ecclesiastical phases of the controversy we need not concern ourselves. The Priscillianists had been condemned by the Council of Saragossa, and the civil power had been invoked to accomplish their banishment from Spain. In vain had they visited Italy to obtain the intervention of Damasus and Ambrose in their favour. Both the Pope and the Bishop of Milan had refused even to grant them an interview.

With Gratian however they had been more successful, owing, as their opponents averred, to the bribes which they successfully administered to Macedonius, the young Emperor's 'Master of the Offices'; and one of the last acts of the unfortunate young Emperor had been an Edict of Restitution in their favour. With the accession of Maximus another change came over the scene. A council was by his order summoned to Bordeaux, and at this council matters were going ill with the adherents of the new doctrines, when Priscillian took the bold step of appealing, like Paul, from the Council to Caesar. Caesar in this case being the butler-Emperor Maximus of Trier.

Maximus, surrounded by a throng of sycophantic prelates, and anxious to win the favour of the Catholic Church for his usurping dynasty, perhaps also sharing some of the orthodox Spaniard's dislike for these strange, austere Oriental heretics, was willing to make short work of the trial and condemnation of the Priscillianists. But at this point the greatest of the saints of Gaul appeared in the Imperial Capital and raised his powerful voice in favour of toleration.

Saint Martin, born at Sabaria in Pannonia, one of the great men whom in various capacities Illyricum in this century sent forth to govern and regenerate the world, was the son of a heathen officer in the Imperial army, and was destined by his father for the career of a soldier, notwithstanding his own strong desire to follow the life of a hermit. It was while he was serving as a young officer with his legion at Amiens that the well-known incident occurred of his dividing with his sword his military cloak and bestowing half of it on a shivering beggar. In the visions of the night he saw the Saviour arrayed in his divided chlamys, and learned that he had performed that act of charity to Christ. Before long, having dared to say to the young Julian in the crisis of a campaign against the barbarians, 'I am a Christian and cannot fight,' and having by a display of moral courage, which showed what a soldier the legions lost in him, won from the reluctant Emperor his discharge from the army, Martin entered a hermit's cell, from which in the course of years he was drawn by the entreaties and the gentle compulsion of the people to fill the episcopal throne of Tours. But whether in the cell or in the palace, Martin

remained a hermit at heart. Or perhaps we should rather say, like one of the preaching friars of nine centuries later, he wandered on a perpetual mission-tour through the villages of Gaul, waging fierce war on the remnants of idolatry, working miracles, casting out devils, and, so said his awe-struck followers, even raising the dead. He had hitherto steadfastly refused to share with the rest of the obsequious Gaulish Bishops the hospitality of Maximus. He appeared at the court from time to time to command, rather than to sue for, forgiveness for the hunted adherents of Gratian: but even on these occasions he refused to sit down at the Imperial banquet, saying that he would not be partaker at the table of the man who had murdered one Emperor and was seeking to dethrone another. It was perhaps during one of these semi-hostile visits to Trier that the wife of Maximus, who professed unbounded devotion for the holy man, obtained her husband's permission to wait upon him while he took his solitary meal. The Roman Augusta brought to the shaggy-haired, meanly clothed ecclesiastic water to wash his hands. She spread the table, arranged his seat, served him with the food which her own hands had cooked, stood behind his chair with downcast eyes, imitating the submissive demeanour of a slave; and when all was over she collected his broken victuals and feasted upon them herself, preferring them to all the dainties of the Imperial table.

Though he permitted this self-abasement of the Empress, and firmly asserted the dignity of his Episcopal office, St. Martin was upon the whole untouched by either the pride or the bigotry which were becoming the besetting sins of the great churchmen of the age.

When still a lad, in the Roman army, he had insisted on treating the one servant whom his position required him to employ, rather as an equal than an inferior; nay, he had often himself pulled off that servant's shoes, and cleaned them from the mud of Picardy. And fervent as was his zeal against idols, he did not revel in the thought of the eternal perdition, even of a demon. In one of those strange colloquies with the Evil One which were beginning to be a characteristic of the hermit's life, when the Accuser of the brethren taunted him with receiving back into Communion some who had fallen from the faith, he said to the Tempter, 'They are absolved by God's mercy: and if even thou, oh wretched one, wouldest cease from hunting the souls of men, and wouldest repent of thy evil deeds, now that the Day of Judgment is at hand, I, truly trusting in the Lord, would dare to promise thee the compassion of Christ.' A daring word truly, and one more in harmony with the genius of our own, than with that of the fourth, or of many intervening centuries.

When St. Martin appeared at the Court of Maximus he exacted from the Emperor a promise that the Priscillianists should suffer no punishment in life or limb. But when the awe of the holy man's presence was removed and when the servile herd of Bishops began again clamouring for blood, Maximus, unmindful of his promise, granted their request. Priscillian himself, the generous and enthusiastic student, the dreamer of strange dreams, and framer of wild cosmogonies, was sent by the sword of the executioner into that other world whose mysteries he had so confidently unravelled. Eudocia, the rhetorician's widow, and five other persons, chiefly clerics in high position, were beheaded. Instantius, a Bishop and one of the most conspicuous of the sect, was banished to the Scilly Islands. Thither also, after, suffering confiscation of all his property, was sent Tiberianus, perhaps a wealthy lay-disciple. Such an exile seemed probably, to those who heard the sentence pronounced, little better than death: but one who has seen the sun set over that beautiful bay of islands, and who has gazed on the luxuriant vegetation that is fostered by the

‘Summer in alien months and constant spring

which reigns at Tresco, may doubt whether after all Instantius and Tiberianus had not a happier lot than their persecutors who remained behind amid the baking summers and fierce

winters of Gaul to see their country wasted by the desolating inrush of the Vandal and the Sueve.

Thus then had the first blood been deliberately shed in the persecution of heretics by a Christian Emperor. It was an evil deed and one which the most orthodox relates of the Church, Ambrose and Martin, condemned as loudly as any heretic. In justice to Maximus, however, it should be remembered that they were accused as Manicheans, a sect upon whom even the tolerant Valentinian had been bitterly severe, and that the offences laid to their charge, however unjustly, were immoralities rather than misbeliefs. This was the kind of defence urged with stammering lips by Maximus when the terrible saint of Tours shortly afterwards appeared at Trier to demand an explanation of the violation of the Imperial promise. The guilty Bishops earnestly besought the Emperor to forbid Martin to enter the capital, and the glutton Ithacius had the audacity to accuse the saint himself of heresy. But mud flung by such hands as his could not stain the white robe which had once been shared with Christ Himself, and Martin, who had forced his way years before into the unwilling presence of Valentinian, was not likely to be kept at a distance by the mandate of Maximus. He appeared in the Emperor's presence, he denounced his cruelty and his breach of faith; he would gladly have shaken the dust of the palace from his feet, but one thing restrained him, a self-imposed commission of mercy. He had come to beg for the lives of two of Gratian's followers, Count Narses and Leucadius, late Praeses of one of the Gaulish provinces, whom Maximus seemed bent on hunting to their doom. Moreover, further measures of severity were about to be taken against the proscribed heretics. Officers of the army were to be sent to Spain with a commission to torture, to confiscate, to kill. Maximus, to whom it was of the utmost importance to be visibly in communion with the great saint of Gaul, gave him to understand that there was one means, and one only, of preventing all these severities, and that was that Martin should accept an invitation to an Imperial banquet.

In sore doubt and perplexity, to stop the further effusion of human blood, the saint consented. Maximus took care to make the banquet a notable one. Men of 'illustrious' rank, the cabinet-ministers of the Emperor, were there : the uncle and brother of Maximus, Counts in high office were also there, and there too was the Consul Enodius, a man of stem temperament, but who generally bore a high repute for the justice of his decisions. Yet the sight of that official cannot have been a pleasant one to St. Martin, since to him in the last resort had been committed the trial of Priscillian and his friends. However, the stately feast went on with no apparent interruption to its harmony. Halfway through it a servant, according to custom, handed the great chalice of wine to the Emperor, who waved it aside and ordered it to be first presented to St. Martin, hoping himself then to receive it from those hallowed fingers. The Bishop, however, when he had tasted it, handed the loving-cup to a Presbyter who accompanied him, signifying by this action that Illustres and Counts and Consuls, nay, even the Emperor himself, were lower in rank than the meanest of the ministers of the Church. Maximus meekly accepted the rebuff, though all marveled at conduct so unlike that of the other Bishops who thronged the palace of Augusta Treverorum. Yet, notwithstanding his bold demeanour, and the excellence of the motives which had prompted his compliance, the spirit of St. Martin sank within him when, on his homeward journey, he mused over the past, and reflected that he had, after all, accepted the hospitality of the man of blood, and had received the kiss of peace from the murderer of Gratian, and the slaughterer of the Priscillianists. Deep depression seized his spirit, and as he was journeying through the vast and gloomy forest of Andethanum he sent his companions forward a little space and sat down to brood over the perpetually recurring questions, 'Have I done right?' 'Have I done wrong?' Thus musing he thought he saw an Angel standing by him who said, 'Rightly, Martin, does thy conscience trouble thee, yet other way of escape hadst thou none. Up now I and resume thy old constancy, lest, not thy power of

working miracles, but thy soul's salvation, be in danger.' Then he arose and went on his way, yet thenceforward sedulously avoided the communion of Ithacius and his crew. Even so, he was for long conscious of a diminution in his miraculous powers, and in all the remaining sixteen years of his life he never again went near a Synod of Bishops.

Before he left the Imperial court Martin had uttered these words of prophecy, 'Oh Emperor! if thou goest, as thou desirest to do, unto Italy, thou wilt be victorious in thy first on-rushing, but soon after thou wilt perish miserably.' The events thus foretold rapidly came to pass.

Three years had passed since Maximus had won without a sword-stroke, by menace and intrigue, the three great countries of the West. He felt that the time was now come for him to win by like arts the realms of Italy and Africa, and he began to assume a menacing attitude towards Justina and Valentinian. Little difficulty had the wolf of Trier in finding grounds of accusation against the trembling lamb of Milan. The decree of toleration for the Arians, the attempt to obtain a basilica in the capital for their worship shocked the pious soul of Maximus. His hospitable invitation to the young Emperor and his mother to visit him in his palace at Trier had not been accepted. There had been trouble with the barbarians in Raetia and Pannonia, trouble which the friends of Valentinian believed to have been fomented by Maximus, but as in the course of the campaign Bauto, Valentinian's military adviser, had brought the Huns and Alans (whom he was employing to repel the inroads of the Juthungi) near to the frontiers of the Roman province of Germany, that was enough to justify the shrill expostulation of Maximus, 'You are bringing barbarians into the Empire to attack me.'

It seems to have been towards the end of 386, or early in 387, that Justina, alarmed by the threatening tone of Maximus, humbled herself before her triumphant antagonist, Ambrose, and begged him to undertake a second embassy to the usurper. Of his proceedings on this occasion the great prelate has left us a spirited account in the report addressed by him to Valentinian II.

'When I had reached Treveri,' says Ambrose, 'I went on the next day to the palace. The chamberlain, a man of Gaulish birth and an eunuch of the palace, came forth to meet me. I requested an audience, and he asked in reply whether I had any commission from your Clemency. When I said that I had, he answered that I could not have an audience except in full Consistory. I said that this was not the way in which priests were usually treated, and that there were certain matters on which I wished to confer in secret with his master. He went in and brought back the same answer which had evidently been at first dictated by Maximus. I then said that in your interests and in the cause of fraternal piety' (part of the Bishop's commission was to plead for the restoration of Gratian's body) 'I would waive what was due to my rank and accept the proffered humiliation.

'When he had taken his seat in the Consistory and I had entered, he rose up to give me the kiss of peace. I stood still among the members of the Consistory. They began to exhort me to go up to the Emperor's seat, and he also called me thither. I answered, "Why should you kiss one whom you do not recognize? For if you recognized me you would give me audience not here but in your Secretum". "Bishop," said he, "you are losing your temper." "No," I answered, "I am not angry, but I blush for your want of courtesy in receiving me in an unsuitable place." "But in the first embassy you appeared in the Consistory." "Not my fault," said I: "the fault lay with him who invited me thither. Besides, then I was asking for peace from an inferior, now from an equal." "Ah, yes," said he, "and whom has he to thank for that equality?" "Almighty God," I answered, "who has reserved for Valentinian that realm which He has given him."

We need not follow in detail the rest of the discussion. Ambrose defended himself from the charge of having outwitted Maximus in the previous embassy, he reiterated his statement of the unreasonableness of expecting the widow and her child to cross the Alps in order to visit the stout soldier at Trier, he vindicated Bauto from the accusation of having sent barbarians

into Roman Germany, and again asked for the body of his murdered pupil, Gratian, reminding the usurper that his brother, who was even then standing at his right hand, had been sent back, safe and with an escort of honour, by Valentinian, when the young Emperor might have avenged his brother's death upon him.

All was in vain. Maximus utterly refused to surrender the body of Gratian (of whose death he again protested his innocence), alleging that the sight of that corpse would 'stir up' the soldiers to some sudden act of mutiny. He complained that the friends of the late Emperor were flocking to the Court of Theodosius, which, as Ambrose remarked, was no wonder, when they remembered the fate of Vallio, that noble soldier, sacrificed for his fidelity to the murdered prince. The mention of Vallio's name led to an incoherent outburst of rage on the part of Maximus. He had never ordered him to be killed, but if Vallio had fallen into his hand he would have sent him to Cabillonum and had him burned alive. With this the conference ended, and St. Ambrose, who had certainly achieved no diplomatic success,—perhaps diplomatic success was impossible—concluded his report of his mission with these words, 'Farewell, oh Emperor, and be on your guard against a man who is hiding war under the cloak of peace.'

It was important for Maximus to get rid of Ambrose from his Court, for the invasion which he was now of meditating was nominally in the interest of orthodoxy, and it would have been too flagrant an absurdity to commence such an enterprise under the ban of excommunication from the greatest champion of orthodoxy in Italy. Already the usurper had addressed a letter to Pope Siricius, the successor of Damasus, boasting of his great deeds in the suppression of the Priscillianist heresy, protesting his zeal for the true faith, and declaring that the ruin of the Church had been averted by his timely and providential elevation to the throne, and by the measures which he had taken to correct the disorders which had crept in under his predecessor. Now the ground thus prepared was utilized by another letter addressed to the young Valentinian, and no doubt widely circulated through his dominions. In this letter 'Our Clemency' expresses to 'Your Serenity' the concern with which 'we have heard that you are mad enough to make war upon God and His saints.' 'What is this that we hear, of priests besieged in their basilicas, of fines inflicted, of capital punishment threatened, of the most holy law of God overturned under the pretext of I know not what principle [of toleration]. Italy and Africa, Spain and Gaul, agree in the faith which you are seeking to overturn : only Illyricum, I blush to say it, wavers, and the judgments of God are falling on that Illyrian city of Margus, which has been the stronghold of Arianism . Yet your Serene Youth is trying to overturn the faith of the whole world, and is making perilous innovations in the things of God. If Our Serenity hated you we should rejoice to see you thus acting; but we hope you will believe that we are speaking to you in love and for your own interest, when we call upon you to restore Italy, and venerable Rome, and all your provinces to their own Churches and their own priests, and not to meddle yourself in these matters at all, since it is obviously more becoming that Arian sectaries should conform to the Catholic faith than that they should seek to instill their wickedness into the minds of those who now think rightly.'

The trembling Valentinian, who seems to have already removed from Milan to Aquileia, in order to be further from his Imperial adviser, sent, perhaps in answer to this letter, another embassy to the Court of Trier.

The envoy chosen was Domninus, a Syrian, loyal to Valentinian and intimately acquainted with the secrets of the policy of Justina. This embassy offered to the crafty Maximus a means of overcoming the difficulty presented by those well-guarded Alpine passes which had foiled his previous endeavours. And here it may be noticed in passing, that though we speak with approximate correctness of the Alps as separating Italy from Europe, it is really the Western and Central Alps of which this is especially true. Piedmont and Lombardy are closed in from the West and North by mighty snow-clad ranges, the passes of which it has

needed the skill of the best generals of the ancient and modern world to traverse with an army. But on the North-East of Italy the Julian Alps, though rising to the height of 3000 or 4000 feet, interpose no such almost impenetrable barrier, and in the course of this history we shall see these mountains often crossed by large armies with comparative ease.

When Domninus arrived at Augusta Treverorum he received a very different welcome from that which had been given to Ambrose. Costly gifts were pressed upon his acceptance; he was treated with every mark of respect and even of effusive affection; the Emperor had ever on his lips his love for his young, if somewhat misguided colleague, and soon Domninus was convinced that Valentinian had in all the world no truer friend than Magnus Clemens Maximus. As a substantial token of his friendship, Maximus, though doubtless somewhat pressed himself by the barbarians in Gaul, would spare some of his best troops to assist Valentinian in the war against the barbarians in Pannonia, and these troops should escort his excellent friend Domninus across the Alps. The generous offer was accepted. Maximus himself moved slowly forward with the bulk of his army. The passes were carefully watched to prevent any tidings of military operations reaching the ears of Valentinian's generals. As soon as the ridge of the Alps was crossed and the difficult marshy land at their feet over-passed, all disguise was thrown off, the main body of the army hastened over the passes now held entirely by the partisans of Maximus. That able negotiator, Domninus, had simply introduced into Italy the vanguard of the army which had come to upset his master's throne.

At Aquileia all seems to have been confusion and alarm when the news of the invasion was received. The stout and wary soldier, Bauto the Frank, was probably dead, as we hear no mention of his name: and the position which he had held as chief counsellor of the Augusta may perhaps have been taken up by the wealthy and timid Probus, whom we last saw on the point of surrendering Sirmium and who was now again holding the office of Praetorian Prefect. Maximus marched with all speed to Aquileia, but when he arrived there he found that the young colleague who was so dear to him had already departed. Justina with Valentinian and his sisters, accompanied by Probus, had taken ship in the port of Aquileia and sailed round Greece to Thessalonica, from whence they sent an embassy to Theodosius, beseeching him now at length to avenge all the wrong which had been done to the house of Valentinian.

Meanwhile the troops of Maximus, like an overflowing and scarcely resisted flood, were pouring over Italy. It is possible that some of the cities on the Po may have offered sufficient resistance to afford the invader a pretext for abandoning them to the wild rapine of his soldiers. There was trepidation and alarm at Milan, where the soothing eloquence of St. Ambrose was needed to prevent the citizens from abandoning their city in terror. But upon the whole there does not appear to have been much bloodshed, nor anything really amounting to civil war in Italy. Maximus, having thus easily glided into supreme authority over two-thirds of the Roman world, does not seem to have used his usurped power tyrannically. It is significant that the worst crime which is imputed to him at this period of his career is the issuing of an order for the rebuilding of a Jewish synagogue which had been destroyed by the populace of Rome. Hereupon, we are told, the Christian population shook their heads ominously. 'No good,' said they, 'will befall this man. The Emperor has turned Jew'.

In Rome itself however, among the old Senatorial party, any disposition towards toleration on the part of the late fierce assertor of orthodoxy would be a welcome relief. The Emperor seems to have visited Rome in person, and (possibly on New Year's Day 388) to have listened to an elaborate harangue pronounced by the heathen orator Symmachus in his honour. This oration, which in after years nearly cost the author his life, was prudently suppressed and does not appear among his published speeches.

It was in the autumn, probably in the month of September or October, that the invasion of Maximus and the flight of Valentinian took place. Notwithstanding the pleadings of Justina,

nearly a year elapsed before her wrongs and those of the house of Valentinian were avenged. At the call of the Empress, Theodosius repaired to Thessalonica, being accompanied by some of the most eminent members of the Senate of Constantinople. A debate ensued, in which it appeared that the universal opinion was that the murderer of Gratian and the despoiler of Valentinian must be at once called upon to justify his conduct before the tribunal of War. The counsel was not acceptable to Theodosius, who, to the surprise of all, proposed that ambassadors should be sent and negotiations should be entered into, to induce Maximus to restore the heritage of Valentinian. Historians hostile to his fame see in this lukewarmness only another evidence of the demoralization which years of palace-luxury had wrought in the character of Theodosius. Even an impartial critic may suspect that some remembrance of the terrible wrong which the house of Theodosius had once suffered from the house of Valentinian still rankled in the breast of the Eastern Emperor.

But there were, as has been already hinted, worthier motives for inaction; the recent danger from the Goths, the ever-present danger from the Persians, the exhaustion of the Empire, the petulant Arianism of Justina, the loudly asserted orthodoxy of Maximus, above all, the terrible shock to 'the Roman Republic' when its Eastern and Western halves should meet in deadly combat on some Illyrian plain, as they had met when Constantine fought with Licinius, when his son fought with Magnentius, as they would, but for a timely death, have met when Constantius warred against Julian.

All these considerations justified delay. Perhaps delay would have glided on into abandonment of all thoughts of revenge, and truce into cordial alliance with the usurper, but for one personal argument which destroyed the even balance of the scales of Peace and War. Justina, the widow of two Emperors, and one of the most beautiful women of her time, had a daughter, Galla, even lovelier than herself. Theodosius was a widower, his wife Flaccilla having died in the preceding year; and when the beautiful Galla clasped his knees as a suppliant and with streaming eyes besought him to avenge the murder of one brother, and the spoliation of another, Theodosius could no longer resist. Overmastered by her beauty, he sought and obtained her hand in marriage, the one condition imposed by Justina being that he should strike down the murderous usurper and restore his kingdom to Valentinian.

Many preparations were needed; and perhaps also the winter and spring were employed in shaping the pliant mind of Valentinian in the mould of Nicene orthodoxy. Embassies passed to and fro between Constantinople and Milan, but it was probably clear to the ambassadors themselves that there was no reality in their messages. Theodosius may have been indirectly helped by a burst of Franks and Saxons over the Gaulish frontier, threatening Cologne and Mayence, and overstraining the energies of the generals whom Maximus had left to guard the throne of his young son and associated colleague Victor. Not less was the relief afforded by the conclusion of peace with Persia, which enabled Theodosius to muster all the hosts of his realm for the westward march, free from anxiety as to the long and weak frontier of the Euphrates.

On the other hand the Arians, even in Constantinople, were restless and still numerous enough to be an element of danger. And great as was the popularity of the Emperor with the Gothic *foederati*, it remained to be seen how that popularity would stand the strain of war. Indeed Maximus, whose one idea of strategy seems to have been to bribe the soldiers of his opponent, had actually entered into negotiations with some of the barbarians, offering them large sums of money if they would betray their master. The negotiations, however, were discovered on the eve of the opening of the campaign, and the barbarians implicated, fleeing to the lakes and forests of Macedonia, were hunted down and destroyed before the war began.

At last all the necessary preparations were completed, and about the month of June (388) Theodosius, having divided his army into three bands, marched down the valley of the Morava and entered the Western Empire at Belgrade. Justina and her daughters had been sent by sea to

Rome, where already the cause of Maximus had become unpopular. For some reason not explained to us Maximus had concluded that Theodosius would make his attack by sea, and Andragathias, his accomplice in the murder of Gratian and his chief military adviser, with a large part of his army was cruising about the narrow seas, hoping to intercept either Theodosius, who never set sail, or Justina, who was already safe in port.

The two chief generals on Theodosius' side were Promotus, Master of Cavalry, and Timasius, Master of Infantry. The two Teutons, Richomer and Arbogast, also held high commands. All depended on rapid movement, and the Eastern army, inspirited probably and roused to emulation by the warlike spirit of the Gothic *foederati* among them, responded admirably to the call made upon them by their leaders. By forced marches they reached Siscia, now the Croatian town of Siszek, on the Save. The dusty, panting soldiers pushed their steeds into the river, swam across, and successfully charged the enemy. In another more stubbornly contested battle at Pettau, where the hostile army was commanded by Marcellinus, brother of the usurper, the fiery valor of the Goths, tempered and directed by the Theodosian discipline, again triumphed. Aemona (Laybach) opened her gates with rejoicing, and welcomed the liberating host to her streets, hung with carpets and bright with flowers.

With an army swollen by numerous desertions from the demoralized ranks of his rival, Theodosius pressed on, over the spurs of the Julian Alps, to Aquileia, where Maximus, whose soldierly qualities seem to have been melted out of him by five years of reigning, cowered behind the walls, awaiting his approach. Aquileia had the reputation of being a virgin fortress, the Metz of Italy, but the forces of the usurper were now too few to form a sufficient garrison. A small body of Moorish soldiers, belonging perhaps to the same legion which had first revolted to him in Gaul, still remained faithful, yet Maximus did not rely too confidently even on their unbribed fidelity. When the troops of Theodosius, with brisk impetuous onset, streamed over the loosely-guarded walls, they found the usurper sitting on his throne, distributing money to his soldiers. They tore off with violent gestures his purple robe, they knocked the diadem from his head, they made him doff his purple sandals, and then, with his hands tied behind him like a slave's, they dragged the trembling tyrant before his judges. At the third milestone from Aquileia, Theodosius and the young lad, his brother-in-law, had erected their tribunal.

'Is it true,' said the Emperor of the East, 'that it was with my consent that Gratian was murdered, and that you usurped the crown?'

'It is not true,' Maximus is said to have faltered out, 'but without that pretext I could never have persuaded the soldiers to join in the rebellion.'

Theodosius looked upon the fallen potentate, once his comrade, with eyes in which there was some gleam of pity. But if he had any thoughts of clemency, they were not shared by his army, who, perhaps for their own safety, thought it necessary to destroy the man whose fallen majesty they had derided. Countless eager hands dragged him off to the place of punishment, where he was put to death by the common executioner. His son Victor, the young Augustus at Trier, was put to death by Arbogast, who was sent into Gaul on this errand, unworthy of a brave soldier. Andragathius, hearing that his master's cause was lost, leaped into the Adriatic, preferring to trust himself to it, rather than to his enemies.

So fell the usurper Maximus after five years' wearing of the purple, and now at last the body of the murdered Gratian found a resting-place in his brother's capital of Milan.

Theodosius, with splendid generosity, handed over to Valentinian not only the young Emperor's own previous share of the Empire, but also his brother Gratian's remaining content with the Eastern provinces which he had ruled from the beginning. It was clearly understood however, and in fact resulted from the necessity of the case, that the great soldier who had won back the heritage of Valentinian was supreme over the whole Empire. This supremacy involved

the complete victory of the Nicene Creed in the West as well as the East, a victory which was aided by the conversion of Valentinian and the timely death of Justina, who had scarcely returned to her son's palace at Milan when she ended her troubled life. The next three years after the overthrow of Maximus, 288-391, were spent by Theodosius in Italy, at Milan, at Rome, at Verona, in setting in order those affairs of Church and State, which in his judgment had gone wrong since the firm hand of the elder Valentinian had failed from the helm.

CHAPTER IX

THE INSURRECTION OF ANTIOCH

IT has been already hinted that Theodosius was not an economical ruler of the Empire. Both his policy and his pleasures compelled him to make large demands on the purses of his subjects. The chiefs of the *foederati*, who doubtless thought the wealth of the great Empire boundless, could not be kept in good humour without rich presents for themselves and frequent largesse for their followers. And, whether we accept or partially reject the accusations of Zosimus, who never tires of inveighing against the luxury, the extravagance, the prodigality of Theodosius, it is clear he had. no tendency towards parsimony, and that he had very high notions of the state which a Roman Augustus ought to maintain. Possibly a liberal expenditure was a wise policy for the Empire; certainly frugality like that of Valens had proved in the end disastrously expensive: but, whether wise or unwise, the heavy demands which it necessitated upon the resources of the tax-payers caused, doubtless, many a muttered execration against this spendthrift Spaniard, his barbarians, and his chamberlains, execrations of which we not only hear the distant echo in the words of Zosimus, but can listen to their turbulent explosion in the story of the insurrection of Antioch.

In the beginning of the year 387 (before Maximus had openly declared war upon Valentinian), Theodosius determined to celebrate the expiration of eight years of his own government and four of the conjoint rule of himself and his young son Arcadius, or in more technical language his own Decennalia and his son's Quinquennalia. The festival of the Quinquennalia, instituted in imitation of the Greek Olympiads, recurred every fifth year, that is, at the expiration of the fourth, the ninth, and the fourteenth years of the ruler's reign, and so on. It consisted of games, chariot-races, and musical contests; but above all, in the present state of the Empire, and with the ever-growing demands of the German *foederati*, it was an occasion for increased largesse to the soldiery. Letters were accordingly written by the Emperor, commanding the provinces to furnish extraordinary contributions for these Quinquennalia. These letters caused probably in most cities of the already overburdened East, such domestic scenes as are vividly described to us by the great preacher of Antioch: 'When we hear that gold is required of us by the Emperor, everyone goes to his house and calls together his wife, his children, and his slaves, that he may consult with them from what source he shall raise that contribution.' But though we hear rumors of seditious movements at Alexandria and Beyrout, it was only at Antioch that the discontent caused by these unwelcome letters burst into a flame.

For the special irritation displayed by the citizens of Antioch there were several reasons. The great capital of the East, situated in the delightful valley of the Orontes, with her massive walls boldly climbing the picturesque heights of Mount Silpius, her long colonnade, the work of Herod, her Royal Palace, her Forum, her Hippodrome; the city which had been for near three centuries the seat of the mighty kingdom of the Seleucids, the city which now prided herself yet more on having been the birthplace of the name 'Christian', was disposed to be somewhat exacting in her demeanour towards her Roman rulers. Julian's slovenly attire and unkempt beard had moved the scorn of the citizens of Antioch, a scorn so openly displayed as to provoke him to the undignified retaliation of the satire *Misopogon*. Jovian, whose abandonment of Nisibis filled the people of Antioch with fears lest they should be the next

victims, was assailed in scurrilous libels, and had Helen's bitter taunt to Paris hurled in his face—

‘Back you are come from the fight: I would you had died on the war-plain’

But the dark and suspicious Valens, so little loved in the rest of the Empire, seems to have been generally popular in Antioch, on account of his having preferred it to Constantinople as his chief place of abode. Now, however, this new Spanish Emperor, who was approaching the Decennalia of his reign, had not once favoured the dwellers by the Orontes with a sight of his comely countenance. Antioch, therefore, was already sore at heart with her sovereign as well as overburdened with the expenses of his administration, when these letters of his came (probably in the early days of March 387) to turn the mob's dislike into hatred and the tax-payer's perplexity into despair.

The story of the insurrection which now broke forth, brings into strong relief the character of the two classes which together made up the bulk of the free population of Antioch as of the other cities of the Empire. There was first the Middle Class, as we should now call it, timid, unenterprising, still perhaps wealthy, though groaning under the heavy burdens imposed upon it by the financial necessities of the sinking Empire. From this class, centuries ago, had emerged the citizens who, with eager emulation, had contended with one another for the honour of a seat in the *Curia* or Senate of their native city, and the glory of being addressed as *Decurio*. That state of things had now long passed away. Though the Curia had still some power (of the kind recently possessed in England by ‘Quarter Sessions’ and now by the ‘County Council’), it was well understood among all classes, that the responsibility attached to the office of *Decurio* so largely outweighed the power, that no reasonable being would covet a seat in the local Senate for its own sake. Instead of a coveted honour, therefore, it had become a dreaded, but hereditary, burden imposed on the infant son of a *Decurio* at birth and (for the most part) only to be escaped from by death. Above these Curial families stood a small privileged class of functionaries, Prefects, Counts, Consulars, and their children, the most highly prized of whose immunities consisted in this, that they could no longer be called upon to discharge ‘Curial obligations’. Below them lay the great sensual, swinish mass of Forum-loungers. All that was onerous in public life, fell with ever-increasing weight on the middle class of *Decurions*. The collection of the revenue, the responsibility for the corn-rations, the care of the prisons, even the heating of the baths, devolved on these men; and whoever else might by jobbery and peculation defraud the public revenue, it seems clear that the Decurion had no chance of plundering, but only the dreary necessity of making good the deficiency caused by the plundering of others.

It is no wonder that a class thus heavily burdened was ever dwindling both in numbers and in wealth. The Senate of Antioch, which had once consisted of 600 members, had so far fallen away that the Emperor Julian took credit to himself for having raised its number to 200; yet, notwithstanding this temporary increase, that number had again fallen to 60 in 386, and in 388 (the year following the insurrection), it was only 12. The same attenuation was evidently going on throughout the Empire. The governor of Cilicia, at the period of which we are now treating, found the Senate of the city of Alexandria in that province reduced to one lame man, but raised it to 15 without violence, but merely by kind words and the assurance that the agents of the centralized despotism at Constantinople should not be permitted to plunder the new Senators, who might even make some profit out of their administrative functions. These fair words drew the desired Senators from their hiding-places under beds and couches or in the caves of the mountains, to undertake, even with alacrity, ‘Curial obligations’. Once, too, when the first Valentinian, in one of his cruel moods, issued a decree that for the punishment of some

disorders in one of the provinces, three Decurions in each of its cities should be put to death, the Prefect to whom this order was addressed replied pleasantly, ‘What is to be done if a town have not so many as three Decurions in it? You ought to add these words to the Edict: (Let them be killed) if they can be found.’”

Such then was the burdened, sorely pressed life of the comparatively wealthy citizens of the Middle Class who were left in the cities of the Empire. It is easy to see that it reproduces the so-called ‘liturgies’ (obligations to undertake certain services to the State), which formed so marked a feature in the life of ancient Athens, and it is indeed under this term that the Curial obligations are constantly spoken of by contemporary orators; but the means to discharge these liturgies had grown smaller, the command to perform them harsher and more irresistible, the inducement which had once been the desire to earn the favour of one’s fellow citizens, and to be by them raised to the high places of the State, had vanished altogether.

But as the rich liturgy-performing aristocracy, so also the pampered liturgy-enjoying democracy of the cities of the Empire, carries us back in remembrance to the days of Aristophanes. The idea of the Roman Empire was in the main urban, as was that of the Athenian Empire, and not only were they both urban, but both were in a certain sense socialistic. To keep the populace of the capital cities of the Empire in good humour was one of the chief cares of a Roman Augustus, and almost of equal importance with the other two, the maintenance of the loyalty of the army and the repulse of the incursions of the barbarians. At Antioch, as at Rome, at Constantinople, and at Alexandria, the citizens enjoyed a free distribution of corn or rather of bread, at the expense of the State. The precise amount of this daily ration does not seem to be handed down to us, but there can be no doubt that it was sufficient to support life for the receiver and his family, and to obviate the necessity of work. The bath—that luxury which is almost a necessity under a Syrian sky—was also open, either gratuitously or at an exceedingly small charge, to all classes of the community; and when the water was not heated hot enough, Demos in the Theatre howled his disapprobation and even threw stones at the governor who had been so slack in enforcing the ministrations of the richer citizens to his comfort. Twice (in 382 and 384) an unfavourable season raised the price of corn. The people in the Theatre cried out for larger loaves, cheaper loaves. In spite of the opposition of certain members of the Senate, who had some dim previsions of the science now known as Political Economy, a governor was each time found who issued a decree lowering the price of the loaf. Unable to comply with the decree the bakers left the city and fled to the mountains. Naturally the famine in the city was not lessened by their departure. The law was withdrawn and the bakers returned but led a precarious existence, always liable to be arrested, and flogged through the streets of Antioch if a governor wished to curry favour with the people, and to repel by this easy demonstration the charge of having himself shared in the profits of the unpopular class.

We have glanced at the condition of the urban population, of which we always hear most; but we must not forget that there was in the rural districts of Syria a large peasant-class, which is comparatively mute in Imperial history. A sermon of St. Chrysostom brings before us the patient, toilsome lives of these men, strangers to the language, to the pleasures, and to the vices of the city-populace, but united to them in faith; and in their temperate and frugal existence illustrating the spirit of Christianity far better than the noisy theological disputants of Antioch. The yoke of the Imperial government pressed heavily on these men, who could not shout applause in the Hippodrome, or hurl stones and taunts at the Prefect in the Theatre, and who therefore, as representative government was unknown, had no means of influencing the administration of affairs. Thus, when the populace were raging at the high price of bread, an edict was issued, forbidding any peasant to carry more than two loaves out of the city, and soldiers were stationed at the gates to enforce the observance of this decree. Thus also, by a yet

more vexatious enactment, it was provided that every rustic who brought hay or straw into the city should carry out of it a certain quantity of the débris of houses shattered by earthquakes, or falling into decay, and this provision was stringently enforced even when the rain-swollen torrents and miry roads of winter made obedience to it most burdensome. It is by slight hints like these as to the condition of the rural population, that we are enabled to understand the rapid success of the Saracens in Syria, two centuries and a half after the period with which we are now dealing. These simple-hearted country folk with their Aramaic speech are in the year 387 still Christian by religious profession, but they are out of sympathy with Greek civilization and are hardly dealt with by Roman functionaries. Bitter controversies and stern persecutions in the fifth and sixth centuries will alienate many of them from the form of faith dominant at Constantinople; and when in the seventh century a great Semitic prophet shall arise to reassert the principle of the unity of God and to declare a religious war against the Roman Empire, they will offer scanty resistance to the sword of Khalid, and will after the lapse of one generation be counted among the most obedient followers of Islam.

Such then was the condition of the people in and around Antioch when, in the beginning of 387, the letters arrived from Theodosius ordering a levy of *aurum coronarium* for his son's Quinquennalia. It was felt that this was too much; and an angry growl was heard through all the ranks of the citizens. Men rushed up to one another in the market-place, saying, 'Our life is become unlivable; the city is quite ruined; no one will be able to bear such a weight of tribute'. So did the 'grave and reverend signors', the men on whom the weight of taxation would fall most heavily, utter their discontent; and in their exasperation they probably used many a word bordering on treason. Meanwhile the mob, among whom there were many boys, and all of whom had the spirit of boyish mischief in their hearts, proceeded from words to deeds. Streaming along the great colonnade which ran past the judgment-hall, having thrown off their upper garments to show that they meant work, they lifted their right arms menacingly in the air calling on all brave men to join them. They went first to the public baths, and severing with their swords the ropes by which the great brazen lamps were suspended they let them fall with a crash to the pavement.

Then the statues of the Imperial family met their eyes and inflamed their wrath. Here was the Emperor himself with that stately presence of his which seemed to command the obedience of Goth and of Roman. By his side was the gentle and pious Flaccilla, the wife whom he had lost two years before. Here was his noble old father, the pacifier of Britain and of Africa; and here was the young Arcadius, the boy of ten years old for whose Quinquennalia all this weight of 'coronary gold' was demanded, and there was the little Honorius, a child of three, not yet Augustus, but already glorified with a statue. The whole family were for the moment hateful in the eyes of the men of Antioch. With ribald shouts and words which a loyal orator could not repeat and wished that he had never heard, they began to stone the wooden statues. There was a roar of laughter as each statue fell in ludicrous ruin, a roar of rage when one, more strongly compacted than its neighbour, resisted the onslaught. From the wooden statues they proceeded to those of brass. As stone-throwing here availed not, they tied ropes round the necks of the Imperial family, dragged them from their pedestals, smashed them as well as they could into fragments, and dragged the scattered members about the streets.

There was a certain leading citizen who, as the mob felt, viewed these seditious proceedings with disapproval. To his house they rushed and threw fire into it, fire which if it could once have got a head would have destroyed the neighbouring palace of the Emperor. But now at last the chief officer of the garrison, a man well trained in war, but who had been completely cowed by this outburst of popular fury, recovered his nerve, ordered his archers to the rescue, extinguished the flames, and by a few discharges of arrows utterly quelled the rioters. Another officer (perhaps the *Comes Orientis*), when he heard that the archers were

called out, plucked up his courage and brought his companies of infantry to assist in restoring order. The rioters who were caught in the act of incendiarism were committed to prison; the rest of the roaring crowd melted silently away: by noon Antioch was quiet again, and men had leisure to bethink them what had been done, and what punishment would fall upon the city.

On the audacious criminals who had been caught red-handed in the act of firing the city punishment, cruel in form, but, in essence, not unmerited, promptly descended. On the third day after the insurrection, Chrysostom, describing the fate of these lawless ones, said, 'Some have perished by fire, others by the sword, others have been thrown to the wild beasts, and these, not men only, but boys also. Neither the unripeness of their age, nor the popular tumult, nor the fact that Devils tempted them to their mad outbreak, nor the intolerable burden of the taxes imposed, nor their poverty, nor the general assent of the citizens to the crime, nor their promise never to offend again—none of these pleas has availed them, but, without chance of pardon, they have been hurried off to the place of execution, armed soldiers guarding them on all sides to prevent the possibility of a rescue. Mothers followed afar off beholding their sons dragged away and not daring even to bewail their calamity.'

But severe as were these punishments inflicted on the most conspicuous rioters, there ran through all ranks of the community a vague presentiment that the matter would not end there. Messengers had at once started off for Constantinople to inform the Emperor of what had occurred, and the citizens shivered with fear when they thought what answer those messengers might possibly bring back with them. The insult to the Imperial dignity contained in the overthrow of the statues had been gross and palpable. All who had abetted or even connived at it were dearly liable to the tremendous penalties denounced against 'Laesa Majestas,' the Roman equivalent of High Treason. When, under Tiberius, the fashion of currying favour with the Emperors by lodging accusations of 'Majestas' against eminent citizens was raging most fiercely, if a man had beaten his slave, or changed his clothes, in the presence of the Emperor's statue, or if even in intoxication he had seemed to treat despitefully a ring bearing the Emperor's effigy, these were sufficient offences upon which to ground the terrible indictment. Possibly under later Emperors this fanaticism of adulation had somewhat subsided; but the statues of the reigning sovereign remained the visible expression of his majesty, raised (as we saw in the case of Maximus) when an usurper was recognized as legitimate ruler, hurled to the ground with ignominy when the fortune of war had declared against him. Woe therefore to the presumptuous mortal who laid a sacrilegious hand upon the effigy of the undethroned Emperor. The chapter in the Digest which comments on the law of Treason devotes two out of its eleven paragraphs to this very question. 'A man is not guilty of treason who repairs the statues of Caesar which have decayed through age. Nor is one, who by the chance throw of a stone has hit a statue, guilty of the crime of treason; so Severus and Antoninus (Caracalla) ruled in their rescript to Julius Cassianus. The same Emperors decided that there was no injury to "majestas" in selling the images of Caesar which had not yet been consecrated. But they who shall melt down the statues or images of the Emperor which have been already consecrated or commit any similar act, are subject to the penalties of the Lex Julia Majestatis.'

That 'Majesty' had been 'injured' therefore in the colonnades of Antioch there could be no question, but the active perpetrators of the insult, notwithstanding the tender years of some of them, had already expiated this crime by fire, by sword, by the cruel teeth of the lions. The question now, the terrible question for the substantial citizens of Antioch, was how far they had made that crime their own by their tacit acquiescence. Thus was the case stated by the great preacher who put their dark forebodings into words: 'Lo! we, whose conscience acquits us of having had any share in the outrage, are not less in fear of the Emperor's wrath than the actual criminal. For it sufficeth us not to say in our defence, "I was not present; I was not assisting; I was not a partaker in the crime." "For that very reason", he may say, "you shall be punished,

because you was not present. You did not hinder the lawless ones. You did not help to repress the tumult. You did not put your life at hazard for the honour of the Emperor.”

At the distance of more than fifteen centuries it is hopeless to retry the case of the burgesses of Antioch and to decide whether they were or were not guilty of connivance in the outrage on the Imperial dignity. The whole affair occupied only a few hours of a March morning; and it is clear that there was no premeditated revolt against the Emperor. But all men were taken by surprise. The wealthy burghers certainly showed an utter want of presence of mind and a cowardly unwillingness to face the mob. Perhaps their fault ended here, but the impression made upon my own mind is that there was something more than this; a certain disposition to stand on one side and allow this extravagant Spaniard who was making life unlivable by his ceaseless demands for money to fight his own battles and defend his throne against these roaring insurgents without the aid of the citizens.

In their dismay at what had been done and fear of the consequences, the citizens of Antioch turned to the Church for aid. In fact, on the fatal morning itself, when the letters of the Emperor were read, the first impulse of the people had been to visit the house of Bishop Flavian and ask his counsel and intercession; and it was only when they had failed in finding him at home that the movement had passed from lamentation to mutiny. Now, they again and more earnestly sought the aid of the venerable prelate, the successor of Meletius, the man whose election had indirectly led to the abdication by Gregory Nazianzen of the Episcopal throne of Constantinople, but who had, by this time, lived down the opposition to his episcopate and was evidently not accepted merely, but beloved by the vast majority of the Christians of Antioch. Flavian was in advanced age, and broken health, little fitted to endure the fatigues and hardships of a journey of 800 miles across the highlands of Asia Minor in the beginning of March. Moreover, his only sister, who dwelt with him in the ancestral mansion, was lying on her death-bed, and her one most earnest longing was that he might be with her when her last hour came. But rising above all these excuses for inactivity the noble old man, thinking only of the words, ‘The good shepherd giveth his life for the flock,’ cheerfully accepted the mission to the Court of Theodosius, there to plead for an indulgent view of the crime of the citizens of Antioch. He started apparently about the 6th of March, and already on the 10th of that month the citizens were comforted by the news that their Bishop, the messenger of reconciliation, was likely to catch up the other travellers, the messengers of wrath, who had started as if with wings to their heels, but had been so delayed—possibly by snow in the passes of Taurus—that they were still only in the middle of their journey, having been obliged to dismount from their horses and travel by the slower conveyance of chariots, drawn probably by mules.

For more than twenty days the silence of an awful suspense brooded over the once light-hearted city of Antioch. Many of the citizens left their homes and took up their abodes in deserts and in caves in the wild gorges of Mount Silpius. The Forum, once loud with the din of buyers and sellers or bright with the robes of revellers, was empty and desolate. If a citizen, to shake off the melancholy which weighed upon him at home, walked abroad in the Forum, so gloomy was the aspect of the place, where he saw only one or two of his fellow-citizens creeping about, with cowed looks and crouching frames, that he soon returned to the less depressing solitude of his home. There he sat, a free man, but as it were in fetters, dreading the entry of an informer or of the *lictors* who would drag him off to prison. As no friends visited him, he would pass the time in conversation with his slaves, conversation which turned on such dreary topics as these: Who has been seized? Who has been carried off to prison? Who has been punished today, and what was the manner of the punishment?

In the city thus abandoned to gloom there was but one place in which words of comfort and hope resounded. In the pulpit of the great church built by Constantine there stood, day after

day, the slight figure of Chrysostom, a broad-browed man, with deep-set eyes, pleading with the overflowing congregations which flocked to the church—it was now the season of Lent—to put off their vices, their luxury, and their worldliness, and to meet with brave hearts whatever the future might have in store for them. One sin against which, with a persistency which is almost amusing, he warns his hearers is that of oaths lightly and frivolously sworn. If a slave made some mistake in waiting at table, the mistress of the house would swear that she would have him flogged, and her husband would swear that the stripes should not be inflicted. Thus, one or other of the discordant pair must commit perjury. A tutor would swear that his pupil should taste no food till he had learned a certain lesson, and when the sun was descending on the still unfinished task, the tutor found himself shut up to one of two alternatives, perjury or murder. Almost every one of the nineteen homilies which the ‘golden-mouthed’ preacher delivered during these eventful weeks concludes with an earnest exhortation to abstain from profane swearing.

One day, probably in the third week of Lent, the Praetorian Prefect of the East himself came in state to the church. He recognized that there was in the great preacher’s discourses the best medicine for the nervous, panic-stricken, dispirited condition of the public mind; and in order to prevent the city from being depopulated through sheer terror he came to give the sanction of the civil magistrate’s presence to the soothing and hopeful words of the ecclesiastic. ‘I praise,’ said Chrysostom, ‘the forethought of the Prefect, who, seeing the city in bewilderment, and all talking about flight, has come in hither to comfort you and turn you to good hope again; but I do not praise you, that after all my sermons you should still need these assurances to deliver you from cowardice. You are a prey to panic terrors. Someone enters and tells you that the soldiers are going to break in upon you. Instead of falling into a paroxysm of fear, calmly tell the messenger of evil tidings to depart, and do you seek the Lord in prayer.’ Towards the close of the same sermon, in dwelling on the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly riches, the preacher says, ‘If you have money, many may rob you of the pleasure which it affords you; the thief digging through your house-wall, the slave embezzling what was entrusted to him, the Emperor confiscating, the informer delating’. It had come to this, therefore, that in the ordinary social life of the capital of Asia, the Emperor’s terrible demands for money could be classed, by a loyal and orthodox preacher, with the crimes of the house-breaker and the defaulting slave as a chief source of anxiety to the wealthy householder.

So the days wore on. In the city, men were living in an agony of fear, so great that, as the preacher said, if but a leaf moved it set them trembling for days. In the mountains, the refugees were suffering all manner of hardships; not grown men only, but little children and tender and delicate women, spent their days and nights in caves and hollow ravines, and some fell a prey to the wild beasts of the desert.

At length, about twenty-five days after the tumult, the Emperor’s commissioners arrived. Their names were Caesarius and Hellebichus. Caesarius probably already held the high position of Master of the Offices. Hellebichus (or Ellebichus), whose name surely indicates a barbarian, perhaps a Gothic origin, had been for at least three years Master of the Horse and Foot quartered in the neighbourhood of Constantinople. He had previously held either that or a similar command at Antioch, and had endeared himself to the inhabitants by his humane and temperate demeanour. It was accepted as a good omen by all the trembling hearts in Antioch that he should have been chosen as a member of the dreaded tribunal. Of Caesarius less was known, but he appears to have been a man who was capable of a generous and self-sacrificing sympathy with misfortune.

The decree which these men brought with them was a stern one, and nothing can show the misery of despair the city, which had fallen upon the inhabitants of the joyous city more vividly than the fact that even such a decree should have been almost welcomed as a relief

from the intolerable agony of suspense. The Theatre and the Hippodrome, which had been temporarily closed since the fatal outbreak, were not to be reopened; the baths were to be also closed; the grain-largesses which Antioch had hitherto shared with Rome, Alexandria, and Constantinople were to cease; and, bitterest drop in the cup to the vanity of the Antiochenes, their city was to lose her high place among the 'great cities' of the Empire, and to take rank henceforth as a dependent of Laodicea, her petty rival on the sea-coast some sixty-five miles to the south. Even so might Paris, after the war of the Commune in 1871, have been made permanently subject to Versailles.

Further still, as has been said, even these rigorous decrees proceedings were received with a sigh of relief by the citizens of Antioch. It was something that life was left to them that their city was not to be levelled to the dust for its outrage on the Emperor. But would even life, much less property, be left to them? That was the question which began to torment the wealthier citizens, the Senators of Antioch, when Caesarius and Hellebichus took their seats in the Hall of Judgment and opened their Commission, for the trial, not now of the street-boys and vagabonds of the Forum who had actually thrown the stones and dragged the dismembered statues about the streets, but of those important and respectable persons who were theoretically the rulers of the city, and who, either from cowardice or disaffection, had let the tumult rage and roar past them without lifting a hand to save the Majesty of the Emperor from outrage. These were the men whom Theodosius had determined at least to terrify, possibly to destroy, as an atonement to the insulted memory of his wife and father.

The Commissioners seem to have arrived at Antioch on Monday the 29th of March. On the 30th they held a preliminary enquiry at the lodgings of Hellebichus, an enquiry which, like all their subsequent proceedings, dealt chiefly with the Senate and with those who held or had held municipal offices in the city. On Wednesday the 31st they took their seats in due form in the Praetorium, surrounded by their *lictors*, with a strong guard of soldiers outside, and opened 'the dread tribunal which shook all the hearts of the citizens with terror, and made the day seem black as night through the sadness and fear which dimmed the eyes of all men.' In accordance with an old custom at Antioch, criminal trials had to take place at night in order to strike more awe into the hearts of the accused.

The Commissioners so far complied with this custom as to begin their proceedings before dawn, but soon the sun rose upon their gloomy work, revealing the cowering multitude without, the stern executioners at their cruel work within. The main object of the Commissioners was to extort confessions of complicity with the insurgents (whether in order to magnify the future clemency of the Emperor or to furnish a pretext for fines and confiscations it is not now easy to determine); and in order to obtain these confessions, torture was freely applied to the leading citizens of Antioch. Chrysostom, who spent that memorable day in the precincts of the Praetorium, draws a vivid picture of the scene. The miserable remnant of the joyous multitude of the city was gathered round the doors in silence, with not even the ordinary platitudes of conversation passing between the by-standers, for each man feared an informer in his neighbour. Only each looked up to Heaven and silently prayed God to soften the hearts of the judges.

Still more gloomy was the sight in the Audience Chamber of the Praetorium; stern soldiers, armed with swords and clubs, tramping up and down amid a crowd of women, the wives, mothers, and daughters of the accused, who were waiting in agonized suspense to learn the fate of their relatives. There were two especially, the mother and sister of a Senator of high rank, who lay on the very threshold of the innermost hall, spreading out their hands in vain entreaty towards the unseen powers within. There they lay, these women, used to the delicate ministrations of waiting-maids and eunuchs, and accustomed to the semi-Oriental seclusion of a Syrian thalamus. No servant, or friend, or neighbour was there to soothe the anguish of their

souls, as they lay grovelling upon the ground, unveiled, before the eyes, and almost under the feet, of a brutal soldiery.

And from within, from the dread hall itself, into which not even the preacher might enter, came terrible sounds, the harsh voices of the stolid executioners, the swish of stripes, the wailings of the tortured, the tremendous threats of the judges. But the agony outside, thought the orator, was even more terrible than the agony within. For as it was well known that the indictments would be framed on the information thus extracted by torture, when the ladies in the hall of waiting heard the moans of some relative who was being scourged to make him declare his accomplices, they looked up to Heaven and prayed God to give him fortitude that he might not in his anguish utter words which would bring another beloved one into trouble. 'Thus were there torments within, torments without; the torturers within were the executioners; without, the feelings of nature and the wringing of the heart with pity and fear.'

All the long day through the judges proceeded with their dreadful work, apparently unmoved by the prayers and tears of those by whom they were surrounded. Yet this apathy was in truth but a mask to conceal their real feelings. Towards sunset the orator Libanius ventured to approach the suppliant-crowded door. Fearing to intrude, he was about to move away again, when Caesarius, with whom he had some previous acquaintance, pushed through the throng to meet him, and, taking him in a friendly manner by the wrist, assured him that none of those who were then imprisoned should suffer death. All other possible punishments seemed tight after this assurance, and Libanius wept for joy on receiving it. He descended into the streets and imparted the comforting tidings to the crowd.

But if the extreme penalty of the law was not to be inflicted there was every sign of a determination to treat with sternness the crimes, voluntary or involuntary, of the Senators of Antioch. They were all loaded with chains and led through the Forum to the gaol; men (as Chrysostom reflected, on beholding the dismal procession) who had been accustomed to drive their own chariots, who were the givers of games and the furnishers of countless brilliant 'liturgies' to the people. But these men's properties were for the time confiscated, and you might see the government sign affixed to all their doors. Their wives, turned out of their ancestral homes, wandered from house to house, begging a night's lodging in vain, for all men feared to receive a relation of the accused or to minister to any of their needs. Such was the abject terror with which the inhabitants of a great Imperial city regarded the wrath of the Emperor.

While the citizens were thus displaying the meanness and selfishness of fear, a strange swarm of visitors appeared in their streets, as if to show by contrast what courage and what generous sympathy for the woes of others could be found in the hearts of men who had voluntarily renounced all that makes life delightful. These were the hermits who lived in the caves and fastnesses of the rocks in the mountain range which overhung the city. No one had invited them, but when they heard, probably from the refugees, of the cloud of doom which was hanging over Antioch, they left their tents and their caves and flocked into the city from all quarters. At another time their vile raiment and uncouth demeanour would probably have moved the laughter of the citizens, but now they were welcomed as guardian angels floating down from heaven. Fearless of the great ones of the earth, they went straight to the Commissioners and pleaded confidently for the accused. They were all ready they said to shed their blood that they might deliver the prisoners from the woes that impended over them.

One of the wildest and most awe-inspiring of these strange figures was the holy Macedonius, a man totally ignorant of all learning, sacred or profane, who passed his nights and his days on the top of a mountain, engaged in all but unintermitting prayer to the Saviour of mankind. Meeting Hellebichus riding in martial pomp through the city, accompanied by Caesarius, he laid his hand upon the officer's military cloak, and desired him and his

companions to dismount. At first they resented this language, coming from a stunted old man of mean appearance and clad in rags. But when the by-standers informed them of the virtue and holiness of the strange figure that stood before them, the Master of the Soldiery and the Master of the Offices dismounted from their horses, and clasping his sun-browned knees implored his pardon. Filled as with a prophet's inspiration the squalid mountaineer thus addressed them, 'Go, my friends, to the Emperor, and say to him, "You are not only an Emperor but a man, and you have to think of human nature as well as of the Imperial dignity. Man was made in the image of God: do not then order that image to be destroyed and so offend the great Artificer. You are making all this stir about bronze statues which it is easy to replace, but if you kill men for the sake of these statues not one hair of their heads can be remade."'

Such were the pleadings of Macedonius. Others of the hermits entreated that they might be sent as ambassadors to the Emperor. 'The man' said they, 'who bears rule over the world, is a religious man, faithful and pious, and we shall surely reconcile him to his people. We will not permit you to stain the sword nor to take a single life. If you slay any of these men we are resolved that we will die with them. Great crimes have been committed, but not greater than the mercy of the Emperor can pardon.'

The offer of the hermits to act as intercessors was gently but firmly declined by the Commissioners. Moved, however, by their rugged earnestness, and by the pitiful lamentations of the female relatives of the prisoners, the Commissioners repeated in a more public and emphatic manner the assurance already given to Libanius, that no capital sentence should be inflicted at any rate till the pleasure of the Emperor had been taken on the matter. On Thursday, the 1st of April, Caesarius departed, amid the prayers and blessings of the weeping inhabitants, to obtain, if it might be, some mitigation of the decree pronounced against the city, and to consult as to the nature of the punishment to be inflicted on the accused Senators.

The road from Antioch to Constantinople was 790 Roman miles long; it crossed two steep mountain ranges and traversed arduous highlands. First of all Mount Amanus had to be over-passed and the deep Gulf of Scanderoon to be rounded; several Cilician rivers must be crossed and Cilician Tarsus visited. A long and steep pull carried the traveller over the rugged range of Taurus, and he then journeyed for many a stage down the widening valley of the Halys, passing on his way the little town of Nazianzus, where St. Gregory was born, and the road-side station of Sasima, the scene of his undesired episcopate. A long journey across the Galatian highlands led him from the valley of the Halys, past the city of Ancyra (now Angora), into the valley of the Sangarius, from whence he crossed over to Nicaea of the famous Council, to Diocletian's Nicomedia, and so coasted along between the Bithynian Mountains and the Sea of Marmora till he entered the gates of Chalcedon, and saw the towers of Constantinople rising proudly in the west, the welcome goal of his journeyings. It was a distance of nearly 800 miles, as has been said, to traverse which, through regions wasted by Ottoman domination, would now occupy 230 hours or nearly ten days of absolutely continuous travel; but such was the zeal of Caesarius, inflamed by pity and the remembrance of the sad hearts which he had left behind him at Antioch, and such the goodness of the Roman roads fifteen centuries ago, that he accomplished the journey in six days, travelling therefore at the rate of 130 miles a day.

When Caesarius arrived in Constantinople to hand in his report and to plead for mercy to Antioch, he found that the ground had been well prepared for him by Bishop Flavian. There can be little doubt that the aged prelate (who must by this time have been at least a fortnight in Constantinople), had several interviews with the Emperor, though St. Chrysostom, for dramatic effect, describes them as one. When Flavian entered the Palace he stood afar off from the Imperial presence, silent, weeping, crouching low and shrinking from observation, as if it were he himself that had committed the fatal outrages. By this well-calculated humility he turned the Emperor's wrath into pity. Theodosius drew near and addressed him rather in sorrow than in

anger, enumerating all the benefits which from the beginning of his reign he had bestowed on ungrateful Antioch. He had ever longed to visit her, yea, had sworn to do so; but even if he himself had deserved ever so ill of the citizens, surely they might have confined their anger to the living. Why wreak their vengeance on the innocent dead, on the brave old general and the gentle Empress who had passed away from earth?

At this the Bishop groaned and shed more tears, and with a heavy sigh (for he saw that the Emperor's gentle expostulation was making Antioch's case seem all the worse) he began, confessing the Imperial benefits, lamenting the vile ingratitude of the inhabitants, and admitting that if the city were swept from the face of the earth, it would not be punished more severely than it deserved. Then he proceeded to open a line of defence, which both the heathen and the Christian apologists for Antioch united in maintaining. The insurrection—said both Libanius and Chrysostom—was not the work of the Antiochenes themselves in their sober senses, but was due to demons, jealous of the prosperity of the city, who had assumed the guise of men, and mingling with the crowd on that fatal morning had goaded them to madness. Libanius in his oration (of which a copy had perhaps been transmitted to the Emperor by Caesarius), gravely tells the story of a certain old man, displaying more than an old man's strength, who rode up and down among the rioters, urging them on to the work of demolition, and who, when the cry was raised 'Well done, old man' changed himself, under the eyes of many beholders, into a youth, then into a boy, and then vanished into thin air. This singular story may not have been related by the weeping Bishop to the Emperor, but he certainly did allude to the demons' jealousy of the glory of Antioch and of her sovereign's love for her, and besought him to foil that envious scheme, and by the exercise of his Imperial clemency to re-erect for himself a statue more glorious than any that had been overthrown, a statue not of gold, nor brass, nor precious mosaic-work, but his own likeness in the hearts of his subjects. 'It is said,' continued Flavian, 'that the blessed Constantine, when his effigy had been stoned by the mob, and when his friends, urging him to avenge the insult, told him that all the face of the statue was marred by the impact of the stones, calmly stroked his own face with his hand, and said with a laugh, "I can find no wound in my forehead. My head and my face appear to be quite uninjured." A noble saying this, one not forgotten by after generations, and tending more to the renown of Constantine than even the cities which he founded, and the victories which he gained over the barbarians.'

'Think that you have now not merely the fate of one city in your hands, but that the whole credit of Christianity is at stake. All nations are watching you, Jews and Gentiles alike, and if you show humanity in this case, they will all cry "*Papae!* what a wonderful thing is the power of this Christianity; that a man who has no equal upon earth, absolute lord of all men, to save or to destroy, should have so restrained himself and exhibited a degree of philosophy which would have been rare even in a private person.'

'Think, too, what a thing it will be for posterity to hear, that when so great a city was lying prostrate under fear of the coming vengeance; when generals, prefects and judges were all struck dumb with horror, one old man, wearing the robes of a priest of God, by his mere appearance and conversation, moved the Emperor to an indulgence which none of his other subjects could obtain from him.'

When Flavian had finished his earnest supplication, Theodosius, we are told, like Joseph, sought a place where to weep apart. It was to a mind softened by interviews such as this, that Caesarius, the Master of the Offices, brought the tidings of the abject self-humiliation of the city, of his own harsh measures towards the Senators, and the recommendation to mercy jointly put forward by himself and his colleague. Theodosius, who had probably been only waiting for this advice be given by his Commissioners, seems to have gladly accepted it, and at once pronounced the sweet word "pardon," which became him better than any diadem'. The

previous decree was to be rescinded, Antioch was to resume all her forfeited privileges, the imprisoned Senators were to be set free and their confiscated property restored to them.

The grateful Flavian offered to remain at Constantinople a few days longer, in order to share the Easter feast of gladness with the reconciled Emperor. But Theodosius, whose whole mind seemed now set on pardon, begged him to return at once and show himself to his flock. 'I know,' said he, 'their downcast souls. Do you go and comfort them. When they see their pilot once more in his wonted place at the helm, the bitter memory of the storm will pass away.' The Bishop importuned him to let the young Arcadius return with him as a visible pledge that the Imperial anger was abated. 'Not now,' said Theodosius. 'Pray ye that these obstacles may be removed, that these impending wars [alluding, no doubt, to the inevitable war with Maximus] may be extinguished, and I will come myself without delay.' Even after the Bishop had departed, and had crossed the Bosphorus to Chalcedon, the Emperor sent messengers beseeching him to lose no time on the road, lest he should diminish the pleasure of the citizens by celebrating Easter anywhere else than within their walls. Generously foregoing, as also did Caesarius, the delight of being the first to communicate the glad-tidings, Flavian detached a horseman from his train, and bade him ride on fast and take the joyful letters of pardon to the city.

The three weeks which had elapsed since the departure of Caesarius had, naturally, been a time of suspense and discouragement for the citizens of Antioch. The absolute closing of all places of amusement weighed on the spirits of the people, the closed doors of the great baths subjected them to bodily privations which seemed almost intolerable. The city-mob streamed down to the banks of the narrow Orontes, and there, with a disregard for decency, for which St. Chrysostom severely rebuked them, bathed amid ribald songs and demoralizing laughter, and with no proper provision for the separation of the sexes.

Meanwhile the Fathers of the city were still languishing in the prison, the discomforts of which had been often in previous years, pointed out to them by Libanius. He had in vain told them that the prisoners had hardly room to stretch themselves for slumber, that they had but the scantiest provision of food except what their friends supplied to them, and only a single lamp, for which they had to pay a high price to the gaoler. Into this miserable dungeon the untried as well as the convicted prisoners were crowded together, and thousands of both classes had died in recent years of the diseases thus engendered. The Senators, who had turned a deaf ear to all Libanius' pleas for Prison Reform, had now an opportunity of learning by bitter experience how greatly it was needed. The courtyard in which they were imprisoned had no roof to cover it from the scorching rays of the noonday sun, nor to protect it from the April showers and the dews of night. Here, crowded so closely together that they trod one on another, with sleep made almost impossible, with food only to be snatched at irregular intervals, as the friends of each might succeed in shouldering their way through the crowd to bring it to them, languished the Senators of Antioch. So miserable was their duration, that it seemed doubtful whether they would be alive to hear the news of pardon when it came. But the gentle-hearted Hellebichus, though powerless to change the decree for their imprisonment, connived at its alleviation. He caused the wall which divided the Senate House from the Prison to be pierced through, and thus the unhappy captives found room and shelter in the halls which had often resounded with their deliberations.

But all these hardships, and all the long suspense of the city on the Orontes were ended, when on one of the days of Holy Week the horseman sent forward by Flavian rode through the Northern Gate shouting that one word 'Pardon.' When the Imperial letter to Hellebichus was read, and when the citizens learned how full was the measure of the Imperial forgiveness, that the baths, the theatres, and the hippodrome were to be re-opened, the corn-largesses restored, Antioch again to take her own high place as a first city of the East, they crowned the pillars of

the forum with garlands, they lighted lamps in all the streets, spread couches before the workshops, and laid out the banqueting tables in front of them. Thus the city wore all the appearance of one of the joyous old *lectisternia* of republican Rome, except that, doubtless, the recumbent statues of the gods Jupiter, Juno, and Ceres were absent from the streets of Christian Antioch—more Christian now than ever, since the mitigation of a great calamity had been obtained by the prayers of a Christian Bishop addressed to a Christian Emperor. In the great Basilica which had been the refuge of the citizens in their dire distress, there was now celebrated such a glad Easter feast as Antioch had never seen before. Flavian was there, unharmed by his sixteen hundred miles of journeying, and having had the joy of finding his sister still alive, and able to exchange a last farewell. Chrysostom, of course, ascended the pulpit, and told all the story of the interview between the Bishop and the Emperor. The agony of the city was over, and the great series of ‘the Homilies on the Statues’ was ended.

It remains only to be said that the visit of Theodosius to the forgiven city was apparently never paid. The war with Maximus, the necessity of setting in order the affairs of Italy, the second civil war which will shortly have to be described, prevented the fulfilment of the design, if it had ever been seriously entertained by Theodosius. Only eight years after the affair of the statues, Antioch was to see from her walls the hosts of the savage Huns spreading ruin and desolation over the pleasant plains of Syria.

Such was the history of the crime and the forgiveness of Antioch. It is usually told as an instance of the generous magnanimity of Theodosius. It may be admitted that no blood appears to have been shed by his orders, and that the first outbreak of fierce resentment, which was almost justified by the insults heaped on his dead wife and his dead father, was amply repented of when he had leisure calmly to reflect on the excess of the punishment over the crime, and to listen to the wise pleadings of Flavian and Caesarius.

Let Theodosius, therefore, in the judgment of posterity, have the full credit which he deserves for his arrested wrath, for his unexecuted purposes of vengeance, although the historian cannot but perceive the difficulty of rightly estimating character, if uncommitted crimes are to be allowed to build up a saintly reputation. But the feeling which will probably be uppermost in the minds of those who study the history of the sedition of Antioch will be compassion for the hard fate of the Senators of that city. Burdened with responsibility, bereft of power, ground between the upper and nether mill-stones of the Emperor and the mob, these unhappy remnants of a once powerful middle class suffered that fate which will probably always be their portion under a system of Imperial Socialism. There was still in them something left to grind, but when they had been ground out of existence the Empire ceased to be.

One other phenomenon of Imperial Rome, the story of the broken statues brings vividly before us, the unapproachable, the almost superhuman majesty of the man who happened to be robed in the purple of Empire. As St. Chrysostom said, ‘He whom the city of Antioch hath insulted hath not his fellow upon the earth, for he is Emperor, the head and crown of all things in the world. Therefore let us fly to the Heavenly King, and call on Him for aid : for if we cannot taste the compassion of the Lord on high, there is nothing in all the world that can help us when we think of that which we have done.’

CHAPTER X

THEODOSIUS IN ITALY AND THE MASSACRE OF THESSALONICA

THE chief interest for us of Theodosius' residence at Milan consists in the relation into which he was thus brought with the Bishop of that city, the eloquent and domineering Ambrose. These two men, the Emperor and the Bishop, were unquestionably the foremost figures of their age. They met now probably for the first time: they were destined to spend about three years in near neighbourhood with one another. A shrewd observer of character might perhaps have prognosticated that, earnest upholders as both were of Nicene orthodoxy, there would hardly be unbroken peace between two such lordly natures constrained, to dwell in such close proximity.

In fact a cause of difference presented itself almost at the beginning of the Emperor's residence in Italy. The court of the East had sent a report to Theodosius as to certain disturbances which had taken place at Callinicum, a city on the Euphrates. The Christian had burned to the ground a richly-adorned synagogue of the Jews; and some orthodox monks who were celebrating (on the 1st of August) the festival of the Maccabean martyrs under Antiochus, had become engaged in a quarrel with the Gnostic heretics who bore the name of Valentinians, and had destroyed their 'temple' also by fire. On the receipt of this information Theodosius dispatched a rescript to the effect that the Bishop of Callinicum should rebuild the Jewish synagogue at his own cost, and that punishment—we are not told of what kind—should be inflicted by the Eastern Court on the disorderly monks. The sentence appears, as far as we are able to judge of it, to have been a just one, and to have been dictated by a laudable spirit of impartiality. There was no doubt that a word from the Bishop would have checked the proceedings of the rioters; but, more than that, the nature of the defence set up for him by his most earnest advocate makes it probable that he had actually hounded them on to the work of destruction. The case was one which was entirely and absolutely within the province of the civil governor; no ecclesiastical right was involved in it; it was simply a question of the kind and degree of punishment which ought to be exacted from the disturbers of the public peace. The Bishop of Milan had no claim to express an opinion on the transaction, one way or the other, but, if he spoke at all, he, as a former Roman governor, who knew how by Law all things hang together in a well-ordered state, might have been expected to give a word of praise to the righteous Emperor, who even against men of his own creed, up held the claim of all peaceable citizens to live under the equal protection of the laws.

Unfortunately for his fame, this was not the view of the matter taken by Ambrose. His was a bold and combative spirit; he had become inured to battle against the great ones of the earth in his disputes with Justina and with Maximus; and from the day of his consecration he had thrown himself into the defence of the Church's rights, real or imaginary, with an ardour such as in after ages burned in a Becket or a Hildebrand. Being absent at Aquileia when the news of the Imperial rescript first reached him, he wrote to Theodosius a letter almost as arrogant in its tone as those which he had formerly addressed to the trembling Valentinian. In this letter he hardly so much entreats as commands the Emperor to recall the fatal edict and to desist from all further proceedings against the destroyers of a mere synagogue, 'the haunt of infidels, the home of the impious, the hiding place of madmen, which was under the damnation of God Himself.' With proud humility he claims his right to offer counsel to his sovereign. 'The Emperor must not deny liberty of speech, nor the priest refrain from saying what he

thinks.’ He declares that the Bishop of Callinicum will be a traitor to his office if he obeys the Imperial decree and rebuilds the synagogue, and he anticipates that he will prefer martyrdom to such a betrayal. ‘Why do you pronounce sentence on the absent? I am here present before you and confess my guilt. I proclaim that I would have burned the synagogue: I would have given charge to my flock that there must not be a house left standing in which Christ was denied. If you asked me why I have not already burned the synagogue here, I answer that its destruction had been already begun by the judgment of God; and to tell the truth, I was the more tardy in doing such a deed because I did not know that you would punish it. Why should I perform an act for which there would, as I supposed, be no avenger and therefore no reward of martyrdom?’

This strangely defiant epistle seems to have been met by Theodosius with dignified silence; but shortly afterwards Ambrose, having come back to Milan, returned to the charge in a sermon which he preached before the Emperor. He reproduces this sermon and describes the occasion and consequences of its delivery in a long letter to his sister, whom, in accordance with the unctuous unnatural tone assumed by the saints of that age, he addresses as ‘your holiness.’

The sermon preached on this occasion in the Basilica of Milan, though not wanting in eloquence of a certain kind, consisted chiefly of a long and, according to our notions, a tedious commentary on the story of the woman in Simon’s house who bathed the Saviour’s feet with her tears. The exegesis is of that barrenly fanciful kind by which anything can be made out of anything; allegorical interpretation pushed to the verge of absurdity, and texts from the Canticles, from Exodus and Isaiah piled one upon another without any attempt to understand the thoughts which the original writers sought to convey through them. But at the end of this wearisome prelection the situation suddenly becomes dramatic. The preacher, with Theodosius full in front of him, draws a covert parallel between his life and that of King David, selecting the moment when the prophet Nathan stood before him to rebuke him for his crime against Uriah. ‘Chosen when you were little in Israel and anointed to the kingship; that former king who was troubled by an evil spirit and who persecuted the priests of the Lord, cut off that you might be exalted; with one of your seed exalted to be partner of your throne; the strangers made subject unto you and they who warred upon you made you servants; will you now hand over God’s soldiers into the power of their enemies? will you brand yourself with shame and give the adversaries occasion to triumph by taking away that which belongs to one of the servants of the Lord?’ It had come then to this, that a Roman Emperor, struggling against his own inclinations to protect an unpopular class of his subjects from mob-violence and priestly intolerance, could be told, in a crowded church in one of the chief cities of his empire, that he was imitating the crimes of David in the darkest passage of his life, his adultery with Bathsheba, his unutterably mean, as well as wicked murder of Uriah the Hittite.

The preacher then turned round and looked Theodosius full in the face. ‘Therefore, oh Emperor, that I may now not speak only about thee but address my words unto thee, do thou also as the woman in Simon’s house did unto Christ; cherish the Church, wash her feet, anoint them with precious ointment, that the whole house may be filled with the odour of it, that angels may exult in thy relaxation of the punishment of her members, that apostles may rejoice and prophets may be made glad’.

When Ambrose descended from the pulpit Theodosius met him and said, ‘You have been preaching about us.’ Ambrose replied, ‘I chose a subject which pertained to your welfare.’ Theodosius: ‘I was certainly too hard in my decision as to the Bishop’s rebuilding of the synagogue; but that is now put straight. The monks commit many crimes’. Timasius, general-in-chief of the forces, echoed his master’s words, and began to inveigh vehemently against the monks; but Ambrose brusquely interrupted him. ‘I speak, as in duty bound, to the Emperor,

who has the fear of God in his heart. I shall take some day a different course with thee, whose lips utter such hard things.’ There then followed some undignified bargaining between the Emperor and the Bishop as to the issue of the edict of revocation. Ambrose twice said, ‘I trust to your honour’ [that it will be issued]. Theodosius at length replied, ‘Trust to my honour;’ and then Ambrose went to the altar and offered, as he says with an unusual feeling of the Divine acceptance, the Sacrifice which he would have persistently refused to offer for Theodosius had he not first received this pledge. Already the Christian hierarchy were beginning to feel and to use the tremendous power which the sacrificial theory of the Supper of the Lord placed in their hands. But Ambrose’s easy victory was partly due to the peculiar temperament of Theodosius. That Emperor, so prone to sudden and violent paroxysms of rage, was easily moved to pity and forgiveness when wrath had had its way, and it was just in such a moment of recoil that the Bishop’s sermon met him and drew from him the confession—unjust to himself as our age deems it—that ‘he had been too hard in insisting on the rebuilding of the synagogue.’

It was perhaps in the following year (389) that an embassy was sent by the Senate, in the forlorn hope of inducing Theodosius to consent to the restoration of the Altar of Victory. The chief orator was again Symmachus, who had fallen into disgrace on account of a panegyric which he had pronounced on the usurper Maximus, but having taken refuge at the altar of a Christian Church had addressed an oration of praise and apology to the triumphant Emperor and had obtained forgiveness. Strangely enough the majesty of the Roman Senate seems to have made even the zealous Theodosius waver. There were some days during which the messengers had hopes of receiving an affirmative answer to their request; but the sternly averted face of Ambrose, who, during these days of doubt, refused to show himself in the presence-chamber of the Emperor, proved in the end mightier than the silver speech of Symmachus. Theodosius drove the heathen orator from his presence with the strange command that he should forthwith mount an uncovered chariot and put one hundred miles between himself and the Imperial Court.

In the summer of 389 occurred one of those rare events, the visit of a Roman Emperor to the City, which nominally gave him the right to rule over the fairest portion of the habitable globe. On the 13th of June Theodosius entered in solemn pomp the Eternal City. By his side sat his young colleague Valentinian, on his lap his little son Honorius, a child of five years old. The people received him with shouts of welcome, which he repaid with a liberal largesse. With that stately affability, which he knew so well how to display without imperilling his dignity, he exchanged good-humoured banter with the crowd, and after the procession was over, entered, with friendly condescension, the houses of many of the nobles and even some of the private citizens.

It was probably a few days after his entry into the City that Theodosius visited the Senate House and there heard the Gaulish orator, Latinus Pacatus Drepanius, recite, with real or feigned timidity, that florid panegyric on the Emperor and bitter invective on the fallen usurper, to which we have been already indebted for several facts in the history of both. In his peroration Pacatus imagines himself on his return to his native Gaul the center of an admiring and envying crowd, because it will be in his power to say ‘I have seen Rome; I have seen Theodosius; I have seen the father of Honorius, the avenger of Gratian, the restorer of Valentinian.’ ‘Distant cities will flock to me and take down from my lips the story of the triumph. Poets will derive from me the argument of their epics; on the faith of my words history will recount the past.’ This last prediction has been curiously verified. History has used the oration of Pacatus as one of the foundations of her edifice, but she has done so from sheer necessity, and not from any confidence that she can put in an inflated and passionate panegyric.

We are fortunate in possessing a contemporary picture by a master-hand, which enables us in some degree to figure to ourselves the social life of the Roman nobles and citizens who

welcomed the Imperial partners on their entrance into the City. Ammianus Marcellinus, writing possibly in this very year 389, twice describes in some detail the manners of the Roman aristocracy and populace. True, his pen is dipped in gall, and almost all the characters that he portrays in these sketches are either odious or contemptible, but this is the well-known license of the satirist, and especially of that most bitter of satirists, a foreigner visiting a great city and finding himself—as we suspect was the case with Ammianus—treated with somewhat less respect than he deems himself entitled to by his rank or his achievements.

The Roman aristocracy, we are told, made a great parade of their hospitality. Even sending commissioners down to Ostia to meet the arriving vessels and press the strangers on board to visit the palaces of their lords; but the hospitality was tendered with a selfish motive and the interest in the stranger's welfare was short-lived. The great object of each Roman noble was to make his list of clients as long as possible, and for this purpose were uttered these words of eager welcome which at first made the visitor feel that Rome was the most delightful place in all the world, and that he had wasted his opportunities by not visiting it ten years before. But the stranger, once secured, ceased to be an object of interest; next day the gracious host had nearly forgotten all about him; whether he visited his patron daily or remained absent for years seemed to be a matter of perfect indifference.

Through the streets walked these great nobles, ruffling it in brilliant tunics adorned with figures of animals, and over these a multitude of thin gauzy mantles to which they were for ever calling attention by waving their left hands backwards and forwards and by all sorts of affected gestures. Sometimes you met one of these aristocrats driving through the streets with his long train of slaves, looking like a little army scientifically marshalled by their wand-bearing stewards.

On either side of the lofty chariot marched the spinners and weavers of the lordly wardrobe, then the sooty ministers of the kitchen, then the promiscuous crowd of slaves mingled with the rabble of poor neighbours, and last of all, with pale, repulsive countenances, the eunuchs, beginning with the old men and ending with the boys.

When such a nobleman met one of his equals in the street, like a butting bull he thrust forward his head to be kissed; when he met one of his parasites, he offered in a similar way his hand or his knee, with a gesture which seemed to say that the honor thus conferred was alone enough to make life happy. When he entered the baths (for instance, those glorious halls whose ruins we still admire, which bear the name of Caracalla) : 'Where are my people?' shouted the self-important master in a voice that was meant to strike terror into all who heard it. Fifty busy servants thronged around him intent on their ministrations. When the bath was over he was dried with towels of the finest linen; bright robes sufficient to clothe a dozen men were respectfully submitted to his gaze; he made the great decision and then received from a slave the rings which he had taken off that they might not be injured by the water, and stuck them on his fingers till these looked like graduated measuring-sticks.

At length the stranger would receive the invitation to supper, so eagerly sighed for by the parasite who assiduously courted the favour of the *nomenclator* in order to obtain it, so little relished by a man of independent spirit, who nevertheless could hardly refuse it without mortally offending his patron. He must gaze with upturned eyes at the lofty-pillared entrance, he must admire the mosaic pictures on the walls, he must affect to consider the noble entertainer as raised almost above our mortal state. Then followed the repast, the long and wearisome repast, in which there was no conversation about books or thought or any worthy topic of discourse, for these Roman nobles were so ignorant that they scarcely knew the names of their own ancestors. The talk was chiefly about eating and drinking; and often the scales would be sent for and the weight of the viands tested. The turbot, the capons, the very dormice which figured in the menu of a Roman voluptuary would be weighed and the weights solemnly

recorded by a band of obsequious clerks, who stood round with their tablets and their pencils. There would be so much writing and ciphering about these childish experiments that the banquet only required a pedagogue to make it resemble a school.

Books (as has been said) were held in little esteem by the Roman nobility: neither philosophy nor history being cultivated by them; but from this general neglect the satires of Juvenal and the lives of the Emperors by Marius Maximus were excepted, probably because both books ministered to the love of scandal engendered by their lazy lives.

Music, dancing and comedy were the only arts that were held in much esteem. The houses which had once been devoted to serious and noble studies were now filled with burlesque performers or echoed to the strains of voluptuous music. Where the philosopher had sat now stood the barytone singer; for the orator you met the comedian. The libraries, closed from year's end to year's end, seemed like gloomy graves, except when sometimes the manufacture of hydraulic organs, or lyres as large as chariots, resounded through their gloomy recesses. Roman matrons, or damsels old enough to have been matrons had they married, with daintily curled locks, were to be seen in all the places of public resort, perpetually sweeping the pavement with their whirling garments while they imitated to utter weariness the last dance which they had seen performed on the stage of the theatre.

All sense of moral proportion seemed to have vanished from the minds of this class of people. If a slave was somewhat slow in bringing the hot water, the order would go forth that he should be beaten with three hundred stripes: but if he had deliberately killed a man, to any demand for his punishment the master would reply, 'Poor fellow! he must have been out of his mind. I will tell him if he does it again he shall certainly be punished.' If these aristocrats undertook a journey to their estates in the country, they seemed to themselves to be rivalling the Indian expedition of Alexander; if they sailed in hot weather on the Avernian lake, and if a mosquito found its way through the silken curtains of the gilded barge, or a sunbeam pierced through an unnoticed hole, they would begin to beat their breasts and bewail their hard fate that they had not been born in Cimmerian cold and darkness.

The only men among the Roman nobility who were capable of forming strong friendships were the gamblers, and these, from the remembrance of common dangers undergone, perhaps of common campaigns against the young men of fortune who were their victims, seemed to be bound together by indissoluble bonds.

Superstition and infidelity went, as they so often go, hand in hand. You might meet with men who denied that there was any Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and yet who would neither go out into the street nor sit down to dinner—hardly even wash their hands—till they had consulted an almanac to ascertain the precise position of the planet Mercury, or to see whether the moon had entered the constellation Cancer.

Lastly, in his sketch of the lives and manners of the Roman aristocracy, Ammianus insists on the degrading eagerness of their legacy-hunting, a practice on which Horace, and Juvenal before him, had poured out the vials of their scorn, but which in a rich, corrupt, and idle community was sure to engross the energies of many of its members. Not only the unmarried and the childless were assailed by the assiduity of the legacy-hunter. Sometimes even the father of a family would be induced by a fawning parasite, who had accommodated himself to his weaknesses, to make liberal provision for him in his will; and in these cases the making of the will was often followed by a death of surprising suddenness. Husbands and wives, too, displayed the same ignoble eagerness for wealth to which death gave the key. The wife wearied the husband to make her his sole legatee. Then the husband persisted that his wife should return the compliment. Soothsayers would be privately consulted as to the time when the desired event would happen which would prevent all chance of the will being revoked: and sometimes, if soothsayers were not sufficient, some other help might be used to hasten the day,

in which case the sorrowing survivor honoured the departed wife or husband with a funeral of surpassing splendor. In short, the judgment of Ammianus concerning most of the Roman nobles whom he had met, might be summed up in the words of Cicero, 'In human affairs, their only test of goodness is profit: and men love their friends as a sheep-master loves his sheep, calculating all the while which will bring him in the heaviest gains.'

This gloomy and of course over-charged picture of the Roman aristocracy is followed by a few contemptuous words as to their humbler fellow-citizens, the men who had not got a pair of whole shoes to wear, but who had to give themselves grand and fine-sounding names. These were they whose days were passed in gambling and drinking, and worse debauchery, and their nights on the floor of the wine-shop or under the curtains of the theatre. How they threw the dice with a kind of pugnacious eagerness and snorted defiance when the luck seemed going against them: how they crowded into the Circus Maximus, spending the livelong day, in blazing heat or pouring rain, scrutinizing the points of the horses and the equipments of the charioteers: how on the day of a great race, long before dawn, they would throng the approaches to the hippodrome, swearing by the gods of the stable that it would be all over with the State if the horse which they fancied did not first reach the goal: how they hissed the dramatic performers who had not bought their favour with coppers: the foul words which they used, and the senseless slang which was for ever on their lips: all these incidents of plebeian life at Rome are sketched, with angry contempt, by the proud Syrian nobleman who came to the City on the Tiber, half-hoping that he might still find in her some trace of the Rome of the Catos and the Fabricii, but who found her dead to the memory of all her past nobleness, sunk in frivolous and degrading vices.

We must not forget, however, that there was another side to the life of the Roman aristocracy, of which Ammianus remained in perhaps voluntary ignorance. While the nobles whom he visited were compassing sea and land to obtain some fresh gratification for their sensual appetites, there were Roman matrons, heirs of some of the greatest names of the Republic, who, in their palaces on the lonely Aventine, were living a life wholly apart from that of the wicked and frivolous City, a life in which 'high thinking' and the plainest of 'plain living' went hand in hand. The visit of Athanasius to Rome half a century before the date which we have now reached, and the earnest pleadings of the Egyptian monks, his companions, on behalf of a monastic life, had borne fruit in these austere noble souls. There, on the Aventine was Marcella, the descendant of the great Marcellus, Fabiola the child of the Fabii, Furia who traced up her lineage to the great Camillus. With these had once been joined Paula, descended on her mother's side from Paulus Aemilius, on her father's from Agamemnon, king of men: but Paula and her favourite daughter were now inhabitants of a narrow cell by the cradle of Christ at Bethlehem, and the great teacher of the Church, St. Jerome, who had preached the monastic life with such success in the palaces of Rome, was the sharer of their exile and their seclusion. All these devout and honourable women lived a life of the strictest self-denial, devoting themselves to study and the service of the poor, spending their days in the reading of the Scriptures in Greek and Hebrew, and making the nights melodious with their pious psalmody.

But it is not with monastic Aventine that we must now concern ourselves. We turn from those high and pure, if somewhat narrow, souls, to the coarse and brutal mob who are filling the Circus Maximus below with their senseless clamour. Already the Chariot-race was becoming the central event in the lives of a multitude of Roman citizens. Already we may conjecture the two colours blue and green, which denoted the most popular training-stables, had attracted to themselves that wild fervour of party feeling which 140 years later was to lay Constantinople in ashes. The green charioteer flashes by, a great part of the inhabitants are in despair. The blue gets a lead: yet more are in misery. They cheer frantically when they have

gained nothing: they are cut to the heart when they have sustained no loss: they plunge with as much eagerness into these empty contests as if the welfare of the whole country were at stake'. So keen was the competition and of such immense importance to a popular chariot-driver did his success appear, that the magicians and the poisoners were freely resorted to, that by their unhallowed arts a dangerous rival might be rendered incapable of victory. This was a matter of such common occurrence that magic or poison was as naturally associated with the name of a favourite *auriga* as foul play of other kinds in our days with the under-strappers of a racing-stable. Before Theodosius left Rome he issued a law denouncing capital punishment on any charioteer who should take private vengeance on even an avowed magician from whose arts he had suffered. 'If he has bewitched you' says the Imperial legislator, 'he is the enemy of the general safety, and should be brought forth in public, and examined under the eyes of the judges. By dealing the deadly blow to him in secret, you incur a twofold suspicion; first, that you yourself have had recourse to his services for a similar purpose, and, secondly, that you are punishing a private enemy under presence of zeal for the public good'

After leaving Rome Theodosius visited several cities in Northern Italy, and returned to Milan before the end of November. He spent the whole of the year 390, and the first half of 391, in that city in the near neighbourhood of the great Bishop, whose presence awed and yet fascinated him. Here, probably in the month of April, he heard the tidings of an event which in its consequences brought the names of Theodosius and Ambrose into ever memorable relation with each other. This event (closely connected with that very passion for the chariot-race which we have just been considering) was the sedition of Thessalonica.

The cause of this sedition is so connected with the unnatural vices of the Graeco-Roman population of that period that it can be but vaguely hinted at by a modern historian. It is sufficient to say that Botheric, master of the soldiery in Illyricum, and evidently a man of Teutonic extraction, had with righteous indignation committed to prison a certain charioteer who was guilty of an abominable crime. In the second act of the drama we find the populace mad with the frenzy of the arena, perhaps also smarting under the feeling of their inferiority to the barbarians quartered upon them, fiercely shouting for the liberation of their favourite. When cries and menaces did not avail to shake the Goth's stern purpose of punishment, they rose in armed rebellion, slew Botheric and some of the other Imperial officers, and dragged their bodies in triumph through the city. The rage of Theodosius, when he heard of this insult to his authority, was indescribable, and hurried him into a revenge the stupidity of which was equal to its wickedness. Without any attempt at a judicial enquiry to ascertain who were the authors of the rebellion, he sent his soldiers (many of them probably the countrymen of the murdered Botheric) to the city, with orders to bring back a certain number of heads. One historian places the number at 7000; another, probably exaggerating, fixes it at 15,000. But whatever may have been the number ordered, the peculiar atrocity of the mandate, its perfect indifference to the guilt or innocence of the victims, is admitted by all. There is something Oriental rather than Roman in this absolute contempt for even the semblance of justice, and it may be doubted if any, even among the most brutal of the wearers of the purple, is stained with a more utterly unkingly crime than this. Moreover, as Gibbon has well observed, Thessalonica had been one of the favourite abodes of the Emperor, and the enormity of his guilt seems intensified by the fact that he must have known by heart the look of the place which his soldiers were to fill with ghastly corpses, and that the citizens who, innocent of any crime, were to fall beneath the sword of his satellites, were men with many of whose faces he must have been familiar, men with whom perchance he had himself exchanged a friendly *Salve* on his way to the bath or the circus. Thessalonica was the scene of his dangerous illness, of his slow convalescence, of the baptism which was meant to mark his rising up to a purer and holier life. Strange! that no softening remembrances came across his mind to prevent his

indiscriminate slaughter of her sons. Yet scenes of which the following is a type must have been common during the massacre. A certain merchant (possibly one of these acquaintances of the Imperial murderer) had the misery of finding that his two sons were selected as victims. He entreated to be allowed to substitute himself for one of them: his tears, his gold, were almost effectual in obtaining this melancholy favour from the soldiery. But then the question arose, 'Which was to be the rescued one?' He looked from one face to another, both so dear, in an agony of indecision; and while he hesitated the brutal soldiers shouted out: 'There is no time to lose, the number must be completed', and slew both the young men before his eyes. While another citizen was being led to the shambles he was met by a devoted slave who with pathetic fidelity offered his own life to the executioners as a ransom for his master's, and apparently the offer was accepted.

Such was the crime of the massacre at Thessalonica, a crime which may have been atoned for in the sight of Heaven by the sincerity of the Emperor's after penitence, but which in the judgment of history must stamp with indelible reprobation, not his character only but the constitution of the State under which such deeds were possible.

Ambrose, when he heard of the massacre, was stirred with honest anger at the brutal crime, a crime against which the law-revering instincts of the old Roman official protested as loudly as the humane instincts of the Christian Bishop. Moreover there was an element of offended dignity added to his righteous wrath. Theodosius throughout his residence at Milan had taken him less into his counsels than so orthodox an Emperor might have been expected to do; but in this affair he had promised Ambrose that he would deal leniently with the guilty city. Afterwards, however, other counsellors, obtaining access to his person, had rekindled the half-extinguished fire of his resentment and had effaced the remembrance of the Bishop's soothing words and his own Imperial promise. Ambrose now studiously avoided the presence of his sovereign, and in a letter full of manly dignity told him that he was doing this intentionally, though he pleaded to the world the excuse of sickness, because his conscience would not permit him to condone the unrepented crime of the Emperor. 'I do not dare to offer the Sacrifice while you are standing by. If the blood of even one man disqualifies the murderer from the Communion, how much more that of thousands! Moreover in a dream of the night, when I was on the point of starting for Milan, I saw you entering the Church, and an intimation from God Himself forbade me to offer the Sacrifice before you.'

What reply Theodosius may have made to this letter we know not, but he apparently presented himself soon after in the church of Milan, intending there to take his usual part in the worship of the congregation. He was met, however, on the threshold by the Bishop who, in temperate but weighty words, forbade him to enter. 'The magnitude of the Empire, and the intoxicating influence of absolute power, might have prevented him from discerning as yet the enormity of his crime : but robed as he was in the Imperial purple, he was still but a man whose body would crumble into dust, whose spirit would return to God Who gave it. What account would he then be able to give of this dreadful massacre of his subjects? His subjects truly, but also his fellow-servants, men whose souls were as precious in God's sight as his own. How could one whose hands were and placed still soiled with that innocent blood, acceptably join in interdict, the worship of Almighty God. Let him depart, and in seclusion from the rest of the faithful, let him practice penitence and prayer till the time should come when he might fitly be absolved from his great transgression.' Theodosius, 'who was well instructed in Scripture, and who well knew the respective limits of the ecclesiastical and temporal power,' received this rebuke with patience, obeyed the interdict, and returned sadly to the Imperial palace. More than eight months after, he made another attempt to obtain reconciliation with the Church; but with a strange want of tact, or of remembrance, he permitted the office of mediator to be assumed by Rufinus. Rufinus, a native of an obscure town in Gascony, had made his way to the court

Byzantium, and there, with nothing to recommend him either as statesman or as general, had climbed up, by dint of flattery, intrigue, and calumny of his competitors, into the place of Praetorian Prefect, the highest position under the Emperor. His rapacity had made him the wealthiest and the most hated of all the ministers of Theodosius, and, scenting no doubt some plunder in the crime, he had (at least according to the belief of the people) been the chief instigator of the Thessalonian massacre. Such was the man whose officious servility proposed to the depressed Emperor an attempt to procure a removal of the interdict, and actually prompted him to offer his own good offices in the negotiation. Rufinus found Theodosius in tears and asked the cause. 'You may be mirthful, oh Rufinus!' said the sighing Emperor, 'but I must be sad. It is now Christmas, the time of the Church's gladness; but though beggars and slaves may enter the house of the Lord, its doors are closed to me.' Reluctantly and without hope Theodosius permitted Rufinus to intercede for him with Ambrose. But the Bishop, as soon as he saw the Praetorian Prefect, addressed him with burning words: 'You are as shameless as a dog, oh Rufinus! It was you who advised this cruel massacre, yet you come to me without a word of penitence or remorse for the outrage you have committed on the images of the Most High.' Rufinus cringed, but hinted that the Emperor would insist on coming to the Church. Ambrose replied, 'He shall slay me first. If he will change his emperorship into tyrantship, I cannot hinder him, but with my consent he comes not within these walls.'

Hearing of the ill-success of his messenger, the Emperor resolved to drink the cup of humiliation to the dregs, and went not to the Church, but to the house of Ambrose, exclaiming, 'I will go and receive the censure which I deserve'. Ambrose again remonstrated with him for his tyranny: 'I repent of it,' said Theodosius. 'Repentance should be openly manifested, and should be accompanied by some precaution against the repetition of the offence.' 'What precaution can I take? Show me the remedy and I will adopt it.'

'Since passion was the cause of thy fall, oh Emperor, prepare a law which shall henceforth interpose an interval of thirty days between the signing of any capital sentence or decree of proscription and its execution. In these thirty days, if passion, not justice, dictated the decree, there will be a chance for reason to be heard, and for the decree to be modified or revoked.' Theodosius gladly accepted this wise and statesmanlike suggestion, and having signed the new law was released from the interdict and permitted to enter Church. Prostrate on the floor he repeated the words of the 119th Psalm, 'My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to Thy word,' and by sighs and tears, by smiting upon his forehead, and tearing his hair, he manifested to the assembled multitude the agony of his remorse.

After the service was ended, the weeping penitent laid his gift upon the table, and then remained within the altar-railings waiting to receive the bread and wine. Ambrose sent him a message by a deacon commanding him to withdraw from that sacred enclosure which was reserved for priests only: 'The Emperor must worship with the rest of the laity outside the rails. The purple robe makes Emperors only, not priests.' Theodosius humbly obeyed the mandate, merely observing that he had not intentionally erred, but had followed the usage of Constantinople, which gave that place to the Emperor. (Already then, even before the separation of the two Empires, the Italian priest held his head higher in the presence of Caesar than the Byzantine.) On his return to Constantinople Theodosius refused to occupy his old place of honor by the altar, saying to the wondering Bishop, 'With difficulty have I learned the difference between an Emperor and a priest. It is hard for a ruler to meet with one willing to tell him the truth. Ambrose is the only man whom I consider worthy of the name of Bishop.' Thus did Theodosius, the prototype in so many other respects of the great 'Roman' Emperors of a later age, anticipate in his own person that humiliation of the Caesar before the successor of Peter, which was so often enacted in the Middle Ages, and which was most vividly exemplified in the courtyard of Canossa. But Theodosius, with all his faults, was a nobler

antagonist than the Emperor Henry IV, and St. Ambrose, fighting for the inalienable rights of humanity, was the champion of a nobler cause than those ecclesiastical claims which kindled the zeal of Hildebrand.

CHAPTER XI

EUGENIUS AND ARBOGAST

IN August 391 Theodosius left Italy and entered the eastern half of that which was all virtually his Empire. Valentinian II, trained by his counsels, reconciled by him to Ambrose and to orthodoxy, was now, apparently, strong enough to rule alone. The Eastern realm, over which the boy Arcadius had nominally presided, really administered by the Praetorian Prefect Tatian, an able, but not immaculate minister, might well seem now to require the largest share of the attention of the Earthly Providence.

Barbarians or freebooters, enough to trouble the tranquillity of the province, though not enough to effect any serious political change, were roving up and down in Macedonia. Thither accordingly Theodosius first repaired: and to deliver Macedonia it was needful that he should take up his quarters in the same place which had welcomed his dawning royalty twelve years before, the city of the Axios, Thessalonica. Willingly would we learn with what emotions, whether of penitence or of still smouldering resentment, he trod those streets which had so lately been filled with slaughter by the ministers of his cruelty; but no letter or oration here lights up our darkness. Instead, we have only a wild romantic story from Zosimus (who is silent as to the years of the Emperor's residence in Italy), with reference to his exploits among the barbarian freebooters. These marauders, he tells us, hiding among the marshes by day and sallying forth at night for plunder, could not be exterminated by the processes of regular warfare, and the campaign against them seemed like fighting with ghosts. Theodosius, accordingly, disguising his rank, took five horsemen as his companions, each leading three or four reserve horses, and scoured the country with these. At length they came to a little lonely inn kept by an old woman, who received the unknown Emperor courteously and gave him food and shelter. In that mean abode he lay down to sleep, but as he did so he espied a mysterious and silent stranger in the sleeping room.

The old woman, when questioned, denied all knowledge of the name and calling of the stranger, who was absent all day but came back each night tired and hungry.

To all questions he preserved the same sullen silence: but at length Theodosius made known his rank, and ordered his soldiers to hack him to pieces with their swords. The man then confessed that he was a spy of the barbarians, who spent his days in informing them of the movements of the army, and pointing out to them when and where they might safely make their next foray. Having cut off the head of this spy, the Emperor galloped with his men to the main body of his army, which was encamped at no great distance, fell with them upon the marauders whose ambush he had thus learned, dragged forth some from their hiding-places in the marshes, killed others as they were in the water, and, in short, made that night a great slaughter of the barbarians.

The confidence bred of this success brought upon the Imperial army a great disaster. Timasius, the Master of the Infantry under the Emperor, regaled his troops so lavishly from the spoils of the barbarians, that, while the camp was all abandoned to drunken slumber, some still unvanquished horde of freebooters came upon them, and, wreaking dire slaughter on their sleeping foes, brought for some critical moments the sacred person of the Emperor himself into jeopardy. But Promotus, the brave and wary Master of the Cavalry, hastening up to the scene

rescued Theodosius from his peril, and turning the tide of battle inflicted a crushing defeat on the barbarians.

After these labours and dangers Theodosius returned to the splendid repose of the city which he probably loved best of any in his Empire. It was on the 10th of November, 391, that he, with his little son Honorius, entered Constantinople, passing through the Golden Gate, the Gate of Conquest, which he himself had gilded in honour of his victory over Maximus, and was slowly drawn by harnessed elephants through acclaiming crowds, till he reached the palace of the welcoming Arcadius.

When Theodosius was once again established in his Eastern capital, and when the pageants and the feasting which commemorated his return were ended he took again into his hand the dropped strings of administration: and now the influence of Rufinus, the new counsellor whom he had brought with him from the West, became quickly manifest. The two great Civil governors, Tatian, Consul for the year and Praetorian Prefect of the East, and his son Proclus, Prefect of the City, who had been practically regents during the absence of Theodosius; the two great military commanders, Promotus and Timasius, one of whom had lately saved the Emperor himself in the night attack of the barbarians; all found themselves treated with the insolence of a conscious favourite by the upstart Gascon. High words and stormy discussions were frequent in the Imperial Consistory. During one of these scenes the language used by Rufinus was so audacious, that Promotus, who was assailed by it, forgot what was due to the Sacred Presence-chamber and slapped his adversary on the face. Rufinus at once presented himself before the Emperor with his cheek yet red from the palm of Promotus, and Theodosius, coming forth in a rage, told the trembling Counsellors that if they would not lay aside their jealousy of Rufinus they should soon see him wearing the diadem. By the favourite's influence Promotus was soon ordered off to the dreary Danubian frontier, and fell a victim to some barbarian assassins who waylaid him on the journey. His death was attributed, but probably without justice, to the machinations of Rufinus.

Tatian and his son still stood in the way of the upward-pushing favourite, who was already designated as Consul for the next year (392), but who also aspired to the great place of Praetorian Prefect of the East. The administration of the father and son had perhaps not been altogether spotless, but on the whole they appear to have been faithful servants of Theodosius. However, the ambition of Rufinus required their removal, and Theodosius, in the blindness of his favoritism, nominated the Gascon member of a commission which was to try the very men for whose offices he hungered. Tatian was of course deprived of his dignity. Proclus, hearing of the commencement of the trial, fled the country. He was tempted back again by promises, oaths, assurances of friendly intentions, in which even Theodosius is accused of having participated. Once back in the power of his enemies he was thrown into prison, and, after appearing many times before his judges, was sentenced to death. Theodosius, relenting, sent a message of pardon, but Rufinus took good care that the bearer of it should be slower of foot than the messenger of vengeance, and Proclus was beheaded in the suburb of Sycae, where now the streets of many-nationed Galata border on the Golden Horn. As for the aged Tatian he was banished in disgrace to his native Lycia. And not only so, but by a strange act of tyranny, less cruel indeed but not more logical than the massacre of Thessalonica, all other natives of the province of Lycia were for Tatian's fault rendered incapable of rising to the higher dignities of the State.

In the East' as in the West the campaign of crowned and triumphant Christianity against the out-worn creeds of heathenism was being actively pursued. We should, perhaps, say more actively in the East than in the West, since in few Oriental cities was there that scornful hate of the new faith which still lingered in the palaces of the Roman aristocracy. It has been already mentioned that Cynegius, one of the highest ministers of the State, had been dispatched to

Egypt (probably about the year 384) to close the temples dedicated to heathen worship, and it seems that his commission, though primarily applicable to Egypt, had reference also to other Eastern provinces. The order then given, however, was only to close, not to demolish the temples. It might be hoped that when the smoke of the incense no longer curled round the feet of the sacred statues, when the steps of the temple were no longer worn by the feet of eager worshippers, and a rusty chain closed the gates of the *pronaos*, the sanctuaries left in dingy desolation would cease to possess any fascination for the minds of their former visitants. In one case, however, at any rate, the heathen temple was still mighty enough to be dangerous, and was still the object of an enthusiasm which proved its ruin.

The stately Serapeum of Alexandria, rising on that little eminence where now stands the lonely pillar of Diocletian, overlooking from afar the busy harbour and the historic Pharos, was the proudest monument reared by the Greek Ptolemies in honour of that Egyptian worship to which they paid their politic homage. The temple stood on a great square platform, to which the worshippers ascended by one hundred steps. Many shrines, and chapels, and vestries, and cells for hierophants surrounded the main building, which rose in pillared magnificence in the center, a mountain of marble, which we cannot help mentally comparing with the Temple at Jerusalem, and which a Roman historian who beheld its glory thought unsurpassed save by the Capitol. In the innermost recess stood the statue of the god Serapis, that compound divinity formed of Osiris and Apis, whom the Ptolemies set forth for the adoration of their subjects. So gigantic was the statue that the right hand touched one wall and the left hand the other, of the great hall in which it stood. Plates of brass, of silver, and of gold lined the walls of that spacious hall, and there was one tiny window through which on a certain day the beams of the rising sun were poured, as the priests said, 'in salutation of Serapis.' But the statue itself, though overlaid with gold and silver and studded with sapphires, with topazes and with emeralds, bore the impress of the barbaric East in its form as well as in its gorgeous magnificence: for the head was not like the majestic Zeus of Olympia, but a monstrous medley of a lion's head in the center with a ravening wolf on its left side and a fawning dog on its right. So had the strange symbolic animal-worship of Egypt prevailed over the instincts of beauty in the mind of the Greek artist who fashioned the image of Serapis.

Theophilus, the Bishop of Alexandria, a restless and ambitious man, had aroused the wrath of the still considerable heathen population of that city by his exposure of the mechanical contrivances whereby their priests had been wont to work miracles in one of their temples. The idolaters, who knew of the war which a devout Emperor was waging against their worship, felt that they were being driven to the last ditch in the defence of their ancestral faith. They assembled in the still strong and stately Serapeum, and making that their citadel, sallied forth at intervals into the streets and squares of the city, did battle with the excited Christians (among whom the fanatical monks from the desert were probably conspicuous), and then returned into their stronghold, often dragging with them a number of Christian captives, whom rumour accused them, probably without truth, of torturing in the recesses of the Serapeum. Two grammarians, Helladius and Ammonius, were captains in this religious war, but the General, as we may term him, was a man named Olympius, clad in a philosopher's cloak, who seems to have been an orator of considerable power. Now he was lashing his hearers to fury, telling them that 'they ought to die rather than neglect the god of their fathers.' Then, in calmer tone, he reasoned with them as to the theory of idolatry. 'Be not dismayed,' said he, 'if some of the statues of the gods are overthrown and destroyed by the Nazarenes. Of course the statues are made of corruptible things, and are subject to decay: but they typify a divine and indestructible power which escapes from the broken image, even as the soul of man flies from its shattered tenement and returns to the heavens whence it first descended'. While these commotions were occurring, and while the blood of Roman citizens was being actually shed on one side or the

other, the Prefect and the Master of the Soldiery feebly represented the outraged majesty of the laws. They visited the temple, and mildly enquired of its disorderly garrison what was the cause of their insurrection, and why they were so daring as to shed the blood of their fellow-citizens. A confused and angry murmur was the only reply, and they retired to make a report of all these proceedings to Theodosius. It is probable, though the Church historians do not inform us of the fact, that the authority of these Imperial officers was set at nought by Theophilus and his monks as much as by Olympius and the idolaters. During the weeks or months that were required for messages to go and return between Alexandria and Milan (for these events probably occurred while Theodosius was still in Italy) a sullen truce perhaps prevailed between the Cathedral and the Serapeum. At length the Imperial rescript arrived, a wiser and more temperate document than might have been expected from the chastiser of Thessalonica. 'The Christians who have fallen in these disturbances are martyrs. Their blessed state exempts us from the necessity of seeking to avenge their blood: and accordingly free pardon is given to the idolaters who have been concerned in the late disturbances. But we condemn the vain superstition of the Gentiles, and we order the destruction of their temple.' A loud shout of applause burst from the Christians when they heard these words, and they proceeded straightway to the temple to put the edict in force. The defenders heard the shouts and were dismayed. Olympius, it was said, had heard on the previous night the voices of unseen spirits singing Alleluia in the very presence of the three headed idol, and silently, and by stealth, had quitted the temple and embarked for Italy.

The Church Militant, with Theophilus at its head, entered the doomed sanctuary. The assailants pressed through the corridors, the chapels, the cells of the hierophants, they entered the great hall where stood the mighty beast-statue, which had been saluted for the last time by the rising sun. Even in that Christian multitude there were many who looked upon it with awe, remembering an ancient prophecy, that if anyone approached that statue an earthquake would follow in which the whole world would be swallowed up. Theophilus smiled with contempt at these old wives' fables, and, beckoning to a soldier, ordered him to strike the statue. Full of faith the soldier raised his axe, and brought it down with all his force on the idol's jaw. The people shrieked with fear, but their panic was turned into laughter when from the broken head a troop of frightened mice came running forth. The soldier struck again and again. Fire was applied to hasten the work of destruction. The legs and feet were chopped off and dragged through the streets, the head was exhibited in scorn to its late worshippers, and, last of all, the huge trunk of the idol was drawn to the great amphitheatre and there burned in the presence of a vast concourse of people.

As the work of demolition went forward the secret mechanism of the temple, and all the priestly artifices of miraculous fraud were laid bare to the vulgar gaze. A Christian Basilica was built amongst the ruins of the overthrown sanctuary. It, too, has had its day, and now neither Christ nor Serapis is worshipped on the bare hill-slope where once stood the splendid Serapeum.

From the destruction of temples we return to the frill of thrones. It was probably in the month of June, 392, in the midst of the palace revolution which gave to Rufinus the Praetorian mantle of Tatian, that disastrous tidings arrived at Constantinople, informing Theodosius that another of his young colleagues, the last male representative of the house of Valentinian, had been cut off in the dawn of his manhood.

Valentinian II, like his brother Gratian, is one of those princes on whose characters it is difficult for history to pronounce judgment, because she sees but the half-opened bud and can only guess at the fashion of the flower. In the earlier part of his reign he of course represented merely the beliefs or misbeliefs, the usurpations or the grievances of his mother, the beautiful but impulsive Justina. Her influence was now removed: the arguments of Theodosius, founded

chiefly on such mundane considerations as the prosperity of the orthodox Constantine and the tragical end of the heterodox Valens, had won him over to the creed of Nicaea, and he spent the last year of his life in warm friendship with his old antagonist Ambrose; a friendship which was maintained by frequent letters, when the young Emperor quitted Milan in order to superintend for a time the defense and government of Gaul. Valentinian delighted the soul of the great churchman, not only by his new-born orthodoxy, but by the spotless purity of his morals. When he heard that a certain actress in Rome was ruining many of the young nobles by her fatal charms, he sent her a twofold summons to the Imperial Court (the first messenger having been bribed to withhold his message), refused to see her himself, and sent back the humbled Delilah with a severe reprimand to the Eternal City. He was at one time accused of giving too much of his attention to the combats of the Amphitheatre; and having heard that this part of his conduct excited reprobation, he suddenly gave up that pastime, and ordered all the beasts which had been collected for the purpose to be at once slain. He loved his two unmarried sisters, Justa and Grata, with devotion. It was considered a distinguished mark of Imperial condescension that he bestowed upon them those innocent caresses which brothers in a humbler position usually confer upon their sisters. Though he had attained his twentieth year, for their sake he still postponed wedlock.

The picture here brought before us seems to be that of an amiable, if somewhat limited, nature, with some of the weakness, but little of the passionate selfishness, which is often found in those who are born in the purple. But we remember the strain of wild and savage cruelty, bordering on insanity, which marred the noble nature of his father, and we see in the closing scenes of the life of Valentinian II some lack of that strong and steady patience which made Edward III of England, and Charles VII of France, victorious over their fathers' foes.

The position in which the young Emperor was left when his mentor and colleague returned within the limits of the Eastern Empire was doubtless a difficult one. He never had yet really ruled. First Justina, and then Theodosius, had guided the helm of the State, while he sat on deck under a silken canopy. Nor had Theodosius intended that the real stress of administration or of war should fall as yet on those boyish shoulders. Bauto, as we have seen, having been apparently for some years dead, the chief command of the western armies and the chief place in the Imperial Councils was assigned to that other valiant Frankish captain, Arbogast, who had shared in the command of the army of Gratian in the Pannonian campaign of 380, of the Theodosian army in the campaign against Maximus, and who had put to death the young and vanquished Victor in Gaul after the downfall of the usurper. This man, now practically chief ruler of Europe west of the Adriatic, belonged apparently to a sort of clan of fortunate barbarians. If the information given us by a somewhat late historian may be depended upon, he was himself the son of Count Bauto and the nephew of Count Richomer. He was still probably in the vigour of early manhood, a man of reckless courage, a master of the art of war, 'flame-like' in his all-conquering energy, and adored by his men, not merely for his other soldierly qualities, but especially because they saw that this rugged Frank cared not for gold and was quite inaccessible to all those paltry bribes which were continually soiling the hands of the Generals of Roman extraction. But with many good qualities the man was still a hard, rough, barbarian at heart, intensely fond of power, and impatient of the deference which Imperial etiquette required him to pay to the young and delicately nurtured Augustus, his nominal master. Perhaps, too, even the domestic virtues of Valentinian II, his piety, his chastity, his affection for his sisters, earned for him contempt rather than respect from this hard-featured son of the forest and the camp.

Arbogast, we are told, laid violent hands on many of the Emperor's chosen councillors, yet none dared hinder him on account of his renown in war. Probably if we had his version of the story we should learn that these were corrupt and avaricious men, who had abused the

opportunities, afforded them by the long minority of the Sovereign. One of these intimate counsellors, who had at least been accused of receiving bribes, was a certain Harmonius, who had the misfortune to offend the all-powerful Frank. Arbogast drew his sword and Harmonius fled for refuge to the *secretum* of the Emperor. Even thither the angry barbarian pursued him, and while he was actually covered with the purple of the sovereign the avenging sword was driven through his heart. From that day there was suspicion and scarcely veiled hostility between Valentinian and his too powerful servant.

The young Emperor sent secret messages to his colleague, Theodosius, informing him that he could no longer endure the insolence of Arbogast and praying for assistance against him. Possibly the reply was less speedy or less favorable than Valentinian expected, for he determined to try what that 'mastership of the world' which State-papers attributed to him was worth, and to see if he could not by his own power rid himself of his tyrannical minister. One day, when he was seated on his throne in full consistory, he put as much severity as he could muster into his boyish features and handed to Arbogast a writing which relieved him from his office of Master of the Soldiery. When the barbarian had spelled through the wordy document, he tore it in pieces with his nails, trampled the fragments under foot, drew his sword, and, with a voice like the roar of a lion, said, "Thou neither gavest me this office, nor shalt thou succeed in taking it from me". With that he turned on his heel and left the consistory.

This scene occurred at Vienne by the Rhone, whither Valentinian had gone in the train of the all-powerful Master of the Soldiery to assist in providing for the defence of Gaul from the barbarians. But while the inroads of hostile barbarians might be repelled, their peaceful invasion went successfully forward. After this failure to dislodge Arbogast, the palace of Valentinian was almost deserted, and he lived with little more pomp than a private citizen. Commands in the army, dignities in the state, were freely bestowed on the clients, and especially the Frankish clients, of Arbogast, while the entreaties and commands of the young Roman Augustus fell on unheeding ears.

To a young and high-spirited monarch, mocked with the shadow of power and denied the reality, the situation was rapidly becoming intolerable. One day, when Arbogast appeared before him in the palace, roused by some insulting speech, Valentinian drew his sword and seemed about to attack him. A servant who stood by held his arm, and then when Arbogast—perhaps with a sneer—asked what he had meant to do with his unsheathed sword, "I meant it for myself", said the over-wrought lad, "because though I am Emperor I am not allowed to what I will".

The health and the spirits of Valentinian were failing, he probably believed his life to be in danger, and since Theodosius was slow to help, he begged his old antagonist, but now dearly loved and honoured friend, Ambrose, to cross the Alps without delay and administer to him the rite of baptism. Besides his fear of dying unbaptized, there was probably working in Valentinian's mind some secret hope that this marvellous prelate, who had obtained an ascendancy over Justina, over Maximus, even over Theodosius himself, might be able to deliver him from the rage of the terrible Arbogast. In fact he added to the petition for baptism a request that Ambrose would be a pledge for his friendly intentions towards 'his Count,' in other words would mediate between the sovereign and his minister.

The *Silentiarius* who was charged with this message started at evening for Milan. On the morning of the third day after his departure Valentinian, who was evidently in a state of feverish excitement, asked if he had yet returned, if Ambrose had already come. Alas! though the Bishop does not seem to have lingered unduly, he had but just surmounted the crests of the Alps when he learned that his labour was vain and that he must return to Milan. The young Emperor had been found dead in the palace, 'self-slain' said the defendants of Arbogast, 'murdered by the Count's order' has been the general voice of history.

Though Arbogast was already virtual ruler of the West, and though the death of the young Emperor in no way shook his hold upon the army or the civil functionaries, who obsequiously obeyed him, it was necessary that someone should be found to wear the purple and sign the Imperial decrees, someone also who might demand from Theodosius recognition as his colleague. The remembrance of Arbogast's barbarian extraction was too vivid to make it politic for him to assume the semblance as well as the substance of Imperial power. Since the days of Maximin the Thracian, the murderer of the young Severus Alexander, no fall-blooded barbarian had been hailed as Imperator by the troops, and the precedent afforded by the wild tyranny of that savage Thracian was not encouraging. In these circumstances the choice made by Arbogast of an Imperial cipher was a singular one. There was a certain rhetorician named Eugenius who, having once 'occupied,' as a historian says, 'the sophistical throne and being of much account for his eloquence, in other words being a professor of some eminence, had attracted the notice of Count Richomer, had been by him recommended to his nephew Arbogast as a dexterous and supple subordinate, had been introduced into the civil service, and was now holding a 'respectable' but not illustrious place in the official hierarchy. This man, who seems to have borne an unblemished character, besides possessing a fair amount of literary ability, and was just the sort of person who, if he had never donned the fatal Nessus-garment of the purple, might have glided happily enough through life to an undistinguished grave, had been already assailed by Argobast with the tempting offer of the diadem. Eugenius however refused to accept the dangerous gift, and apparently, so long as Valentinian lived, he persisted in this refusal. After the tragedy in the palace at Vienne he consented, as his tempter expressed it, 'no longer to throw away the gifts of Fortune.' The usual donative was no doubt given to the army, the acclamations of the soldiers were ready for any one whom their adored general should present to them as his choice, and the clever professor, hailed by the troops as Imperator and Augustus, found himself promoted almost at a bound from 'the sophistical throne' to the throne of the universe,—a strange revolution indeed which, in the scarcely exaggerated language of the poet Claudian,

Made the barbarian's lackey lord of all.

The news of Valentinian's death was probably brought to Theodosius by a messenger whom Ambrose sent to learn the Imperial pleasure as to the manner of disposing of the corpse of the young Emperor. Less brutal than Maximus, Arbogast had permitted the body of his late sovereign to be transported to Milan, where it lay probably in some chapel awaiting burial, and was daily visited by the weeping sisters Justa and Grata. Pale and tearful always, they came back from these sad visitations paler than ever, and for their sakes Ambrose pleaded for an early interment, even though the rite might lack some of the gorgeous pageantry with which the body of Valentinian, the father, had been deposited in the Church of the Apostles. Theodosius at once consented. There was a vast porphyry sarcophagus at Milan, resembling that in which the rough soldier Maximian, colleague of Diocletian, had been at last laid to rest after his stormy old age, and herein the young Emperor was buried, his remains being covered with slabs of most precious porphyry. Ambrose pronounced in his honour a funeral oration, in which some rather commonplace consolations, addressed to the weeping sisters, were mingled with passages of real and pathetic eloquence.

"How are the mighty fallen! How far more swiftly have the wheels of both lives run down than the current of Rhone himself! Oh Gratian and Valentinian! my beautiful and beloved ones! in what narrow limits were your lives confined! How near the places of your dying! How close together your sepulchres! Inseparable in heart while you lived, in death you are not divided. Harmless ye were as doves, swift as eagles, innocent as lambs. The arrow of

Gratian turned not back, and the justice of Valentinian returned not empty. How have the mighty fallen without fighting!

“I grieve for thee, my son Gratian, whose love was very sweet to me. In thy perils thou didst ask for me: in thy last extremity thou didst call upon me: thou didst sorrow for my sorrow more than for thine own. I grieve for thee too, son Valentinian, who wast very beautiful in mine eyes. Through me didst thou think to be delivered from danger: thou didst love me not only as a father but as thy redeemer and liberator. Thou saidst, “Think you that I shall see my father?” Alas! that I did not earlier know thy desire. Alas! that thou didst not sooner in secret send for me. Ah me! what pledges of love have I lost! “How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!”

Though Justa and Grata could only weep timid to avenge tears for their vanished brother, it may easily be imagined that Galla, the wife of the Lord of the East, thought not of sorrow only but of revenge. When she heard of the death of her brother she filled the palace with her cries, and doubtless during the short remainder of her life she ceased not to adjure Theodosius by every motive of gratitude, of honour, and of kinship to avenge the blood of Valentinian. Towards the end of 392 an embassy from the Emperor Eugenius appeared at the Court of Constantinople. The chief spokesman was an Athenian named Rufinus—a different person of course from the minister of Theodosius—who, no doubt, pleaded eloquently for peace between the different members of the same Republic, while several obsequious Gaulish Bishops—the same sort of vermin that had applauded the execution of Priscillian and condemned the uncourtliness of Martin—conveyed to Theodosius their valuable assurances that Arbogast was innocent of the death of his colleague.

To this embassy the Eastern Emperor made a diplomatic reply, not accepting the proffered friendship of the Professor in the purple, nor yet openly threatening war, which nevertheless all the Roman world probably knew to be inevitable.

Was it caution, was it indolence, was it reluctance to array one half of the Empire in battle against the other half which again, as in the war against Maximus, caused such inexplicable delay in the movements of Theodosius? Certainly he had some excuse for hesitation, for Arbogast, the ‘flame-like’ Frank, was, as he well knew, no mere intriguer like Maximus, but a brave and well-trying soldier, probably now the best general in the Empire, for the veteran Richomer (his kinsman according to the historian before-quoted) died at Constantinople shortly before the commencement of the war. But whatever the cause, it is clear that more than two years elapsed after the death of Valentinian II before his brother-in-law stood with an avenging army on the soil of Italy.

These two years of waiting were employed by Arbogast and his puppet-Emperor doubtless for the most part in warlike preparations. They were occupied partly by a campaign beyond the Rhine which compelled the Alamanni and the Franks to sue once more for peace with the Empire. But they were also signalized by an attempt such as that which Julian had made thirty years before to roll back the current of men’s thoughts into the deserted channels of Paganism. Eugenius, nominally a Christian, but essentially a rhetorician, was willing as a matter of policy to give another lease of existence to the Olympian gods whose names and rivalries and amours he had himself doubtless interwoven many a time as conventional commonplaces in his orations. And his patron Arbogast, probably still, like the rest of his Frankish countrymen, a heathen, certainly no friend to Christian Bishops and the Christian clergy, was also willing, nay eager, to conciliate the old Conservative aristocracy of Rome by rebuilding the fallen altars and opening again the dust-begrimed temples of their ancestors. Thus did Odin lend a helping hand to the battered Jupiter of the Capitol and assist him to reascend, and for a little while to maintain, his tottering throne.

The heathenism of the Mediterranean countries was all concentrated in the city by the Tiber. It had taken refuge in that old home of Empire as the Jews, when Jerusalem was besieged by Titus, took refuge in the Temple of Jehovah, and there it was prepared to make its last desperate stand against the new faith; to try

What reinforcements it might gain from hope,
If not, what resolution from despair.

We have seen with what strange pertinacity the Senators had urged on successive Emperors their petition for the restoration of the Altar of Victory. During the last sad months of the young Valentinian's life another deputation had waited upon him in Gaul with the same monotonous request, and had received a rebuff which showed that even when not fortified by the presence of Ambrose, Valentinian could, in religious matters, hold his own against the terrible Arbogast. Now, after the accession of Eugenius, they again appeared, preferring the same request. Liberty to re-erect the altar seems to have been at once conceded. The closed temples of the gods were also opened without delay. It was a harder matter to obtain the restoration of the revenues which had formerly been devoted to the service of the temples, but which had perhaps now been confiscated to the Imperial exchequer. Twice did a deputation plead in vain for this concession, but at length, when Arbogast also condescended to endorse the petition, Eugenius unbent from his sternness and granted the Temple-revenues, not ostensibly to the Temple-service, but to the petitioners themselves, leaving it to them to bestow those revenues on the gods of the heathen if they were disposed so to do. So might some Stuart king, secretly inclined to the old religion, have regranted certain abbey-lands, not directly to one of the old monastic orders, but to some devout Roman Catholic courtier, well knowing that he, on the first opportunity, would reconvey them to the old uses.

A leading member of the deputation which obtained these important concessions from the new Emperor was Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, Praetorian Prefect of Italy. This Roman nobleman, who at the time of the accession of Eugenius was verging on the sixtieth year of his age, has been made strangely real to us by a recent discovery. He was a cousin of Symmachus, and was yet more closely connected with him through the marriage of their children, the son of Symmachus having married the daughter of Flavianus. But the ninety-one letters addressed to Flavianus by his kinsman Symmachus, though they slightly illustrate the changes in the fortunes of the receiver, and though they have some interest as representing the croakings of one old Roman raven to another over the downfall of the religion and customs of their forefathers, do not add much to our knowledge of the career and character of Flavianus. Far more valuable for our purpose is a frantic and bitter libel upon him, the work evidently of a Christian scribe, which has lately been discovered at the end of a MS. of the poems of Prudentius. The author repeats in sonorous and tolerably lucid hexameters the commonplaces of Christian apologists as to the disreputable lives of the gods of Olympus. But when from Jupiter and Venus he descends to Flavianus (not named but clearly indicated) he is so furious as to be barely intelligible. Only we can perceive that Flavianus, like most of the pagans of his day, was very eclectic in his religion. No cult seems to have been unwelcome so long as it was not the cult of the Christians. He was a worshipper of Serapis, ever friendly to the Etruscans, and learned in their science of infusing poison into the veins. He had submitted, like many Roman Senators of his day, to the disgusting rite of *Taurobolium*, a literal baptism of blood which formed part of the worship of Mithras, and which, like other rites of that oriental superstition, seems to have aped and exaggerated the symbolic rites of Christianity. He took part apparently in the mystic procession on the 5th of March, when the goddess Isis, accompanied by a long train of priests arrayed in white linen, set sail on the Tiber in quest of

the slain Osiris. In the seven days' feast of the Great Goddess, Cybele, he, with other Senators, guarded her chariot and pushed on the silver lions which appeared to draw the Mother of the Gods. And, reviving the long-discontinued festival of the Amburbium, a festival which apparently had fallen into disuse since the time of Aurelian, he caused the priests to march in solemn procession round the city with three victims, a sow, a sheep, and a bull, which at the end of the ceremony were offered up on the altars of Mother Earth and of Ceres or of Father Mars. The old wooden statues of the gods were perhaps brought forth and placed on couches in the streets and *fora* of the city, with costly viands set out on tables before them and incense burning under their nostrils: and the merry but indecent dances with which men and women had once celebrated the gay rites of Flora again twinkled through the streets.

The populace of Rome, who for at least two generations had been accustomed to think of Paganism as a defeated religion, existing only by sufferance and celebrating its rites by stealth, were doubtless amazed to see it thus stalking abroad again in full day-light and asserting itself as the religion of the State. There does not seem to have been any persecution of the Christians, but inducements were not wanting to prevail upon time-servers to desert their faith. One man was persuaded to apostatize by a commission to administer the Imperial domain in Africa, another by the Proconsulate of that wealthy province. The old faith in auguries too began to revive. Flavianus, who was undoubtedly a learned man according to the standard of that age, had studied deeply the old treatises on divination and was perpetually turning over with curious eyes the entrails of the sacrificial victims to read there the will of the gods. Like most augurs, especially political augurs, he could read there the omens which he most desired, and he confidently assured Eugenius that in the war, which all men knew to be impending, he should conquer and the religion of the Nazarene should be overthrown.

Of course there was deep indignation in all Christian hearts at these puny attempts to imitate the mighty Apostate. Theodosius, as if to emphasize his unshaken loyalty to the Christian faith, put forth, in November 392, only a few months after he had heard of the death of his young colleague, an edict against idolatry.

No one in any station of life, high or low, was to be permitted to offer up innocent victims to senseless idols, nor in the secrecy of his home to seek to propitiate the Lares by fire, the Genius with wine, or the Penates with sweet incense, to kindle sacrificial lights, to throw frankincense on the fire, nor to hang up garlands. The attempt to derive auguries from the examination of the steaming entrails of a sacrifice was pronounced an act of treason against the Emperor; and all places from which the smoke of incense had ascended in honour of an idol were to be confiscated to the Emperor's use. Clearly if the Old Rome was inclined to rebuild the altars of the Capitol, the New Rome would keep the faith of the Cross inviolate.

In Italy Ambrose withdrew from contact with the powers of darkness. Like Milton's Abdiel,

Amid innumerable false he stood
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified

He left Milan when Eugenius approached it; he retired to Bologna, to Faenza, finally to Florence. From thence he wrote one of his noblest letters to the new Emperor, describing the earlier phases of the discussion about the Altar of Victory, and sharply rebuking him for being less true to his Christian faith than either of the young sovereigns, Gratian and Valentinian. "Though the Imperial power be great, yet consider, oh Emperor, how great is God. He sees the hearts of all, He questions their innermost consciences. He knows all deeds before they are done. He knows the secrets of thy breast. You monarchs will not allow one of your subjects to deceive you and think ye that ye can hide anything from God?"

The relations between the upstart Emperor and the self-exiled Bishop grew doubtless more hostile all through the year 393, and when at length in the summer of 394 Arbogast set forth to war with Theodosius, he and the Prefect Flavianus said in the haughtiness of their hearts as they passed out from the gates of Milan: "When we come back we will stable our horses in the great Basilica, and all these sleek churchmen shall be drilled to arms by our centurions". And yet even Arbogast might have learned how mighty and all-pervading was the power which he had thus arrayed against himself and his Imperial puppet. For in the campaign against the Franks of the Rhine, which probably filled up the summer of 393, he had met one of the many kings of that fierce tribe, who asked him 'Dost thou know Ambrose?' 'Yes,' said Arbogast, 'I know him and he loves me well, and I have often dined with him.' 'Then that is the cause, Sir Count, why you have conquered me, because you are loved by that man who says to the Sun, "Stand still," and it stands'.

Already the fame of a great saint had learned to travel over mountains and rivers: already superstitious fears were creeping behind the mail of barbarian kings and making them feel that it was dangerous to war against the God of the Christians.

Meanwhile, Theodosius with leisurely calmness, but also with unshaken determination, was making his preparations for the great campaign. All through the year 393 the movement of troops along the roads, and the clang of the armourer's hammer in the arsenals of the East, gave token of the coming fray. In order to secure the succession to his own family, and to mark more emphatically that he recognized no colleague in the rhetorician Eugenius, he associated his younger son Honorius, a boy of nine years old, as Augustus with himself and Arcadius. The people of Constantinople saw with superstitious fear a darkness, almost like that of night, overspread the city on the morning of the ceremony which marked this event. The south wind blew up dense masses of cloud from the Bithynian plains and all the shores of the Bosphorus were wrapped in obscurity. But then, when the soldiers were acclaiming the new Augustus, suddenly the clouds dispersed, Chalcedon again became visible from the capital, and the returning gladness of Nature was hailed as an augury of happiest promise for the reign of the princely child. Unfortunately, the Roman Empire had reason in after days to look upon the darkness rather than the radiance as a type of the long and disastrous reign of Honorius.

Though he felt that the war was inevitable, Theodosius had a strange reluctance to commence it. Ill-health was perhaps already depressing his spirits and making him shrink from the labours and dangers of a campaign. By his own experience of Arbogast as a subordinate he knew how formidable he would be as an antagonist, far more formidable than that mere demagogue and trader in mutiny, Maximus. The road over the Julian Alps, as he well knew, would not be traversed so easily as it had been in 388, for now Arbogast, forewarned of the danger, had stationed some of his best troops to dispute the passage. With an anxious desire to read what Providence might have written on the yet unturned page of his fortunes, Theodosius sent a member of his household, the Eunuch Eutropius, to a cave in the Egyptian Thebaid to consult the holy hermit John, a man who had the reputation of performing miraculous cures and foretelling future events. The hermit steadfastly declined an invitation to quit his cell for the palace at Constantinople, but sent back by the Eunuch this oracular response. 'The war will be bloody, more bloody than that against Maximus. Theodosius will conquer, but he will not long survive his victory. In Italy will he draw his last breath'.

So the preparations went on all through the year 393. The Gothic *foederati* were mustered in their squadrons eager to fight under the open-handed Augustus and other barbarians from across the Danube, perhaps the remnant of Athanaric's Visigoths, perhaps Ostrogoths and Gepidae, and even some of their Hunnish conquerors, trooped across the broad river, scenting bloodshed and spoil in the fluttering of the wings of the Roman eagles. When the army was already on the point of marching, she for whose sake the whole campaign was undertaken

vanished from her husband's side. The beautiful Empress Galla died, (May, 394), having given birth to a little daughter, who was one day to rule the Empire of the West under the title of Galla Placidia Augusta. Theodosius, as a historian says, was mindful of the Homeric maxim—

In war, with stern hearts we entomb our dead,
And but for one day must our tears be shed.

and, though with an aching heart, set forth from Constantinople, only pausing to pay his devotions in the Church which he had reared in the suburb of the Hebdomon in honour of John the Baptist.

As before, he moved his troops along the highway that connected Sirmium with Aquileia. By this road, through as has been before hinted, the Alps may be said to be turned rather than crossed. At one point indeed, between Laybach and Gorizia, a shoulder of the Julian Alps has to be surmounted, but as the highest point of the pass is less than 2000 feet above the level of the sea, it must not be associated in our minds with those ideas of Alpine hardship which suggest themselves in connection with the St. Bernard, the Splügen, or even the Brenner. On the summit of the pass there grew, at the time of the Roman road-makers, a pear-tree, conspicuous, we must suppose, from afar by its cloud of white blossoms. This tree gave to the neighbouring station the name of *Ad Pirum*, and the memory of it has now for many centuries been preserved, in another tongue, by the appellation of the *Birnbaumer Wald*, given to the whole of the high plateau which the road once traversed. Standing on the crest of this pass, in the place where probably 2000 years ago the pear-tree was blooming, the spectator beholds spread out before him a landscape with some very distinctive features, which the imagination can easily convert into a battlefield. To his right, all along the northern horizon, soars the bare and lofty ridge of the Tamovaner Wald, about 4000 feet high. None but a very adventurous or a badly beaten army would seek a passage there. Opposite, to the south and west runs a range of gently swelling hills, somewhat resembling our own Sussex downs, the last outliers in this direction of the Julian Alps. On the left hand, to the south-east, the Birnbaumer Wald rises towards the abrupt cliff of the Nanos Berg, a mountain as high as the Tarnovaner Wald, which, conspicuous from afar, seems by its singular shape to proclaim itself to travellers, both from Italy and from Austria, as the end of the Alps. Set in this framework of hills lies a fruitful and well-cultured valley, 'The Paradise of Carniola', deriving its name from its river, which, burrowing its way between hay-fields and orchards, seems disinclined to claim the visitor's notice, though entitled to it for more reasons than one. For this river, the Wipbach of our own day, the Frigidus Fluvius of the age of Theodosius, has not only historic fame, but is a phenomenon full of interest to the physical geographer. Close to the little town of Wipbach it bursts forth from the foot of the cliffs of the Birnbaumer Wald; no little rivulet such as one spring might nourish, but 'a full-fed river,' as deep and strong as the Aar at Thun, or the Reuss at Lucerne, like also to both those streams in the colour of its pale-blue waters, and, even in the hottest days of summer, unconquerably cool. Many a Roman legionary, marching along the great high road from Aquileia to Sirmium, has had reason to bless the refreshing waters of the mountain-born Frigidus. We know somewhat more than the philosophers of the camp could tell him of the causes of this welcome phenomenon. The fact is that in the Wipbach Thal we are in the heart of one of those limestone regions where Nature so often amuses us with her wild vagaries. Only half a day's march distant lies the entrance to those vast chambers of imagery, the caverns of Adelsberg. The river Poik, which rushes roaring through those caverns for two or three miles, emerges thence into the open country, disappears, reappears, again disappears, again reappears, and thus bears three different names in the course of its short history. A little further from Wipbach lies that other wonder of Carniola, the Zirknitzer See,

where fishing in spring, harvesting in summer, and skating in winter, all take place over the same ground. The chilly Wipbach bursting suddenly forth from its seven sources in the Birnbaumer Wald is, it will be seen, but one of a whole family of similar marvels.

Leaving the blue waters of the Frigidus we remount the hills, and stand with Theodosius by the pear-tree on the crest of the pass. By his unexpected energy he has gained the heights, before the enemy could anticipate him, but that is all. Far away below him stretch the tents of the army of Eugenius; they line the sides of the river and fill all the valley. The regular troops of Theodosius, the so-called Roman legionaries, are commanded by the veteran Timasius and under him by the Emperor's kinsman Stilicho. But true to his constant policy, Theodosius has surrounded himself with a strong band of barbarian auxiliaries, and the commanders of these skin-clothed Teutons are some of the most influential men in his army. There is Gainas the Goth, the same man who, six years hence, being general-in-chief of all the forces of the Eastern Empire, will rebel against Arcadius, son of Theodosius, and will all but succeed in capturing Constantinople. Gainas is an Arian Christian, as are most of his countrymen by this time; but by his side, with perhaps equal dignity, rides the Alan Saul, a heathen yet, notwithstanding his Biblical name. There too is the Catholic Bacurius, general of the household troops, who fought under Valens at Hadrianople, a man of Armenian origin, and of royal birth, who is destitute of all evil inclinations and perfectly versed in the art of war. There also, carefully noticing the lie of these mountain passes, and veiling his eagerness for the first sight of Italy, is a young Visigothic chieftain named Alaric.

Theodosius gave the order to descend into the valley and join battle. Owing to the roughness of the ground over which they were moving, the baggage-train broke down. A long and vexatious halt ensued. Theodosius, to whose mind the religious aspect of this war was ever present, and whose enthusiasm was at least as strongly stirred as was that of Constantine at the battle of the Milvian Bridge, rode forward to the head of his column, and in words borrowed from the old Hebrew Prophet, exclaimed, "Where is the Lord God of Theodosius?" The troops caught the fervour of his spirit, the obstacle was quickly surmounted, and the army descended to the conflict.

The weight of that day's battle fell upon the Teutonic auxiliaries of the Emperor, and they were not successful. Bacurius, the brave and loyal-hearted Armenian, fell; 10,000 of the barbarians perished, and the remnant, with their leaders, retired, but not in disorder, from the battle-field. When night fell, Theodosius was not indeed absolutely routed, but his position had become one of extreme peril. Eugenius, considering the victory as good as won, passed the night in feasting and in distributing largesse to the officers and soldiers who had most distinguished themselves in the encounter. Theodosius was advised by his generals to retreat during the night, and adjourn the campaign till next spring. But the soldier could not bear to retire before his grammarian rival, and the Christian refused to allow the standard of the Cross to confess itself vanquished by the figure of Hercules, which adorned the banners of Eugenius. He found a solitary place in a hill behind his army, and there he spent the night in earnest prayer to the Lord of the Universe. When the dawn was creeping over the Birnbaumer Wald he fell asleep. In his vision two men mounted on white steeds and clothed in white raiment appeared to him. They were not the great twin brethren who stood by Aulus on the margin of the Lake Regillus : they were the Apostles St. John and St. Philip, and they bade Theodosius be of good courage, since they were sent to fight for him in the coming day. The Emperor awoke and resumed his devotions yet more earnestly. While he was thus engaged a centurion came to inform him of a remarkable dream which had visited one of the soldiers in his company. The dream of the soldier was the very same as that of the Augustus, and the marvellous coincidence of course gladdened all hearts.

Yet when in the early dawn the Emperor began again to move his troops down towards the scene of yesterday's encounter, he saw a sight which boded little good. Far back amid the recesses of the mountains were soldiers of the enemy, in ambush though imperfectly concealed, and threatening his line of retreat. The peril seemed more urgent than ever, but he contrived to call a parley with the officers of these troops, invisible probably to Eugenius, though seen by his antagonist, and he found them willing, almost eager, to enter his service, if they could be assured of pay and promotion. The contract (not one of which either party had reason to be proud) was soon concluded, and Theodosius recorded on his tablets the high military offices which he bound himself to bestow on Count Arbitrio, the leader of the ambushade, and on his staff. Strengthened by this reinforcement he made the sign of the cross, which was the concerted signal of battle, and his soldiers clashed against the foe, who in the security of victory were perhaps hardly ready for the onset. Yet the second day's battle was obstinately fought, and was at length decided by an event which may well have seemed miraculous to minds already raised to fever-heat by this terribly even contest between the new faith and the old. In the very crisis of the battle a mighty wind arose from the north, that is to say from behind the troops of Theodosius, who were standing on the slopes of the Tarnovaner Wald. The impetuous gusts blew the dust into the faces of the Eugenians, and not only thus destroyed their aim, but even carried back their own weapons upon themselves and made it impossible to wound one of their adversaries with dart or with pilum. The modern traveller, without considering himself bound to acknowledge a miraculous interposition, has no difficulty in admitting the general truth of this narrative, which is strongly vouched for by contemporary authors. All over the Karst (as the high plateau behind Trieste is called) the ravages of the Bora, or north-east wind, have long been notorious. Heavily-laden wagons have been overturned by its fury, and where no shelter is afforded from its blasts houses are not built, and trees will not grow. From the fruitful and well-clothed aspect of the Wipbach Thai it might be supposed that it was sheltered by its mountain bulwarks from this terrible visitation. But it is not so. All the way up from the village of Heidenschafft to the crest of the pass which bounds the Wipbach Thai, the Bora rages. Not many years ago the commander of a squadron of Austrian cavalry was riding with his men past the very village which probably marks the site of the battle. An old man well versed in the signs of the weather warned him not to proceed, because he saw that the Bora was about to blow. 'No, indeed,' laughed the captain. 'What would people say if soldiers on horseback stopped because of the wind?' He continued his march, the predicted storm arose, and he lost eight men and three horses, swept by its fury into the waters of the Wipbach. The same cause which in our lifetime struck those eight men off the muster-rolls of the imperial-royal army, decided the battle of the Frigidus near fifteen centuries ago, and gave the whole Roman world to the family of Theodosius and the dominion of the Catholic faith.

The poet Claudian, describing the events of this memorable day, with all the audacity of a courtier makes them redound to the glory of his patron Honorius, son of Theodosius, a boy in the eleventh year of his age, who was a thousand miles away from the fighting, but to whose auspices, as he was Consul for the year, his father's victory might, by a determined flatterer, be ascribed.

'Down from the mountain, summoned by thy name
 Upon your foes the chilling north wind came;
 Back to the sender's heart his javelin hurled,
 And from his powerless grasp the spear-staff whirled.
 Oh greatly loved of heaven! from forth his caves
 Aeolus sends his armed Storms, thy slaves.

Aether itself obeys thy sovereign will,
 And conscript Winds move to thy bugles shrill.
 The Alpine snows grew ruddy: the Cold Stream
 Now, with changed waters, glided dank with steam,
 And, but that every wave was swoln with gore,
 Had fainted 'neath the ghastly load she bore'.

Eugenius, who seems not to have been in the thick of the fight, and who still deemed himself secure of victory, saw some of his soldiers running swiftly towards him. 'Are you bringing me Theodosius in bonds,' he shouted, 'according to my orders?' 'By no means', they answered; 'he is conqueror, and we are pardoned on condition of carrying you to him.' They then loaded him with chains and bore him into the presence of Theodosius, who upbraided him with the murder of Valentinian, and, almost as if it were an equal crime, with setting up the statue of Hercules for worship. Eugenius grovelled at the feet of his rival, begging for life, but his entreaties were cut short by a soldier who severed his head from his body with a sword. This ghastly proof of failure carried round the camp upon a pole determined the last waverers to throw themselves on the mercy of Theodosius, who was now, at any rate, the only legitimate Roman Emperor. This mercy was easily extended to them, policy as well as religion making it incumbent on the Emperor to convert his late foes as speedily as possible into loyal soldiers. The barbarian Arbogast, of whose generalship on the second day of the battle we hear nothing, fled to the steepest and most rugged part of the mountains (perhaps the Nanos Berg), and after wandering about for two days, finding every gorge which led down into the plain carefully watched, fell upon his sword, like King Saul among the mountains of Gilboa, and so perished. Thus fell the last of the antagonists of Theodosius.

When the battle was ended, one of the earliest acts of the Emperor was to overturn the statues of Jupiter with which the idolatrous usurper had garnished and, as he seems to have hoped, guarded the Alpine passes. The hand of each statue of the god grasped, and was in act to hurl, a golden thunderbolt. When the statues were overthrown Theodosius distributed these golden bolts among his outriders. 'By such lightnings,' said the laughing soldiers, 'may we often be struck' And the stately Emperor, according to St. Augustine, unbent from his usual high demeanour and permitted the merriment of the soldiers.

As after the defeat of Maximus, so now, Theodosius showed himself humane and moderate in the hour of victory. There was no proscription of the adherents of Eugenius or confiscation of their property. The children of Eugenius and Arbogast, though not members of the Christian Church, had taken refuge in the Basilica at Milan. Ambrose, true to the noble instincts of his nature, at once addressed a letter to Theodosius beseeching him to have mercy on the fallen. The Emperor's reply consigned them provisionally to the protection of an Imperial notary: and before long a full and complete amnesty arrived at Milan, granted to the petition of Ambrose who had visited the Emperor at Aquileia, and had been assured that no reward was too great for the prayers which had earned the fateful victory.

There was, however, some note of censure and ignominy attached to the name of the deceased Flavianus, for a tablet discovered in the Forum of Trajan records what we should call 'the reversal of his attainder,' thirty-six years after this time, by the grandson of Theodosius at the request of the grandson of Flavianus.

That the defeat of Eugenius dealt a real death-blow to the recrudescing Paganism of Home there can be no doubt, but how the death-blow was administered is by no means clear. Zosimus tells us that Theodosius visited Rome with his little son Honorius; that he presented him to the Romans as their Emperor, and constituted Stilicho his guardian: that he then called the Senate together and exhorted them to forsake the errors of heathenism, and embrace the

faith of the Christians, which would free them from every stain of impiety and guilt. The Senate, however, according to this historian refused to abandon the rights which had for near 2000 years secured victory to their city: whereupon Theodosius fell back on a mere financial argument, asserting that the necessities of the military chest forbade the expenditure which had hitherto been lavished upon the heathen sacrifices. The Senate replied that the sacrifices of the State must be offered up at the State's expense; but Theodosius was inexorable, and struck the provision for their maintenance out of the Imperial budget. 'The result of this has been,' says Zosimus, 'that the Roman Empire, cut short in every direction, has become the home of every barbarous tribe or else has been so utterly wasted of its inhabitants, that men can no longer recognize the places where its great cities stood.'

The poet Prudentius represents the Emperor as delivering to the Senate a long harangue, partaking in some degree of the nature of a sermon, against idolatry. He declaimed against the folly of worshipping senseless and perishable images of stone, of plaster, or of brass, though he uttered a kindly hint to preserve those which were beautiful as works of art, unmutated but also unstained with sacrificial gore. He reminded the Senate of the cruelties which nearly a century before had been practiced by the heathen Maxentius, and of the joy with which their forefathers had hailed the 'In hoc signo vinces' standard of the Christian liberator Constantine. He exhorted them to leave idolatry to the barbarians, and to cultivate 'that mild and reasonable religion which was worthy of the wise trainer of the nations.'

According to the Christian poet 'the benches of the full Senate decreed that the couch of Jupiter was infamous, and that all idolatry was to be driven far from the purified City.' There is at first sight some contradiction between this story and that told by Zosimus, but, on examining the two and making allowance for the prejudices of the heathen and the poetical amplification of the Christian, it seems probable that Theodosius did actually make some proposition to the Senate for the discontinuance of the grants hitherto made for the great State-sacrifices to Jupiter and the other gods of the Capitol, that in bringing forward this proposal he resorted to some of the usual arguments of Christian controversialists against the folly of idolatry, that this harangue provoked from some brave Senators the declaration that they meant to live and die in the faith of their ancestral gods, but that nevertheless the vote for the discontinuance of the sacrificial grants was carried by a large majority, either Christian at heart or pliant to the will of an omnipotent Emperor.

But more important, probably, than any formal legislative action of the Emperor was the social influence exercised by him as the unquestioned and victorious head of the great official hierarchy of the Empire, upon the office-seeking Senators of Rome. Prudentius declares that six hundred families of ancient lineage, among whom he enumerates the bearers of the following names—Annius, Probus, Anicius, Olybrius, Paulinus, Bassus, and Gracchus—were 'turned to the ensigns of Christ.' He does not directly assert that all these conversions were caused by the arguments of Theodosius, and in fact we know that the representatives of some of these families had been Christians for many years previous to 395: but he does convey the idea, and probably with truth, that the overthrow of Eugenius and the visit of Theodosius which followed closely upon it were turning-points in the religious history of the Roman Senate, and that the heathen party in that assembly, which had before been either a majority or nearly equal in number to their opponents, now became a hopeless and dwindling minority.

The new year (395) was marked by a pleasing event hitherto unknown in Roman annals, and that event was commemorated by a poem of Claudian, the first of a long and important series. The Consulship of the year was conferred on two brothers, Probinus and Olybrius, the sons of that successful place-hunter, but most unsuccessful ruler, Petronius Probus, whose oppressions and whose cowardice twenty years before so nearly brought Illyricum to ruin. Probus, who preyed upon the provincials, was himself preyed upon by a swarm of hungry

dependents, and it was perhaps from one of these that Claudian, who is bound to flatter when he does not lampoon, derived the following estimate of the generosity of Probus:—

‘Not on his gold was seen the cavern’s stain,
The darkness hid it not: for heaven’s rain
Falls not so freely on the thirsting sword,
As upon countless crowds his wealth was poured’

Whatever may have been the defects in the character of Probus, he was one of the most powerful nobles of Rome, and it was doubtless a stroke of policy on the part of the Eastern-minded Theodosius to attach him to his party by the magnificent gift of two Consulships for his sons. In the language of poetry this sort of transaction is translated into a dialogue between personified Rome and the divine Emperor. Claudian represents the goddess of the Seven-hilled City flying northward to present her suit to Theodosius immediately after the victory of the Frigidus. She alights among the winding passes of the Alps, those passes impenetrable to all but Theodosius.

‘Hard by, the victor on the turf reclined,
The joy of ended battle filled his mind,
The glad earth crowned with flowers her master's rest,
And the grass grew, rejoicing to be pressed.
Against a tree he leaned: his helm beneath
Shone his calm brows, but still his panting breath
Came thick and fast, and still the hot sweat poured
Down those vast limbs. He lay like battle’s Lord,
Great Mars, when, the Gelonian hosts o’erthrown,
He upon Gothic Haemus lays him down.
Bellona bears his arms; Bellona leads
Forth from the yoke his dusty, smoking steeds.
Trembles his weary arm. The quivering gleam
Of his vast spear falls far o'er Hebrus’ stream’.

Of course the Imperial City’s petition is granted. Proba, the venerable mother of the designated Consuls, prepares for their use the golden-woven *trabeae* (the consular vestments), ‘and shining garments of the tissue which the Chinese shave off from the soft [mulberry] foliage, gathering leafy fleeces from the wool-bearing forest.’ Jupiter thunders his approval, and old father Tiber, startled by the sound, leaves his mossy bed and lays him down on the island opposite to the Aventine to watch, delighted, the loving brothers escorted by the Senate to the Forum, and the double set of *fasces* borne forth from the same door.

‘O Time, well-marked by brother-memories dear
And brother-chiefs, O happy, happy year.
Let Phoebus now his fourfold toil bestow,
Send forth thy Winter first, not white with snow,
Nor numb with cold, nor vexed by tempests wild,
But tempered by the South-wind’s whispers mild.
Then let sweet Zephyr bring the Spring serene
And gild with crocuses thy meadows green.
Let Summer deck thee with her cereal crown,

And Autumn with full clusters weigh thee down.
 To thee alone is given the boast sublime,
 Peerless in all the chronicles of Time,
 That brothers were thy rulers: all our land
 Shall speak thy praise; the Hours with loving hand
 Shall write in changing flowers thy honoured name,
 And the dim centuries rehearse thy fame'

It certainly was a memorable year, the one which was thus pompously saluted, though not precisely for the reasons which made the poet welcome it. The 395th year of the Christian era, the 1148th year from the building of the city, brought with it in its earliest weeks the death of Theodosius, and that death was the beginning of the end of all things.

The disease of which Theodosius died in the prime of life (for he had not attained his fiftieth year) was dropsy, caused, we are told, by the fatigues and anxiety of the war with Eugenius. But he was evidently a somewhat free liver, and his long illness at Thessalonica had probably left him with an impaired constitution. When he felt his health failing he sent for his child-partner Honorius, who was brought by Serena from Constantinople to Milan. He arranged for the division of his Empire, the East to Arcadius, the West to Honorius: he made his will, in which he exhorted his sons to the practice of piety, by which victory would be obtained and peace secured. He also recommended the remission of an unpopular tax which he had himself proposed to abolish, but which had been hitherto maintained by the advice of one of his counsellors, probably Rufinus. Having made these dispositions, he calmly awaited the death which the Egyptian hermit had foretold. There was, however, a transient return of health, during which he gave orders for the celebration of some chariot-races on the 17th of January in honour of his victory. In the morning he was able to preside in the Hippodrome, but, after he had dined, his malady returned with added violence, and he was forced to send the little Honorius to preside in his stead. On that night he died, having reigned sixteen years all but two days.

The great Emperor lay in state for forty days. His friend and faithful monitor, Ambrose, delivered an oration over his bier, to which we are indebted for some valuable information as to the character and the last days of Theodosius. In an eloquent apostrophe he pictures the soul of the great Christian Emperor winging its way to the halls of light, and there communing with his lost friend and colleague Gratian, as 'day unto day uttereth speech,' while in the realms of darkness Eugenius and Arbogast mingle in dreary colloquy 'as night unto night showeth its unholy knowledge.' But the oration as a whole strikes a modern reader as stilted and diffuse, and does not seem to come so directly from the speaker's heart as that in which he mourned the untimely death of Valentinian II.

The body of Theodosius was eventually removed to Constantinople and laid in the Church of the Apostles, where the great chest of porphyry in which it was entombed was visible till the Turk entered the city of the Caesars.

Thus ended the career of Theodosius, generally styled the Great. Did he deserve that title, which he probably received at first from the Catholic party for the services, undoubtedly eminent, which he rendered to their cause? In comparison with the infinite littleness of every Roman Emperor during the succeeding century, he is rightly named; but how as to his own essential greatness? There is a certain magnificence and stateliness about him which would seem to justify posterity in naming him 'the Grand', but of greatness his prematurely interrupted life makes it difficult to judge. Had his conciliatory policy towards the barbarians saved the Empire (and who can say what thirty years more of that policy under a wise and firm ruler might have effected?) he had been greater than Africanus, greater than Caesar. As it is,

his life lies like a ruined sea-wall amidst the fierce barbarian tide, and the ravaged lands beyond it seem to say, but perhaps untruly, ‘Thou couldst never have been a barrier to defend us.’

To me, earnestly striving to form an impartial estimate of his character, he seems to have been a true Spaniard both in his virtues and his faults. The comparison may seem fanciful, as many other elements have since combined to form the Spanish character : but let it be taken for what it is worth. The hero of those strange encounters with the Barbarians of the Marshes, recalls the figure of his countryman El Cid Campeador; the author of the Edict concerning the Catholic faith reminds us of the title of ‘His Most Catholic Majesty’; his steady perseverance in the suppression of Heresy is worthy of Philip II; his magnificence suggests the Escorial, his ferocity the bullfight; his procrastination in his dealings with Maximus and Arbogast, the phrase ‘hasta la mañana’; his mismanagement of the finances, the wrongs of the Spanish bondholder.

Here is one estimate of the character of Theodosius. Those who desire a more favourable picture may find it often repeated in the pages of the courtly Claudian. His apotheosis of the Emperor is painted with such strength of colour that the very extravagance of the flattery makes it almost sublime. He represents the dying Theodosius adjuring Stilicho, by the ties of gratitude and kindred, to be a faithful guardian to his sons. Then—

“He ceased, nor longer on the earth might stay,
 But through the clouds he clove his radiant way.
 He enters Luna’s sphere; he leaves behind
 Arcadian Mercury’s threshold. Soon the wind—
 The gentle wind of Venus—fans his face,
 And thence he seeks the Sun’s bright dwelling-place
 The sullen flame of Mars and placid Jove
 He passes next, and now stands high above,
 Where at the summit of the spheres is spread
 The zone made hard by Saturn’s chilly tread.
 The frame of Heaven is loosed, the gleaming gates
 Stand open: for this guest Boötes waits
 Within his northern home; and southward far
 Hunter Orion greets the stranger Star.
 Each courts his friendship: each alternate prays
 That in his sky the new-lit fire may blaze.
 Oh glory, once of Earth, and now of Air,
 Wearied, thou still dost to thy home repair,
 For Spain first bore thee on her noble breast,
 And in Spain’s ocean dost thou sink to rest.
 .At thy proud rising, oh exultant sire,
 Thou seest Arcadius: when thy coursers tire,
 The loved Honorius stays thy westering fire,
 And wheresoe’er through heaven thine orbit runs,
 Thou seest the world-wide kingdom of thy sons:
 Thy sons, whose wise serenity of soul
 And patient cares the conquered tribes control”.

The Roman Empire certainly held out splendid possibilities to ambition. Never since its fall has a mere Spanish gentleman of respectable birth and talents been turned into a star.

CHAPTER XII

INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE

THE death of Theodosius was the prelude to momentous changes in the whole Roman world. Before proceeding to describe them, it will be convenient to give some faint outline of the internal organization of the Empire during the fourth century. Fragmentary and imperfect the sketch must necessarily be. Materials for it are scanty, and for some unknown reason the attention of scholars has been little turned to the history of Roman administration between Constantine and Justinian. Even the patient German has scarcely yet fully applied the microscope of his historical research to the institutions of the sinking Empire. But the attempt must be made, though the result may be a confession of ignorance on many points rather than a series of defined and well-rounded statements such as readers naturally prefer.

The Emperor, that still majestic figure who stood at the head of the Roman state, how shall we think of him? The old idea that he was merely the most influential of Roman citizens, that idea which Augustus and even Tiberius strove to preserve, must be considered as quite obsolete since the changes introduced by Diocletian and Constantine. All the Greek half of the Empire calls him without compunction *BASILEUS* (King), and no Roman, though he may not use the actual word *REX* in speaking of him, can still cheat himself with the thought that the Emperor is one whit less of an absolute sovereign than Tullus or Tarquin. Few things impress one with a more vivid conception of his power than the matter-of-fact way in which a historian like Zosimus speaks of the imperial dignity as “the Lordship of the Universe”. In the Directory of the Empire, the Chamberlain, the Almoner, the Marshal, are described as having charge of “the Sacred Cubicle”, “the Sacred Charities”, and “the Sacred Palace”. The characters which the imperial hand deigns to trace in purple ink upon the parchment scroll are “the Sacred Letters”. When the august scribe wishes to describe his own personality he speaks with charming modesty of “Our Clemency” or “My Eternity”. Nay, in some place he speaks of his own presents to his courtiers as “gifts from heaven”.

If it were possible to penetrate into the secret thoughts of those long-vanished wearers of the purple, one would eagerly desire to know under what aspect the imperial deification presented itself to their minds. Many a one had watched the failing intellect and the increasing bodily infirmities of the preceding Emperor. In some instances a timely dose of poison, or a judicious arrangement of the bed-clothes over his mouth, had hastened his departure from a world in which his presence was no longer convenient, yet in the very first proclamation of the new ruler to the soldiery he would speak of his predecessor as “God Augustus” or “God Tiberius”, “God Claudius” or “God Commodus”, and the court poets would, as we have seen, describe in unfaltering phrase his translation to the spheres. The homely common sense of Vespasian seems to have perceived the humour of the thing. At the first onset of his disease he said, “If I am not mistaken I am in the way to become a god”. But Caligula accepted his divinity much more seriously. He averred that the goddess Luna visited him nightly in bodily shape, and he called upon his courtier Vitellius (the same who was afterwards Emperor) to vouch for the fact. Vitellius, with his eyes bent towards the ground, with folded hands, in a thin and trembling voice, replied, “My lord, you gods alone are privileged to look upon the faces of your fellow-deities”. And Caligula evidently received the answer as a matter of course, and not a smile probably crossed the faces of the bystanders—for to smile at Caligula’s godhead would have been to die.

But it may be said that no fair argument can be drawn from the case of a confessed madman like Caligula. Let us hear then how Theodosius, the statesman, the Christian, the sound theologian, permitted himself to be addressed in the Panegyric of Pacatus. The latter is praising him for the accuracy with which he always discharges his promises of future favour to his courtiers. "Do you think, O Emperor, that I wish to praise only your generosity? No, I marvel also at your memory. For which of the great men of old, Hortensius, Lucullus, or Caesar, had so ready a power of recollection as *that sacred mind of yours*, which gives up that has been entrusted to it at the very place and time which you have ordered beforehand. Is it that you remind yourself? or, as the Fates are said to assist with their tablets *that God who is the partner in your majesty*, so does some divine power serve your bidding, which writes down and in due time suggests to your memory the promises which you have made?" Such a sentence, gravely premeditated and uttered without reproof in the presence of Theodosius, is surely not less extraordinary than the impromptu answer of Vitellius.

How was this omnipotent Emperor, this God upon earth, selected from the crowd of ordinary mortals around him? Hereditary descent was not the title, though we have already met with many instances in which it asserted itself. The Empire never, at any rate during the period with which we are concerned, lost its strictly elective character. Who then were the electors? Imagine the endless discussions on this point which would take place in any modern European state, the elaborate machinery by which in Venice, in Germany, in the United States, even in Poland, the election of the Chief of the Executive has been accomplished. Of all this there is not a trace in the Roman Empire. In old days, when the Republic was still standing, the army, after an especially brilliant victory, gathered around the praetor or proconsul who commanded them, and with shouts of triumph, while they clashed their spears upon their shields, saluted him *Imperator*. That tumultuary proceeding seems to have been the type of every election of a Roman Emperor. The successor might have been absolutely fixed upon beforehand, as in the case of Tiberius; he might follow in the strict line of hereditary descent as Titus followed Vespasian and Domitian Titus; the choice might even have been, as in the case of the Emperor Tacitus, formally conceded by the soldiery to the senate; but in any case the presentation of the new sovereign to the legions, and their acclamation welcoming him as *Imperator*, seems to have been the decisive moment of the commencement of his reign.

This fact explains the anxiety of every Emperor who had a son to have him associated with himself in his own lifetime. By presenting that son to the legions, as Valentinian presented Gratian at Amiens to the army of Gaul, this delicate and critical event of the Acclamation was accomplished, while he still had all his father's influence at his back, and being an Augustus already, his reign *might*, if all went well and no rival claimant to the favour of the legions arose, be quietly prolonged without any solution of continuity at his father's death.

In a great number of cases such an attempt to settle the succession beforehand, whether in favour of a real or an adopted son, was successful. In many, as we all know, it failed, some other legions, often in a distant part of the Empire, having, when the news of the death of the old Emperor arrived, acclaimed their favourite officer as *Imperator*, arrayed him with the purple, and eventually carried him, shoulder-high, into the chambers of the Palatine. This, it may be said, was mutiny and insurrection, but when one considers the essentially unconstitutional and tumultuary character of the election of every Emperor, one is almost ready to say that in this case at least success was the only test of legality. The lawful *Imperator* was the man who either succeeded to the throne without opposition, or who made good his pretensions by the sword. The usurper was a general who having been 'acclaimed' by the troops was afterwards defeated in battle.

A parallel might possibly be drawn between the election of a Roman Emperor and that of his yet mightier successor the Roman Pontiff. It is well known to how fluctuating and ill-

defined an electorate the choice of a new bishop of Rome was entrusted until, in the eleventh century, it was transferred to the College of Cardinals. And although the lengthy deliberations of the old men who are now immured in the Vatican during a Papal Interregnum might seem as little as possible to resemble the cheers uttered by the rough voices of the Roman legionaries, there is still among their traditions the possibility of electing a Pope by 'Adoration', a rapid and summary process, with no set speeches or counting of votes, which may possibly have been suggested by the remembrance of the equally impulsive movement whereby, in theory at least, the Roman army chose its Emperor.

The brothers, sisters, and children of the Emperor, bore the title of *Nobilissimus*, and naturally took precedence of the rest of the brilliant official hierarchy which surrounded his throne. Of the members of this hierarchy it is usual to speak as Nobles, and there does not seem any reason for departing from the customary practice if it is clearly understood by the reader that hereditary dignity, or in the strict sense of the term 'noble blood', did not form part of the idea of an aristocracy in Imperial Rome. Office ennobled the actual holder. No doubt the son of a Prefect had a greater chance of attaining to office than the son of a shopkeeper. In right of this chance he enjoyed a certain social pre-eminence, but he had no claim by inheritance to a seat in the Senate, or to any other share in the government of the State. In thinking of the aristocracy of the Empire we must entirely unfeudalize our minds. The Mandarins of China or the Pachas of Turkey furnish probably safer analogies than any which could be drawn from our own hereditary House of Peers.

Of the many grades into which this official hierarchy was divided, three only need here attract our attention :

1. The Illustres.
2. The Spectabiles.
3. Clarissimi.

Our own titles of distinction are for the most part so interwoven with ideas drawn from hereditary descent that it is impossible to find any precise equivalents to these designations. "His Grace the Duke", "The Most Noble the Marquis", are out of court at once. But as extremely rough approximations to the true idea, the reader may perhaps be safe in accepting the following equations :

Illustris = The Right Honourable.

Spectabilis = The Honourable.

Clarissimus = The Worshipful.

If we describe the functions of the different classes we shall get a little nearer to a true analogy, but parliamentary institutions and local self-government will still prevent that analogy from being exact. With these limitations we may say that

The Cabinet ministers = the Illustres

Heads of Department, Lords Lieutenant of Counties, Generals and Admirals = the Spectabiles

The Governors of our smaller Colonies, Colonels and Captains in the Navy = the Clarissimi

The Illustres, who alone need be described with any detail, were twenty-eight in number, thirteen for the West and fifteen for the East, and may be thus classified. For the sake of clearness we will confine our attention to the thirteen Cabinet Ministers of the West. The only

difference worth noticing is that there were five *Magistri Militum* for the East as compared to three in the West.

CIVIL ADMINISTRATION, FINANCE AND JUSTICE.	ARMY.	HOUSEHOLD.
Praefectus Praetorio Italiae.	Magister Peditum in Praesenti.	Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi
Praefectus Praetorio Galliarum	Magister Equitum in Praesenti.	Comes Rerum Privatarum
Praefectus Urbis Romae.	Magister Equitum per Gallias	Comes Domesticorum Equitum.
Magister Officiorum. Quaestor.		Comes Domesticorum Peditum.
Comes Sacrarum Largitionum.		

Praetorian Prefect

1. In each of the four great compartments into which Diocletian had divided the Roman world, the *Praefectus-Praetorio* was the greatest man after the Emperor. To him the great majority of the laws were addressed, and he was charged to see to their execution. He held in his hand the whole network of provincial administration, and was the ultimate referee, under the Emperor, in all cases of dispute between province and province, or municipality and municipality. In all the processes of civil and criminal law his was (still under the Emperor) the final court of appeal. The idea of his office seems to have been that as the Emperor was the head, so he was the hand to execute what the head had decreed. What Joseph was to Pharaoh when the Lord of Egypt said to him "Only in the throne will I be greater than thou", what the Grand Vizier is now to the Sultan of the Ottomans, that, substantially, the Praetorian Prefect was to the Augustus. The nearest approach which, under our own political system, we can make to a counter-part of his office, is to call him a Prime Minister *plus* a Supreme Court of Appeal.

The history of his title is a curious one. In the very early days of Rome, before even Consuls had a being, the two chief magistrates of the Republic bore the title of Praetors. Some remembrance of this fact lingering in the speech of the people gave always to the term Praetorium (the Praetor's house) a peculiar majesty, and caused it to be used as the equivalent of palace. So in the well-known passages of the New Testament, the palace of Pilate the Governor at Jerusalem, of Herod the King at Caesarea, of Nero the Emperor at Rome, are all called the *Praetorium*. From the palace the troops who surrounded the person of the Emperor took their well-known name the *Praetorian Guard*. Under Augustus the cohorts composing this force, and amounting apparently to 9,000 or 10,000 men, were scattered over various positions in the city of Rome. In the reign of Tiberius, on pretence of keeping them under stricter discipline, they were collected into one camp on the north-east of the city. The author of this change was the notorious Sejanus, our first and most conspicuous example of a Prefect of the Praetorians who made himself all-powerful in the state. The fall of Sejanus did not bring with it any great diminution of the power of the new functionary. As the Praetorians were the frequent, almost the recognized, creators of a new Emperor, it was natural that their commanding officer should be a leading personage in the state, as natural (if another English

analogy may be allowed) as that the Leader of the House of Commons should be the First Minister of the Crown. Still it is strange to find the Praetorian Prefect becoming more and more the ultimate judge of appeal in all civil and criminal cases, and his office held in the golden age of the Empire, the second century, by the most eminent lawyers of the day.

This part of his functions survived. When Constantine at length abated the long-standing purely nuisance of the Praetorian Guards—setting an example which was unconsciously followed by another ruler of Constantinople, Sultan Mahmoud, in his suppression of the Janissaries—he preserved the Praetorian Prefect, and, as we have already seen, gave him a position of pre-eminent dignity in the civil and judicial administration of the Empire. But of military functions he was now entirely deprived, and thus this officer who had risen into importance in the state solely as the most conspicuous Guardsman about the court was now permitted to do almost anything that he pleased in the Empire so long as he in no way touched soldiering.

This strong line of demarcation drawn between civil and military functions was one of the most important features of the change in the government introduced by Diocletian and Constantine. It was alien to the spirit of the old Roman Republic, whose generals were all judges and revenue-officers as well as soldiers; but it consolidated for a time the fabric even of the Western Empire, and it created that wonderful bureaucratic machine which, more than any other single cause, prolonged for ten centuries the existence of the Empire of Byzantium.

On the important question how long the Praefectus Praetorio continued in office there is an inexplicable silence among most ancient and modern authorities; but the following statement made by a learned and laborious German legist may probably be relied upon with safety. With reference to the tenure of office [of all the imperial functionaries] Augustus's plan of continuing them in power for an indefinite series of years had [in the fourth century] been abandoned, and a return had been made to the fundamental principle of the Republic that all offices were *annual* in their duration : an arrangement by which the cause of good administration was not benefited, but which served to break the power of the provincial governors. The prolongation of the term of office depended entirely on the favor of the Emperor. *Only the Praetorian Prefects were nominated for an indefinite time, albeit they seldom maintained themselves in power Longer than one year.*

Prefect of the city.

2. *Praefectus Urbis.* The Prefects of the two great capitals of the Empire seem to have been theoretically the equals in rank of the Praetorian Prefects, and though their power extended over a more circumstantial area, the splendour of their office was quite as great. When the Prefect of Rome drove through the streets of the city he was drawn by four horses richly adorned with silver trappings and harnessed to the stately *carpentum*. This degree of state was apparently permitted to no other official save only to the Praetorian Prefects. He convened the Senate, spoke first in that august assembly and acted as the channel of communication between it and the Emperor. The police of Rome, the anxious task of the gratuitous distribution of corn among the poorer inhabitants, the aqueducts, the baths, the objects of art in the streets and squares of the city, were all under his general supervision, though each department had a subordinate Prefect, a *Count* or a *Curator* as its own especial head. The Prefect of Rome had also civil and criminal jurisdiction extending, in the time of Augustus, over the city itself and an area of a hundred miles radius round it, and at a later period over a much wider territory. As the especial champion of the privileges of the Senate he was the judge in all cases where the life or property of a senator was at stake. All lawsuits also and prosecutions arising out of the relation of master and slave, patron and freedman, father

and son, and thus involving that peculiar sentiment which the Romans called *pietas* (dutiful affection), came by a curious prerogative before the Praefectus Urbis. At a later period of this history we shall make acquaintance with a man holding this exalted position, and shall learn from his private correspondence some of its glories and anxieties.

Master of the Offices

3. *Magister Officiorum*. Thus far we have been concerned with the government of separate portions of the Empire, for both the Praetorian Prefect and the Praefectus Urbis were somewhat like what we should call Lords Lieutenant. Now we come to the central authority, the staff officers, so to speak, of the civil administration. The chief of these was the *Master of the Offices*. He was supreme in the audience-chamber of the sovereign. All dispatches from subordinate governors passed through his hands, all embassies from foreign powers were introduced by him. The secretaries of the Imperial cabinet, the guards in immediate attendance on the Imperial person, were amenable to his authority. The elaborate and expensive service of the public posts, and, by a less intelligible combination of duties, the great armor manufactories and arsenals of the Empire, were under his oversight. He was thus a great officer of the household, but he was also chief of the Imperial *bureau*, and it is easy to see how enormous an influence he could exercise, especially under an indolent sovereign, over the conduct both of foreign and domestic affairs. Our constitutional system offers no precise analogy to his position, but if we imagine the offices of the various principal Secretaries of State again held, as in the days of the Tudors, by one man, and that man also discharging the important though little noticed duties of Private Secretary to the Queen, we shall not perhaps be very far from an adequate idea of the functions of the Illustrious Master of the Offices.

(These manufactories in Italy were as follows :—1- of arrows at Concordia (between Venice and Udine; 2, 3- of shields at Verona and Cremona; 4 of breast-plates at Mantua ; 5- of bows at Ticinum (Pavia); 6- of broadswords at Lucca).

Quaestor.

4. The *Quaestor* had the care of preparing the Imperial speeches, and was responsible for the language of the laws. He would probably be generally a professed rhetorician, or at any rate a man of some note in the world of letters. His office is not unlike that of the Chancellor of a mediaeval monarch.

Count of the Sacred Largesses

5. *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum*. The Count who had charge of the Sacred (i.e. Imperial) Bounty, should have been by his title simply the Grand Almoner of the Empire, and thus would seem to require a place among the officers of the household. In practice however the minister who took charge of the Imperial largesses had to find ways and means for every other form of Imperial expenditure; and now that the Emperor had become the State, and the Privy Purse (Fiscus) had practically become synonymous with the National Treasury (Aerarium) the House Steward of the Sovereign was the Finance Minister of the State. The Count of the Sacred Largesses was therefore in fact the Chancellor of Exchequer of the Empire. To him all the collectors of taxes in the smaller divisions of the realm (*comites largitionum per omnes diceceses*) were subordinate. The mines, the mints, the linen factories, the purple dye-houses, were under his control. And as some part of the Imperial revenue was drawn from duties on the transport of goods by sea, the Count of the Sacred Largesses was supposed to have a general

superintendence of private commerce—though more, it must be feared, with a view to fleece than to foster it.

Masters of Horse and Foot

6,7,8. *Magister Peditum in Praesenti* (or *Praesentalis*); *Magister Equitum*; *Magister Equitum per Gallias*. When Constantine deprived the Praetorian Prefect of his military command, and made of him the first civil minister of the state, he lodged the leadership of the troops in the hands of a new officer to whom he gave the title of Master. Still bent on prosecuting to the utmost his policy of division of powers, he gave to one officer the command of the infantry—always far the most important portion of a Roman army—with the title of *Magister Peditum*; to another the command of the cavalry with the title *Magister Equitum*. It is possible that in these arrangements there was a retrospective glance to the earliest days of the Republic, when the appointment of a Dictator, that absolute lord of the legions was always accompanied by the appointment of a Master of the Horse. But whatever the constitutional warrant for the practice, it seems difficult to suppose that such a division in the supreme command could have worked successfully. And in fact we often find, in the period that we are now considering, the two offices united under the title *Magister utriusque Militiae* (Master of both kinds of soldiery.)

Under the sons of Constantine the number of these commanders-in-chief was increased, and under Theodosius it was increased again, partly in order to meet the stress of barbarian warfare on the frontiers, partly in order that the pride or jealousy of each Emperor might be flattered or soothed by having his own Magister in attendance at his court. But in the East and West the Master of the Foot or Horse, who commanded the troops nearest to the Imperial residence, was called the *Master in the Presence* (*in Praesenti* or *Praesentalis*); thus with bated breath, in Latin which would have been unintelligible to Cicero, were courtiers beginning to talk of that portion of the atmosphere which was made sacred by the presence of the Imperial Majesty. In addition, at the time when the *Notitia* was compiled, Gaul, the Orient, Thrace, and Illyricum had each its Magister of one or both divisions of the army.

It will be well here to put on record the unfavorable opinion of the historian Zosimus with reference to the institution of these offices. The view generally adopted, and that which has been submitted to the reader, is that the separation between the civil and the military functions was a wise measure. Zosimus, however, is of a different opinion, and he holds that Constantine, who first instituted the offices of *Magister Equitum* and *Magister Peditum*, and Theodosius, who so largely increased the number of these officers, both did ill service to the state. The charge against the second Emperor seems more reasonable than that brought against the first; but here are the words of the indictment :—“Having thus divided the rule of the Prefect [into the four Prefectures], Constantine studied how to lessen his power in other ways. For whereas the soldiers were under the orders not only of centurions and tribunes, but also of the so-called *duces*, who exercised the office of general in each district, Constantine appointed *Magistri*, one of the cavalry, and another of the infantry, to whom he transferred the duty of stationing the troops and the punishment of military offences, and at the same time he deprived the Prefects of this prerogative. A measure this which was equally pernicious in peace and war, as I will proceed to show. So long as the Prefects were collecting the revenues from all quarters by means of their subordinates, and defraying out of them the expenses of the army, while they also had the power of punishing the men as they thought fit for all offences against discipline, so long the soldiers, remembering that he who supplied them with their rations was also the man who would come down upon them if they offended, did not dare to transgress, lest they should find their supplies stopped and themselves promptly chastised. But now that one man is

responsible for the commissariat and another man is their professional superior, they act in all things according to their own will and pleasure, to say nothing of the fact that the greater part of the money allotted to the provisioning of the troops goes into the pockets of the general and his staff”.

“Meanwhile the Emperor Theodosius, who was residing at Thessalonica, showed much affability to all with whom he came in contact, but his luxury and neglect of state affairs soon became proverbial. He threw all the previously existing offices into confusion, and made the commanders of the army more numerous than before. For whereas there was before one Master of the Horse and one of the Foot, now he distributed these offices among more than five persons. Thereby he increased the public burdens (for each of these five or more commanders-in-chief had the same allowances as one of the two had before), and he handed over his soldiers to the avarice of this increased number of generals. For as each of these new Magistri thought himself bound to make as much out of his office as a Magister had made before when there were only two of them, there was no way to do it but by jobbing the food supplied to the soldiers. And not only so, but he created Lieutenants of Cavalry and Captains and Brigadiers in such numbers that he left two or three times the number that he found, while the privates, of all the money that was assigned to them, out of the public chest, received nothing”.

Super-intendent of the Sacred Bed-Chambers

9. *Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi*. We now come to a branch of administration which, as statesmanship declined, became surrounded with more and more awful importance, the Imperial, or in the language of the day the Sacred, Household. The fortunate eunuch who attained to the dignity of Superintendent of the Sacred Bed-chamber, took rank in the year 384 immediately after the other Illustres. But a solemn edict, issued in 422 by the grandson and namesake of the great Theodosius, ordained that “when the nobles of the Empire shall be admitted to adore our Serenity, the Superintendent of the Sacred Bed-chamber shall be entitled to the same rank with the Praetorian and Urban Prefects and the Masters of the Army”; in front, that is to say, of the humbler departments of Law and Finance, represented by the Master of the Offices, the Quaestor, and the Count of the Sacred Largesses. The wardrobe of the sovereign, the gold plate, the arrangement of the Imperial meal, the spreading of the sacred couch, the government of the corps of brilliantly attired pages, the posting of the thirty *silentarii* who, in helmet and cuirass, standing before the second veil, guarded the slumbers of the sovereign, these were the momentous responsibilities which required the undivided attention of a Cabinet Minister of the Roman Empire.

Count of the Privated Domains

10. The *Comes Rerum Privatarum*, whom we may compare to our Commissioners of Woods and Forests, held an office which must sometimes have been not easily distinguishable from that of the Count of Sacred Largesses. Only, while the latter officer handled the whole revenue raised by taxation, the former was especially charged with the administration of the Imperial Domain. In the language of our law he dealt with realty rather than personalty. The vast estates belonging to the Emperor, concentrated in the city, or scattered over all the provinces of the West, were administered under his direction. He had to see that they were let to suitable tenants, to guard against the usurpation of "squatters"; to keep a watch upon the Superintendents of the Imperial Stables, the Sheepmasters, the Foresters. A corps of porters, who were perhaps originally organized in order to convey to the palace the various delicacies grown on the domains of the Emperor, were also placed under his control. And lastly, as one of

his chief subordinates was styled Count of the *Private Largesses*, he must have had charge of outgoings as well as incomings, and must have fulfilled some of the duties which now devolve on the Keeper of the Privy Purse.

Count of the Domestics

11, 12. *Comes Domesticorum Equitum; Comes Domesticorum Peditum*. These officers (who are sometimes called "Counts of the Domestics") commanded the various divisions of the household troops, known by the names of *Domestici* and *Protectores*, and thus together replaced the Praetorian Prefect of the earlier days of the Empire. The *Notitia* fails to inform us what number of troops were subject to their orders. Theoretically their duties would not greatly differ from those of a Colonel in the Guards. Practically the Count of the Domestics often intervened with a most decisive voice in the deliberations respecting the choice of a candidate when a vacancy occurred upon the Imperial throne.

The Illustrious Ministers, whose offices have now been described, formed the nucleus of the *Consistorium*, the council with which the Emperor was accustomed, but of course in no way bound, to consult upon all great matters of state. Such a Consistory was probably held at Antioch when Valens was deliberating concerning the admission of the Visigoths into the Empire.

It will not be needful to describe the functions of the *Spectabiles* and the *Clarissimi* with any minuteness of detail. For the most part their offices were mere copies of the offices of the Illustres on a smaller and provincial scale. In order however to make clear the gradations of the Imperial hierarchy, a few words must be given to the new territorial divisions introduced by Diocletian. In the first ages of the Empire, the provinces were the only subordinate division known. Now the size of these was greatly reduced (as an unfriendly critic says, "the provinces were cut up into bits"), and two divisions, the Prefecture and the Diocese, were introduced above them.

Of the Prefectures, as has already been explained, there were four, each, let us say, about as large as the European Empire of Charles the Fifth.

Of the Dioceses there were thirteen. We must empty our minds of all ecclesiastical associations connected with this word, associations which would pin us down to far too small an area. For practical purposes it will be sufficient to consider an Imperial Diocese as the equivalent of a country.

The Provinces, 116 in number, were, as a rule, somewhat larger than a French province of average size. Many of the frontier still survive, especially in ecclesiastical geography. Where the lines are not the same, how infinitely various have been the causes of change. The course of trade, the conflict of creeds, war and love, crusades and tournaments, and the whole romance of the Middle Ages, might all be illustrated by the lecturer who should take for his text the map of Europe as divided by Constantine and as it was marked out at the time of the Reformation.

A glance at the following table will bring the chief divisions of the Empire in the fourth century clearly

PREFECTURE	DIOCESE	NO. OF PROVINCES	MODERN EQUIVALENT OF DIOCESE
I. ITALIAE	1. Italia	17	Italy, Tyrol, Grisons, South Bavaria.
	2. Illyricum	6	Austria between the Danube

PREFECTURE	DIOCESE	NO. OF PROVINCES	MODERN EQUIVALENT OF DIOCESE
			and Adriatic, Bosnia.
	3. Africa	7	Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli.
II. GALLIAE	4. Hispaniae	7	Spain and Morocco
	5. Septem Provinciae	16	France, with the Rhine boundary.
	6. Britanniae	5	England and Wales, Scotland south of Frith of Forth.
III. ILLYRICUM	7. Macedonia	6	Macedon, Epirus, Greece.
	8. Dacia	5	Servia and Western Bulgaria.
IV. ORIENS	9-Oriens	15	Syria, Palestine, and Cilicia.
	10- Aegyptus	5	Egypt
	11. Asiana	10	South-Western half of Asia Minor.
	12. Pontica	10	North -Eastern half of Asia Minor.
	13. Thracia	6	Eastern Bulgaria and Roumelia.
		116	

The separation between the civil and military functions was carried down through all the divisions and subdivisions of the Empire, and the following may be taken as the type of the gradations of rank thus produced :

	CIVIL OFFICERS	MILITARY OFFICERS
Prefecture	Illustris PRAEFECTUS PRAETORIO	Illustris MAGISTER MILITUM
Province	Spectabilis VICARIUS	Spectabilis COMES
Diocese	Clarissimus <i>Consularis</i> or <i>Corrector</i> or <i>Perfectissimus Praeses</i>	Spectabilis DUX

The subordination of the military offices was not quite so regular as that of the civil. Some of the provinces of the interior scarcely required an army at all, while on an exposed frontier two or three large armies might be assembled. But the general idea of the subordination of offices is that shown above. To make this point quite clear let us examine the arrangement of Imperial functionaries in the two 'dioceses' with which we have most concern, Britain and Italy.

That part of Britain which was subject nitrated to the Romans (the *Dioecesis Britanniarum*) was divided into five provinces:

1. Britannia Prima = the country south of the Thames and Bristol Channel
2. Britannia Secunda=Wales
3. Flavia Caesariensis = the Midland and Eastern Counties.
4. Maxima Caesariensis = the country between Humber and Tyne.
5. Valentia = the country between Tyne and Frith of Forth.

The first two provinces were governed by (*perfectissimi*) Praesides, the last three by (*clarissimi*) Consulares. This slight difference in dignity is perhaps due to the fact that (at any rate) Nos. 4 and 5 were more exposed to hostile invasion. The civil authority may have been therefore pitched a note higher in order to accord with the prominence of the military officers.

The chief military leaders were—

1. The Count of Britain (*Comes Britanniae*).
2. The Count of the Saxon shore (*Comes Litoris Saxonici per Britanniam*), who from his nine strong castles dotted along the coast, from Yarmouth to Shoreham, was bound to watch the ever-recurring Saxon pirates.

3. The Duke of the Britains, whose head-quarters were probably at York, and who had under his control the Sixth Legion stationed in that city, and various detachments of auxiliary troops posted along the line of the wall in Northumberland (*per lineam Valli*), and in the stations upon the great Roman roads through Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumberland. It is not expressly stated that these last two officers were subject to the control of the first, the Count of Britain, but we may reasonably infer that they were so from the fact that all the details of the troops subject to them are given with great minuteness, while of him it is only said, 'Under the control of the Spectabilis the Count of Britain is *the Province of Britain*'.

In civil matters there can be no doubt that the VICARIUS was supreme, and he probably administered his diocese from the city of Augusta, which the ancients called Londinium.

In financial matters we find an *Accountant for the receipts of Britain* (*Rationalis Summarum Britanniarum*), and a Superintendent of the Treasury at Augusta (*Praepositus thesaurorum Augustensium*), who appear to owe no obedience to the VICARIUS, but are directly subordinate to the Count of the Sacred Largesses-COMES SACRARUM LARITIONEM- (at Rome or Ravenna). Similarly the Accountant of the Emperor's private estate in Britain (*Rationalis rei privatae per Britannias*) reports himself immediately to the Illustrious the COMES RERUM PRIVATARUM.

This illustration, drawn from the Roman government of Britain in the fourth century, may help us to understand the similar details which are given of the civil and military administration of Italy. The system is here, however, somewhat complicated by the extraordinary powers vested, as we have before seen, in the Prefect of the city - PREFECTUS URBIS. Though the geographical limits of his power are not expressly indicated in the *Notitia*, we find that his subordinate VICARIUS, who is not likely to have had a wider jurisdiction than himself, controlled the vicarius administration of seven provinces in Italy, besides the three islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. These seven provinces in fact made up the whole of Italy south of Ancona on the east coast, and Spezia on the west; and thus, little beside the valley of the Po and the countries at the foot of the Alps was left to the somewhat hardly-treated official who bore the high-sounding title of Spectabilis Vicarius Italiae. To indemnify him,—but in those days of trouble with the heaving nations of Germany the charge must have brought more toil than profit,—he superintended the government of the Raetias, provinces which reached from the Alps to the Danube, and of which Coire and Augsburg were the respective capitals.

Of high military officers in Italy we read very little in the *Notitia*, doubtless because the great masters of the horse and foot in *Praesenti* overshadowed all other commanding officers

in the near neighborhood of the court. There is a Count of Italy -COMES ITALIAE- whose duty it was to look after the defense of the country close round the bases of the Alps, and whose charge is illustrated in the effigy at the head of the chapter by two turreted fortresses climbing at an impossible angle up two dolomitic-like mountain peaks.

The DUX RAETIAE also is mentioned, who with twenty-one detachments of auxiliary troops—among them a cohort of Britons stationed near to Ratisbon—held the posts on the Danube and by Lake Constance and in the fastnesses of the Tyrol. Of other military leaders in the diocese of Italy we have no express mention. They doubtless all formed part of the machine of the legions, and were all under the immediate orders of the Masters of the Soldiery.

Reviewing now this great civil and military hierarchy, which was invented by Diocletian, perfected by Constantine, and still majestic under Theodosius, we see at once how many titles, and through them how many ideas, modern European civilization has borrowed from that subtly elaborated world of graduated splendor. The Duke and the Count of modern Europe—what are they but the Generals and Companions (Duces and Comites) of a Roman province? Why or when they changed places, the Duke climbing up into such unquestioned pre-eminence over his former superior the Count, I know not, nor yet by what process it was discovered that the latter was the precise equivalent of the Scandinavian *Jarl*. The Prefects of France are a closer reproduction both of the name and of the centralized authority of the *Praefecti Praetorio* of the Empire. Even the lowest official, who has been here named, the Corrector of a province, survives to this day in the Spanish *Corregidor*. In ecclesiastical affairs the same descent exhibits itself. The Pope, who took his own title of Pontifex Maximus from Caesar, and named his legates after Caesar's lieutenants, now sits surrounded by his purple-robed councilors to hold what he calls, after Constantine, his Consistory. Diocese and Vicar are words which have also survived in the service of the Church, both, it may be said, with lessened dignity; yet not altogether so, for if the Vicarius of Britain or Africa was greater than the modern Vicar of an English parish, he was less than the mighty spiritual ruler who, claiming the whole world as his Diocese, asserts his right to rule therein as “The Vicar of Christ”.

Thus do the strata of modern society bear witness to the primary imperial rock from which they sprang. On the other hand, it is curious to observe how few of the titles of old republican Rome survived into these latter days of the Empire. Tribunes indeed we do find in the *Notitia*, but they are chiefly military officers. Of Quaestors, Aediles, Praetors, the offices which in old days formed the successive steps on the ladder of promotion to the highest dignities of the state, we find traces indeed, but of the faintest possible kind, in the *Notitia*. The Consulate indeed still retained much of its ancient splendor. The Emperor was generally invested with it several times during his reign. Claudian's enthusiastic congratulations show how it was prized by the sons of Probus. Pacatus speaks of it as the highest honor which Theodosius was able to bestow upon his friends. Sidonius, eighty years later, says that he and his brother-in-law, who were by birth sons of Prefects, have attained the honor of the Patriciate, and he hopes that their sons may crown the edifice by the Consulate. But though the office of Consul retained its social preeminence it had no practical power. Not once does the name occur in the *Notitia*, not the meanest functionary is mentioned as being “under his control”. The Vicar reflected the Prefect and the Prefect the Emperor. Power earned by the suffrages of the people was nowhere; power delegated by the Divine Emperor was irresistible and all-prevailing.

One office indeed there was which might seem to office of require some limitation of the statement which has just been made. The *Defensor Civitatis* derived his power, theoretically at any rate, from the popular vote, and was in theory a counterpoise to the otherwise uncontrolled dominion of the Imperial officials; and yet it might with some fairness be argued that the

history of the Defensor's office is the most striking illustration of the tendency of all power in the Empire to become Imperial.

It is believed that these Defenders of the Cities came into being in the first half of the fourth century, but the first distinct trace of them in the Statute-book is in a law of 364 addressed by Valentinian and Valens to the Praetorian Prefect of Illyricum, Probus, a governor whose unjust exactions must often have made the Provincials under his rule sigh for a Defender from such a ruler. The functions of the Defensor were eloquently expressed in an edict addressed by Theodosius to a holder of the office. 'The Defensores of all the Provinces are to exercise their powers for the space of five years. Thou must in the first place exhibit the character of a father to the commonalty: thou must not suffer either the rustics or the city-dwellers to be vexed with inordinate assessments. Meet the insolence of office and the arrogance of the Judge with proper firmness, yet always preserving the reverence which is due to the magistrate. Claim thy right of freely entering into the Judge's presence when thou shalt desire to do so. Exclude all unjust claims and attempts at the spoliation of those whom it is thy duty to cherish as thy children, and do not suffer anything beyond the accustomed imposts to be demanded of these men who certainly can be guarded by no arm but thine.'

We can gather with sufficient clearness from this edict what were the duties of the new officer, whom, perhaps with some slumbering memories of the Tribunes of the Plebs in republican Rome, the Emperors were now creating to be a check on the venal rapacity of their own judges and tax-collectors. He was to be the perpetual advocate of the municipality, to maintain its rights against usurping officials, to resist all attempts at illegitimate and excessive taxation, to be a sort of embodied Habeas Corpus Act on behalf of the poorer and friendless citizens. He was chosen by the voice of the whole community, but his name had to be submitted to the Praetorian Prefect for his approval, and he was confirmed in his office by that high functionary. In order to secure in the new officer a sufficient amount of courage and independence for the exercise of his duties, it was expressly provided that he should not be chosen from the class of decurion, the local vestry-men, corresponding to those Senators of Antioch whose woes we were recently considering. For the decurion, as we shall see more plainly in a later chapter, was a being born to be pillaged and oppressed, and was always trembling before the frowns of power.

But this requirement, that the *Defensor* should be a man of rank and importance in the State, ruined a well-meant plan. The *Defensor* took upon himself the airs of a great official; he gradually became a real magistrate; his jurisdiction, which at first extended only to cases where an amount of sixty solidi was at stake, was enlarged so as to include cases relating five times that amount. And as he grew in importance and power, he evidently became more and more unapproachable by his 'children,' the humbler class of tax-payers, so that before the end of a century from the first appearance of the name in the Statute-book, we find a law passed to repress the insolence and injustice of the *Defensor*, and to recall him to a remembrance of the object for which he was appointed. So true it is that every office takes the color of the State on which it is engrafted. In a monarchy which has become democratic we see even the professed servants of the monarch pandering to the passions of the crowd; while in a republic which had become Imperial even the constituted champions of the commonalty were found before long in the ranks of its oppressors.

In conclusion, though the proper subject of this chapter is civil administration, we may give a glance at another most interesting subject brought before us by the Notitia Dignitatum, namely, the condition of the army of the Empire. The information with which the Notitia furnishes us on this subject is tantalizing by its very fullness. At first sight we seem to have a complete picture of the disposition of all the legions and all the corps of 'federate' infantry and cavalry over the whole Empire. But on closer examination we find that there are great gaps in

the statement thus laid before us. Deficiencies in one place, redundancies in another, bewilder us in our attempt to construct a definite scheme of the military organization of the State. It will probably require some years of patient labor, especially of comparison of this ill-edited army-list with the slowly accumulating evidence of inscriptions, before anything like safe and definite conclusions can be reached as to the magnitude and the composition of those armies on the Danube and the Rhine, which did not avail to save the Empire from the impact of the barbarians.

Meanwhile, however, it may be stated very roughly, that the Notitia appears to display to us a force whose nominal strength was nearly a million of men, and that this force was pretty evenly divided between the Eastern and the Western portions of the Empire. There can be no doubt, however, that this number is enormously in excess of the troops which Rome could actually put in the field. The legions especially (the theoretical strength of which at this time was 6100 foot soldiers, with cavalry attached to the number of 730) appears sometimes in history in such a miserably attenuated condition, that some writers have asserted that even in theory it only consisted of 1000 men, an alteration which would require us to reduce the estimate just given to little more than a sixth. For any such formal and theoretical reduction, however, there does not appear to be sufficient authority. The following sentences from a contemporary author probably set forth the true state of the case. 'The name of the legions still abides in our army, but through negligence the strength which it possessed in old days is broken, the rewards of valor being now given to intrigue, and the soldier's promotion which he used to earn by toil being now given by favor. When the veteran has earned his discharge, having completed his term of service, there is no one to take his place. Moreover, some must be incapacitated for service by disease, others will desert or perish by one accident or another, so that unless every year, I might almost say every month, a troop of young recruits is brought in to fill the places of those who fall out, a legion, however numerous at the outset, soon dwindles. There is another reason for our attenuated legions, namely, the great labor of service therein, their heavier arms, their more numerous duties, their severer discipline. In order to escape these, most recruits rush to take the military oath in the auxiliary forces where the toil is less and the rewards sooner earned.'

This last remark leads us to consider the different classes of troops, which, according to the Notitia, composed, the Imperial army. The 132 legions which were enumerated above are divided into three ranks. These are:—

25 legiones Palatinae.

70 legiones Comitatus.

37 legiones Pseudo-Comitatus.

The first class, the legions of the Palace' speak for themselves. If not in the strictest sense the bodyguard of the sovereign, a title which more fittingly belongs to the high-born and brilliantly accoutred *Domestici* and *Protectores*, they are at any rate those troops who are most immediately under the eye of the Emperor, and who will be first grouped round his standard when he goes forth to war.

Over against these 'legiones Palatinae' are found certain non-legionary bodies of troops, forty-three in number in the East and sixty-five in the West, called the Auxilia Palatina. To read through the titles of these regiments is to study the morbid anatomy of the dying Empire. You find there the name of almost every barbarian nationality that was hovering on its borders, the cannibal Atacotti of Scotland, the Heruli, the Thervingi, the Moors. Then there are names like those of our battle-ships, the *Petulantes*, the *Invicti*, the *Victores*; and names derived from the reigning Emperor, the *Valentinianenses*, the *Gratianenses*, the *Felices Theodosiani*, the *Honoriani Victores*, the *Felices Arcadiani*. The terrible name of Goths does not appear on the list, but there can be little doubt that among these barbarian satellites of the Emperor were to

be found a large number of those yellow-haired Visigothic *foederati*, whose golden collars roused the envy, and whose arrogant demeanor kindled the resentment of the Roman legionaries. In the regiment of Gratianienses there may very likely have still been serving some of those very Alans, his partiality for whom cost the ill-fated Gratian his life.

From the *legiones Palatinae* and their attendant *auxilia* we pass to the *legiones Comitatuses*, evidently a large and important portion of the Imperial army. In the laws of this period they are generally coupled with the *Palatini*, and it is not easy to see what was the difference between them, for *Comitatus* is used for court as *Palatium* for palace. It is conjectured with some probability that the *legiones Comitatuses* may have held something like the same position towards the 'Masters of the Soldiery' that the *legiones Palatinae* held towards the Emperor. And though we cannot prove the point, there seems some reason to connect these 'Comitatensian' legions with the assertion of Zosimus, that Constantine withdrew the bulk of his troops from the fortresses on the frontier and stationed them in the cities of the interior, where they became demoralized by urban pleasures and a long peace.

For it seems clear that the duty of guarding the frontier, taken off from these pampered 'courtly' legions, was in great measure devolved upon their inferiors, who went by the uncouth name of *Pseudo-Comitatuses* or 'sham-courtly' troops. These plebeians of the army received only four rations where the *Comitatuses* received six; they were probably of lower stature, received in several ways fewer privileges than their envied superiors.

Lastly, there was a class of troops of whom the Notitia gives us only fragmentary and imperfect information, the *Limitanei* or *Ripenses*. These were apparently a kind of militia stationed on the frontiers of the Empire, along the great rivers, the Rhine and the Danube; where Egypt looks forth upon the desert; or where the Parthian was hovering round Mesopotamia. They were probably not mere soldiers, but cultivated the soil and practiced the arts of peace; always, however, under special obligation to take up arms at the approach of an enemy and defend the land which they tilled. We would gladly receive further information as to this body of men whose status in some degree foreshadows that of the feudal soldiers of the Middle Ages, while at the same time some of them must surely have been found among the defenders of the great Roman Walls in Britain and in Germany.

A survey of this most interesting document, the Notitia, as a whole, and a comparison of it with the Theodosian Code, suggest some reflections as to the relative capacity of the Romans as warriors and as administrators. The citizens of the little stronghold by the Tiber had first made their mark on Latium by their fierce determination in war. As their territory grew, their powers of government developed, and when they were the undisputed lords of all the fair countries round the Mediterranean Sea they did in truth fulfill with wonderful success the charge given to them in the poet's imagination by the spirit of their ancestor:—

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento.

At the period which we have now reached in the history of that vast accumulation of peoples which still called itself the Roman Republic, the old Roman spirit of delight in battle was departed, but the Roman genius for law and administration still remained. The Seventh Book of the Theodosian Code gives us a dreary picture of the military state of the Empire. The sons of the veterans have to be forced to follow the profession of their fathers. Self-mutilation to avoid military service is frequent. The man who does enter the army seems to be only intent on avoiding his obligations as a tax-payer, or oppressing his fellow-citizen by unreasonable demands when he is billeted upon them. And while the pages of the Notitia, which deal with the civil constitution of the Empire, display to us a great, well-organized, official hierarchy,—corrupt it may have been, oppressive it may have been, but one in which every wheel of the

great administrative machine knew its place and performed its office,—the military chapters of that book seem to be a perfect chaos. Fragments of the same legion are dispersed hither and thither, some under the command of the *Magister Militum in Praesenti*, some under the Duke of a province. It would seem to have been in the last degree difficult for the Prefect of a legion to ascertain accurately who were subordinate to him, and to whom he was subordinate. All the mistakes and the heart burnings to which divided responsibility and ill-defined prerogatives give birth, seem to be here prepared in abundant measure. Instead of keeping the noble legions of the early Empire, the 25 of Augustus or the 33 of Severus, up to their full strength, and enabling them to do deeds worthy of their great traditions, each Emperor seems to form a number of fresh legions, some of which he calls after his own name and some after the name of the latest tribe of barbarians to whom he has taken a fancy. But whether they be called ‘Happy Honorians,’ or ‘Senior Britons,’ or ‘Lancers of Comagene,’ in any case we feel certain that they are not a legion in the old magnificent sense of the word. The full complement of officers may be there, exhausting the treasury by their exorbitant *Annonae*, or parading their gorgeous equipments before the eyes of a gratified Emperor, but when the Goth or the Frank appears upon the frontiers of the Empire where such a mushroom legion is stationed, we feel sure that he will not find 6000 stout soldiers ready to resist him.

In short, the perusal of the *Notitia* and the *Code* leaves us with the conviction that not even Valentinian nor Theodosius, and certainly none of their successors, was a Carnot or a von Moltke, able to organize victory. The civil administration of the Empire was marvelous, and it left its mark upon Europe for centuries, but the military administration at the close of the fourth century was a fabric pervaded by dry-rot, and it crumbled at the touch of the barbarian.

CHAPTER XIII

HONORIUS, STILICHO, ALARIC

By the death of Theodosius a division, which proved to be practically a final division, was made between the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman Empire, and Honorius, a boy eleven years of age, began to rule over its Western portion.

Britain, Gaul, Spain, the south-west corner of Germany, the western half of the province of Illyricum (comprising Austria west of the Danube, and Dalmatia), Italy, and the African shore of the Mediterranean as far east as Tripoli, were all included in the dominions of the young monarch. The whole of this territory, except the northern part of the British province, was still virtually untouched by barbarian invasion. It was the Eastern half of the Empire which had suffered the dangerous aneurism of the Gothic settlement south of the Danube, and which had seen the provinces of Thrace and Macedon, so near to its capital, harried by the yearly incursions of the barbarians: it was the East which, could a prophet have arisen to announce the impending ruin of one half of the Empire, would have seemed likely to fall the first sacrifice. But the marvelous foresight of Constantine, instructed by the difficulties of his own campaign against Licinius, had led him to root his dynasty in a stronghold which, for the space of nine centuries, was to defz external assault, and that city, the offspring of Imperial Christianity, cherished with grateful devotion the powers to which it owed its being. Old Rome, on the other hand, unfavourably situated for defence, and penetrated with memories of Republican freedom and Pagan art, visited only at distant intervals by the Emperors, was sinking into a state of sullen isolation, fearing the ruin of the state, yet almost prepared to view with indifference the ruin of the Caesar.

Simultaneously with this renewed division of the Roman Empire a new generation of men, and one destined to witness and to share in mighty revolutions, appeared on the scene. Theodosius is gone. Most of the counsellors and warriors who stood round his throne have disappeared, some having perished in civil war and some having fallen victims to the intrigues of their adversaries. Ambrose, though not in advanced old age, has but two years more to live, and takes no more a conspicuous part in public affairs. The three persons with whom for the next decade and a half we have chiefly to deal are those whose names appear at the head of this chapter—Honorius, Stilicho, Alaric.

We begin with ‘Our Master, the Eternal and ever-August Honorius.’ What was the character and appearance of the lad who from his palace at Milan issued his edicts to the Western world? Hear first the courtly Claudian:—

Thee from the fair first dawning of thy life
 A palace nurtured; in triumphal strife
 A camp, bright with the flashing swords of men,
 Nourished thine infancy; for even then
 Thy lofty fortunes brooked no humble home,
 But gave thee life with empire. Thou didst come,
 Meet present from an Empress to her Lord,
 And thee in purple swathed his realm adored.
 Rome's victor eagles marked thy earliest day,
 And in the midst of spears thy cradle lay.
 When thou wast born, to Rhine's extremest floods

Germania trembled, the Caucasian woods
 Shook with new terror. Meroeno more
 —Fearing thy power divine—her quiver bore,
 But from her hair the useless arrows tore.
 Crawling, o'er shields, thou mad'st thy childish way,
 And spoils of mighty princes were thy play.
 And again :—
 Spain reared thy sire her golden streams beside,
 But Bosphorus recalls thy birth with pride.
 From the Hesperian threshold rose thy line,
 But bright Aurora was thy nurse divine.
 For such a prize what eager strife is shown
 Since, of two worlds, each claims thee for her own.
 Thebes gloried in the might of Hercules
 And joy of Bacchus, both her offspring these;
 Delos stood still to mark Apollo's birth,
 The tiny Thunderer crept o'er Cretan earth;
 But more than Delos, more than Crete, must be
 The land which fostered thy divinity.
 No narrow shores could our new god receive,
 Nor might rough Cynthian rocks thy members grieve.
 Thy mother lay on gold, with gems arrayed,
 When upon Tyrian cushions thou wast laid.
 A palace echoed to her labour's cry,
 And oh! what tokens of thy fortunes high
 Abounded then! what flight, what call of birds,
 And from pale prophets what mysterious words!
 Of thy great name the horned Ammon spoke,
 Delphi for thee her age-long silence broke.
 The Persian Magi sang of thee; thy power
 Thrilled through the Etrurian Augur; in that hour
 Babylon's sages gazing on the stars
 Read with blank fear the triumph of thy wars.
 And now once more the rocks of Cumae's cave
 Bang with the shrieks the frenzied Sibyl gave.
 No Corybantian priests thy birth-cry drowned
 With cymbals' clash; an army stood around
 In glittering steel; their standards waved above
 Thine infant head, oh, more august than Jove!
 Thou saw'st adoring legions round thee fall,
 And thy shrill cries gave back the trumpet's call.
 Empire and life were thine the selfsame day,
 And in thy cradle did a consul play.
 By thy new name the new-born year was known,
 It gave thee being, 'twas given thee for thine own.
 Quirinus' robe thy mother made thee wear,
 And helped thee, crawling, to the curule chair.

Porphyrogenitus, "born in the Purple Chamber", is the key-note of the poet's panegyric. This fortunate accident of birth amid the splendours of royalty was not shared by Arcadius, who came into the world while Theodosius was still in a private station.

The childhood of the "New Divinity" is thus sketched:—

First wast thou wont thy victor-sire to greet,
 When he from Ister homeward turned his feet.
 'Twas thou who first didst softly soothe the glance
 Of that still war-o'ershadowed countenance.
 Coaxing, thou pray'dst for trophies from the foe,
 A helt Gelonian, or a Scythian bow,
 A Dacian javelin, or a Suevic rein.
 He on his shining shield, how oft again
 Would raise thee smiling; to his panting breast
 How oft thy eager little form was pressed.
 Thou from the gleaming steel didst fear no harm,
 But to the helmet's crest stretched forth thine arm.
 And then thy sire would say with holy joy,
 King of Olympus! grant that this my boy
 Thus may return victorious from his foe,
 From wasted Parthia, Babylon laid low.
 Red be his sword like mine; like mine his breath
 Come panting fast from the great game of Death.
 Be war's delicious dust on every limb,
 And let him bring me spoils as I to him.

This pretty little picture, borrowed from the Iliad, in which Theodosius is equal to Hector, and Honorius is more than Astyanax (for Astyanax did fear "the dazzling helm and nodding crest"), need not of course have had any existence in reality.

Let us now turn from poetry to fact, and see what mark the real Honorius made upon the men and things that surrounded him. None. It is impossible to imagine characters more utterly destitute of moral colour, of self-determining energy, than those of the two sons of Theodosius. In Arcadius we do at length discover traces of uxoriousness, a blemish in some rulers, but which becomes almost a merit in him when contrasted with the absolute vacancy, the inability to love, to hate, to think, to execute, almost to be, which marks the impersonal personality of Honorius. After earnestly scrutinising his life to discover some traces of human emotion under the stolid mask of his countenance, we may perhaps pronounce with some confidence on the three following points.

1. He perceived, through life, the extreme importance of keeping the sacred person of the Emperor of the West out of the reach of danger.

2. He was, at any rate in youth, a sportsman.

3. In his later years he showed considerable interest in the rearing of poultry.

We must not do him injustice. He was also religious, after the fashion of his time; and he found leisure in some of the direst emergencies of his country to put forth fresh edicts for the suppression of Heresy and Paganism.

It is natural to ask. Why this sudden decay of energy in the Theodosian line? Why in Arcadius and Honorius do we find no trace of the impetuous will of their father. If the coins of Theodosius, his wife, and sons, may be trusted to convey any likeness of the imperial lineaments, Flaccilla was the cause. As we so often notice in our daily life, the child that

inherits the father's sex copies the mother's character; in feature as well as in mind Arcadius and Honorius are the true sons of the pious, timid, feeble Flaccilla. Instead of the fresh vigorous face and well-defined nose of Theodosius, Honorius inherits the low brow, long feeble nose, and melancholy lymphatic beauty of his mother. Another reason for the extraordinary poverty, almost imbecility, of Honorius's character may be drawn from the unrestrained and increasing irascibility of Theodosius in later life, which, as we gather from a hint of Claudian's, was not always subdued in the presence of the Empress herself. The poet says (addressing Serena, niece and adopted daughter of the Emperor)—

When harassed with the heavy cares of state,
Home he returned, moody and passionate;
When from their angry sire his children fled,
And e'en Flaccilla saw his scowl with dread,
Then thou alone could'st break his roaring rage,
Alone, with soothing speech, his wrath assuage

But probably, after all, the chief cause of the want of energy shown by the sons of Theodosius was the enervating moral atmosphere which surrounded them from childhood. Passing their early years in the sacred recesses of the palace, shut out from contact with the healthy world outside by the purple veil and the brightly clothed *Silentiarii*, hailed in childhood with the great name of Augustus, surrounded by adoring courtiers and listening to flattery as fulsome, but not always as eloquent, as that of Claudian, it is not surprising that these unfortunate lads grew up to manhood flaccid, nerveless, and ignorant, the mere tools of the ministers who governed in their names, and utterly unable to support, themselves, any of the real weight of the Empire

But let us pass on from Honorius to describe the character and fortunes of the real ruler of the Western world, Stilicho. Stilicho was born probably between 350 and 360. He was the son of a Vandal chief who had entered the service of the Emperor Valens, and had apparently commanded his squadrons of barbarian auxiliaries in a creditable manner. Had there been any worse stigma than the fact of his Vandal descent attaching to Stilicho's parentage, we should certainly have heard it from his captious critic Orosius; had he by either parent been linked to any noble Roman family, we should have had it impressed upon our recollection by his flatterer Claudian, who, however, if his father had been a great general, would certainly not have dropped the hint that "even though he had wrought no illustrious deed, nor with faithful allegiance to Valens ever guided his chestnut-haired squadrons, it would have been enough for his fame that he was the begetter of Stilicho".

When the young Vandal, tall, and of stately presence, moved through the streets of Constantinople, the crowds on either hand deferentially made way for him. And yet he was still only a private soldier, but the instinct of the multitude foretold his future advancement. Nor was that advancement long in coming: scarcely had he attained manhood when the Emperor sent him on an embassy to the Persian court. Arrived at Babylon (continues the flattering bard) his proud deportment struck awe into the hearts of the stern nobles of Parthia, while the quiver-bearing multitude thronged eagerly to gaze on the illustrious stranger, and the Persian ladies, smitten by his goodly appearance, nourished in secret the hopeless flame of love. Hopeless, for a higher alliance than that of any Persian dame was in store for him on his return to Constantinople. There, in the court of her uncle Theodosius, dwelt the learned and dignified Serena. She was the daughter of his brother, the elder Honorius, and was older than any of his own children. In the old days, when they were all dwelling together in Spain, and when Theodosius was still in a private station, he took a fancy to the little maiden, and often carried

her back with him from her father's house to cheer his own still childless home. When the elder Honorius died, and Theodosius found himself at the summit of the world, he remembered his old favorite, and summoned her, with her sister Thermantia, to his court. Both were adopted by him as his daughters, but Serena retained the stronger influence over him, and, as we have already seen, ventured to approach and to soothe him in those angrier moments when his vapid Empress dared not face his wrath,

Such was the bride whom the Emperor (probably about the year 385) bestowed on the young warrior. Henceforward his promotion was certain. He rose to high rank in the army, being made *Magister Utriusque Militiae* some years before the death of Theodosius, he distinguished himself in many campaigns against the Visigoths, and finally, when his wife Serena had brought her little cousin Honorius to his dying father at Milan, Stilicho received from his sovereign, whom he had no doubt accompanied in his campaign against Arbogast, the guardianship of his son and the regency of the West-Western Empire. It is also stated, with some probability, that Theodosius on his death-bed gave to this stalwart kinsman a general charge to watch over the safety of the East as well as the West, thus constituting him in some measure guardian of Arcadius as well as of Honorius.

Of the great abilities of Stilicho as a general and a civil administrator there can be no doubt, as to the integrity of his character there is a conflict of testimony. We are met at the outset by the words of Zosimus, who couples Rufinus and him in the same condemnation, declaring that on the death of Theodosius everything was done in the Western and Eastern Empires according to the mere pleasure of these two men, that they took bribes without any pretence of concealment, that large possessions came to be accounted a calamity, since they marked out the owner for the calumnies and false accusations of delators in the minister's service, that through the perversion of justice all manner of wickedness increased in the cities, that ancient and substantial families were rapidly sunk into penury, while vast masses of wealth of all descriptions were being accumulated in the dwellings of Rufinus and Stilicho.

Claudian, in a fine torrent of angry verse, brings in the very same idea of widespread corruption and robbery forcibly before us, but of course with him Rufinus is the only guilty one. Of Stilicho's moral character he draws a flattering picture. His clemency is depicted in twenty-four lines, his truthfulness in twenty. His justice, patience, temperance, prudence, constancy, are more rapidly sketched; but great stress is laid on his utter freedom from avarice, the mother of all the vices, on his firmness in suppressing the too common practice of *delation* (false and frivolous accusations against the rich for the sake of hush-money), and on his bestowal of the offices of the state on merit alone, irrespective of all other considerations.

With this conflict of testimony before us, and feeling that the prejudices of Zosimus may make his testimony almost as valueless as the venal verses of Claudian, our best course will be to watch the life of the great Vandal for ourselves, and draw our own conclusion at its close.

One thing is certain, that the animosity existing between Stilicho and the successive ministers of the Eastern Emperor (an animosity which does not necessarily imply any fault on the part of the former) was one most potent cause of the downfall of the Western Empire. In part this was due to the peculiar position of military affairs at the time of the death of Theodosius. The army of the East, the backbone of which was the Gothic auxiliaries, had just conquered, at the river Frigidus, the army of the West, which similarly depended upon the Frankish and West German soldiery. The two hosts coalesced in devotion to Theodosius; they were perhaps ready to follow the standards of a rising-general like Stilicho, but they were in no great haste to march off to wearisome sentinel duty on the frontiers of Persia or Scythia, nor was Stilicho anxious so to scatter them. Hence heart-burnings between him and the Eastern court, and complaints, perhaps well-founded, made by the latter, that he kept all the most able-bodied and warlike soldiers for himself and sent the cripples and good-for-nothing fellows to

Constantinople. Whatever the original grievance, for a period of thirteen years (from 395-408) hearty co-operation between the courts of Rome and Constantinople was unknown, and intrigues which it is impossible now to unravel were being woven by the ministers of Arcadius against Honorius, perhaps by Stilicho against them. The Roman Empire was a house divided against itself, and it is therefore no marvel if it was brought to naught.

Odious as the character of Rufinus was, it must be admitted in justice to him that his position was a difficult one. He was expected to administer the Eastern Empire for the obviously incapable Arcadius, but the chief forces of that Empire were under the command of his avowed enemy, Stilicho, who also put forward a claim of indefinite magnitude to joint or superior guardianship of the helpless sovereign. To make his situation still more difficult, he was at this time foiled by a yet more artful villain than himself in a palace intrigue. Rufinus proposed to himself to marry his daughter to Arcadius, but during his temporary absence from the capital, the Eunuch Eutropius (the same man whom Theodosius had despatched on a mission to the hermit John before his last campaign) contrived to bring under his young master's notice the picture of a young Frankish maiden of surpassing beauty. This was Eudoxia, the daughter of the late Count Bauto, who had been brought up in the house of Promotus, and who had among her foster-brothers and sisters doubtless imbibed undying enmity to the crafty minister who had contrived the death of that veteran. In the feeble soul of Arcadius the flame of love was easily kindled, and he gladly gave command (during a temporary absence of the terrible guardian) that the fair Frankish maiden should be won. Eutropius bade the people make holiday and deck their houses for an Imperial wedding. He set forth with his attendants bearing the Imperial crown, the bright robes of an Imperial bride; and with dance and song the festive procession moved through the streets of Constantinople. All men expected that the chamberlain would proceed to the house of Rufinus, whose ambitious designs were well known. But no; the attendants moved on to the humbler abode of Promotus, brought forth from thence Eudoxia in all her radiant Northern beauty, and led her to the palace, where for the next nine years she reigned supreme. Rufinus on his return to Constantinople found that his position was undermined, and that henceforward he would have a covert rival at Constantinople besides the avowed rival at Milan.

The third name on our list is Alaric, the great Visigothic chieftain whose genius taught him the best means of turning the estrangement between the two Empires to account. Alaric was sprung from one of those royal or semi-royal houses which, among the German nations, proudly traced back their lineage to the gods of Walhalla. His family, the Balthi, ranked, some said, only second in nobility to the Amals; and when Alaric in after-days had performed some of his daring deeds against the great world-Empire, men said, remembering the meaning of the name of his forefathers, 'Rightly is he called Baltha (Bold), for he is indeed the boldest of mankind'. As for the year of his birth we have no certain information. It may have been any time between 360 and 370, but can hardly have been much earlier than the first or much later than the second date. His birthplace was the island Peuce, in the Delta of the Danube, apparently south of what is now termed the Sulina mouth of that river. We have already met with him crossing the Alps as a leader of auxiliaries in the army of Theodosius, when that Emperor marched to encounter Eugenius and Arbogast. With the accession of the two young Princes the spell of the Theodosian name over the barbarian mind was broken. The ill-timed parsimony of Rufinus, perhaps of Stilicho also, curtailed the largesses hitherto given to the Gothic troops, and thus yet further estranged them from the Empire. Then individual grievances were not wanting to their general. He was still only a leader of barbarian auxiliaries, bound to difficult and little-honoured labour on the wings of the Imperial armies, though Theodosius had led him to believe that if the campaign against Eugenius prospered he would be promoted to high military office in the regular army, and thus earn the right to command

Roman legionaries in the centre of the line of battle. And already perhaps in the very outset of his career he felt that mysterious, irresistible impulse, urging him onwards to Rome, which fourteen years after he spoke of to the Italian monk who had almost succeeded by his intercessions in inducing him to turn back from the yet uncaptured city.

But however varied the causes might be, the effect is clear. From the day that Alaric was accepted as leader of the Gothic people their policy changed, or rather they began to have a policy, which they had never had before. No longer now satisfied to serve as the mere auxiliary of Rome, Alaric adopted the maxim which he himself had probably heard from the lips of Priulf just before his murder by Fravitta, that the Goths had fought Rome's battles long enough, and that the time was now come for them to fight their own. And though the career which he was thus entering upon was one of wide-wasting war and invasion, it would be a mistake to think of the young king as a mere barbarian marauder. Knowing the Roman court and army well, and despising them as heartily, educated in the Christian faith, proud of the willing allegiance of a nation of warriors, fated to destroy, yet not loving the work of mere destruction, Alaric, and the kings of the Visigoths who followed him, are in fact knights-errant who rear the standard of chivalry—with its errors as well as its noble thoughts—in the level waste of the Orientalised despotism and effete civilisation of the Roman Empire.

Such then was the chief whom the Visigothic warriors, in accordance with the usages of their forefathers, raised upon the buckler and held aloft in the sight of all men as their newly-chosen king. The actual date of this election is uncertain, but it is much the most probable conjecture that it occurred in 395, immediately after the death of Theodosius, and was consequent upon the change of policy adopted by the ministers of his sons.

If the date is not quite clear, the purpose of this election is not clouded by any doubt. As Jordanes says, 'After Theodosius, that lover of peace and of the Gothic nation, had departed this life, and when his sons, living luxuriously, began to annihilate both Empires, and to filch from their auxiliaries, I mean the Goths, their accustomed gifts, soon the Goths conceived an increasing dislike for those princes; and fearing lest their own valour should be relaxed by a long peace, they ordained over themselves a King, named Alaric. Presently then the aforesaid Alaric, being created King, and entering into deliberation with his people, persuaded them to seek kingdoms for themselves by their own labours rather than quietly to lie down in subjection to others, and therefore gathering together an army he marched against the Empire'.

Little as they knew what they were doing, the flaxen-haired barbarians who in the Illyrian plains raised amid shouts of *Thiudans, Thiudans* ('the king! the king!') the shield upon which Alaric stood erect, were in fact upheaving into reality the stately monarchy of Spain, with her Pelayos and San Fernandos, her Alonsos and Conquistadors, her Ferdinand and Isabella, with Columbus landing at Guanahani, and Vasco Nunez wading knee-deep into the new-found ocean of the Pacific to take possession of its waves and shores for Spain. All these sights, and, alas, also her Inquisition, her Autos-da-fe, her wrecked Armada, the impotence and bankruptcy of Iberia in these latter days, might have passed before the unsealed eyes of a seer, had there been such an one among those Gothic warriors, for all these things were to spring from that days decision.

Thus then the spring of 395 was a time of terror and dismay to the inhabitants of the Eastern Empire. While the savage Huns, passing through the Caucasian Gates, laid waste the provinces of the Empire on the Upper Euphrates, and even appeared in sight of the walls of Antioch, Alaric with his Visigothic followers, in the first fervour of the enthusiasm of revolt, ravaged Moesia and Thrace, and carried consternation to the environs of Constantinople. Induced by some means or other to turn his face southward, he departed from these old battle-fields of his race, penetrated Thessaly, passed the unguarded defile of Thermopylae, and, according to the story of Zosimus (coloured of course by his heathen prejudices), 'having

gathered all his troops round the sacred city of Athens, Alaric was about to proceed to the assault. When lo! he beheld Athene Promachus, just as she is represented in her statues, clothed in full armour, going round about the walls thereof, and Achilles standing upon the battlements, with that aspect of divine rage and thirst for battle which Homer ascribes to him when he heard of the death of Patroclus. Awe-struck at the sight Alaric desisted from his warlike enterprise, signalled for truce, and concluded a treaty with the Athenians. After which he entered the city in peaceful guise with a few of his followers, was hospitably entertained by the chief inhabitants, received presents from them, and departed, leaving both Athens and Attica untouched by the ravages of war'.

He did not turn homewards, however, but penetrated into Peloponnesus, where Corinth, Argos, and Sparta all fell before him.

The precise details of these campaigns are difficult to recover, and lie beyond our present horizon. What is important for us is their bearing on the relations between the two ministers Stilicho and Rufinus. The latter is accused of having actually invited Alaric to invade his master's dominions, or, at any rate, of having smoothed Alaric's passage into Greece in order to remove him from his too menacing neighbourhood to Constantinople. He was jealous of the overshadowing power of Stilicho, he was too conscious of his own intense unpopularity with all classes; even the dumb loyalty of his master was beginning to fail him. The beautiful barbarian Empress was now putting forth all her arts to mould the plastic soul of her husband into hostility to his chief minister. Surrounded by so many dangers Rufinus perhaps conceived the desperate idea of playing off one barbarian against another, of saving himself from the Vandal Stilicho by means of Alaric the Goth. We can only say 'perhaps', because we hear of these events only from men who were bitter enemies of the minister and who wrote after his fall, and because some of the misdeeds imputed to him look more like the acts of a bewildered and panic-stricken man than like the skilful moves of a cunning traitor. Suspicion was aroused by the fact that in all the wide-wasting raids of the soldiers of Alaric the vast estates of Rufinus in Moesia and Thrace were ostentatiously spared; but it might be part of the Visigoth's plan to arouse that very suspicion. Rufinus paid a visit to the camp of the barbarian to endeavour to bring him back to his old loyalty to the Empire, and in that visit, to the grief and indignation of the Byzantines, he even affected a certain barbaresque fashion in his own costume, changed the flowing toga, which became the Roman magistrate, for the tight leathern garments of the Teutons, and carried the large bow and displayed the heavy, perhaps silver-mounted, bridle which distinguished the auxiliaries from the legions. But this again was not necessarily a proof of disaffection to the Empire. It might be only a clumsy imitation by an upstart civilian of the arts by which the great soldier Theodosius had won the love of his barbarian *foederati*. It is probable enough that Rufinus may at this interview have suggested to Alaric the policy of withdrawing from before the strong defences of Constantinople and gratifying his barbarians with the spoil of the yet unwasted provinces of Greece. A base and cowardly expedient certainly; but we need not perhaps believe the accusation of Zosimus that he actually committed the government of Greece to the dissolute Musonius, the defence of Thermopylae to the treacherous Gerontius, in order to ensure the success of Alaric's invasion. When a man is so universally hated as was the grasping Rufinus, his very blunders and weaknesses are easily interpreted as evidence of yet more and deeper wickedness.

To Stilicho an appeal was naturally addressed to bring or to send the Eastern army to the defence of the Eastern Empire. He came: it was still early spring, for events had moved rapidly since the death of Theodosius. He had under his command a mighty host collected from various provinces of the Empire, some of whose legions had fought under Arbogast, some under his conqueror, on the great day of the battle of the Frigidus, but all were now welded

together into one body by their enthusiastic confidence in their great leader, Stilicho, and all were eager for the fray.

The Imperial army had come up with the Visigoths at some unnamed place within the confines of Thessaly. Alaric recalled his marauding squadrons, gathered all his forces into one plain, surrounded the herds of cattle which he had collected with a double fosse and a rampart of stakes. All men in both armies knew that a great battle was impending, a battle which, as we the after-comers can see, might well have changed the course of history. Suddenly letters arrived from Constantinople, subscribed by the hand of Arcadius, commanding Stilicho to desist from further prosecution of the war, to withdraw the legions of Honorius within the limits of the Western Empire, and to send the other half of the army straight to Constantinople.

This infatuated decree, which can only be explained by the supposition that Arcadius had really been persuaded of the disloyalty of Stilicho, and feared the rebel more than the barbarian, had been wrung from the Emperor by the cajolery and menaces of Rufinus.

Stilicho obeyed at once, notwithstanding the earnest dissuasions of the soldiers, with a promptness which must surely be allowed to count heavily in proof of his loyalty to the Theodosian line, and his reluctance to weaken the commonwealth by civil war. The army of the whole Roman Empire had appeared for the last time in one common camp; the Western portion set off for Italy, the Eastern for Constantinople. With deep resentment in their hearts the latter passed through Thessaly and Macedon, revolving silently a scheme of revenge which, if it passed from the domain of thought into that of uttered words, was faithfully kept from all outside, an army's secret.

On their return to Constantinople, Rufinus, who deemed himself now secure from Stilicho's hatred, and who had extorted a promise from Arcadius that he should be associated with him in the sovereignty, caused coins to be struck with his effigy, and prepared a liberal donative for the troops in commemoration of his accession to the Empire. In a plain near the capital the greedy minister and the helpless sovereign proceeded to review the troops. Rufinus, who already practised the condescending suppleness of an imperial bow, addressed individual soldiers by name, informed them of the health of their wives and families, and appropriated to himself the cheers which were meant for the son of Theodosius. While this was going on, and while the high platform on which he and Arcadius stood, he could be seen plucking the Emperor by the mantle, beseeching, almost commanding him, to fulfil his promise, and at once declare him co-emperor, the army in the meantime was spreading out both its wings, not to protect but to destroy, and enclosed the imperial platform in a narrower and ever-narrower circle. At length Rufinus raised his head, and saw everywhere around him the lowering faces of his foes. One moment of awakening he had from his fond dream of Empire, and then a soldier stepped forth from the ranks, and with the words, 'With this sword Stilicho strikes thee' plunged the weapon into his heart.

Then as many as were able to do so clustered round the corpse, hacked it to pieces, carried off the limbs in triumph, sowed them over the fields as the Maenads sowed the fragments of the flesh of Pentheus, but fixed the head on a spear, where they made it practise its newly learned lesson of condescending salutation, and carried round through the city the dead hand and arm, with grim ingenuity making the fingers unclose and close again upon imaginary wealth, and crying out: 'Give, give to the insatiate one.'

There is no doubt that the minister had made himself thoroughly hateful to both the people and the army, but we need not accept too literally the statement (taken from Claudian) that the murder was entirely planned by the soldiery. The general under whose command they marched back to Constantinople was Gainas the Goth, a friend of Stilicho's. Zosimus states that Gainas gave the signal for the murder, and had arranged the whole pageant of the review for this express object, a statement which we can easily believe —when we find that for the

next five or six years the chief power over the feeble soul of Arcadius was divided between three persons, his fair Frankish Empress Eudoxia, Eutropius, the haggard old eunuch who had placed her on the throne, and Gainas the Goth, commander of the Eastern army.

In the following year Stilicho made a rapid march —rather a journey than a campaign— to the banks of the Rhine, and may have thus succeeded in confirming the wavering loyalty of some Frankish and Alamannic chiefs. Then, with some of his Western legions, he crossed the Adriatic and again appeared on its Eastern shore, this time in the Peloponnesus, as the champion of the Empire against the Visigoths. We must suppose that for a time the tremors of Arcadius had been soothed by his new ministers, and that he was willing that his realm should be delivered by Stilicho. The outset of the campaign was successful. The greater part of Peloponnesus was cleared of the invader, who was shut up in the rugged mountain country on the confines of Elis and Arcadia. The Roman army expected soon to behold him forced by famine to an ignominious surrender, when they discovered that he had pierced the lines of circumvallation at an unguarded point, and marched with all his plunder northwards to Epirus. What was the cause of this unlooked-for issue of the struggle? ‘The disgraceful carelessness of Stilicho’ says Zosimus. ‘He was wasting his time with harlots and buffoons when he should have been keeping close watch on the enemy’. ‘Treason,’ hints Orosius. ‘Orders from Constantinople, where a treaty had been concluded with Alaric’, half suggests Claudian, but he does not tell the story as if he himself believed it. The most probable explanation of this and of some similar passages in Stilicho’s subsequent career is that Fabian caution co-operated with the instinct of the *Condottiere* against pushing his foe too hard. There was always danger for Rome in driving Alaric to desperation: there was danger privately for Stilicho if the dead Alaric should render him no longer indispensable.

Whatever might be the cause, Stilicho returned to Italy, and henceforward he interferes no more with the armed hand in the affairs of the Eastern Empire. Left alone with the Visigothic King, the ministers of Arcadius soon concluded one of those treaties (*foedera*) of which the history of the Eastern Empire is full. With almost sublime cowardice they rewarded the Grecian raids of Alaric by clothing him with the sacred character of an officer of the Empire in their portion of Ulyricum. The precise title under which he exercised jurisdiction is not stated, but the scope of his powers and his manner of wielding them are thus described by Claudian—

He who, unpunished, laid Achaia waste
 And smote Epirus, foremost now is placed
 In all the Illyrian land. Each city's gate
 Greets the new friend, the armed destroyer late:
 And in law's name he sways the trembling crew
 Whose wives he ravished, and whose sons he slew.

And again, where Alaric is supposed to be himself rehearsing the matter to his followers—

‘Our race, of old, by its own strength prevailed,
 When still it fought unweaponed and unmailed;
 But now, since Rome gave rights into my hand,
 And owned me Duke of the Illyrian land,
 How many a spear and sword and helmet fair
 Did not I make the Thracian’s toil prepare,
 And, bidding Law my lawless purpose crown,
 Took iron tribute from each Roman town.
 So Fate was with me. So the Emperor gave
 The very race I plundered as my slave.

The hapless citizens, with many a groan,
 Furnished the arms for havock all their own:
 And in the flame, o'erwatched by tears and toil,
 The steel grew red, its craftsman's home to spoil.

From what has been before said, it will be understood that these last expressions of the poet must not be interpreted literally. It was not the inhabitants of Illyricum itself against whom the collected arms of Alaric were to be used. But, taking the Roman Empire as a whole, the statement is true enough that during an interval of quiescence, which lasted apparently about four years, the Yisigothic King was using the forms of Roman law, the machinery of Roman taxation, the almost unbounded authority of a Roman book provincial governor, to prepare the weapon which was one day to pierce the heart of Rome herself.

The precise geographical position occupied by Alaric while 'presiding over Illyricum' is not more clear than his exact official rank in the Notitia, but we may conjecture that he was in the extreme west of that portion of Illyricum which obeyed Arcadius, that is in the regions which we now know as Bosnia and Servia. For a chief who nourished the vast designs which were now ripening in his soul, the position was an alluring one. Both Empires in their weakness lay before him. He could either make his way through those Julian Alps over whose passes he had followed Theodosius to victory and so descend upon Italy, or by the southern bank of the Danube he could march down to the old Moesian battlefields and so descend upon Constantinople. Hovering thus on the frontiers both of Honorius and Arcadius he, in the words of Claudian,—

Sold his alternate oaths to either throne.

But as he remembered the long years of purposeless battle which his predecessors had waged with the East and how they had ever dashed themselves in vain against the impregnable battlements of Constantinople, his thoughts evidently turned more and more towards the West, and already, we may believe, a prophetic voice began to whisper to his soul—

'Thou shalt pierce to the very City of cities, to Home herself.'

Not yet however was the Imperial City immediately threatened with war: but she was already suffering from famine, and famine brought upon her by an ignoble foe, Gildo the Moor. For centuries, as the rural element in the population of Italy had grown weak and the urban element had grown strong, the dependence of Rome for her food-supply upon foreign lands, and especially on the great grain-producing countries which lined the southern shore of the Mediterranean, had become more absolute and complete. In fact, the condition of Rome, from the point of view of a political economist, was during the whole period of the Emperors as unsatisfactory as can well be imagined. She had long passed (nor is that surprising) out of the self-sufficing stage, in which she produced within her own territory all the necessaries of life for her citizens. But then, having devoted herself so exclusively to the arts of war and the science of politics, she was not producing any mercantile equivalent for the food which she needed. Her sole manufacture, we may almost say, was the Roman legionary, her chief exports armies and praetors; and in return for these, through the taxation which they levied, she imported not only the ten thousand vanities and luxuries which were consumed by her wealthy nobles, but also the vast stores of grain which were distributed by the Caesar, as a Terrestrial Providence, among the ever-increasing, ever-hungrier swarms of needy idlers who represented the *Plebs Romana*.

Since the foundation of Constantinople, the area of supply had been diminished by one-half; Egypt had ceased to nourish the elder Rome. No longer now, as in the days of a certain Jewish prisoner who appealed to Nero, would a Roman centurion easily find in Lycia 'a ship of Alexandria' with a cargo of wheat 'about to sail for Italy.' Ships from that port now preferred

the nearer and safer voyage through the land-locked Archipelago, and discharged their cargoes at Constantinople.

Rome was thus reduced to an almost exclusive dependence on the harvests of Africa proper (that province of which Carthage was the capital), of Numidia, and of Mauretania, whose corn-growing capacities must not be measured by the scanty dimensions to which they have now dwindled under centuries of Mohammedan misrule. But this supply, ever since the death of Theodosius, had been in a precarious condition; and in the year 397 was entirely stopped by the orders of Gildo, who had made himself virtual master of these three provinces.

It has been before stated that the war which the elder Theodosius brought to a successful issue in Africa in the year 374 was waged with a certain Mauretanian rebel named Firmus. The son of a great sheep-farmer, Nabal, he had left behind him several brothers, one of whom, Gildo, had in the year 386 gathered up again some portion of his brother's broken power. We find him, seven years later (in 393), holding the rank of Count of Africa in the Roman official hierarchy. Probably the troubles in the house of Valentinian II had enabled him, though a doubtful friend to the Empire, to force himself into this position. While the great duel between Theodosius and Arbogast was proceeding, he held aloof from the contest, rendering indeed a nominal allegiance to the former, but refusing to send the men or the ships which he called for. Had not the death of Theodosius followed so promptly upon his victory, men said that he would have avenged this insincere adhesion, worse than open enmity, upon the Count of Africa, in a way which would have recalled the early days of Roman history, when Tullus Hostilius tied the dictator of Alba, Mettius Fuffetius, to chariots driven in opposite directions, and so tore asunder the body of him whose mind had wavered between loyalty and treason.

But the great Emperor having died in his prime, Gildo's day of punishment was deferred. Nay, more, he turned to his own account the perennial jealousy existing between the ministers of the Eastern and Western Courts, renounced his allegiance to Rome, and preferred to transfer it to Constantinople. What brought matters to a crisis was his refusal to allow the grain crops of 397 to be conveyed to Rome. Our often-quoted poet represents the Mistress of the World calling, in the agony of hunger, upon Jove, not now with her wonted look of pride; not with that commanding mien with which she dictates her laws to Britain or lays her *fasces* upon trembling India. No, but with weak voice and tardy steps and eyes dimmed of their lustre, with hollow cheeks and thin hunger-wasted arms that scarce could uphold the shield; her unloosed helmet showed her whitened hair, and she trailed her rusted spear feebly behind her. Then, in the bitterness of her soul, she addressed the Thunderer, telling him that her conquest of Carthage had been in vain if Gildo, a meaner and more odious Hannibal, was to lord it over Africa. 'Even the magnitude of my Empire oppresses me. Oh! for the happy days when Veii and the Sabines were my only foes. Oh! that I could return to the old limits and the walls of good King Ancus. Then the harvests of Etruria and Campania, the acres which the Curii and Cincinnatus ploughed and sowed would be sufficient for my need.' The return to these narrow limits, which he introduces as a mere flower of poetry, was nearer than the poet thought.

The Roman Senate declared war in the early winter months of 398 against Gildo. Stilicho, who, of course, undertook the fitting out of the expedition, found a suitable instrument for Rome's chastisement in one who had had cruel wrongs of his own to avenge upon Gildo. This was yet another son of Nabal, Mascezel, who, not favouring his brother's ambitious schemes, had withdrawn to Italy. To punish this defection Gildo had caused his two sons to be slain, and their bodies to be left unburied. Now at the head of a Roman armament consisting of six legions (which ought to have numbered 36,600 men,) Mascezel set forth.

Claudian brings vividly before us the embarkation from the harbour of Pisa, which the shouts of the soldiers and the bustle of the armament filled, even as Agamemnon's warriors made Aulis echo when they were assembling for the war against Troy. Then we see the fleet

set forth : they leave the Riviera on their right, they give a wide berth to Corsica, they reach Sardinia, and land at Cagliari, where they wait for favouring zephyrs.

Here, unfortunately, our mythological poet breaks off, and we are handed over to the very different guidance of the devout but foolish Orosius. He describes how Mascezel, having learned from Theodosius the efficacy of prayer, made sail for the island of Capraria, and there took on board certain holy servants of God (monks) with whom he spent the following days in prayers, fastings, and the recitation of psalms, and thus earned a victory without war, and revenge without the guilt of murder.

For when they reached a river which seems to have been the frontier between Numidia and the province of Carthage, and when he found that on the opposite side the enemy, 60,000 strong, were drawn up prepared to join battle with his inferior numbers, in the night that holy man, Ambrose of Milan, then lately deceased, appeared to him in a vision, and striking the ground thrice with his staff said, 'Here, here, here.' The prophecy was clear: that place was to be the scene of the victory, which they were to achieve on the third day. After waiting the appointed time, and passing the third night in prayers, the singing of hymns, and the celebration of the Sacrament, they moved onward and met their foes with pious words. A standard-bearer of the enemy pressed insolently forward. He was wounded in the arm, the standard fell, the distant cohorts thought that Gildo had given the signal for surrender, and came in by troops to give themselves up to Mascezel. The Count of Africa fled, escaped on ship-board, was pursued, brought back to land, put to death (some say he committed suicide); but all this was done by others, so that the hands and the conscience of Mascezel were clear from his brother's blood, and yet he had the revenge for which he longed. The scene of Gildo's death was Tabraca, a little town still existing under the name Tabarca, on the frontiers of Tunis and Algiers.

And thus the provinces of Africa were for the time won back again for the Empire of the West, and Rome had her corn again *.

The fate of Mascezel, the re-vindicator of Africa, is an enigma. The version given by Zosimus is that generally accepted. He says, that he returned in triumph to Italy; that Stilicho, who was secretly envious of his reputation, professed an earnest desire to advance his interests; but that when the Vandal was going forth to a suburb (probably of Milan), as he was crossing over a certain bridge, with Mascezel and others in his train, at a given signal the guards crowded round the African and hustled him off into the river below. 'Thereat Stilicho laughed, but the stream hurrying the man away, caused him to perish for lack of breath.'

Orosius, however, makes no mention of all this. In his narrative, which is written with a bias towards religious edification, Mascezel, in the hour of his triumph, is described as neglecting the society of the holy men whom he had taken on board at Caprera, and even daring to violate the sanctity of the churches by laying hands on some of the rebels who had taken refuge there. 'The penalty for this sacrilege followed in due course, for after some time he himself was punished under the very eyes and amid the exulting cries of those whom he had thus sought to slay. Thus when he hoped in God he was assisted, and when he despised Him he was put to death.'

This does not seem to describe the same scene as the tumultuary assassination of which Zosimus speaks. As Orosius hates Stilicho, and omits no opportunity of insinuating calumnies against him, his silence appears to outweigh the hostile testimony of Zosimus, who generally leans to the side of detraction. Possibly the Roman ministers who had seen Firmus rise again in Gildo may have feared that Gildo would rise again in Mascezel, and may have determined by fair means or foul to crush the viper's brood of the house of Nabal; but such a crime, committed for reasons of state, however foul a thing in itself, is different from the assassination

prompted by mere personal envy, which has been on insufficient grounds attributed to the Vandal hero.

The glory and power of Stilicho were now nearly at their highest point. Shortly before the expedition against Gildo he had given his daughter Maria in marriage to Honorius, and the father-in-law of the Emperor might rightly be deemed to hold power with a securer grasp than his mere chief minister. In the poem on the nuptials of Honorius and Maria, a poem in which the mythological element—Cupid, Venus, the Nereids, and the like—is more than usually prominent, Claudian seems perplexed to know which he is to praise the most—the Emperor, the bride, or the bride's father. He settles at length, however, on Stilicho, even daring to Bay—

More of our duty e'en our prince hath won
Since thou, unconquered captain, call'st him son.

And to this quarter of the compass, during the remaining six years over which his poems extend, the needle of his Muse's devotion pointed faithfully. He tells us, and one is disposed to believe that the flattery is not wholly baseless, that when Stilicho trod the streets of Rome there was no need of any herald to announce his advent. Even when surrounded by the throng of citizens, his lofty stature, his demeanour, stately yet modest, his voice, accustomed to command, yet free from the loud arrogance of the mere military swashbuckler; above all, his capacious forehead and his hair, touched with an early whiteness by the cares of state, and suggesting the gravity of age combined with the vigour of youth, all proclaimed his presence to the people; all forced the by-stander to exclaim, '*Hic est, hic Stilichon.*' ('This, this can be none else than Stilicho.')

In the same poem, Claudian indulges in anticipations of the birth of a little 'Honorides,' who should climb the knees of his grandfather, an anticipation, however, which was not realised. There was no issue of the marriage, and though there can be no doubt that the birth of an Imperial grandson would have, more than anything else, consolidated the power of Stilicho, even this failure of issue was, at a later day, attributed to the magical arts of Serena and included in the indictment against her too prosperous family.

The years 399 and 400 were memorable ones in the Consular Fasti. For the first of these years, Eutropius, the chamberlain and ruling favourite at the Court of Constantinople, was nominated Consul on behalf of the East, while Mallius Theodoras, a Roman of respectable rank and character, was the colleague given him by the West. For though the Consul's titular dignity was connected properly with Old Rome alone, this divided nomination between the two portions of the Empire seems to have been usual, if not universal.

Slaves and freedmen, even of the degraded class of eunuchs to which Eutropius belonged, had before now, under weak Emperors, and especially under Constantius, exercised great power in the state, but it had been always by keeping themselves in the background and working upon the suspicions or vanity of their lord. But that a slave who had sunk lower and lower in the menial ranks as he passed from one master to another till he at length received his freedom as the contumelious prize of his age and ugliness, that an old and wrinkled eunuch, who had combed the hair of his mistress and fanned her with peacocks' feathers, should sit in the chair of Brutus, be preceded by the lictors with the *fasces*, and affect to command the armies of Rome, was too much for the still remaining pride of the *Senatus Populus Que Romanus*. The populace of Constantinople only laughed at the effeminate voice and faded prettinesses of the Eunuch-Consul, but the Western Capital refused to defile her annals with his name, and wrote down Mallius Theodoras as sole Consul. By a not unnatural blunder, in after years the blank space was filled up by the division of the Western magistrate's name, and the year 399 (a.u.o. 1152) was assigned to 'Mallius et Theodoras, Consules'.

In the following year (400) Stilicho himself was raised to the Consulship. The promotion seems to have come somewhat tardily to one whose power and whose services were so

transcendent, but there was perhaps a reluctance to confer this peculiarly Roman office on one so recently sprung from a barbarian stock. Claudian's muse was roused by this exaltation of his patron to some of her finest efforts. In the trilogy of poems celebrating the first Consulship of Stilicho, the enthusiastic bard furnishes us with many of those details as to the youth and early manhood of the General, which have been already quoted: he describes how he had by the mere terror of his name brought Germany into such a state of subjection and civilisation, that the perplexed traveller sailing down the Rhine was fain to ask himself which was indeed the German, which the Roman shore; he celebrates the civic virtues of his hero, and he doses with a rapturous description of the sports in the amphitheatre which were to celebrate the joyful event, and for which Diana and all her nymphs with glad willingness purveyed the needful animals.

From amidst the prophecies of future glory and victory, which are, as it were, a common form in such compositions, one may be selected which concludes the second poem. The personifications are doubtless less vivid than those of the great Epic Poets, and some of the images are perhaps blurred in the original, and must be yet more so in a translation. Still, as one of the latest mythological pictures in Roman art, and as a forecast of the future of the Empire, delivered at the very commencement of the fifth century (according to our reckoning), the passage may be found not devoid of interest—

The Cuve of Time.

'Far off, in some wild spot, unknown of men,
Scarce to be traced by e'en Immortals' ken,
Yawns the vast Cave, dark mother of the years,
Forth from whose depths each new-born time appears,
Whither it hastes, when ended. All the place
Is girdled by a serpent's coiled embrace:
For ever fresh each green and glittering scale,
And the jaws close upon the back-bent tail,
End and beginning one. Before the Gates
Primeval Nature, stately guardian, waits,
And all around her, as in act to fly,
Hang the swift souls, soon to be bora or die.
Meanwhile a man, of venerable age,
Writes Fate's firm verdicts on his opened page.
He tells the stars, he knows their devious way,
The secret cause of every orb's delay,
And the fixed laws which death and life obey.
He knows what prompts the mazy dance of Mars,
The Thunderer's steadfast course among the stars,
The Moon's swift orbit, Saturn's sluggish pace,
Why Venus, Mercury, haunt Sol's resting-place.
Soon as that threshold feels the Sun-god's feet,
The mighty Mother runs his steps to greet.
That ancient mage, before the sunbeam's glare,
Bends all the snow-white honours of his hair,
And then, self-moved, the adamantine doors
Turn backwards; gleam upon the spacious floors
The conquering rays; Time's mysteries old and new,
In Time's own realm, lie open to the view.

Here, each apportioned to its separate cell,
 By various metals marked, the ages dwell.
 Here are the brazen years, a crowded line,
 Here the stem iron, there the silvern shine.
 Oh! safely guarded, rare for earth to hold,
 Lie the great boons, the ruddy years of gold.
 Of these the Titan chooses the most fair,
 The noble form of Stilicho to wear,
 Bids all the rest to follow, and as they fly
 Salutes them thus, and tells their destiny.
 "Lo! he, for whom the better age so long
 Has tarried, comes, a Consul. Oh ye throng
 Of years that men have yearned for, haste amain
 And all the Virtues carry in your train.
 Once more from you let mighty minds be born,
 The joy of Bacchus, Ceres' wealth of corn.
 Let not the starry Serpent, by the Pole,
 Hiss forth the icy breath that chills the soul:
 Nor with immoderate cold let Ursa rage,
 With heat the Lion; Cancer's heritage
 Let not the fury of the summer burn,
 Nor let Aquarius, of the lavish urn,
 Wash out the seeds from earth with lashing showers.
 Let Phrixus' Ram lead in the spring with flowers,
 But not the Scorpion's hail the olives bruise,
 Nor Virgin! thou the autumnal germs refuse
 Kindly to foster. Dog-star! let the vine
 Grape-crowned, not hear too loud that bark of thine".
 He said and sought the saffron-flaming fields
 And his own vale, which circles and enshields
 A fiery stream. There in a deep-grown glade,
 Where feed his deathless steeds, his steps he stayed,
 Bound with the fragrant flowers his amber hair,
 The manes and bridles of his coursers fair—
 Here served him Lucifer, Aurora there—
 And with them smiling, stood the Year of Gold,
 Proud on his brow the Consul's name to hold.
 Then on its hinge the gate is backward rolled,
 And the stars write the Stilichonian name
 On Rome's eternal calendars of fame.'

CHAPTER XIV.
ARCADIUS.

HITHERTO the course of events has compelled us often to linger by the shores of the Euxine and the Propontis. The barbarians whose fortunes we have been following have rarely lost sight of the Danube. The great Emperor who tamed them has ruled the world from Constantinople. Henceforward it will be our duty to concentrate our attention on the affairs of Western Europe and only to attend to the history of the Eastern Empire, in so far as it may be absolutely necessary to enable us to understand the history of the West. For however true it may be that Theodosius intended to make no permanent division of the Empire, when on his death-bed at Milan he left the East to Arcadius and the West to Honorius, it is not less true that that division, towards which the stream of destiny had long been tending, did practically result from the arrangements then made by him, from the weakness of his sons and from the mutual and envenomed hatred of their ministers. The process of division began in 330, when Constantine dedicated his new capital by the Bosphorus. It ended in 800, when the people of Rome shouted 'Life and Victory to Carolus Augustus, crowned by God, great and pacific Emperor of the Romans'. But if we must connect one date more than another with a process which was thus going forward for nearly half a millennium, undoubtedly that date will be 395, the year of the death of Theodosius.

Recognising this fact, I shall only sketch in brief outline the thirteen years of the reign of Arcadius. We have seen that this prince, nominally lord of half the civilised world, really a man of such feeble and sluggish temperament as to be always the slave of some more powerful character near him, had passed, after the murder of Rufinus, under the dominion of three joint-rulers,—Eutropius the Eunuch, Eudoxia the daughter of a Frankish warrior, and Gainas the Goth. How these three may have divided their power we know not; doubtless there were rivalries and jealousies between them, but for five years they seemed to have pulled the strings of the Imperial puppet in apparent harmony. During this time Eutropius, Superintendent of the Sacred Bedchamber, was the chief figure in the administration of the Empire. He raised up his friends and cast down his enemies. Hosius, once a servant in the kitchen of Theodosius, became Master of the Offices, and Leo, a big swashbuckler soldier, who had once been a wool-comber, and whose chief glory was that he could drink more goblets of wine than any other man in the camp, was made, at a crisis of the fortunes of the State, *Magister Militum per Orientem*. On the other hand, the old general, Abundantius, who had formerly been one of the many masters of the despised and elderly Eunuch, and who, by introducing him to the Court, had laid the foundations of his future greatness, had to atone for too vividly recalling to the upstart Minister the memories of past degradation. He was banished to Pityus, at the eastern end of the Black Sea, under the roots of Caucasus, where only the charity of the barbarians prevented him from perishing with hunger. Timasius, the old general of Theodosius, who had been threatened with the anger of Rufinus, fell before the yet deadlier enmity of Eutropius. An unworthy confidant of the general's, Bargus the sausage-seller, was persuaded to accuse his patron of treasonable designs upon the throne; forged letters were adduced in support of the charge: Timasius was condemned and banished to the great Oasis in the Libyan desert in the west of Egypt. His son, Syagrius, sought to deliver him from that terrible place of exile, surrounded with vast wildernesses in which no creature could live: and it was said that he had hired a band of robbers to assist him in his pious design, but whether he failed to communicate with his father, whether the sand of the desert swallowed up both father and son, or whether

both escaped and lingered out inglorious lives among the savage tribes of the Soudan, was never ascertained. Enough that both Timasius and Bargas vanished from the eyes of men.

The pampered menial who could make his anger thus terrible to his foes was of course soon surrounded by a crowd of sycophants. Ignoble natures always prostrate themselves before the possessor of power, and the same kind of persons who now grovel before a democracy then vied with each other for the honour of shaking the hand of the Eunuch, clasped his knees, kissed his wrinkled cheeks, and hailed him as 'Defender of the Laws' and 'Father of the Emperor.' Statues were erected to him in all the chief cities of the East. In some he was represented as a judge clad in solemn toga: in others he was a mailed horseman: and the inscriptions on the bases of the statues dared to talk of his noble birth (though men were still living who had bought and sold him as a slave), to declare that he, the Chamberlain, had fought great battles and won them without others' help, or to call him the third founder of the City of Constantinople.'

Meanwhile, Eutropius was accumulating vast stores of wealth. The greater part of the confiscated property of Rufinus found its way into his hands; and as it soon became manifest that his word was all-powerful with Arcadius in the selection of governors of the provinces, he was able to coin this influence into gold, and according to Claudian's account of the matter, actually set up a kind of domestic mart at which prefectures and governorships were openly sold to the highest bidder. 'All the lands between Tigris and the Balkans are put to sale by this hucksterer of Empire. One man sells his villa for the government of Asia; another with his wife's jewels purchases Syria; a third thinks he has bought Bithynia too dear at the sacrifice of the home of his fathers. A tariff fixed on the Eunuch's door distinguishes the price of the various nations; so many sesterces for Galatia, so many for Pontus, so many for Lydia. If you wish to rule Lycia, pay down so many thousands.

For Phrygia you must pay me something more.

'Tis thus he bargains. He, oft sold before,

Now fain would sell us all, and branded see

Upon our brows his mark of infamy

One good deed and memorable in the history of the John Christian Church marked the administration of Eutropius. On the death of Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, long and fierce debates arose as to the choice of his successor. Eutropius, who with all his vices was not wanting in penetration and insight into character, appears to have suggested the name of John Chrysostom, to whose eloquent discourses he had listened during a recent visit to Antioch. The suggestion pleased both clergy and people; the golden-mouthed preacher was unanimously elected to the vacant see. An order was sent to Asterius, Count of the East, who, according to the somewhat high-handed fashion usual in those days in dealing with bishops-elect, captured the unwilling preacher, delivered him to the Imperial officers, and sent him in honourable custody to the city, with which his name was thenceforward to be for ever associated.

The degrading yoke of the Eunuch-chamberlain was not borne without a murmur by the nobles of Constantinople. There was a party, headed by the high-souled and cultivated Aurelian, which dared to protest with increasing boldness against the ascendancy of court-lackeys within the palace, and Gothic soldiers without. To this party Synesius of Cyrene attached himself. He had come, a young man of about twenty-seven, on a mission from his native city to offer a golden wreath to the Emperor and to obtain some remission of the crushing taxation under which the Cyrenaic province was groaning. For more than a year he had been in vain pleading for an audience with the Emperor. The covetous Eunuch, who had no desire to see the quotations of provincial governorships lowered by any alleviation of their burdens, kept the doors of the palace fast closed against him. At length, however, the opportunity of Synesius came. It was the year 399, the year when the Fasti were soiled by the

disgraceful Consulship of Eutropius; but it was also the year in which, by some means unknown to us, Aurelian obtained the commanding position of Praetorian Prefect. From this high vantage-ground he was able effectually to help the young orator, and thus it was that, apparently in the beginning of the year, Synesius, admitted into the palace, delivered before Arcadius his celebrated oration 'on Kingship.'

It was a striking scene: the young and eloquent deputy from Cyrene standing up in the midst of that brilliant assemblage to lecture the short, sallow, sleepy-eyed young man, who was hailed as Lord of the Universe, on the duties of his office. If Synesius really uttered half the bold and noble words which appear in his published oration, it is a marvel that he was not at once arrested on a charge of *laesa majestas*; but while, on the one hand, he may well have added weight to his sentences at a later day in the secure seclusion of Cyrene, on the other hand, it was safe to presume on the lethargy of the lectured Emperor.

Where Theodosius would have been listening with flushed face and on the point of bursting forth in a passion of uncontrollable rage, the heavy-eyed Arcadius yawned and wondered how soon the oration of the young deputy from Cyrene would be ended.

'The Emperor,' said the young orator, 'ought to know the faces of his soldiers, to endear himself to them by sharing their hardships and their dangers, to make himself acquainted with the wants and grievances of his subjects by visiting the provinces in person. The great Caesars of Rome lived in the open air, feared not to expose themselves to the noontide sun and to the winter's wind, lived under tents, were seen by the peasant and the legionary. The notion that the sovereign should shut himself up in his palace, beheld only by adoring courtiers, surrounded by tall, fair-haired guards, with golden shields and golden lances, perfumed with essences and odours, this seclusion and idolatry of the Emperor is a custom borrowed from the barbarians and if persisted in will ruin the Republic, whose fortune even now hangs, as it were, on a razor's edge. For while the Emperor is shutting himself up in his palace, living the life of a polypus, occupying himself only with the pleasures of the table or with the buffooneries of low comedians, the barbarians are pressing into our armies, urging every day more audacious claims, yea, have already kindled rebellion in some provinces of the Empire. Their chiefs, raised to high military command, are taking their seats in the Senate. They wear the Roman toga, condescending so far to our usages when they are figuring as officers of the State, but as soon as they re-enter their dwellings they hasten to throw off the civic gown, declaring that it hinders the drawing of the sword. The true patriot Emperor will find this to be his first task, cautiously, but firmly, to weed out the barbarians from his army, and make that army what it once was, Roman.'

The patriotic oration of Synesius awoke no echo in the soul of Arcadius, but it was contemporaneous with and may possibly have been in part the cause of certain events which made the year 399 memorable in the history of the Eastern Empire. Eutropius the venal chamberlain, Eudoxia the Frankish empress, and Gainas the Gothic general, had, as we have seen, for some years been helping one another to misgovern the Empire; but in 399, the year of Eutropius' consulship, this disastrous coalition was dissolved, chiefly, it would seem, by the overweening arrogance and insatiable rapacity of the Eunuch-Consul, but also partly by the inherent tendency of all coalitions which are founded merely on a selfish desire to appropriate the honours and emoluments of the State, to break down sooner or later under the warring ambitions of their members.

Early in the year tidings came to Constantinople of untoward events in the inland province of Phrygia. A colony of Greuthungi, who had been settled there probably after the great victory which Promotus gained over their invading hordes, had broken out into open revolt, and were marching hither and thither, entering and plundering at their will the wealthy cities, whose mouldering walls and unrepaired battlements bore witness to the deep peace

which had long reigned in the provinces of Asia. The leader of the insurrection was Tribigild the Ostrogoth, a kinsman of Gainas, who, though he had attained the rank of a Count, complained that his services as a captain of *foederati* had not been rewarded with the promotion which they deserved.

When these tidings reached the Imperial Court, Eutropius at first affected to treat them with indifference. 'A little band of malefactors,' said he, 'is wandering about in Phrygia. They need the scourge of the lictor, not the darts of the soldier, to repress their outrages.' But this ostrich-like policy of ignoring the danger of the Empire availed not long. When it had obviously failed, Eutropius affected a new and martial ardour, and men saw with amused wonder the elderly slave donning the terrible habiliments of war, and trying to utter the words of command in his thin and quavering falsetto. But it was needful to appoint generals for the war; and while the defence of Europe was entrusted to Gainas, Leo, the burly but incapable favourite of Eutropius, had the Asiatic campaign entrusted to his care. His troops, already demoralised by too long enjoyment of the pleasures of the town, gained nothing from the leadership of such a man. There was no proper vigilance on the march; the sentinels were not properly posted on the ramparts of the camp; at length there came a night when the whole army was surprised in its drunken slumber. Some were killed in their sleep; of the fugitives many were soon floundering in a morass which bordered the camp. Among these last was Leo himself, who certainly perished, though we need not take as literally true the poet's statement that he died of terror—

Leo himself, more timid than the deer,
 Springs on his steed, with teeth that chatter fear:
 The horse perspiring 'neath that mighty mass,
 Soon falls and struggles in the swift morass.
 Then shrieked the general: lo! the gentle wind
 Brought down a shower of shaken leaves behind.
 Each leaf, to Leo's terror, seemed a dart,
 And terror struck, like javelins, to his heart.
 With skin untouched, and hurt by fear alone,
 He breathed his guilty life out with a groan.

Fall of Eutropius.

It may possibly have been the failure of the general, who was Eutropius' favourite, and the knowledge of the unpopularity which he had thus incurred, that emboldened his two former allies, but present enemies, to declare themselves against him. Gainas, like Tribigild, was dissatisfied with his share in the plunder of an Empire, and probably contrasted enviously the rewards given to Alaric with his own. Eudoxia had long fretted under the Eunuch's arrogance, and had been forced—so men said—to hear from him the insulting words, 'Beware, oh lady! The hand which raised thee to the throne can easily pull thee down from thence'. It was Eudoxia who dealt the fatal blow to the Eunuch's power. She suddenly appeared before the Emperor, holding her little two-year-old daughter Flaccilla by the hand, and with her baby, Pulcheria, in her arms, to complain of the insolence of Eutropius. She stretched forth her children and wept: the children wept also; and Arcadius, goaded into energy by their mingled cries, at once gave orders for the fall of the detested Minister.

When he saw that his position in the Palace was undermined, Eutropius at once gave up the game. He knew that he had countless enemies, he doubted if he had one faithful friend, and his own heart gave him no counsels of courage or of hope. He fled to the great church of St. Sophia, and there at the altar sought an asylum from his foes. He himself in the days of his power had grudged this last refuge to Pentadia, the widow of his victim Timasius, and had caused a law to be passed, removing, or at least abridging, the right of asylum in the churches.

Now, however, the church, with splendid magnanimity, threw her aegis over her fallen foe. When Chrysostom entered the Cathedral he found Eutropius, in sordid garb, his thin grey hairs covered with dust, clinging in an agony of terror to the table of refuge. The soldiers soon appeared and demanded the surrender of the fugitive, but Chrysostom boldly told them that they should penetrate into the sanctuary only over his dead body, since, living, he would never betray the honour of the Church, the Bride of Christ. A day passed in negotiations between the Cathedral and the Palace. The mob in the Hippodrome, the troops before the royal dwelling, shouted for the head of the fallen Minister; but Chrysostom remained firm, and Arcadius, yielding to the ascendancy of that noble nature, besought the soldiers with tears not to violate the sanctity of the altar.

The next day was Sunday, and the proudest day in the life of the golden mouthed orator. A vast crowd of men and women flocked to the Cathedral, and when Chrysostom mounted the pulpit, the curtain between the nave and the chancel was drawn aside, and all the throng beheld the Superintendent of the Sacred Bedchamber, the Consul who gave his name to the year, the lately omnipotent Eutropius, lying prostrate in over-mastering fear under the Holy Table. The Bishop chose his text from 'the Preacher' of a date earlier by fourteen centuries, 'Vanity of vanities : all is vanity'. In eloquent words he described the pomps and revels, the troops of flatterers and the gay garlands which had once made up this man's felicity, contrasting them with the forlorn condition of the wretch who was weeping and trembling under the altar. Eutropius himself probably cared little what the Bishop said, so long as he did not surrender him to the terrible *Silentiarius*, who was chafing and fuming outside; but there were many who thought the preacher's eloquence ill-timed, and that there was something ungenerous in delivering a sermon which was in fact a bitter invective against a foe so utterly fallen

Before many days had passed, Eutropius came forth from his asylum, induced, it was said, by a promise that his life should be spared. His goods were confiscated, the consular annals were 'vindicated from the foul taint and muddy defilement brought upon them by the mention of his name.' His statues, in brass and marble, were pulled down 'that this infamy of our age may no longer pollute our vision', and he was banished under strict custody to the island of Cyprus. Even thence, however, he was recalled. Gainas, now his open enemy, clamoured for his head, declaring that his kinsman Tribigild would never be reconciled so long as Eutropius remained alive. Eudoxia probably urged her shrill entreaties on the same side. There remained the difficulty of the Imperial promise, perhaps the Imperial oath, that the culprit's life should be spared: but a way was found out of this difficulty. It was alleged that the promise had been that he should not be killed at Constantinople, and he was therefore brought back only as far as Chalcedon, the fair Asiatic city which rose opposite to Constantinople, and there the Eunuch met his doom.

After the fall of Eutropius the history of the rebellion of Tribigild and Gainas becomes more and more unintelligible and obscure. Tribigild, instead of pushing westward and overrunning the opulent plains of Lydia (which, Zosimus thinks, he might successfully have accomplished), wasted his strength in border warfare with the strongly-posted dwellers in mountainous Pisidia. Then, accompanied only by the remnants of his army, he made his way across the Hellespont into Thrace, and there soon afterwards perished. Gainas at first played the part of candid friend to the Empire, recommending the concession of one point after another to Tribigild, in order to soothe his resentment, and secretly encouraging the desertions of the *foederati* under his command to the rebel standard; but when the reverses of Tribigild made this part impossible, he threw off the mask and stood revealed as the real author of the rebellion. At his request Arcadius consented to meet him in conference at the church of St Euphemia, outside the gates of Chalcedon. His principal demand was for the surrender of three men who were the chiefs of the 'Roman' or national party within the city, and whose surrender,

as he expected, would give his partisans a predominant influence in the State. These three men were Saturninus, the consul for 383, whose successful negotiations with the Goths seventeen years ago, had given the *foederati* their present position of vantage in the army: Aurelian, the consul-designate for 400 (colleague of Stilicho in that office); and Joannes, a friend, some said a favoured lover, of the Empress. Even Arcadius seems to have recoiled from the baseness of giving up these men to the barbarian; but Aurelian and Saturninus came forward of their own accord, and with something of the old Roman spirit voluntarily offered themselves for the good of their country. Gainas was touched by their patriotic devotion; perhaps Chrysostom added his intercession: at any rate, the Goth was content to insult them with his clemency. They were led out as if to death: the executioner brandished his drawn sword; but when the blade had touched the skin of their necks they were told that their lives were spared, but their possessions confiscated, and that they might go forth into poverty and exile.

The result of the interview between Gainas and the Emperor seems to have been the complete ascendancy of the Gothic party in Constantinople. 'The city was altogether barbarised' is the expressive sentence of a historian, 'and all who dwelt in it were treated after the manner of captives. So great was the danger impending over the city, that a very large comet was visible in the heavens. But as some counterpoise to the terror of the comet, tall and fair angels in the guise of heavy-armed soldiers stood round the palace one night, and terrified the barbarians into the abandonment of their design to set it on fire.

Up to the time of his overthrow of Eutropius, Gainas had shown both courage and resource, but now success made him languid and weak of will. Like so many another barbarian leader, when he had the Roman Empire at his feet, he did not know whether he himself wished to destroy or to preserve it. He loudly demanded the cession of one church in the city to his Arian co-religionists; but under the scathing invective of Chrysostom, who reminded him that he had come as a fugitive and an outcast into the great Roman republic, and had solemnly sworn to Theodosius that he would yield true obedience to its laws, he flinched from that request. Then he thought of making a raid on the shops of the silversmiths, but the shopkeepers got wind of his design, and locked up their tempting wares. The angelic guards (whoever they may have been) frustrated his design of setting fire to the palace. At length he flung out of the city, in a fever of vexation and rage with himself and everyone about him, giving out that he was possessed with a demon, and would go to worship at the Church of St. John the Apostle, seven miles outside Constantinople.

Apparently when he left the city it was with some fury design of returning and besieging it in regular form, while his attack was to be seconded by his partisans within the walls; but this design, if it were ever clearly thought out, was frustrated by a conflict which suddenly arose between the Goths in Constantinople in July, and the citizens. The uncomprehended jabberings of an old beggar woman at one of the gates, her harsh treatment by a Gothic soldier, and the championship of the poor old creature by a brave Roman, were the sparks which kindled this flame of war. The citizens who had long been chafing under the arrogant demeanour of the *foederati*, fought bravely, arming themselves in part with the weapons of their dead foes; and in that age, before the invention of gunpowder, a vast and resolute multitude could probably always prevail in street-fighting over a comparatively small number even of disciplined troops. At any rate, so it was that the fortune of war went against the Goths (at last reduced to a troop of 7000 men), who retired, slowly and in fighting order, to 'the Gothic Church,' which was near the Imperial palace. The excited crowd wrung from Arcadius by their clamours leave to disregard the sanctity of the Gothic asylum. The church was partially unroofed, and burning firebrands, hurled down among its wooden seats, kindled a flame in which the Gothic remnant perished.

The sudden popular fury had delivered the capital of the East from the only serious risk which it ran of capture by the Goths. Gainas, who was now declared a public enemy by the Senate, withdrew with his army to the Northern shore of the Hellespont. Fravitta, the brave and loyal heathen Goth, whom we last met with, engaged in deadly debate with Eriulph on the question whether to observe or to break their oaths of fidelity to Theodosius, was appointed as Imperial general. This man, though broken in health, was still full of courage and skill in war. He cooped up the enemy in the wasted Thracian Chersonnese, and when at length Gainas was compelled by hunger to attempt on rafts the passage of the Hellespont, Fravitta, with his swift and brazen-beaked Liburnian galleys, dealt such destruction to the frail flotilla that Gainas found himself practically left without an army. He fled to the shores of the Danube where Uldis the Hun found him wandering with few followers, and, thinking to earn the favour of the Emperor, surrounded his little army, and after many skirmishes, slew him fighting bravely. The head of Gainas, sent as a present to Arcadius, caused great joy to the citizens of Constantinople, and was the seal of a new foedus between the Empire and the Huns.

As for Fravitta, when he returned to Constantinople, though some sagacious critics censured him for too languid a pursuit of the foe, the Emperor received him with all honour, decorated him with the Consulship, and asked him to name his own reward for such signal services. 'That I may be allowed to serve God after the manner of my forefathers' was the reply of the honest and simple-minded heathen.

The failure of Gainas in his attempt to make himself master of the New Rome deserves to be remembered when we find ourselves spectators of the success of Alaric in his similar enterprise against the Old Rome. It suggests also a question whether it was on the whole a gain or a loss to the world that Constantinople was not taken by a Teutonic chief and did not become the seat of a German monarchy. On the one side is the immense gain to civilisation implied in the preservation of the treasures of Greek literature and science for more than 1000 years after the victory of Fravitta. On the other is the possibility that a Teutonic monarchy by the Bosphorus might have poured fresh life and vigour into the exhausted nations of the East, might have saved Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt from the flood of Arab invasion, perhaps might, by changing the conditions of human society, have prevented the uprising of the Empire of Islam.

The remainder of the reign of Arcadius was chiefly occupied with the dissensions which led to the deposition and banishment of Chrysostom. That well-known page of ecclesiastical history must be very briefly written here. We may notice, however, the fact that in the earlier and happier years of the great preacher's episcopate he seems to have devoted himself with much success to the conversion of the Goths. A church at Constantinople was especially set apart for religious services in the Gothic tongue. Priests, deacons, and readers acquainted with that language were ordained to minister to the barbarians, and Chrysostom himself frequently appeared in the pulpit of the church and addressed them by the aid of an interpreter. Missionaries were sent by him to some of the wandering tribes, possibly Goths, possibly Huns, who, 'dwelling by the banks of the Danube, thirsted for the waters of salvation and he wrote to the Bishop of Angora, urging him to undertake the conversion (doubtless the conversion from Arianism to Orthodoxy) of the 'Scythians,' by whom we must probably understand the Ostrogoths settled in Central Asia Minor.

But both the virtues and the failings of the golden-mouthed preacher conspired to effect his downfall. He was too holy, too apostolic a man to fill acceptably an episcopal throne in the Constantinople of the fifth century. In his denunciations of the foppery and extravagance of the male and female dandies of Constantinople he showed a vehemence, sometimes, we must confess, a pettiness of criticism which, while it of course exasperated the objects of his invective, may have been felt by his more sober-minded hearers to be scarcely worthy of the

dignity of his great office. Before many years had passed, the Bishop had arrayed against him all the gaily-dressed and fashionable ladies of Constantinople with the Empress at their head, many of the nobles, and not a few of his own clergy, and of the monks in the capital who chafed under the strictness of his discipline, so different from the lax government of his easy-tempered predecessor. All these smouldering embers were blown into a flame by Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, who had favoured the election of another candidate to the vacant see and in whom ecclesiastical Alexandria's jealousy of ecclesiastical Constantinople found its most violent and unscrupulous representative. A council was held under the presidency of Theophilus outside of Chalcedon (the 'Synod of the Oak'), at which on the most paltry charges and with an utter disregard of canonical order, Chrysostom was deposed from his see, chiefly by the votes of the Egyptian bishops, ignorant partisans of Theophilus. Chrysostom appealed from the decision of the Synod to a lawful general council; but now came the opportunity of the temporal power, guided by that hot-blooded Frankish lady, Eudoxia. Believing that the Bishop had in one of his sermons covertly alluded to her as Jezebel, she caused her submissive husband to issue a rescript ratifying the sentence of deposition and ordering that the deposed prelate should be banished. After a touching farewell to his flock, Chrysostom gave himself up to the Imperial officers, and was hurried across the Bosphorus into Bithynia.

But if the golden-mouthed prelate had bitter enemies in Constantinople he had also many enthusiastic friends. The crowds which had flocked to hear him preach in the great basilica, which had applauded his denunciations of the follies of the rich, and had been consoled by his cheering words when the city was threatened by the fierce hosts of Gainas, saw now with anger and fear the pulpit empty of its greatest ornament. An earthquake which happened shortly after the banishment of the Bishop increased the general uneasiness. There was a tumultuous uprising in the capital, which caused Theophilus to return in all haste to Alexandria. The Court-party felt that they had gone too far. Arcadius signed the order for the recall of Chrysostom, and Eudoxia sent her chief eunuch, Briso, to meet him with an autograph letter in which she called God to witness that she was guiltless of any machinations against the holy man who had baptised her children.

Thus did Chrysostom return, and was at first loud in his praises of the gracious Augusta who had exerted herself on his behalf. But soon the old enmities broke forth again. A silver statue of Eudoxia, mounted on a high column of porphyry, was dedicated with halfpagan rites on a Sunday in the Forum near the Church of St. Sophia. The noise of the heathenish merry-making disturbed the too scanty worshippers in the Church, and Chrysostom poured forth his indignation in a splendid torrent of angry eloquence. The words which he used, severe enough in themselves, were magnified by the rumour which bore them to the Empress. Even posterity has been similarly deceived, for the Church historians, Socrates and Sozomen, report (as it is now believed quite erroneously) that on this occasion the Bishop used the famous words, 'Again Herodias rages, again she dances, again she demands the head of John.' There was again open enmity between the great preacher and the Court-party; another council was assembled which confirmed the deposition pronounced by the Synod of the Oak, and after some weeks of tumult and violence, Chrysostom was at last persuaded to go quietly on board the vessel which was once more to bear him across the Bosphorus, this time never to return. He was taken first to Cucusus, a desolate village in the high uplands of Taurus, on the borders of Cilicia and Lesser Armenia. The bitter winter-cold of that mountainous region, and the marauding ravages of the Isaurians, made his abode in this place full of hardship, and he was already quite broken in health when, after three years of exile, the order arrived for his transference from Taurus to Caucasus, from the desolate Cilician village to the yet more inhospitable Pityus on the Colchian shore of the Black Sea. But he never survived, probably

was not expected to survive, to the end of the journey. Worn out with fatigue and the cruelty of his guards, he died at Comana in Pontus before he had reached the waters of the Euxine.

The story of Chrysostom irresistibly suggests both by analogy and by contrast the story of the other great preacher, his contemporary, Ambrose. Both were of high birth : both coupled their names with the events of a great insurrection—Chrysostom with the riot at Antioch, Ambrose with the massacre of Thessalonica. Both were called upon to face the fury of a woman wielding absolute power through her ascendancy over an incapable Emperor; but while Ambrose gained a signal triumph over Justina, Chrysostom died broken-hearted and in exile, a victim to the vengeance of Eudoxia.

And their fortunes were typical of the fortunes of the churches which they represented. Ambrose, as we have already noted, stands at the head of a long line of courageous and somewhat domineering churchmen who made the Caesars of the West tremble before them. Chrysostom's successors, perhaps disheartened by his fate, scarcely ever ventured on anything but the mildest remonstrance with the Emperor at Constantinople. The absolute ascendancy in the Church which the Sovereign thus obtained, 'Caesaro-papism,' as it is now the fashion to call it, was a remarkable feature in the constitution of the Eastern Empire, and one which is reproduced in its northern descendant.

The Church of Russia in our own day acknowledges as her spiritual head the Autocrat of all the Russias, the Holy and Orthodox Czar.

Old and feeble as he was, Chrysostom survived his arch-foe Eudoxia, who died in childbed 6th of October, 404. Who thereupon assumed the reins of government over Arcadius the meagre chronicles of his reign do not inform us. He himself died on the 1st of May, 408, and his death, as we shall see, led indirectly to certain momentous results in connection with the Empire of the West. Arcadius was still only in his thirty-first year at the time of his death. These sluggish Theodosians had not energy enough even to live.

CHAPTER XV.

ALARIC'S FIRST INVASION OF ITALY.

The year of gold, which was honoured by Stilicho's Consulship, and which, according to our computation, closed the century that had witnessed the foundation of Constantinople and the marriage between Christianity and the Empire, saw also Alaric's first invasion of Italy. The details of this inroad are supplied to us with a'most sparing hand by the few historians who mention it, and even their meagre facts are not easy to reconcile with one another. The discussion of some of these difficulties is postponed to the note at the end of this chapter. In the meantime the following narrative is submitted to the reader as upon the whole the most probable that can be constructed out of the varying accounts of the authorities; but there is scarcely an event in it which can be stated with certainty, except the battle of Pollentia, and even that, as to its date, its cause, and its issue, is involved in perplexity and contradiction.

In the course of the year 400 Alaric descended into Italy with an army, which, as so often in the case of these barbaric campaigns, was not an army but a nation. Determined not to return to Illyria, but to obtain, by force or persuasion, a settlement for his people on the Italian soil, he brought with him his wife and children, the families of his warriors, all the spoil which he had taken in Greece, all the treasures which he had accumulated during his rule in Eastern Illyricum. He marched from Belgrade up the valley of the Save by Laybach and the well-remembered pass of the Pear-Tree. This road, the one by which most of the great invasions of Italy in the fifth century were made, presents, as has been before remarked, nothing of truly Alpine difficulty. It is mountainous; it would furnish to an active general many opportunities for harassing such an army as that of Alaric, encumbered with women and waggons, but there is no feature of natural difficulty about it which our own Wales or Cumberland could not equal or surpass.

Precisely, however, because of the comparatively defenceless character of this part of the Italian frontier, the wise forethought of Senate and Emperors had planted in this corner of the Venetian plain the great colony, port and arsenal of Aquileia, whose towers were visible to the soldiers of Alaric's army as they wound round the last spurs of the Julian Alps, descending into the valley of the Isonzo. Aquileia was still the Virgin-fortress, the Metz of Imperial Italy, and not even Alaric was to rob her of her impregnable glory. A battle took place under her walls, in which the Romans suffered a disastrous defeat; but the city—we may say with almost absolute certainty—did not surrender. Remembering, it may be, Frigidern's exclamation that "He did not make war upon stone walls", Alaric moved forward through Venetia. Across his road to Rome lay the strong city of Ravenna, guarded by a labyrinth of waters. He penetrated as far as the bridge, afterwards called the bridge of Candidianus, within three miles of the city, but he eventually retired from the untaken strong-hold, and abandoning it would seem for the present his designs on Home, marched westwards towards Milan.

These operations may perhaps have occupied Alaric from the summer of 400 to that of 401. His progress seems slow and his movements uncertain, but some of the delay may be accounted for by the fact that he was acting in concert with another invader. This was "Radagaisus the Goth", a man as to whose nationality something will have to be said when, five years later, he conducts an army into the heart of Italy on his own sole account. For the present all that can be said is that he entered Italy in concert with Alaric in the year 400, and that during that and the following year we have mysterious allusions from the pen of Claudian

to some great troubles going on in Rhaetia (Tyrol and the Grisons), which province now formed part of Italy. As these troubles were sufficient to keep a large part of the Roman troops employed, and to require the presence of Stilicho at a time when even the Emperors sacred person was in danger, it is at least a permissible conjecture that they were due to the invasion of Radagaisus, who was operating from the North, and trying to descend into Italy by the Brenner or the Splugen Pass, while Alaric was carrying on the campaign in the East, and endeavouring to reduce the fortresses of Venetia.

The movements of Honorius and Stilicho, the nominal and the real rulers of Italy, in response to this invasion, cannot be described with certainty. It would seem that the Rhaetian attack was the one which, at any rate during the first two campaigns, claimed the largest share of Stilicho's attention. If we could place entire dependence on the dates of the laws in the Theodosian code (which profess to indicate the residence of the Emperor on the day of the promulgation of each enactment), we should say that Honorius spent the greater part of the years 400, 401, and 402 at Milan, that in the spring and autumn of 400 he made two journeys to Aquileia and Ravenna, and that before December of 402 he had taken up his residence at Ravenna, which place was his home for the remainder of his life. Unfortunately the editing of these laws has not been done with sufficient accuracy to allow us to quote these dates with absolute confidence, but there is nothing in them which is at variance with the view here put forward of the progress of Alaric's campaign. After several months had been consumed by the Visigotli in his operations before Aquileia and Ravenna he advanced, in the year 401, up the valley of the Po, and besieged Honorius either in Milan or possibly in the strong city of Asti (Asta in Piedmont).

Throughout the Roman world the consternation was extreme when it was known that the Goths, in overwhelming numbers, were indeed in Italy. A rumour like that of the fall of Sebastopol after the battle of the Alma, born none knew where, propagated none knew how, travelled fast over Britain, Gaul, and Spain, to the effect that the daring attempt of Alaric had already succeeded, that the city was even now his prey.

Claudian draws, in his murkiest colours, a picture of the gloom which prevailed at the Imperial Court. Supernatural terrors deepened the darkness of a prospect dreary enough to political science. There were dismal dreams, whisperings of sinister prophecies in the Sibylline roll, eclipses of the moon, great hail-storms, untimely swarms of bees, and, worse than these, a comet, which first appeared in Cepheus and Cassiopeia, and then travelled on into the Seven Stars of Charles's Wain, too plainly foreboding danger from the Gothic waggon. But the worst portent was that of the two wolves. Starting up under the very eyes of the Emperor while he was reviewing some squadrons of cavalry, they attacked the soldiers, who slew them with their darts. Strange to tell, inside of each was found a human hand, one right, one left, with clenched fingers, and still ruddy as if in life. The she-wolf being the emblem of Rome, how could the Fates more clearly indicate that her power was endangered, and that both in the East and West she was to suffer some grievous amputation?

Already the Italian nobles, the Emperor apparently consenting, were deliberating whether they should take to their ships, should flee to Corsica or Sardinia, or should plant a new Rome on the banks of the Saone or the Rhone. Stilicho alone, says the panegyrist, stood unterrified, and prophesied of the salvation which he himself was to achieve. "Cease your unmanly lamentations, your foolish forebodings", he adjured them. "The Goths have, it is true, perfidiously stolen into our country while our troops were busy in Rhaetia. But Italy has borne and overborne worse shocks of fate than this — the Gallic inroad, the irruptions of the Cimbri and Teutones. And if Latium were to fall, if you did basely abandon your mother-land to the northern hosts, how long, think you, would you be left in safety beside the streams of Gaul? No; tarry here in Italy through the winter, while the flooded rivers of Lombardy delay the

march of Alaric. I will go to the North to collect an army from the garrisons yonder, and will return, after a short delay, to vindicate the insulted majesty of Rome. And think not, my fellow-citizens, that I shall not share your anxieties, for, though absent myself, I leave in your midst my wife, my children, and that son-in-law who is dearer to me than life".

So saying, he departed. He sailed in a little skiff up the olive-bordered Lake of Como. Then in the depth of winter (the winter of 401-2), he directed his course towards the province of Rhaetia, that province which gives birth to two rivers, the Danube and the Rhine, each of which serves as a bulwark to the realm of Romulus. But that side of Rhaetia which is turned towards Italy raises its peaks and ridges high towards the stars, and its passes, even in summer, are perilous for the traveller. Many in that terrible frost, as if at the sight of a Gorgon, have stiffened into stone: many have been whelmed in fathomless abysses, the waggons, the oxen which drew them, and the drivers being all sucked at once into the sparkling gulf. Often, under the south-wind's treacherous breath, the whole mountain seems to be loosed from its icy fetters, and rushes in ruin on the traveller's head.

Through scenes like these, in winter's thickest snow
 Upon his dauntless course, pressed Stilicho.
 No genial juice to Bacchus there is horn,
 And Ceres reaps a niggard store of corn.
 But he,—his armour never laid aside—
 Tasted the hurried meal, well satisfied;
 And, still encumbered with his dripping vest,
 Into his frozen steed the rowel pressed.
 On no soft couch his wearied members lay,
 But when dark night cut short his arduous way
 He sought such shelter as some wild beast's cave,
 Or mountain-shepherd's hut to slumber gave,
 The shield his only pillow. Pale with fear
 Surveyed his mighty guest the mountaineer.
 And the rude housewife bade her squalid race
 Gaze on the unkuown stranger's glorious face.
 Those couches hard the horrent woods below,
 Those slumbers under canopies of snow,
 Those wakeful toils of his, that ceaseless care
 Gave to the world this respite, did prepare
 For us unhoped-for rest. From dreadful doom
 He, in those Alpine huts, redeemed thee, PRome

In the course of this Rhaetian campaign, Stilicho seems to have effectually repelled the invading hosts, who, according to the view here maintained, under the leadership of Rhadagaisus, were threatening Italy from the North. He not only pushed them back into their settlements by the Danube, but he also raised, in these trans-Alpine provinces and among these half-rebellious tribes, an army which was suited in numbers to its work, "not so great as to be burdensome to Italy or formidable to its ruler". "The troops which had lately defended Rhaetia came, loaded with spoil, to the rescue of Italy". At the same time the legions were withdrawn from other countries to shelter Rome. The Rhine was left bare of Roman troops, and the Twentieth Legion, one of three which had for centuries been stationed in Britain, generally at Chester, was now removed finally from service in this island.

The clouds which have gathered round the movements of both the rival chiefs at length lift, partially, and we find them face to face with one another at Pollentia during the season of Easter, 402. About twenty miles south-east of Turin, on the meet at left bank of the Tanaro, in the great alluvial plain which is here Piedmont, but a little further east will be Lombardy, still stands the little village of Pollenzo, which by its ruined theatre and amphitheatre yet shows traces of the clays when it was a flourishing Roman municipality, renowned for its manufactures of dark woollen cloth and of earthenware. This was the place which Alaric and his Goths were now besieging.

Sieges, as has been before remarked, were generally unfortunate to the Northern warriors, whose inroads were, as a rule, most successful when they pushed boldly on through the fertile country, neglecting the fortresses, and despising the troops that garrisoned them. It may be that already a doubt of the prosperous issue of the invasion had dawned upon some of the Gothic veterans, and that some such divided counsels as Claudian describes in the following sketch existed in the camp.

"The long-haired fathers of the Gothic nation, their fur-clad senators marked with many an honourable scar, assembled. The old men leaned on their tall clubs instead of staves. One of the most venerable of these veterans arose, fixed his eyes upon the ground, shook his white and shaggy locks and spoke:

Thirty years have now elapsed since first we crossed the Danube and confronted the might of Rome. But never, believe me in this, O Alaric, did the weight of adverse battle lie so heavy on us as now. Trust the old chief who, like a father, once dandled thee in his arms, who gave thee thy first tiny quiver. Often have I, in vain, admonished thee to keep thy treaty with Rome, and remain safely within the limits of the Eastern realm. But now, at any rate while thou still art able, return, flee the Italian soil. Why talk to us perpetually of the fruitful vines of Etruria, of the Tiber, and of Rome. If our fathers have told us aright, that city is protected by the Immortal Gods, lightnings are darted from afar against the presumptuous invader, and fires heaven-kindled flit before its walls. And if thou carest not for Jupiter, yet beware of Stilicho, of him who heaped high the bones of our people upon the hills of Arcadia, him who would then have blotted out thy name had not domestic treason and the intrigues of Constantinople rescued thee from his grasp.

Alaric burst in upon the old man's speech with fiery brow and scowling eyes—

"If age had not bereft thee of reason, old dotard, I would punish thee for these insults. Shall I, who have put so many Emperors to flight, listen to thee, prating of peace. No, in this land I will reign as conqueror, or be buried after defeat. The Alps traversed, the Po witness of our victories, only Rome remains to be overcome. In the day of our weakness and calamity, when we had not a weapon in our hands, we were terrible to our foes. Now that I have made the reluctant Illyrian forge for us a whole arsenal of arms, we are not going, I presume, to turn our backs to these same enemies. No! Beside all other reasons for hope there is the certainty of God's help. No dreams, no flight of birds revealed it to me. Forth from the grove came a clear voice, heard of many: Break off all delays, Alaric. This very year, if thou lingerest not, thou shalt pierce through the Alps into Italy; thou shalt penetrate to the City itself".

"So he spoke, and drew up his army for the battle. Oh ever-malignant ambiguity of oracles, so dark even to the utterers, so clear to them and to their hearers when the event has made them plain! At the extreme verge of Liguria he came to a river, known by the strange name of Urbis, and there defeated, recognised his doom"

The reader is requested to observe that we have here an undoubted case of a fulfilled presentiment. Six years after the composition of this poem, Alaric did in truth penetrate to the City. Now the hostile poet taunts him with his belief that he was called thither by Destiny, and triumphs over the apparent ruin of his hopes.

Battle of Pollentia

Claudian's verses pourtray the Gothic chieftain, after this council, drawing up his army in battle array at Pollentia. It seems certain, however, that Alaric was taken unawares and forced into a battle which he had not foreseen; and this from a cause which illustrates the strange reactions of the barbaric and civilised influences upon one another in this commencing chaos. As was before said, Eastertide was at hand: on the 4th of April, Good Friday itself occurred. Alaric, with his army, Christian though Arian, was keeping the day with the accustomed religious observances, when he was attacked and forced to fight by Stilicho's lieutenant, Saulus. This man, the same who fought under Theodosius at the battle of the Frigidus, was by birth an Alan, and was probably surrounded by many of his countrymen, that race of utter savages who once dwelt between the Volga and the Don, and arrested the progress of the Huns, but had now yielded to their uncouth conquerors and rolled on with them over Europe, as fierce and as heathenish as they. The pigmy body of Saulus was linked to a dauntless spirit; every limb was covered with the scars of battle, his face had been flattened by many a club stroke, and his little dark Tartar eyes glowed with angry fire. He knew that suspicions had been entertained of his loyalty to the Empire, and he burned to prove their falsity. Having forced Alaric and his warriors to suspend their Paschal devotions, he dashed his cavalry with Hun-like impetuosity against their stately line of battle. At the first onset he fell, and his riderless horse, rushing through the ranks, carried dismay to the hearts of his followers. The light cavalry on the wings were like to have fled in disastrous rout, when Stilicho moved forward the steady foot-soldiers of the legions from the centre, and turned, says Claudian, defeat into victory. The Gothic rout (if we may trust Claudian's story of the battle) soon became a disastrous flight. The Roman soldiers, eager for revenge, were scarce diverted from their purpose by the rich stores of plunder which were thrown in their way by the despairing fugitives. On the capacious Gothic waggons were heaped piles of gold and silver coin, massive bowls from Argos, statues instinct, as it seemed, with life, snatched from burning Corinth. Every trophy of the barbarian but added fury to the Roman pursuit, reviving as it did the bitter memories of Roman humiliation; and this fury reached its height when, amid a store of other splendid apparel, the purple garments of the murdered Valens were drawn forth to light. Crowds of captives who had followed the chariot of the Gothic king for years now received their freedom, kissed the gory hands of their deliverers, and, revisiting their long deserted homes, looked with wonder on the changes wrought there by Time. On the other hand, Alaric, hurrying from the field, heard with anguish the cries of his wife, his wife whose proud spirit had urged him on to the conflict, who had declared that she was weary of Grecian trinkets and Grecian slaves, and that he must provide her with Italian necklaces and with the haughty ladies of Rome for her handmaidens, but who was now herself carried into captivity with her children and the wives of her sons.

Who won at Pollentia?

After the vivid and circumstantial account which Claudian gives us of the Roman victory at Pollentia, it is almost humiliating to be obliged to mention that there is some doubt whether it was a Roman victory at all. Cassiodorus and Jornandes both say distinctly that the Goths put the Roman army to flight. Both of these authors, however, are in the Gothic interest, and the earliest of them wrote at least a century after the date of the battle. Orosius, a Roman and a contemporary, speaks of the unfortunate battles waged near Pollentia, in which "we conquered in fighting, in conquering we were defeated". It is possible that this alludes to the fact that the Romans attacked on Good Friday, an impiety which the ecclesiastical historian cannot forgive. The subsequent course of the history seems to show that the bulk of the Gothic army remained intact, and that its spirit was not broken. On the other hand, the language of Claudian (confirmed by his contemporary Prudentius) seems to make it incredible that the Romans can

have been really and signally defeated. Probably it was one of those bloody but indecisive combats, like Borodino and Leipzig, in which he who is technically the victor is saved but as by a hair's breadth from defeat, a result which is not surprising when we remember that here the numbers and impetuosity of the Goths were met, for the first time on Italian soil, by the courageous skill of Stilicho. Then, after such a battle, however slight might be the disadvantage of the Goths, the long train of their wives and children, their captives and their spoils would tell heavily against them in retreat; and though we may doubt the captivity of the wife of Alaric and the recovery of the purple robe of Valens, we may well believe that a large share of the Gothic booty did fall into the hands of the Imperial soldiers.

Battle of Verona

That the battle of Pollentia was no crushing defeat for the Goths seems sufficiently proved by the events which immediately followed it. Stilicho concluded a treaty of some kind with Alaric, perhaps restored to him his wife and children, and the Gothic king recrossing the Po, commenced a leisurely retreat through Lombardy. Having arrived at Verona, and committed some act which was interpreted as a breach of the treaty, he there, according to Claudian, sustained another severe defeat; but this engagement is not mentioned by any other writer. The poet tells us that, had it not been for the too headlong zeal of the Alan auxiliaries, Alaric himself would have been taken. As it was, however, he succeeded in repassing the Alps, with what proportion of his forces we are quite unable to determine. Claudian, who is our only authority for this part of the history, gives us no accurate details, only pages of declamation about the crushed spirits of the Gothic host, the despair of their leader, and his deep regret at ever having allowed himself to be cajoled away from the nearer neighbourhood of Rome by his fatal treaty with Stilicho. "Reading between the lines" we can see that all this declamation is but a laboured defence of Stilicho's conduct in making a bridge of gold for a retreating foe. That much and angry criticism was excited by this and some similar passages of the great minister's career is evidenced by the words of the contemporary historian Orosius (immediately following the mention of Stilicho's name), "I will not speak of King Alaric with his Goths, often defeated, often hemmed in, and always allowed to escape". Probably, however, the criticisms were unjust. Stilicho had a weapon of uncertain temper to wield, legionaries enervated and undisciplined, barbarian auxiliaries, some of whom might sympathise with their northern brethren if they saw them too hardly pressed. It was by skill of fence rather than by mad clashing of sword against sword that the game was to be won, and it would have been poor policy to have driven the Visigothic army to bay, and to have let them discover

'What reinforcement they might gain from hope;

If not, what evolution from despair'.

At the end of this first great campaign of the barbarians in Italy we naturally ask ourselves what were the feelings of the inhabitants of Italy and of Rome when they found the traditional impregnability of their country to "aught but Romans" so rudely disproved. How deep in those imperial centuries might be the repose of Roman provincial life we infer from the Epistles of the younger Pliny, and even from an early poem by Claudian himself as to a district which was ravaged in this very campaign. It is strange to turn from the description of the battle of Verona to these lines in which poet dilates on the quiet felicity of an old man who has spent all his days on his farm not far from that city.

Happy this man, whose life has flowed away
 In that old home whose past he knows so well;
 Through the same fields, staff-propt, he takes his way
 Where, as a boy, he leapt and laughed and fell.

Him Fortune drags not in her weary whirl,
 Nor drinks he, wandering, from un-homish streams;
 He sees no banners flaunt, no white waves curl,
 No wrangling law-suit haunts his peaceful dreams.
 Strange to the town and heedless of the great,
 He loves his own street-unencumbered sky.
 For him no Consul's name denotes the date;
 By flowers and harvests marked, his years slip by.
 Above his lands he sees the sunrise red,
 Above his lands the sunset's fading gold.
 His hand once held the oak that shades his head;
 He and his woods together have grown old.
 Verona seems far off as farthest Ind,
 And Garda's lake as is the Red Sea's strand.
 His massive muscles still strong sinews bind
 Though his sons' sons full grown before him stand.
 Go, thou who yearnest still for foreign air;
 Go, see who dwell by Spain's remotest stream;
 Thou of earth's highways hast the largest share,
 But he of living has the joy supreme

When Alaric's troops were swarming around Verona, whether in the insolence of victory or in the rage of defeat, it would be too much to hope that this picture of lethargic simple happiness was not in some degree marred by their presence. At Rome the first news that the barbarians were south of the Alps filled all ranks with terror. Stilicho dissuaded them from flight, promised to collect troops for their deliverance, and induced them to assume an appearance of courage even if they did not feel it. He then departed for the northern campaign. Meantime they set to work vigorously to rebuild the walls of the city. During the prosperous days of the Republic and Empire Rome had needed no walls. When the clouds of barbaric invasion in the third century were gathering around her, Aurelian, the undoubted hero of that evil time, had surrounded her with fortifications. These were at this time renewed; and to this day the walls of Honorius are a frequent subject of discussion in the long debates of Roman archaeologists.

While thus engaged, the citizens often looked forth with dread over the plain, and up to the cloudless sky, with a superstitious fear lest Heaven itself was fighting against them. Each river that crossed the Lombard plain was one barrier the more against the dreaded Alaric; but where were the storms of winter that should have swollen the brooks into streams and the streams into rivers? Day after day passed by, and still the rain came not, and surely the Goth would come. At length the watchmen on the loftiest towers saw a cloud of dust rolling up from the horizon. Was it raised by the feet of enemies or of friends? The silence of a terrible suspense reigned in every heart, till

'Forth from the dusty whirlwind, like a star,
 Shone forth the helm of Stilicho from far,
 And that white head, well known, well loved of all;
 Then sudden thrilled along the crowded wall
 The cry "He comes, himself," and through the gate
 The glad crowd pressed, to view his armed state.'

This visit, if not a mere poetical imagination, must have occurred before the battle of Pollentia. After the close of the campaign, and when Italy was again cleared of her invaders, the gladness of delivered Rome seemed to claim a more conspicuous expression. To the year 404 the Emperor deigned to affix his name as 'Consul for the sixth time'; and he and his father-in-law appear to have visited Rome to celebrate a triumph over the Goths. Strange to say, during the whole preceding century, Rome had only thrice seen an Emperor within her walls, Constantine (312) after his victory over Maxentius, Constantius (357) four years after the overthrow of Magnentius, and Theodosius (389) after his defeat of Maximus.

The Romans might naturally contrast the doubtful joy of these victories over their fellow-countrymen with the unalloyed delight of their recent deliverance from the barbarians. The young men rejoiced to welcome an Emperor their equal in years; the old saw with pleasure that he did not, like his predecessors, make the Senators walk, as slaves, before his chariot. They said, "Other Emperors came like masters, this one like a citizen". By the side of Maria the Empress, stood her brother Eucherius, wearing no insignia of exalted rank (for Stilicho was chary of honours for his son), and gave the homage of a soldier to his chief.

"Then the matrons admired the fresh-glowing cheeks of Honorius, his hair bound with the diadem, his limbs clothed with the jewelled trabea (consular robe), his strong shoulders, his neck, which might vie with that of Bacchus, rising from amid Arabian emeralds.

"Stilicho himself, borne along in the same car with the son of Theodosius, felt with proud satisfaction that he had now indeed fulfilled the trust reposed in him by the dying father"

Among other amusements with which the citizens of Rome were regaled on this occasion, a venerable tradition places the last and the most memorable of the gladiatorial combats. Prohibited as these exhibitions had been by an edict of Constantine, they still held their ground in half heathen Rome. A butchery, doubtless of unusual magnificence, was to celebrate the defeat of Alaric. Probably some of the captive Visigoths themselves were to minister to the brutal enjoyment of those who had so lately quailed before their very names. Already the lists were set, the combats commenced, the first blood had been drawn. The eager "habet, habet" was resounding from imperial, senatorial, and proletarian benches, when an eastern monk, Telemachus by name, was seen stalking down from seat to seat of the crowded Colosseum, till at length he reached the arena. Astonishment held the spectators mute till his strange purpose was made manifest. He was thrusting himself in between the gladiators, and endeavouring at the risk of his own life to part the combatants. Then uprose a cry of execration from podium to gallery, and missiles of every sort were hurled down upon the audacious disturber of the bloody game. He died: in his death, most Christ-like, he did in truth "give his life for the flock"; and not in vain, for Honorius, moved to awe and pity by the strange scene which he had witnessed, not only recognised him as saint and martyr, but for his sake decided that shows of gladiators should be, not in name only, but indeed, abolished.

With this visit of Honorius and Stilicho to Rome ends our companionship with Claudian, whose verses, whatever their defects, have shed over the last eventful nine years a light which we shall grievously miss in those that are to come. He tells us himself that after his poem on the Gildonic war, a brazen statue had been erected in his honour, and dedicated by some personage of patrician dignity. From a letter addressed by him to Serena, we find that the good offices of that powerful patroness had enabled him to win the hand of an African lady, whom we may safely presume to have been an heiress. The wedding was celebrated in her country, and, as we have no certain information, we may conjecture that he did not return to Italy, and that the divine Honorius, Stilicho, Alaric, and even Rome herself were wellnigh forgotten in the society of his Libyan wife and the administration of her estate. At any rate, from this time forward, his muse no longer gives life and colour to the historical picture. The dry bones of the annalists, the disjointed paragraphs of Zosimus and Orosius, and the faint and

partial sketches of the ecclesiastical historians are our only materials for the remainder of the Visigothic invasion of Italy.

The following year witnessed the second consulship of Stilicho, and another great inroad of barbarians, which comes as a mysterious interlude in the great duel between Alaric and Rome. Alaric was not the leader in this new invasion; he was at this time, according to one authority, quartered in Epirus, and concerting measures with Stilicho for a joint attack on the Eastern Empire. The new invader is a wild figure bearing the name of Radagaisus, a Goth, but not of Alaric's following, though formerly his confederate; possibly one of the Ostrogoths, who had remained in their old homes by the Euxine when the tide of Hunnish invasion rolled over them. This man, "far the most savage of all past or present enemies of Rome", was known to be fanatically devoted to the false deities of his heathen ancestors; and as the tidings came that he, with his 200,000, or some said 400,000, followers, had crossed the Alps, and was vowing to satiate his fierce gods with the blood of all who bore the Roman name, a terrible despair seized all the fair cities of Italy; and Rome, herself, on the very verge of ruin, was stirred with strange questionings. Nowhere did the spirit of the ancient paganism linger so stubbornly as in the neglected city by the Tiber; and now from the apparently imminent danger of the Eternal City, the many to whom the name of Christ was hateful drew courage to utter their doubts aloud. "These men, the barbarians, have gods in whom they believe, strange and uncouth deities it is true, but yet gods represented in visible form to whom they offer bloody sacrifices. We have renounced the protection of our old ancestral divinities, we have allowed the Christians, who are in truth Atheists, to destroy every other religion in their fanatic zeal for the crucified Galilean; what marvel if we perish, being thrust, thus destitute of all supernatural aid, into collision with the wild yet mighty deities of Germany?"

However, Rome's hour of doom had not yet come. The fierce barbarian horde, instead of marching along the Lombard plain to Rimini, and thence by the comparatively easy Flaminian Way to Rome, chose the nearer but difficult route across the Tuscan Apennines. Stilicho marched against them, and succeeded in hemming them in, in the rugged hill country, where, owing to the shortness of provisions, their very numbers were their ruin. Powerfully supported by Uldin, the chief of the Huns, and Sarus, who commanded other Gothic (perhaps Visigothic) auxiliaries, he at length succeeded in forcing all that remained of that mighty host to encamp on one rough and barren chain of mountains near to Faesulae, and probably within sight of the then tiny town of Florentia.

Without incurring any of the risks of battle, the Roman army, "eating, drinking, sporting" (says Orosius), for some days kept watch over 200,000 starving men, till at last Radagaisus gave up the game, and tried to steal away from his camp. He fell into the hands of the Roman soldiery, was kept prisoner for a little time—perhaps with some thought of his decking the triumph of Consul Stilicho—and then put to death.

His unhappy followers were sold for an *aureus* apiece, like the poorest cattle; but owing to the privations which they had endured, they died off so fast that the purchasers (as Orosius tells us with grim satisfaction) took no gain of money, having to spend on the burial of their captives the money which they had grudged for their purchase. And thus ended the invasion of Radagaisus.

During the two succeeding years history is silent as to any events which may have occurred in Italy itself, but we see the process of disruption and decay going on rapidly in the outlying members of the Empire. In 406 a swarm of Vandals, Sueves, and Alans (the first two of Teutonic, the third of what we call Tartar origin) crossed the Rhine and poured confusedly into Gaul, which from this time forward was never free from occupation by the barbarians. The Roman soldiers in Britain, seeing that the Empire was falling to pieces under the feeble sway of Honorius, and fearing lest they too should soon be ousted from their dominion in the island

(part of which was already known as the Saxon shore), clothed three usurpers successively with the Imperial purple, falling, as far as social position was concerned, lower and lower in their choice each time. The last and least ephemeral of these rulers was a private soldier named Constantine, and chosen for no other reason but his name, which was accounted lucky, as having been already borne by a general who had been carried by a British army to supreme dominion. This proclamation of Constantine, which was made by the 2nd and 6th Legions, the former stationed at Richborough in Kent (Rutupiae), the latter at York (Eburacum), occurred in the year 407. For the four succeeding years—very critical ones for the Empire—we must think of those two legions, and of such other strength as gathered round them in Gaul, as thrown into the scale against Rome.

Thus the two great invasions of Alaric and Radagaisus have effected little directly against Italy; but by compelling Stilicho to weaken his line on the Rhenish frontier, they have indirectly caused the Empire to lose three mighty provinces in the West. While those two chieftains have been crying "check" to the king, castles and knights and bishops have been ruthlessly swept off a distant portion of the board.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FALL OF STILICHO.

The invasion of Alaric and Radagaisus had been repelled, and it might seem that the throne of Honorius was established on a more secure basis than ever. In fact, however, the events of 406 and the years immediately following it, brought not only the throne of Honorius but the whole Roman Empire nearer to irretrievable ruin than it had ever been brought before. By three diseases, each one of which seemed as if it might prove fatal, was that Empire at once assailed, (1) by barbarian invasion, (2) by military mutiny, and (3) by discord between the Eastern and Western realms.

1. The desperate necessities of the defence of Italy had compelled Stilicho, as we have seen, to leave the long Rhine frontier of Gaul almost bare of troops. Claudian dared to boast of this.

Nor Britain only sends to aid our war;
 They who the yellow-haired Sicambrian bar,
 They who the Cattian, the Cherusker tame,
 Hither have brought the glory of their name:
 And fear alone now guards the Rhenish shore
 Paced by the Roman sentinel no more.
 Will future days believe it? She the bold
 Impetuous Germany whom Caesars old,
 With all their legions scarcely could restrain,
 Now in her docile mouth receives the rein.
 Held by the hand of Stilicho, nor dares
 To tempt the rampart which he proudly bares
 Of its accustomed garrison, nor dreams
 To cross with plundering bands the guardless streams.

But Claudian boasted too soon : and it may perhaps have been foolish vapourings such as these, attributing to plan and policy on Stilicho's part what was really due to dire need, which suggested to the great states-man's enemies the hateful, and in my belief utterly groundless accusation that he actually invited the barbarians across the Rhine, in order, in some mysterious and inexplicable way, to facilitate his schemes for obtaining the diadem for the young Eucherius. But whatever the cause, the result is manifest. On the last day of 406 a great host of barbarians, consisting chiefly of three races, the Vandals, the Suevi, and the Alans (the first two Teutonic, the third probably of what we call 'Tartar' or Turanian origin), crossed the Rhine, and in one wide, desolating stream, poured over the fruitful province of Gaul, which from this time forward was never free from barbarian occupation.

2. We shall have occasion hereafter to trace the fortunes of some of the barbarous tribes who thus poured into Gaul. At present we are more concerned with the indirect consequences of the invasion, the military mutiny and civil war which resulted from it.

There had no doubt been for years a growing dissatisfaction with the rulers of the Empire. Reports of the utter imbecility of Honorius had doubtless gone abroad, and the avarice and

ambition of Stilicho would be freely discussed by the many disappointed competitors through whom he had shouldered his way to supreme dominion. Under the Imperial system of Rome as under the imitations of it which have been seen in later days, the usual penalty of ill-success was dethronement. Where the liegemen of a Constitutional King change a Ministry, the subjects of an elected Emperor upset a dynasty: and we who have heard the shouts of *déchéance* ring through the streets of Paris on the morrow of the surrender of Sedan, can understand what angry criticisms, what schemes of mutiny and revolt were heard in *Colonia* and camp when it became manifest that the Empire was going to pieces under the rule of the incapable Honorius.

It was of course in Britain, that 'province fertile in usurpers,' that the criticisms were the loudest and the temper of the troops most mutinous. It was hard enough that the soldier should be doing outpost duty for Rome amid biting winds and sweeping snow-storms, on desolate moorlands a thousand miles from the nearest vineyard, without the added bitterness of knowing that his own Gaulish home was being trampled into ruin by Vandal freebooters, and all through the idiocy of the Augustus or the supposed treachery of that other Vandal who stood nearest to his throne.

Under the influence of these emotions the soldiers who still remained in Britain broke out into open mutiny, and, to legalize their position, acclaimed a certain Marcus as Emperor. But Marcus failed to lead them as they desired. He was slain, and his successor Gratian (a native of Britain) after a reign of four months, shared the same fate. Then the choice of the captious king-makers fell on a private soldier named Constantine, a man apparently of lower social position than either of his two predecessors. But he had a fortunate name, for a Constantine acclaimed a hundred years before in the same tumultuous fashion had won the Empire of the world; and in truth this later Constantine, though he seems to have had little but his name to recommend him, did make himself for a time lord of all that was left to Rome of the great Prefecture of the Gauls, and did wring from the reluctant Honorius a recognition as a legitimate Augustus.

Very difficult and obscure is the story of the four years' reign of Constantine, a story which the reader turns from with impatience, because he knows that it leads to nothing, and because it distracts his attention from the far more important events which were passing at the same time in Italy. The soldier-Emperor crossed to Boulogne in the year 407, taking with him the last remnants of the Roman army of Britain. Whether he fought the barbarian invaders of Gaul is doubtful. It seems more probable that he made some kind of compact with them, leaving them free to ravage the west and centre of Gaul while he marched down the valley of the Rhone, adding city after city to his dominion, and gradually getting the whole machine of Imperial administration into his hands.

When tidings of the British soldiers' usurpation reached the Court of Ravenna, an army was sent into Gaul to check his further progress. It is characteristic of the strange state of confusion into which the Empire was falling, that the general who commanded the army thus sent forth to vindicate the cause of Imperial legitimacy was the Gothic captain Sarus. Sarus seems to have fought well and bravely, though with less regard for his plighted word than a Teuton chieftain should have shown. Of the two masters of the soldiery whom the upstart Emperor deputed in lordly fashion to fight his battles for him, one (Justinian) was defeated and killed in fair encounter, the other, a man evidently of barbarian descent, named Neviogast, was lured by pretext of friendship into the Imperial camp and treacherously slain in violation of the plighted oath of Sarus. Constantine himself was besieged in the strong city of Valentia (*Valence*) by the Rhone, and it seemed as if his reign would end while his purple robe was still new. But the activity and warlike skill of his two new *magistri*, Edovich the Frank and Gerontius the Briton, quickly changed the face of affairs, and compelled Sarus to raise the

siege of Valentia and to beat a precipitate retreat. The Bagaudae, a band of armed peasants whom we shall meet with again fifty years later, and who waged a war of centuries against the Roman government in Gaul, held the passes of the Alps, and it was only by abandoning to them all his hardly won booty that Sarua could buy permission to return crest-fallen and empty-handed to his Imperial employer.

Thus the fortunes of the so strangely lifted up British soldier went on prospering. He sent his son Constans (a son who had turned monk but was drawn forth from the monastery by the splendour of his father's fortunes) into Spain in order to win that province, which generally followed the fortunes of its Gaulish neighbour. In Spain, however, pride in the Theodosian line and loyalty to the Theodosian house were still powerful sentiments. Two brothers, kinsmen of Honorius, named Didymus and Verenianus, upheld for a time the banner of their family in the Lusitanian plains and on the passes of the Pyrenees. But their army, hastily raised from among the slaves and peasants on their estates, could not permanently make head against the trained soldiers led by Constans, who by a curious paradox of nomenclature were chiefly composed of some of those *Auxilia Palatina* who bore the name of Honorians.

Didymus and Verenianus were defeated, and with their wives were taken prisoners and sent to the Court of Constantine, which was now held at Arles, in a certain sense the capital of Gaul. The Spanish campaign seems to have been ended in 408, and in the following year an embassy was sent by Constantine to Honorius, claiming recognition as a lawful partner in the Empire, while throwing all the blame of Constantine's unlicensed assumption of the purple on the rude importunity of the soldiery. Honorius who, as we shall hereafter see, was at this time sore pressed by Alaric, and who trembled for the safety of his Spanish kinsfolk, captives as he supposed in the hands of Constantine, consented, and sent, himself, the coveted purple robe to the fortunate soldier in his palace at Arles. But the concession came too late to save the lives of Didymus and Verenianus, who had been already put to death by their ungenerous conqueror.

Here for a little while we must leave the story of the British usurper, which has already brought us down to a somewhat later date than we have reached in the affairs of Italy. But it is important to remember that in the three years which we have thus rapidly surveyed, the whole noble Prefecture of the Gauls, that is to say, the three fair countries of Britain, Gaul and Spain, have been lost to Honorius. We shall hereafter see what fragments of them, if any, might be yet recovered for the Empire.

3. Lastly, as if all these calamities were not enough, there was added to them the fact of estrangement and the danger of actual war between the Eastern and Western portions of the Empire. We have already seen how the successive ministers of Arcadius resented the claim of Stilicho to exercise some kind of moral guardianship over both the sons of Theodosius. Now, from 404 onwards, the events connected with the persecution of Chrysostom by the Court party had deepened and widened the gulf between the two governments.

Pope Innocent, when appealed to by the oppressed prelate, had warmly espoused his cause, and had called upon Theophilus of Alexandria to cease from his canonical intermeddling with the affairs of an alien see. Honorius, acting probably under the Pope's advice, had addressed a letter to Arcadius full of regret at the lamentable events which common rumour informed him had taken place in his brother's dominions—the burning of the Cathedral, the harsh measures adopted towards a father of the Church. The reflections as to the impropriety of Caesar's interference with the affairs of the Church of God were orthodox and judicious, and might perhaps have been listened to with patience had the great Ambrose still been alive to utter them: but when put forward by a younger brother, and such a younger brother as Honorius, they goaded even the lethargic Arcadius to fury. The ecclesiastics sent by Honorius to urge upon his brother the assembling of a General Council were treated with a discourtesy

which the law of nations would have condemned had they been the ambassadors of a hostile power. They were arrested at Athens, despatched under military escort to Constantinople, forbidden to land there, and sent off to a fortress in Thrace. Here they were shamefully handled, and their letters were taken from them by force. At length after four months' absence they were contemptuously dismissed on their homeward journey, without having once seen the Emperor of the East, or had any opportunity to deliver their message.

This deadly insult caused Stilicho to form on behalf of his son-in-law the most extraordinary schemes of revenge and ambition. Alaric, so lately the enemy of Italy, was now to be made her champion. He and Stilicho were to enter on a joint campaign for the conquest of the whole of Eastern Illyricum, that is, presumably, all of what is now called the Balkan Peninsula, except Moesia and Thrace; and Arcadius was to be left with only the 'Orient' for his share of the Empire. Stilicho was actually on the point of starting from Ravenna on this strange expedition when he was stopped by the receipt of two pieces of news: one false, that Alaric had died in Illyricum; the other true and of necessity profoundly modifying his plans, the victorious march through Gaul of the usurper Constantine.

Another measure taken by Stilicho at this time shows how thunderous was the atmosphere in the Council-chamber at Ravenna. The ports and harbours of Italy were watched to prevent any one, even apparently a peaceful merchant, from landing if he came from the Eastern realm.

But civil war between East and West was not to be added to the other miseries of the time. On the 1st of May, 408, Arcadius died, and that death, though it perhaps saved the Eastern Empire from ruin, brought about the fall of Stilicho, and by no remote chain of causes and effects, the sieges and sack of Rome. After the death had happened, but before certain tidings of it had reached the capital, Alaric, who had actually entered Epirus (but whether as invader or ally neither he himself nor any contemporary statesman could perhaps have accurately explained), marched northwards to Aemona (*Layback*), passed without difficulty the unguarded defiles of the Julian Alps, and appearing on the north-eastern horizon of Italy, demanded pay for his unfinished enterprise. The Emperor, the Senate, Stilicho, assembled at Rome to consider what answer should be given to the ambassadors of the Visigoth. Many senators advised war rather than peace purchased by such disgraceful concessions. Stilicho's voice, however, was all for an amicable settlement. 'It was true that Alaric had spent many months in Epirus. It was for the interest of the Emperor that he had gone thither; here was the letter of Honorius which had forbidden the enterprise, a letter which he must confess he attributed to the unwise interference of his own wife Serena, unwilling as she was to see her two adopted brethren at war with each other'. Partly persuaded that Alaric really deserved some reparation for the loss he had sustained through the fluctuation of the Imperial counsels, but more unwilling to oppose a courageous 'no' to the advice of the all-powerful Minister, the Senate acquiesced in his decision, and ordered payment of 4000 pounds of gold to the ambassadors of Alaric. The Senator Lampridius, a man of high birth and character, exclaimed indignantly, '*Non est ista pax sed pactio servitutis*' (That is no peace, but a mere selling of yourselves into slavery). But, fearing the punishment of his too free speech, as soon as the Senate left the Imperial palace, he took refuge in a neighbouring Christian church.

The position of Stilicho was at this time one of great apparent stability. Though his daughter, the Empress Maria, was dead, her place had been supplied by another daughter, Thermantia, who, it might reasonably be supposed, could secure her feeble husband's loyalty to her father. With Alaric for his friend, with Arcadius, who had been drilled by his ministers into hostility, dead, it might have seemed that there was no quarter from whence danger could menace the supremacy of the great minister.

This security, however, was but in appearance. «Honorius was beginning to chafe under the yoke; perhaps even his brother's death made Stilicho seem less necessary to his safety. An adverse influence too of which the minister suspected nothing, had sprung up in the Imperial court. Olympius, a native of some town on the Euxine shore, had ascended, through Stilicho's patronage, to a high position in the household. This man, who, according to Zosimus, 'under the appearance of Christian piety concealed a great deal of rascality,' was now whispering away the character of his benefactor. With him seem to have co-operated the clergy, who sincerely disapproved of Honorius' marriage with the sister of the late Empress, and who also had imbibed a strange notion that Eucherius, the son of Stilicho, was a Pagan at heart, and meditated, should he one day succeed to power, the restoration of the ancient idolatry.

Strange to say, the Pagans also had their reasons for disliking the same all-powerful family. They still muttered to one another an old story of the days of the the first Theodosius. During one of his visits to Rome (Zosimus says immediately after the defeat of Eugenius) he turned out the priests from many of the temples. Serena, with haughty contempt for the votaries of the fallen faith, visited, in curious scorn, the temple of Rhea, the Great Mother of the Gods. Seeing a costly necklace hung around the neck of the goddess, she took it off and placed it on her own. An old woman, one of the surviving Vestal Virgins, saw and loudly blamed the sacrilegious deed. Serena bade her attendants remove the crone, who, while she was being hurried down the steps of the temple, loudly prayed that all manner of misfortunes might light upon the head of the despiser of the goddess, on her husband, and her children. And in many a night vision, so said the Pagans, from that day forward, Serena had warnings of some inevitable doom. Nor was Stilicho free from like blame, for he had stripped off the massive gold plates from the doors of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus; and he, too, had had his warning, for the workmen to whom the task was allotted had found engraven on the inner side of the plates, 'Misero regi servantur' (Reserved for an unhappy ruler).

Thus did the two religions, the old and the new, unite in muttered discontent against the great captain. The people also, wounded and perplexed by the strange scene in the Senate, and the consequent payment to Alaric, had perhaps lost some of their former confidence in the magic of his name. On the other hand, the army, whose demoralised condition was probably the real cause of his policy of non-resistance, and whom his stem rule had alone made in any measure efficacious against the barbarian, were some of them growing restive under the severity of his discipline. Partly too we can discern the workings of a spirit of jealousy among the Roman legionaries against the Teutonic comrades by whom they found themselves surrounded, and often outstripped in the race for promotion. Stilicho's own Vandal origin would naturally exacerbate this feeling, and would render unpardonable in him preferences which might have been safely manifested by Theodosius. At Ticinum (the modern Pavia) the troops were thoroughly alienated from Stilicho; and at Bologna, whither Honorius had journeyed from Ravenna, the soldiers broke out into open mutiny. Stilicho, being summoned by the Emperor, suppressed the revolt and either threatened or actually inflicted the dread punishment of decimation, the *ultima ratio* of a Roman general.

In the midst of this quicksand of suspicions and disaffections three facts were clear and solid. The usurper Constantine was steadily advancing through Gaul towards the capital. Alaric, though he had received the 4000 golden *librae*, hovered still near the frontier, and was evidently wearying for a fight with some enemy. Arcadius was dead: the guardianship of the little Theodosius was a tempting prize, and one which the dying words of his grandfather might possibly be held to confer upon the great Vandal minister. Honorius proposed to journey to the East, and assume this guardianship himself; but Stilicho drew out so formidable an account of the expenditure necessary for the journey of so majestic a being, that the august cipher, who was probably at heart afraid of the dangers of the way, abandoned his project. Stilicho's

scheme, we are told, was to employ Alaric in suppressing the revolt of Constantine, while he himself went eastwards to settle the affairs of the young Emperor at Constantinople. Honorius gave his consent to both parts of the scheme, wrote the needed letters for Alaric and Theodosius, and then set off with Olympius for Ticinum. The minister, conscious that he was beset by some dangers, but ignorant of the treachery of Olympius, neither removed the mutinous soldiery from Ticinum, nor set forth to assume the command of the armies of the East, but, with strange irresolution, lingered on still at Ravenna. That irresolution proved his ruin.

For Olympius, having now sole access to the ear of Honorius, and being surrounded by an army already sore and angry at the very mention of the name of Stilicho, had found exactly the opportunity for which he had long been watching. Although the one point in his enemy's life which was least open to hostile comment was his conduct in reference to his son, although Eucherius had never been promoted beyond the modest office of Tribune of the Notaries Olympius persuaded both the Emperor and the army that Stilicho aimed at nothing less than placing his son on the Eastern throne, to which presumably his own barbarian parentage prevented him from aspiring. It is easy to imagine how the courtier, who, 'under an appearance of Christian piety veiled every kind of wickedness,' would enlarge to the Emperor on the horror of seeing the young pagan Eucherius on the throne of the holy Arcadius;—to the soldiers on the prospect of endless hardships under the stern discipline of Stilicho, when he should have made himself master of both realms.

The bonds of military obedience, hard to bind, are easy to unloose when Authority itself is foolish enough to invite to mutiny. The soldiers at Ticinum rose in fury, eager to lay murderous hands on all who were pointed out to them as friends of Stilicho. Their first victims were Limenius, the Praetorian Prefect of the Gauls, and Chariobaudes, the commander of the forces in the same provinces. But lately these two men had been, under the Emperor, supreme from the Northumbrian Wall to the Pillars of Hercules. Now, fugitives before the might of the usurper Constantine, they received the reward of their fidelity, death from the soldiers of their Emperor, in his presence and ostensibly at his bidding. The storm grew more furious; the Emperor cowered in his palace; the magistrates of the city took flight; the brutal soldiery rushed through the streets robbing and murdering at their will. The authors of the insurrection, terrified by their own success, resorted to the desperate remedy of parading Honorius through the town, dressed hastily in the short tunic of a private citizen without the military cloak (*paludamentum*) which marked his rank as a commander, and without the diadem of an Emperor. In answer to their abject supplications, order was at length restored, and the soldiers returned to their quarters; but not until Naemorius, the General of the Household Troops, with two other military officers, till Petronius, the Chief Minister of Finance, and Salvius, the Quaestor (who struggled to the feet of the Emperor and vainly pleaded there for mercy); nay, not till the head of the whole official hierarchy, Longinianus, Praetorian Prefect of Italy, had been slain. All these eight victims of the bookl revolt—belonged to the rank of Illustres, the highestclass of Imperial functionaries. But besides these, a great and uncounted number of the private citizens of Ticinum fell in this day's massacre.

At the present day, Pavia, the successor of Ticinum, though rich in Lombard relics, has no buildings to show recalling the days when it was a Roman *municipium*. The Ticino, hurrying past the little town to join the Po, is crossed by a covered bridge of the fifteenth century. If you happen to visit the place on a day of festa, you see the blue-tunicked lads of the Italian army streaming across this bridge and through the high street of the town. The river and the army are there still: all else how greatly changed from that fierce day of August, 408, when Honorius, pale with fear, clothed in his short tunic, was hurried up and down through the streets of Ticinum, imploring an end of that mutiny for which he had given the watchword! The

Lombard churches, S. Michele and S. Teodoro, gray with their vast multitude of years, stand, it may be, where the murdered Prefects and Quaestor had then their palaces; and these merry, good-humoured soldier-lads, who cover the pavement with their nut-shells and fill the air with their laughter, are the representatives of that fierce mob-army, drunk with blood as with wine, which swept from end to end of the city shouting for vengeance on the friends of Stilicho.

The best defence of Stilicho's loyalty is to be found in his own conduct when he heard of the mutiny at Ticinum. The news found him at Bologna: perhaps he had escorted the Emperor so far on his westward journey. He called a council of war, composed of the generals of the barbarian auxiliaries. All felt themselves alike threatened by this murderous outbreak of bastard Roman patriotism. The first report stated that the Emperor himself was dead. 'Then' said all,—and Stilicho approved the decision,—'on behalf of the violated *sacramentum*, let us march and avenge his murder on the mutineers'. But when a more correct version of the events reached them Stilicho refused to avenge the massacre of his friends only, the Emperor being unharmed, and loudly declared that to lead barbarians to an attack on the Roman army was, in his opinion, neither righteous nor expedient.

To this resolution he steadfastly adhered, though the conviction forced itself upon his mind that Honorius was now incurably alienated from him. Then the barbarian generals, one by one, separated themselves from what they felt to be a doomed cause.

Sarus, the Goth, the antagonist of Constantine, who had fought under Stilicho's orders, now turned against his old chief, made a night attack on his quarters, slaughtered his still faithful Hunnish guards, but reached the general's tent only to find that he had taken horse and ridden off with a few followers for Ravenna. Not for the hand of the ungrateful Sarus was reserved that reward which Olympius was yearning to pay for the head of his rival.

Stilicho, though a fugitive, seems still to be more anxious for the safety of the Empire than for his own. As he passes city after city, where the wives and children of the barbarian soldiers are kept as hostages for their fidelity, he adjures the magistrates not on any pretence to allow one of the barbarians to enter. He reaches Ravenna: shortly after his arrival come messengers bearing letters written by the Emperor, under the steady pressure of Olympius, commanding that Stilicho shall be arrested and kept in honourable confinement without bonds. Informed of the arrival of this mandate he took refuge by night in a Christian church. When day dawned the soldiers entered the building: on their solemn assurance, ratified by an oath, sworn in the presence of the Bishop, that the Emperor's orders extended not to his death but only to the placing him under guard, Stilicho surrendered himself. Once out of the sanctuary, and entirely in the power of the soldiers, he learned the arrival of a second letter from Honorius, to the effect that his crimes against the state were judged deserving of death. The barbarian troops, who yet surrounded him, his slaves, his friends, wished still to resist with the sword, but this he utterly forbade, and by threats, and the old still-lingering terror of his brow, he compelled his defenders to desist. Then, in somewhat of a martyr's spirit, and with a heart already broken by man's ingratitude, and weary of life, he offered his neck to the sword of the executioner, and in a moment 'that good gray head, which all men knew,' was rolling in the dust.

'So died,' says Zosimus, 'the man who was more moderate than any others who bore rule in that time. And in order that those who are interested in the history of his end may know the date thereof exactly, it was in the consulship of Bassus and Philippus, the same year in which the Emperor Arcadius succumbed to destiny, the 10th day before the Kalends of September (23rd August, 408).'

The circumstances of Stilicho's death naturally recall to our minds 'The Death of Wallenstein.' The dull, suspicious Honorius is replaced by Ferdinand II, Olympius by the elder Piccolomini, Sarus by Butler, Alaric by Wrangel, Stilicho himself by the great Duke of

Friedland. Only let not the parallel mislead us as to the merits of the two chief actors. Wallenstein was at length disloyal to Ferdinand; Stilicho was never untrue to Honorius.

At the outset of his career, when recording the conflict of testimony concerning him (this very same Zosimus being then the *Advocatus Diaboli*) it seemed necessary to say that we must wait for the dose of his life before pronouncing our verdict on his character. That he was a brave and hardy soldier and a skilful general is virtually confessed by all. That his right hand was free from bribes and unjust exactions, only his flatterers assert, and we need not believe. That he was intensely tenacious of power, that he imposed his will in all things on the poor puppet Honorius, is clear, and also that the necessities of the State amply justified him in doing so. The murder of Rufinus may or may not have been perpetrated with his connivance. The death of Mascezel, Gildo's brother, must remain a mystery; but upon the whole it seems improbable that Stilicho was personally connected with it. The inveterate hatred which existed between him and each successive minister of Arcadius certainly hastened the downfall of the Empire, and it is difficult to believe that there might not have been a better understanding between them had he so desired. The accusations of secret confederacy with Alaric would seem mere calumnies, if it were not for the painful scene in the Senate and Lampridius' indignant ejaculation '*Non est ista pax sed pactio servitutis.*' Without imputing actual disloyalty to Stilicho, we may perceive in him, ever after the terrible slaughter and doubtful combat of Pollentia, a disinclination to push Alaric to extremities, a feeling which seems to have been fully reciprocated by his great antagonist. Possibly some such involuntary tribute of respectful fear would have been mutually paid by Napoleon and Wellington had Waterloo been a drawn battle. Stilicho may also have remembered too faithfully that the East had given Alaric his first vantage-ground against Rome, and he may have been too ready to keep that barbaric weapon unblunted, to be used on occasion against Constantinople. Yet on a review of his whole life, when contemplating the circumstances of his death, pre-eminently when observing the immediate change which his removal from the chessboard produced upon the whole fortunes of the game, with confidence we feel entitled to say, 'This man remained faithful to his Emperor, and was the great defence of Rome.'

In order however to lay all the evidence fairly before the reader, it will be well to quote the following passage from Orosius, the most eloquent of the defamers of Stilicho. Observe how mildly and even with what approbation the reverend Spaniard speaks of the atrocious *pronunciamento* at Pavia.

'Meanwhile Count Stilicho, sprung from the stock of the unwarlike, greedy, perfidious, and crafty nation of the Vandals, thinking it but a small matter that he already wielded Imperial power under the Emperor, strove by fair or foul means to lift up into sovereign dignity his son Eucherius, who, according to common report, had been already from boyhood, and while in a private station, meditating the persecution of the Christians. Wherefore when Alaric, with the whole nation of the Goths at his back, respectfully and respectably prayed for a fair and honourable peace, and some certain dwelling-place, by denying him in public the opportunity whether of peace or of war, but cherishing his hopes by a secret league, he reserved him and his people for the scaring and scarifying of the State. Furthermore, those other nations, unbearable in their numbers and strength, by which the provinces of Gaul and Spain are now oppressed, namely the Alans, the Sueves, the Vandals, together with the Burgundians, who obeyed the same simultaneous impulse,—all of these he gratuitously called to arms, removing their previous fear of the Roman name.

'These nations, according to his design, were to hammer at the frontier of the Rhine and harass Gaul, the wretched man imagining that under such a pressure of surrounding difficulties he should be able to extort the Imperial dignity from his son-in-law for his son, and that then he should succeed in repressing the barbarous nations as easily as he had aroused them. Therefore,

when this drama of so many crimes was made clear to the Emperor Honorius and the Roman army, the indignation of the latter was most justly aroused, and Stilicho was slain,—the man who, in order that one lad might wear the purple, had been ready to spill the blood of the whole human race. Slain too was Eucherius, who, in order to ingratiate himself with the Pagans, had threatened to celebrate the commencement of his reign by the restoration of temples and the overthrow of churches. And with these men were also punished a few of the abettors of their criminal designs. Thus with very slight trouble, and by the punishment of only a few persons, the churches of Christ, with our religious Emperor, were both liberated and avenged'. (Orosius, Hist. viL 38.)

So far the religious pamphleteer. Let us turn from his invective to history, and trace the immediate consequences of the death of Stilicho. The fall of his family and friends followed his as a matter of course. Eucherius fled to Rome and took refuge in a church there. The sanctity of his asylum was for some time respected, but before many months had elapsed he was put to death. Thermantia was sent back from the Imperial palace to her mother Serena. A law was passed that all who had held any office during the time of Stilicho's ascendancy should forfeit the whole of their property to the State. Heraclian, the actual executioner of the sentence upon Stilicho, was made general of the forces in Libya Major in the room of Bathanarius, brother-in-law of the late minister, who now lost both office and life. Cruel tortures, inflicted by the command of Olympius, failed to elicit from any of Stilicho's party the least hint of his having conceived any treasonable designs.

It is plain, however, that justly or unjustly the name of the deceased minister was connected with the policy of conciliation towards the barbarians and employment of auxiliaries from among them. As soon as the death of Stilicho was announced, the purely Roman legionaries rose and took a base revenge for the affronts which they may have received at the hands of their Teutonic fellow-soldiers. In every city where the wives and children of these auxiliaries were dwelling the legionaries rushed in and murdered them. The inevitable result was, that the auxiliaries, a band of 30,000 men, inheriting the barbarian vigour, and adding to that whatever remained of Roman military skill, betook themselves to the camp of Alaric, and prayed him to lead them to the vengeance for which they hungered.

But it is a characteristic of the strange period upon which we are now entering (408-410) that no one of the chief personages seems willing to play the part marked out for him. Alaric, who had before crossed mountains and rivers in obedience to the prophetic voice, 'Penetrabis ad Urbem,' now, when the game is clearly in his hands, hesitates and hangs back. Honorius shows a degree of firmness in his refusal to treat with the barbarians, which, had it been justified by the slightest traces of military capacity or of intelligent adaptation of means to ends, and had his own person not been safe from attack behind the ditches of Ravenna, might have been almost heroic. And both alike, the fears of the brave and the courage of the coward, have one result, to make the final catastrophe more complete and more appalling.

Alaric sent messengers to the Emperor, saying that on receipt of a moderate sum he would conclude a treaty of peace with Rome, exchange hostages for mutual fidelity, and march back his whole host into Pannonia. Honorius refused these offers, yet made no preparation for war, neglected to avail himself of the services of Sarus, undoubtedly the greatest general left after the death of Stilicho, entrusted the command of the cavalry to Turpillio, of the infantry to Varanes, of the household troops to Vigilantius; men whose notorious incapacity made them the laughing-stock of every camp in Italy, and for himself (says Zosimus) 'placed all his reliance on the prayers of Olympius.' Not quite all his reliance, however, for he was at this time exceedingly busy as a lawgiver, placing on the statute-book edict after edict for the suppression of heathenism and every shade of heresy.

Thus we find him decreeing in 407, 'We will persecute the Manicheans, Phrygians, and Priscillianists with deserved severity. Their goods shall be confiscated and handed over to their nearest relatives who are not tainted with the same heresy. They themselves shall not succeed to any property by whatever title acquired. They shall not buy nor sell nor give to any one, and everything in the nature of a will which they make shall be void.'

In 408 (addressed to Olympius, Master of the Offices) 'We forbid those who are enemies of the Catholic sect to serve as soldiers in our palace. We will have no connection of any kind with any man who differs from us in faith.' 'All our former decrees against the Donatists, Manicheans, and Priscillianists, as well as against the heathens, are not only still to have the force of law, but to be obeyed to the utmost.' 'The revenues belonging to the Pagan temples are to be taken from them, the images pulled down, the altars rooted up.' 'No feast or solemn observance of any kind is to take place on the sites of the [old] sacrilegious worship. The bishop is empowered to see to the execution of this decree.' 'No one who dissents from the priest of the Catholic Church shall have leave to hold his meetings within any city or in any secret place in our dominions. If he attempts it, the place of meeting shall be confiscated and he himself driven into exile.'

In 409—'A new form of superstition has sprung up under the name of Heaven-worship. If those who profess it have not within a year turned to the worship of God and the religion of Christ, let them understand that they will find themselves smitten by the laws against heretics.'

In this same year, doubting apparently his own power to resist the pressure of his new minister (Jovius), he ordains that no edict which may be obtained from him in derogation of these anti-heretical laws shall have any force at all.

In 410—'Let the houses of prayer be utterly moved, whither the superstitious heretics have furtively crept to celebrate their rites, and let all the enemies of the holy law know that they shall be punished with proscription and death if they shall any longer attempt, in the abominable rashness of their guilt, to meet together in public.'

About twenty years after this time, we find Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, saying to the younger Theodosius, 'Join me in destroying the heretics, and I will join you in destroying the Persians'; and it is probable that these recurring edicts against heathens and heretics, ever increasing in severity, seemed to Honorius the easiest means of wringing forth the favour of the Almighty and adjuring Him to clear the Empire from the barbarians.

It is curious to read, side by side with these decrees, the story of Generidus as told us by Zosimus. He was a man of barbarian extraction; brave and honest, but still adhering to the religion of his forefathers. When the law was passed which forbade any one not a Christian to remain in the service of the Emperor, Generidus handed back his belt, the emblem of military office, and retired into private life. In a desperate crisis of his fortunes, the Emperor entreated him to return, and to take the command of the troops in Pannonia and Dalmatia. He reminded Honorius of the law which forbade a heathen like himself to serve the state, and was told that while that law must still remain in force, a special exemption should be made in his favour. 'Not so,' replied the soldier; 'I will not be a party to the insult thus put on all my brave heathen comrades. Bestore them all to the rank which they have forfeited because they adhere to the religion of their forefathers, or else lay no commands upon me.' The Emperor with shame consented, and Generidus, assuming the command, drilled his troops rigorously, served out their rations honestly, spent his own emoluments among them generously, and soon became a terror to the barbarians and a tower of strength to the harassed provincials. We do not hear of him, however, again in any of the great events of the war, and may be permitted to conjecture that Zosimus has coloured highly enough the virtues of his fellow heathen.

The mention of this religious legislation may seem like a departure from the main subject of the chapter, but it is not so. The religious element was probably the most important factor in

the combination which brought Stilicho to his fall, and it has had the most powerful influence in blackening his memory after his death. The intrigues of Olympius and the passionate calumnies of Orosius are not pleasant specimens of the new type of Christian politician and litterateur which was then coming to the front. The former especially is a style of character of which the world has seen too much in the subsequent centuries, and which has often confirmed the truth of a saying of the founder of Christianity. Salt like this, which had utterly lost its savour, was in a certain sense worse than anything which had been seen on the dunghill of Pagan Imperial Rome, and was fit for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALARIC'S THREE SIEGES OF ROME.

A FEW weeks were probably spent in the fruitless negotiations between Alaric and Honorius after the murder of Stilicho. Then the Visigothic king decided to play the great game, and while it was still early autumn he crossed the Julian Alps and descended into the plains of Italy to try once more if that voice were true which was ever sounding in his ears, 'Penetrabis ad Urbem'. He left Aquileia and Ravenna unassailed. He would not now waste his strength and time over any smaller sieges; he would not attempt to get the person of the Emperor into his power; he would press on to the city of cities, and would see whether, if he made Famine his ally, the services of that confederate might not counterbalance his own deficiencies in siege artillery. He crossed the river Po. No hostile force appeared in sight, and he was soon at Bologna, at Rimini, in the rich plains of Picenum.

While he was thus proceeding by rapid marches towards Rome, laying waste all the open country, and plundering the towns and villages, none of which was strong enough to close its gates against him, a man in the garb of a monk suddenly appeared in the royal tent. The holy man warned him in solemn tones to refrain from the perpetration of such atrocities and no longer to delight in slaughter and blood. To whom Alaric replied, 'I am impelled to this course in spite of myself: for something within urges me every day irresistibly onwards, saying, Proceed to Rome and make that city desolate.'

It would have confirmed the royal Visigoth in his belief of a Divine mission if he had been able, as he nearly was, by his rapid march to frustrate a dastardly crime. Two of the Imperial eunuchs, Arsacius and Terentius, who had the two children of Stilicho in their hands, were all but made prisoners by the Goths. They succeeded, however, in hurrying off with their captives to Rome, delivered up the divorced girl-empress Thermantia to her mother, and put the helpless lad Eucherius to death by order of the Emperor. On their return to court they were rewarded with the places of grand chamberlain and marshal of the palace, 'for their great services,' as Zosimus bitterly remarks.

Alaric meanwhile pressed on, and soon, probably in the month of September, he stood before the walls of Rome and commenced his *First Siege of the city (A.D. 408)*.

The actual appearance of the skin-clothed barbarians within the sight of the Capitol, so long the inviolate seat of Empire, found the senate resourceless and panic-stricken. One only suggestion, the cruel thought of coward hearts, was made. Serena, the widow of Stilicho, still lived in Rome. Her husband had made a league with Alaric. Might not she traitorously open to him the gates of the city? Unable, apparently, among the million or so of inhabitants of Rome to find a sufficient guard for one heart-broken widow, they decreed that Serena should be strangled, and thus, as devout heathens observed with melancholy satisfaction, that very neck round which she had sacrilegiously hung the necklace of the Mother of the Gods was now itself encircled by the fatal cord.

But (as Zosimus sarcastically observes) 'not even the destruction of Serena caused Alaric to desist from the blockade'. The course of the Tiber was watched so that no provisions should be brought into the city from above or from below. Soon Rome, the capturer of a hundred cities, began to understand for herself the pang of the old Jewish lawgiver's words of warning:

‘And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down wherein thou trustedst... And thou shalt have nothing left thee in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates’.

Day after day the citizens looked forth towards the north-eastern horizon expecting help from Ravenna, but it came not. The daily portion of food allotted to each citizen was reduced to one half, then to one third of its ordinary quantity. Two noble-hearted women, Laeta, widow of the Emperor Gratian, and her mother, who were entitled to draw a large maintenance from the public storehouses, did their utmost to relieve the distress of the citizens, ‘but what were they among so many?’

To famine was added sickness, and then, when the surrounding enemy made it impossible to bury the dead outside the walls, the city itself became one vast sepulchre, and Pestilence arose from the streets and squares covered with decaying corpses.

At length, when the citizens had tried every other loathsome means of satisfying hunger, and were not far from cannibalism, they determined to send an embassy to the enemy. The Spaniard Basil, a governor of a province, and John, the chief of the Imperial notaries, were selected for this duty. The reason for the choice of John was a strange one. A rumour, unaccountable except through that national vanity which could not admit that

‘so supine

By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid’,

had spread through the City that it was not the true Alaric, but one of the chiefs of the mutinous army of Stilicho, who was directing these operations against her. As John was acquainted with Alaric’s person, and was indeed allied to him by the bonds of mutual hospitality, he was sent to solve this question.

The language which the ambassadors were directed to use had in it somewhat of the ring of the old world-conquering republic’s voice, ‘The Roman people were prepared to make a peace on moderate terms, but were yet more prepared for war. They had arms in their hands, and from long practice in their use had no reason to dread the result of battle.’

These swelling words of vanity only provoked the mirth of Alaric, who had served under the eagles, and knew what the Roman populace’s ‘practice in the use of arms’ amounted to. With a loud Teutonic laugh he exclaimed, ‘Thick grass is easier mowed than thin.’ To the dainty patrician ambassadors the proverb was probably strange and unfamiliar: to Alaric it recalled the memory of many a spring morning when by the banks of the Danube he had swept his great scythe through the dewy grass, delighting in the patches where the green blades stood up, manifold, for the slaughter, growling at the constant toil of sharpening the steel where the thin and weedy grass bowed beneath the unavailing stroke.

After much ridicule showered upon the ambassadors who had brought so magnanimous a message, business was resumed, and they contrived again to enquire as to the terms of a ‘moderate peace.’ The Goth’s announcement of his conditions was, says Zosimus, ‘beyond even the insolence of a barbarian.’ ‘Deliver to me all the gold that your city contains, all the silver, all the moveable property that I may find there, and moreover all your slaves of barbarian origin: otherwise I desist not from the siege.’ Said one of the ambassadors, ‘But if you take all these things, what do you leave to the citizens?’ Alaric, still in a mood for grim jesting, and thinking perhaps of the passage in his *Ulfilas*, ‘What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul,’ or more probably of that passage in Revelation where the merchandise of the great city is described, her purple and silk and scarlet, her cinnamon and odours and ointment, her fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, ‘and horses and chariots and slaves and *souls of men*,’ replied in one gruff word *saivalos*, ‘your souls.’

The ambassadors returned to the Senate with their message of despair, and with the assurance that it was indeed Alaric with whom they had to deal. The Senate, enervated by

centuries of powerless sycophancy, found themselves compelled to look forth upon a horizon blacker than their heroic ancestors had seen after the terrible day of Cannae. In the dying state as in the dying man, when it was seen that human aid was impossible, religion, the power of the Unseen, rose into dominion. The once fashionable Paganism, the now fashionable Christianity, both of them fashions rather than faiths, lightly held, lightly abandoned, still divided the allegiance of the senators of Rome. Which, oh which of them was true? Would Jove or Jesus bring the yearned-for deliverance to the sacred city—to the temple of Capitolinus, to the tombs of the Apostles ?

Of the feelings of the Christians at this time we have no sufficient description, but the heathen historian records, with almost Christian fervour, the despairing religiousness of the opposite party. ‘Then indeed, when they were persuaded that it was in truth Alaric who warred against them, and when they had renounced all hope of aid from human power, they thought upon that [heavenly] succour which had hitherto accompanied the State through all her tribulations, and they perceived how they were now abandoned thereby, in consequence of having deserted the religion of their forefathers.’

At this juncture, Pompeianus, the Prefect of the City, felt in with certain Tuscan visitors (how they had pierced the blockade we know not), who were full of the marvels which had been lately wrought at Narni in their own country. There, they said, a series of prayers offered up to the Immortal Gods, and the performance of the old ancestral rites had been immediately followed by loud crashes of thunder and the fall of fire from heaven, which had so terrified the barbarians that they had at once raised the siege.

The holy books were consulted. They recommended, and the majority of the Senate were favourable to the proposition, that similar observances should be commenced in Rome. To make himself quite safe, however, Pompeianus (himself a Christian) appealed to the Bishop of Rome. This was Innocent I, one of the first great Popes, by no means wanting in energy of self-assertion either towards the Emperor or other Bishops. Yet even he, we are told, in this ‘distress of nations and perplexity’ which had fallen upon the world, ‘preferring the safety of the city to his own private opinion, gave them leave to practise in secret the incantations which they knew.’ The priests replied that no good result would follow unless the rites were publicly performed on the Capitoline Hill, with all the Senate as witnesses, in the Forum Boarium, in the Forum of Trajan, and elsewhere in all the public places of the city. The required permission was granted, but was not made use of. The believers, the half-believers, the would-be believers in the Olympian Dwellers were in too small a minority. Not one dared to perform the ancestral rites. The lightning did not fall from heaven, but the city gates opened once more, and again a train of suppliant senators, this time with no pretence of menace in their tone, set forth to see what terms could be obtained from the mercy of the conqueror.

At length, after much discussion, Alaric consented to allow the city to ransom herself by a payment of 5000 pounds weight of gold, 30,000 of silver, 4000 silken tunics, 3000 hides dyed scarlet, and 3000pounds of pepper. It is a strange catalogue of the things which were objects of desire to a nation emerging from barbarism. The pepper suggests the conjecture that the Gothic appetite had already lost some of its original keenness in the fervent southern lands; and the numbers of the special articles of luxury prompt the guess (it is nothing more) that the nobles and officers of this great nation-army may have been about 3000, the extra 1000 of silken garments perhaps representing the wives and daughters who accompanied some of the great chiefs.

And so ended the First Gothic siege of Rome, a siege in which no swords were crossed, no blood drawn. Famine was the only weapon used by Alaric.

The question then arose, How were the great quantities of gold and silver named by Alaric to be provided? Public money there was none in the exchequer: probably the sacred

majesty of Honorius drew all the produce of the taxes to Ravenna. The senators, whose statement of their wealth was perhaps capable of tolerably exact verification, paid their contributions according to a prepared list. A revenue-officer named Palladius was appointed to collect the rest from the citizens who had still any property remaining; but, partly owing to the extortions of previous Emperors and their ministers, which had really reduced many wealthy men to poverty, partly to unpatriotic concealment of their riches by those who were still rich, he failed to collect the required sum. Then, under the influence of some avenging demon which metes out the destinies of men, a really fatal resolution (says Zosimus) was adopted; 'for they decided to make up the deficit by stripping off from the images of the gods the precious metals with which they were adorned. This was in fact nothing less than to deprive of life and energy, by diminishing the honour done to them, those statues which had been erected in the midst of solemn religious rites, and clothed with becoming adornment in order that they might ensure everlasting felicity to the state. And since it was fated that from all quarters everything should concur to the ruin of the city, they not only stripped the statues of their adornments but they even melted down some of those which were composed of gold and silver, among which there was one of Valour (which the Romans call *Virtutem*). And when this was destroyed, all that was left of Valour and Virtue among the Romans perished with it, as those who were learned in divine things and the rites transmitted from our ancestors perpetually asserted would be the case.'

After this matter of the payment was settled, the future relations between the people of Rome and the Gothic king came under discussion. No one hinted now (nor for two generations later) at making the barbarian ruler of any part of Italy. But to constitute him the permanent champion of Rome; to conclude a strict offensive and defensive alliance with one whose sword weighed so heavily in the scale; in fact to revert to and carry further the policy of Stilicho which these very Romans had probably been among the loudest in condemning,—this did seem to the Senate a wise recognition of existing facts, a chance of saving the majesty of Rome from further humiliation. And such doubtless it was; and Theodosius himself, or the great Constantine, seeing Alaric's unfeigned eagerness for such an alliance would have concluded it with gladness. But all the endeavours of statesmanship were foiled by the impenetrable stolidity of Honorius, who could not make either war or peace, nor could comprehend the existence of any danger to the Empire so long as his sacred person was unharmed.

This year 409 was glorified by the eighth Consulship of Honorius and the third of his young nephew Theodosius II. Though comparatively unimportant in the development of the great drama, it is described with almost provoking minuteness by our one chief authority, Zosimus. Would that as full and clear a light had been thrown upon the first and the last campaigns of Alaric, upon 402 and 410.

As was before remarked, no one, in this period of uncertainty and suspense, seems to play the part which is set down for him. As if the destruction of Rome were some mighty cataract towards which all were being drifted along by the irresistible current of events, the Goth, the Roman, the Emperor, the Senate, swim helplessly in the stream, first towards one shore, then towards another, and all their motions do not seem to alter the final result in a single circumstance. Alaric himself undoubtedly had this conviction, that he was an instrument in the hand of a mightier power for the overthrow of Rome. Was the presentiment that he would be known to the nations as the Destroyer of Rome coupled with another presentiment that he himself would shortly after lay his bones on the Italian soil, and is this the clue to those stem and ruthless advances tempered by fits of such strange and unexpected moderation?

Immediately after the conclusion of the treaty of peace a vast number of domestic slaves fled from Rome, who, joining themselves to some of the wandering bands of barbarians, made up an army of 40,000 men, and levied a rude toll on the provisions and other merchandise

arriving at Ostia for the relief of the city. As soon as Alaric heard of this event, which seemed to stain the purity of his plighted honour, he repressed repressed the bands of pillagers with strong hand. At least his share of the compact should be kept while he waited calmly to see whether Honorius would ratify the other. The stipulation upon which at this time Alaric laid most stress in the negotiations was that hostages, the sons of some of the chief men in the Roman state, should be placed in his hands as security for the continuance of friendly relations between himself and the Empire.

The senate sent an embassy to the Emperor to represent to him the piteous condition of the Mistress of the World, and implore him to consent to the treaty with Alaric. Honorius tore himself away for a few hours from his poultry, heard apparently without emotion of the sufferings of his people, gave a step in official rank to two of the ambassadors, and declined their request.

As soon as the news of this refusal reached Alaric he recommenced the blockade of the city, not perhaps with all the old strictness, but with sufficient severity to make it difficult for the unsuccessful ambassadors to return. One of them, Attalus, now apparently Count of the Sacred Largesses, with great difficulty stole into the city at the same time with a routed general Valens, who had just flung away 6,000 picked troops in an unsuccessful attempt to relieve Rome. Another of the envoys was actually taken prisoner, and being sold for a slave was bought by his father for 30,000 aurei (about £18,000). The name of this luckless ambassador, rare in Italy then, was to be only too fatally familiar to the Italy of a thousand years later. He was called Maximilian.

Another embassy was sent by the Senate to Ravenna, and Pope Innocent I was associated with it, but we do not seem to be informed of its results. Just at this time Honorius was in a state of great elation, because Ataulfus, the brother-in-law of Alaric, who was hastening to join him with a body of troops collected in Upper Pannonia, had been defeated by a small army of Huns in the service of the Emperor. The Roman account of the engagement is that 300 Huns slew 1200 Goths, with a loss to themselves of only 17 men. This is probably an exaggeration, and it is clear that the great point, the junction of Ataulfus and Alaric, was not prevented. Still there was sufficient occasion for a momentary exultation on the part of Honorius in his interview with the Roman ambassadors.

About this time occurred a revolution in the council chamber of the sovereign. Olympius' sole idea of government seems to have been confiscating the possessions of all who could possibly be suspected of Stilichonism, and endeavouring by torture to force them to confess their share in the conspiracy. Up to this time not a trace of any such conspiracy had been discovered; perhaps the public were growing a little weary of the cry against Stilicho, and contrasted the present position of affairs with that which had existed under the great minister: certainly the soldiers were dissatisfied with the miserable generals Turpillio and Vigilantius, whom the favour of Olympius retained in the highest military posts. The eunuchs of the palace employed against Olympius the same arts which he had used against Stilicho. Knowing the criminality of ill-success, he escaped to Dalmatia, and a certain Jovius was appointed Praetorian Prefect; was clothed with the dignity of Patrician, became chief counsellor of Honorius, and drew all power into his own hands.

In order to wrest the military commands from the hands of the friends of Olympius, the mutiny of Ticinum was re-enacted on a smaller scale at Ravenna. The soldiers assembled on the shore hard by Classis, shouting in mob fashion that the Emperor must be made to appear before them. Honorius of course concealed himself, and Jovius, the real author of the sedition, went to enquire with bland innocence the reason of all this clamour and wrath. Turpillio and Vigilantius were denounced by the infuriated soldiery. The Emperor consented at once to a decree of perpetual banishment being passed against them, and by the secret orders of Jovius

this punishment was commuted into assassination at the hands of the officers of the ship on board of which they had been placed. Other changes were made in the household, but there is no need to record the names of these tumultuary chiefs of the civil and military service, of whom it may be said that they ‘sprang up in a night and perished in a night.’

Practically all power centred in Jovius, and Jovius, as having overthrown the enemy of Stilicho, and also as having been of old ‘guest-friend’ of Alaric in Epirus, had peculiar facilities for effecting that accommodation with the Visigothic king which the State imperatively required. With the Emperor’s consent he invited Alaric to a conference, which was held at Rimini, about thirty Roman miles from Ravenna. The terms upon which the Goth was now willing to base his alliance with the Emperor were these :—A yearly payment of gold by Honorius; a supply of provisions, the amount of which was to be the subject of future negotiation; and the concession of the two divisions of Noricum, and of Istria, Venetia, and Dalmatia for the residence of the Gothic troops and their families. It was not apparently intended that these regions should cease to be included, at least theoretically, in the dominions of the Roman Emperor, but rather that the Goths should be quartered there as permanent allies on the same terms on which many other auxiliary tribes had at various times been permitted to settle within the confines of the Empire.

In transmitting these demands to his master, Jovius gave a secret hint that probably if Alaric himself were gratified with some high official position, such as that of *Magister Utriusque Militiae*, he would be found willing to abate considerably from the stringency of his demands. To this Honorius replied,—and for once we do hear a man’s voice, though not a wise man’s,—‘You have behaved hastily in this matter. Payments of gold and subsidies of corn belong to your duty as Praetorian Prefect, and I do not blame you for having arranged these according to your own judgment. But military command it is mine alone to bestow, and I hold it unfitting that such offices as you name should ever be held by Alaric or any of his race.’

This letter arrived when Jovius and Alaric were conversing. Was it pique against the Emperor, was it despair, was it mere folly, that impelled the minister to read it from the beginning to the end in the hearing of the Visigoth? Alaric listened to all the rest of the letter patiently enough, but when he heard the scornful close he broke off the negotiations abruptly, and declared that he would revenge on Rome herself the insult offered to himself and his race.

Jovius, whose conduct is a perfect mystery of needless villainy, and who seems to us to behave like an Italian statesman of the sixteenth century who had lost his Machiavel, rushed back to Ravenna, and induced the Emperor to take an oath that he would conclude no peace with Alaric, but would wage against him perpetual war. When Honorius had taken this oath, Jovius, touching the Emperor’s head, repeated the same words, and all who held high office in the State were compelled to follow his example. And yet every one of these men knew in his secret heart that a just and honourable peace with Alaric was the only chance of rescuing Rome from impending destruction.

Honorius made some feeble preparations for war, enrolled 10,000 Huns in his armies, imported cattle and sheep from Dalmatia for the provisionment of Ravenna, and sent some scouts to watch the progress of the Gothic army towards Rome.

But again Alaric, though duped and insulted, was seized by one of those strange qualms of awe or compassion which so often might have saved the Imperial City. ‘Beginning to repent of his expedition against Rome, he sent forth the bishops of the cities through which he passed to act as his ambassadors, and to adjure the Emperor not to see unconcerned the City which had for more than a thousand years ruled over the greater part of the earth, given up to be sacked by barbarians, nor yet such magnificent buildings destroyed book by hostile fire, but rather to arrange a peace on very moderate conditions’. He offered in fact to abate three provinces, Venetia, Istria, and Dalmatia, from his former demand, and to be satisfied with the two

Noricums alone, provinces already so wasted by barbarian invasions as to be of very small value to the treasury. He asked for no office or dignity, civil or military, nor even for gold, but only for such a supply of rations to his troops as the Emperor himself should consider reasonable; and in return for these slight concessions he promised friendship and military assistance against any enemy who might arise to trouble the peace of Honorius and his Romans.

The moderation of Alaric excited general surprise, for in truth his demands were such as an Augustus might almost have conceded to an Arminius, or Trajan to a Decebalus; but, for some reason hidden from us, Jovius and his creatures did not dare to advise their acceptance. The pretext alleged for refusal was that act of solemn imbecility, the oath by the head of the Emperor that no treaty of peace should be made with Alaric. 'A mere oath by the Almighty,' said Jovius, 'would have mattered comparatively little, as they might safely have trusted to the Divine good nature to overlook the apparent impiety. But an oath by the Emperor's person was a very different affair, and so awful an imprecation as that must never be disregarded.' The flattered sovereign thought this reasoning most conclusive; and the Visigoth, pale with rage at the tidings of the refusal of his request, set to work without further forbearance to commence the *Second Siege of the City*.

The second siege of Rome by Alaric is one of the surprises of history. With the remembrance of the terrible famine and pestilence which accompanied the first siege vividly before us, with the knowledge of the repeated insults since then inflicted upon the Visigothic king, we expect to see some great and doleful tragedy enacted upon the Seven Hills. Far from it; the curtain is drawn up, and we behold, instead of a tragedy, a burlesque, the title whereof is 'The Ten Months' Emperor, or Attalus the Aesthetic.'

The citizens of Rome saw once more the Gothic army encamped around their walls, Ostia occupied, the large stores of provisions there collected taken possession of by the barbarians. They had no desire to see the experiments of last year as to the possible articles of human diet repeated; they began to ask themselves, very naturally, 'Since Honorius does nothing to protect us, and since he can neither make war nor peace with Alaric, but only shuts himself up behind the ditches of Ravenna, leaving us to bear all the burden of the war, why should we suffer any more in his quarrel?' They explained their feelings to the king of the Goths, and speedily an arrangement was made which seemed likely to satisfy all parties. The Imperial City formally renounced all allegiance to Honorius, and bestowed the purple and the diadem on Attalus, the Prefect of the City, who as Augustus at once concluded the long-desired treaty of peace with Alaric.

The Praetorian Prefect of the City was already in official rank the highest person in Rome next to the Emperor. But independently of his high office, Priscus Attalus had in various ways made himself popular with various parties. He was a Greek, an Ionian—born, that is, on the Eastern shore of the Aegean, near the birthplaces of the old Greek poetry, philosophy and art. Looking at his medallions, one is at once struck by the Greek character of the face portrayed upon them. Though there is no strength in the brow, there is surely some artistic sensibility indicated by the lines of the mouth. The curve of the lower jaw and the well-rounded chin have somewhat of nobility, and when contrasted with the wooden imbecility of Honorius's effigy, he seems almost like 'Hyperion to a Satyr.'

From this art-loving Ionian Greek the Pagans in Rome expected nothing less than the restoration of their old temples and sacrifices. Yet he was not an obstinate Pagan, for he had been baptized by an Arian bishop. There again was hope for the still large though down-trodden Arian party. But yet again the Arian bishop who baptized him was himself a Goth, Sigisarius by name. That fact endeared him to the Goths: and thus it came to pass that he whose first promotion to high office had been earned through his personal

acceptability to Honorius, was now set upon the throne by a combination of Honorius' sternest foes in order to achieve his downfall.

The new Augustus, having put on the diadem and the purple *paludamentum*, and having at once bestowed high military offices on his barbarian friends, went with much pomp of attendant soldiery to a meeting of the senate in the Imperial palace. There he addressed them in a long and elaborate oration. 'Rome and the Senate had too long been treated with unseemly disrespect. He, Priscus Attalus, would restore both to their former high estate. He would make the name of the Conscript Fathers again venerable, he would bring the whole world back under the dominion of Rome. Yes, *the whole world*; the upstart rival on the Bosphorus should be dethroned, and Egypt and all the provinces of the East should again own the sway of the City by the Tiber.' Some such sonorous words as these he poured forth. Such of the senators as were versed in public affairs may have whispered to one another 'Graeculus esuriens in coelum jusseris, ibit', and the nobles of the Anician house, the wealthiest in Rome, openly displayed their doubt of the stability of the new Emperor's throne; but the tide of popularity out of doors ran strongly in favour of Attalus, whose crown was the seal of the alliance with Alaric, the pledge of the punishment of the selfish court of Ravenna. The Visigoth had shown himself terrible as a foe, but if Rome could only keep him as her friend, what might she not accomplish by his aid against her enemies?

The quick eye of Alaric perceived that the key of the hostile position was not in Italy, but in Africa. Rome was dependent on that province for the supply of corn for her citizens, but Africa was at present held strongly for Honorius by Heraclian, the executioner of Stilicho. Alaric, therefore, earnestly advised Attalus to send thither a moderate force of barbarians under the command of a certain Drumas, and to attempt nothing else till Africa was secured. But the new Emperor, whose head was quite turned by his sudden elevation, who had the echoes of his own sonorous address to the senate still ringing in his ears, and who was 'seeking to wizards and familiar spirits' for his policy, scornfully rejected the advice of his Gothic friend. He sent Constans (a different person, of course, from the son of the British rebel) with a slender body of troops into Africa; and he himself, probably in the beginning of 410, marched towards Ravenna to indulge in the luxury of trampling on the apparently fallen Honorius. That Emperor sent Jovius to him proposing a similar arrangement to that which had been made with the usurper Constantine. 'Let us divide the Empire; you reign at Rome, I at Ravenna, only let me still be Augustus here.' Jovius, the Talleyrand of this epoch, whose orbit of treachery it is impossible to calculate, seems to have become for the time a partisan of the new Emperor, from whom he accepted the office of *Praetorian Prefect*; and he it was who dictated the insolent reply which he surely can never have had the audacity to carry back in person. 'Not a particle of Italian soil, O Honorius, not a vestige of the Imperial dignity, not even thy own body will we allow thee to preserve un mutilated. Thou shalt be maimed, thou shalt be banished to some island, and then, as a favour, we will concede to thee life.' Certainly the artistic Greek nature of this man preserves a trace of the feline cruelty which showed itself in certain passages of the Peloponnesian war.

However, for a time the very arrogance of the usurper seemed destined to achieve success. Honorius, thoroughly alarmed for the safety of his person, was about to escape by sea to Constantinople, when suddenly six legions, amounting to 40,000 men, landed at the very port where he was making his preparations for flight. They were soldiers of Theodosius II, sent to the assistance of his uncle against Alaric. We receive a vivid impression of the disorganised state of the Eastern as well as the Western half of the Empire when we are informed that these men had actually been summoned by Stilicho, not later therefore than the first half of the year 408, nearly two years before their appearance on the scene of action. Not unfriendliness, but

inefficiency or procrastination— in this case a most seasonable procrastination—had postponed their arrival till now.

When these 40,000 men arrived, Honorius picked up courage enough to attempt a further defence of Ravenna, watching above all things for the issue of affairs in Africa, and postponing his departure for the East till he knew at least whether that province was lost to him.

It was not lost. Stilicho's murderer was still loyally serving his Imperial master. Constans, the general of Attalus, was slain, and the usurper, instead of even yet retrieving his fortunes by despatching thither an army of Goths, could think of nothing better than to send an apparently trifling reinforcement of Romans, with money to reinvigorate his failing cause. Alaric began to be seriously displeased at the imbecility which his Emperor was displaying in reference to this African campaign. Jovius, too, seeing which way fortune was inclining, turned round once more and made his peace secretly with Honorius, but remained at the court of Attalus to sow dissension between him and Alaric, by suggesting to the Visigoth—a suggestion which probably contained some grains of truth—that the usurper, if he were once securely settled on his throne, would not be long in disembarassing himself, by assassination or some other means, of his too powerful barbarian benefactors. Alaric listened and half believed, but did not yet desert the cause of Attalus. He left Ravenna unbesieged, traversed the province of the Aemilia, compelling all the cities therein, except Bologna, to acknowledge the new Emperor, and then proceeded towards Genoa on the same errand.

Meantime, however, Alaric's own weapon, famine, was being fatally employed against his creature. Heraclian, like Gildo, by closing the African ports, was able to bring Rome to her knees. It was of no avail that Ostia was free, that the city was unblockaded, if the great granary itself was closed. Already, without a siege, the horrors of the first siege were recommencing; the grain-dealers were accused of 'forestalling and regrating,' and when Attalus and his people met face to face in the great Flavian Amphitheatre—for, of course, the games must go on though all else was falling into ruin—it is said that an angry murmur surged round through the topmost seats where the populace sat, and that fierce voices shouted to the new Augustus, *Pretium inpone carni humanae*—'Fix a maximum price for human flesh.'

Again the senate assembled; again all the reasonable men in that assembly urged that Dramas and the barbarians should be sent to cut the knot of the African difficulty; again the vainglorious Attalus refused to entrust the war to other than Roman hands. Then at length, on the receipt of these tidings, the patience of Alaric gave way. He marched back to Rimini, his nearest outpost towards Ravenna, commanded Attalus to wait upon him, and there, in the plain outside the town, in sight of the Gothic army and the Roman inhabitants, he stripped him of his diadem and purple robe, and proclaimed that he was degraded to the condition of a private citizen. The unhappy Greek, so proudly self-inflated and so ignominiously collapsing, had reigned for something less than a year. He did not dare to return to Rome, far less, of course, to Ravenna, but requested permission for himself and his son Ampelius to follow the train of the Visigothic army. The permission was disdainfully granted, and we shall meet with him once again in the barbarian camp.

Alaric, in order to give Honorius visible tokens of the change in his policy, sent to the court of Ravenna Imperial ensigns which he had stripped from his dethroned client. The officers also, who had received their commands from the usurper, restored their military belts to the legitimate Emperor, and humbly implored his forgiveness. 'And now, surely,' any discriminating observer might have thought, 'a just and honourable peace will be concluded between Alaric and Honorius, and Italy will rest from her anguish.'

The hindrance to the fulfilment of these hopes came this time from Sarus the Goth, a man who is to us scarcely more than a mere name, but about whom a real historian, writing contemporaneously, would probably have told us much. At present we know little, except that

he was at first a friend and follower of Stilicho, but turned against him (as has been already described) with the turn in the tide of fortune, and sought, but unsuccessfully, to earn the price set upon his head. Then had come his short-lived success and ignominious failure in the campaign against Constantine, notwithstanding which he was still deemed by the people the fittest man to make head against his countryman Alaric after Stilicho's death. He was not, however, chosen for that purpose by the Emperor, but had since remained near Ravenna with a small force of his countrymen, standing sullenly aloof from both the combatants. He had some cause of rankling enmity against Ataulfus, if not against Alaric also, and some have conjectured that an old Teutonic blood-feud existed between his house and theirs. Now there came either a skirmish or an apprehension of one between the old enemies. In the end, Sarus, with 300 chosen warriors, entered Ravenna and exerted all his influence to break off the negotiations between Honorius and the Visigoths.

He succeeded: Alaric retired from the conferences and marched southwards, this time in deadly earnest, intent upon *The Third Siege of Rome*.

Of this, the crowning act of the great drama, the real end of old Rome, the real beginning of the new Third age, it must be confessed that we scarcely know more than we do of the fall of Babylon. The history of Zosimus comes to an abrupt end just short of the climax. That the work is incomplete is manifest from the preface, in which Zosimus contrasts it with that of Polybius, and evidently implies that as the latter had told the story of the rise of Rome, so he would describe her fall. The capture of the city in 410 would have been the fitting dramatic close to his narrative, and it is quite impossible to suppose that he did not at least intend to write of it. The ecclesiastical historians have transmitted a few anecdotes illustrative of the religious aspect of the struggle; we are grateful for these details, which preserve us from utter darkness, but the very importance attached to them, the frequency of their repetition by subsequent chroniclers, show how little was really known of the more important incidents of the siege. Rome, which had described with such eager minuteness the death-pangs of a hundred cities which she had taken, has left untold the story of her own overthrow.

Alaric was spared, this time, the necessity of reducing the city by a slow blockade. On the night of the 24th of August, it would seem almost immediately after his appearance before the walls, his troops burst in by the Salarian Gate, near the eastern flank of the Pincian Hill, close to the gardens of Sallust, and about half a mile from the Baths of Diocletian.

Hints indeed are let fall that the gates were opened to him by treachery, but they rest only on the very doubtful authority of Procopius, who wrote more than a century after the event. He describes circumstantially a stratagem of Alaric's, who, he says, presented to the Roman nobles three hundred of the bravest youths of his nation under the guise of slaves, by whom, when the fitting time came, he was admitted through the Salarian Gate. Or else, says the same author, the venerable Christian matron Proba (mother of the Consuls Probinus and Olybrius), pitying the sufferings of the people from famine, ordered her slaves to open the gate by night and so end their misery. Neither story harmonises with the characters or mutual relation of the chief actors in the scene; and the words of the contemporary Orosius, 'Alaric appears, he besieges the trembling city, he throws it into confusion, *he breaks into it,*' seem almost conclusive against the hypothesis of treachery. In confirmation of this view, that Rome was taken by assault, we find it stated very emphatically that the splendid palace of Sallust was set on fire—just what we might expect to have happened if there was hard fighting around the Salarian Gate.

It was said in a preceding chapter that we must not think of the Visigoths as savages, scarcely even, except in the classical sense of the word, as barbarians. Now however that they have entered Rome, now that, after years of waiting and marching and diplomatising, the prize is at last theirs, the accumulated treasures of the world at their feet, and few days in which to pick them up, we may have to fall back for a time upon that more popular conception of their

character. Every army during the sack and pillage of a conquered town sinks to the level of the savage; a fever of avarice, cruelty, lust, burns in the veins of men to whom, after months of hardship and discipline, all at once everything is permitted, nothing is forbidden. The latent demon in each man's heart suddenly asserts himself, looks into the eyes of demon brethren, and becomes ten times more terrible by the communion of evil. Thus, though the soldiers of Alaric were ministers of mercy when compared with those of Alva or Tilly, we cannot doubt that brutality and outrage of every kind marked their entrance into the conquered city.

One instance recorded is doubtless the type of thousands. On the Aventine hill dwelt, as has been already said, the widow Marcella, with her friend and adopted daughter Principia. Of noble birth and conspicuous beauty, Marcella had lost her husband in her early youth after only seven months of married life. Refusing all offers of remarriage she devoted herself thenceforward to a life of seclusion and charity, turned her palace on the Aventine into a convent, and bestowed the greater part of her substance on the poor. While the great advocate of monasticism, Jerome, had dwelt in Rome, Marcella had been one of his most earnest supporters; after he retired to his cave at Bethlehem she was one of the most highly favoured of his correspondents. This had been her manner of life for fifty years or more: she was now verging upon extreme old age when she saw the ruin of her country. The blood-stained Gothic soldiers, who rushed into her house expecting large spoils from so stately a palace, eagerly demanded that she should surrender the treasures which they were persuaded she had buried. She showed her mean and threadbare garments, and told them how it came to pass that she, a Roman matron, was destitute of wealth. The words 'voluntary poverty' fell on unbelieving ears. They beat her with clubs, they scourged her: she bore the strokes with unflinching courage, but fell at their feet and implored them not to separate her from Principia, dreading the effect of these horrors on the young maiden if called to bear them alone. At length their hard hearts softened towards her; they accepted her statement as to her poverty, and escorted her and Principia to the Basilica of St. Paul. Arrived there she broke forth into a song of thanksgiving, 'that God had at least kept her friend for her unharmed, that she had not been made poor by the ruin of the city, but that it had found her poor already, that she would not feel the hunger of the body even though the daily bread might fail, because she was filled with all the fulness of Christ'. But the shock of the cruelties she had endured was too great for her aged body, and after a few days she expired, the hands of her adopted daughter closing her eyes, and her kisses accompanying the last sigh.

Our other anecdotes of the capture of the city are of a less melancholy kind. The Christian apologists naturally dwell on every fact, which suggests the reflection how much worse might the state of Rome have been, had heathens been its captors. Before entering the city Alaric had given strict orders, which appear to have been obeyed, that all the Christian edifices should be left uninjured, and that the right of asylum in them, especially in the two great basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, should be rigorously respected. Great multitudes of Pagans, as well as of Christians, availed themselves of this provision, which was accompanied by a general recommendation from Alaric to spare human life as much as possible while satiating themselves with spoil.

One of the Goths, a man in high position and professing the Christian faith, burst into a house, which formed part, though he knew it not, of the possessions of the Church. Meeting an aged nun therein, he asked her, not uncourteously, whether she had any gold or silver. She replied that she had much of both, and would immediately produce it. She then set before him such a splendid array of gold and silver vessels as the barbarian had probably not seen before. Bewildered, he enquired as to the nature and use of them. She replied boldly, 'They are consecrated to the service of the Apostle Peter. I am not strong enough to defend them from you. Take them if you are not afraid to do so: you will have to answer for the deed.' The

officer, struck by her boldness, and fearful of incurring the guilt of sacrilege, sent to ask orders from Alaric, who commanded that the sacred vessels, the woman who had so faithfully guarded them, and any Christians who might wish to accompany her, should be escorted by soldiers to the Basilica of St. Peter. A kind of triumphal procession was formed, the soldier and 'the virgin of Christ' at its head; brawny Gothic arms carried the sacred vessels on high; the Roman Christians sang hymns; their barbarian brethren raised the melodious antiphone; many Pagans, wondering and trembling, joined themselves to the crowd, and thus through the blood-stained, smoking streets that strange chorus moved on in safety to the shelter of the great Basilica.

Within the same inviolable enclosure a Roman matron, young and of surpassing loveliness, was conducted by another Gothic soldier. When he had sought to offer her outrage, she had preferred death to dishonour, and bared her neck to his sword. He struck, and the blood flowed copiously; he struck again, but he could not slay; then he relented, and leading her to the church gave her into the charge of the officers who were stationed there, and at the same time handing them six aurei desired them to conduct her safely to her husband.

The amount of injury done by the Goths to the city itself it is not easy to determine. Writers, who were remote from the scene and declamatory in their style, speak as if the whole city had been wrapped in flames, every building shattered, nothing left but ruins. It is easy to see from subsequent descriptions of the appearance of the city that this is a gross exaggeration, and it is a priori most improbable that the Goths, who only stayed a short time in Rome, and had much plundering to accomplish in that time, should have devoted so large a part of their energies to the destruction of mere buildings. On the other hand, it is clear that they did use fire in one case, when they burned the palace of Sallust, and probable enough that other edifices may have suffered in the same way, though it is singular that this one palace is the only building which any historian condescends to specify as having been destroyed by fire. Orosius, writing history as an advocate, and having to maintain the thesis that Rome had not suffered since her conversion to Christianity greater calamities than befell her in her pagan times, is not, it must be admitted, an entirely trustworthy witness on this point. But he, a contemporary writer, distinctly says that 'the destruction wrought by fire at the hands of the Gothic conqueror was not to be compared with that caused by accident in the 700th year from the foundation of the city.' This verdict seems a probable one, and may support a conjecture that Rome suffered less, externally, from the barbarians in 410, than Paris from the leaders of the Commune in 1871.

Little as we know from eye-witnesses of the actual details of the siege, we are not left in ignorance of the effect which the news of its fatal result produced on the minds of the provincials. Especially are we able to note the impressions received by the two greatest writers of that age, St. Jerome and St. Augustine.

In his cell at Bethlehem, St. Jerome was laboriously constructing his commentary on Ezekiel, wrestling with the shadowy difficulties of the most enigmatical of Prophets, when suddenly a terrible rumour from the west was brought to him. The story of all the three sieges seems to have reached him at once, the famine, the purchased peace with its vain humiliation, the capture and the sack. All filled his soul with one sorrow and consternation, a consternation so bewildering that, as he himself says, to quote a common proverb, 'I wellnigh forgot my own name.' Then came the troops of exiles, men and women of the noblest families in Rome, once abounding in wealth, now beggars. At that sight 'I was long silent, knowing that it was the time for tears. Since for us to relieve them all was impossible we joined our lamentations with theirs, and in this state of mind I had no heart for explaining Ezekiel, but seemed likely to lose all the fruit of my labour.' He quotes Lucan,

'What is enough, if Rome be deemed too small?'

and proposes to modify the question thus—

'What can be safe, if Rome in ruins fall?'

Then he quotes Virgil (with slight alterations)

'Not though a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues
Were mine, or came my voice from iron lungs,
Could I rehearse each tortured captive's pain,
Or swiftly tell the names of all the slain;'

Isaiah, 'In the night Moab is taken, in the night has her wall fallen';
Asaph, the Psalmist, 'O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple
have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps';

And again his favourite Virgil—
'What witness could recount aright
The woes, the carnage of that night,
Or make his tributary sighs
Keep measure with our agonies?
An ancient city topples down
From broad-based heights of old renown.
There in the streets confusedly strown
Lie age and helplessness o'erthrown.
Block up the entering of the doors
And cumber Heaven's own temple-floors'.

In the midst of his distress and consternation, Jerome does not fail to improve the opportunity to enforcing his own ascetic views. The first quotation from Virgil occurs in his celebrated letter 'De Monogamia,' addressed to the young widow Ageruchia, to dissuade her from re-marriage, 'Not even your sighs are safe,' he says; 'it is dangerous to weep over your calamities. Tell me, dear daughter in Christ, will you marry in the midst of such events as these? What do you mean your husband to do—fight? or fly? In either case you know what sad results to expect. For the Fescennine song, the terrible trumpet will crash upon your ears, and your bridesmaids may have to change their part and act as mourners for the dead.'

Again, in writing to Gaudentius as to the education of his infant daughter Pacatula, he seems almost to rejoice that she is born into so dreary a world, because there is a greater chance of her being trained to abhor it. 'O shame,' he says, 'the frame of the world is falling into ruin, yet our sins fall not from us! That renowned city, the head of the Roman world, has been destroyed by one conflagration. There is no region where the exiles from Rome are not found; churches, once sacred, have fallen into heaps of ashes; and yet we are still set upon covetousness! Into such times as these our little Pacatula has been born; these are the playthings by which her infancy is surrounded; she is learning tears before laughter, sorrow sooner than joy. Oh, let her think that the world has ever been like this; let her be ignorant of the past, avoid the present, yearn only for the future.'

But the climax of his ascetic enthusiasm is reached in his letter to Demetrias, daughter of the Olybrius whose Consulship, along with that of his brother Probinus, and granddaughter of

Proba who was accused of opening the Salarian Gate to the Goths. In this letter he asserts that on Demetrias consecrating herself to a life of perpetual virginity 'Italy changed her garments of mourning, and the ruined walls of Rome almost resumed their former glory. This signal instance of Divine favour made the Romans feel as if the Gothic army, that off-scouring of all things, made up of slaves and deserters, were already cut to pieces. It made them rejoice more than their ancestors had done over the first victory which succeeded the terrible disaster of Cannae.' Was it genuine monkish enthusiasm, or flattery, or the slavery of a declamatory author to his own rhetoric, which made Jerome write such extraordinary sentences as these?

On his great African contemporary Augustine, the tidings of the capture of Rome produced an effect as powerful as upon Jerome. As powerful, and in a certain sense more durable, since it stimulated him to the composition of his greatest work, the offspring of thirteen years of toil, his treatise on *The City of God*. In his *Retractations* he thus describes the origin of the book:—

'Rome, meanwhile, by the invasion of the Goths, under their king Alaric, was overthrown with the crash of a mighty slaughter. This overthrow, the worshippers of many and false gods (whom we are accustomed to call Pagans) endeavoured to connect with the Christian religion, and accordingly they began to blaspheme the name of the true God with even more than their usual bitterness. Wherefore I, inflamed with zeal for the Lord's house, determined to write a treatise on The City of God, in order to refute the mistakes of some and the blasphemies of others. This work kept me employed during several years, being interrupted by many other engagements which had to be attended to immediately. But this great work *De Civitate Dei* is at length completed in twenty-two books.'

He then goes on to describe the plan of the treatise. The first five books refute the error of those who assert that the prosperity of mankind depends on Polytheism. The next five are directed against those who admit that misfortunes sometimes befall the worshippers of the gods, but who contend that they ought still to be adored for the sake of the happiness which they are capable of bestowing in a future state. So much for the negative part of the work. Then, for the positive part, in the remaining twelve books he seeks to establish the truth of the Christian religion. In the first four (11th to 14th) he traces the origin, in the second four (15th to 18th) the growth, and in the last four books (18th to 22nd) the destined consummation of the two eternally separate cities whereof one is the City of God, the other the City of the World.

Such is the general outline of the great Apology of victorious Christianity, but there is many a creek and inlet of curious disquisition, of antiquarian lore, of fantastic speculation concerning Man and concerning Nature, of which this sketch-map gives us no hint. Its value as a piece of Christian polemic is, if one may venture to say so, far inferior to its value as a repository of the thoughts and feelings of Pagan Rome. As a mere piece of argument it suffers, not only from its intolerable prolixity, but yet more from the very completeness of its victory. Through page after page Augustine wrangles on with the Romans upon such topics as their worship of the goddess Felicity. Why did they worship both Felicity and Fortune? What was the difference between them? Why did they not worship Felicity in the earlier ages of the Republic? and yet introduce her worship afterwards? Were they I not really happier before than after they began to worship Felicity? And so on. Arguments of this kind seem to a modern reader a most wearisome slaying of the slain: and yet the passage from Zosimus, quoted in this chapter, about the insult offered to the statue of Valour, shows that these deified abstractions really retained some hold on the reverence of the average pagan intellect, and that Augustine was not fighting mere phantoms, though much of his swordplay seems to us superfluous.

Upon the whole, while recognising the justice of its claim to a place in the front ranks of Christian literature, it may be said that the book is less than its title, that the single thought. The City of God abideth for ever though the greatest City of the World has fallen in ruin, is the

most sublime thing which the author has to put before us, and that many of the arguments by which he tries to buttress his great thesis add no strength and no beauty to the edifice. As a work of art the *De Civitate Dei* certainly suffers from its extreme diffuseness and from the evident anxiety of the author to deal with every difficulty which had come before him in the course of a worldwide correspondence with the faithful. Still it is a great book, worthy of the fateful age in which it appeared, worthy to close the chapter of the old polytheistic literature of Greece and Rome, and to open the chapter of the new mediaeval literature which was to be the common possession of Christian Europe. The thought of this grand unseen City of God which was slowly forming itself out of the wrecks of kingdoms and empires was one which tended to realise itself in the lives of Christian men, and which undoubtedly influenced the policy of the Goths after the capture of Emperors as well as Popes, of Charles and Otho as well as of Hildebrand and Innocent.

As we might expect from his position in the argument, Augustine strongly insists on all the mitigating circumstances in the fall of Rome, the respect shown to the churches, the privilege of sanctuary, and so forth; while, on the other hand, his statement that in so great a carnage the bodies could not even be buried, and the many pages devoted to the unhappy lot of the women who had been dishonoured by the barbarians, clearly show that the usual horrors of a town taken by assault were not lacking in the case of Rome.

The same great thesis, 'Rome has not suffered these things on account of her desertion of Paganism', guides and informs the whole history of Orosius, which has been so often quoted in these pages, and which is dedicated to Orosius' friend and master Augustine.

But it is time to return from the theological schools of Bethlehem and Hippo to Rome and her invaders. Three days only, or, at the most, six, did the Goths tarry in the famine-wasted and probably fever-stricken city. Then, with their heavy burden of spoils, and a long train of captives to help in bearing them, they marched southwards through Campania. Rome fallen, no meaner city seems to have even attempted resistance. We hear incidentally of one captured town, Nola, which had resisted Hannibal when flushed with his great success at Cannae, but which apparently did not even delay the victorious march of Alaric. Here round the tomb of St. Felix (who suffered martyrdom probably in the persecution under Diocletian) Paulinus the bishop had erected a little suburb of convents. He had long ere this voluntarily exchanged great wealth for a life of poverty; and, to quote the words of his friend Augustine 'When he was taken prisoner by the barbarians he put up this prayer, as he afterwards informed me, "Lord, let me not be tortured to make me reveal my gold and silver, for where all my wealth is gone thou knowest". ' The context of the passage seems to imply that the prayer was granted, and that the good bishop did not even lose the little fragment of property which still belonged to him.

From Campania Alaric and his Goths pressed on still southward into Bruttii, the modern Calabria. They collected some ships at Reggio — intending to invade Sicily, some historians say; to pass on thence into Africa, says Jordanes the Goth. There can be little doubt that he is right, that Africa was the present object of Alaric's attack. Not necessarily, however, the ultimate object. His military instinct showed him that there, in the great granary of Rome, must the question of dominion over the Eternal City be decided; that while Heraclian still held Africa for Honorius, the phantom-Emperor at Ravenna could not be dethroned. He was going, then, to Africa, but doubtless with the intention of returning to Rome.

But whatever might be his intentions, they were frustrated. The wave of Teutonic invasion had reached its extreme limit at Reggio, and was henceforward to recede. With delight, doubtless, and gratitude for what seemed like an interference of Providence on their behalf the citizens of Sicilian Messina saw a great storm arisen by which Alaric's fleet was dashed to pieces, and a considerable part of his army, already embarked thereon, destroyed. The Visigothic king could not bring himself to acknowledge defeat, even by the elements. He

lingered near Reggio, still perhaps dreaming of conquests beyond the seas. Suddenly, in the midst of his warlike schemes, Death surprised him. We are told nothing as to the nature of his malady, except that it was of short duration. It is probable that in his case, as in that of so many other Northern invaders of Italy, climate proved itself mightier than armies, and that Fever was the great avenger.

The well-known story of the burial of Alaric derives some additional interest from the remembrance of his birthplace. He was born, as the reader may recollect, on an island at the mouth of one of the greatest rivers of Europe. The flow of the broad but sluggish Danube, the sound of the wind in the pine-trees, the distant thunder of the Euxine upon its shore,—these were the sounds most familiar to the ear of the young Visigoth. Now that he had swept with resistless force from the Black Sea to the Straits of Messina, a river must flow over his grave as it had encircled his cradle. Forth from the high pine-woods of the Calabrian mountain-range of Sila leaps the stream of the Busento, which, meeting the larger river Crati coming from the Apennines, encircles the town of Cosenza, where the great Visigoth met his death. To provide their leader with a tomb which no Italian hand should desecrate, the barbarians compelled a number of their captives to labour at diverting the Busento from its ordinary channel. In the dry bed of the river they dug the grave, in which, amid many of the chosen spoils of Rome, the body of Alaric was laid. The captives were then ordered to turn the river back into its ancient course, and their faithful guardianship of the grim secret was secured by the inviolable seal of death printed upon their lips. So, under the health-bringing waters of the rapid Busento, sleeps *Alaric the Visigoth*, equalled, as it seems to me, by only three men in succeeding times as a changer of the course of history. And these three are Mohammed, Columbus, Napoleon.

Of that other triad who marked for us the commencement of the year 395, two are gone—Stilicho and Alaric. Honorius, their ignoble contemporary, as is the manner of human affairs, survives, and is to live on yet for thirteen years. Something has been said of the effect of the tidings of the fall of Rome upon Jerome and Augustine : it would be improper not to mention the impression which they are said to have produced on the mind of the Roman Emperor. A chamberlain, says Procopius, rushed into the Imperial presence, announcing that Rome had perished. “Rome perished!” said the Emperor. “It is not an hour since she was feeding out of my hand.” He understood the sad news as relating to a very fine fowl to which he had given the name of Rome. Then the eunuch explained to him that it was only the city of Rome which had been destroyed by Alaric. “But I thought, my friend,” said Honorius, evidently relieved, “that you meant that I had lost my *bird* Rome.”

The anecdote can hardly be true, but even the invention of such a story shows the estimate which his subjects had formed of the fatuous folly of the prince who is styled upon his coins, Honorius, the Pious and the Fortunate, the Triumpher over the nations of the barbarians.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LOVERS OF PLACIDIA.

It has seemed necessary to relate with almost tedious minuteness the marches and counter-marches, the intrigues, the negotiations, and the plunderings, which preceded or accompanied the Gothic sack of Rome. Other sieges and pillages of the Eternal City lie before us, but we shall not find it necessary to bestow on all the same close attention which has been claimed for the first. Now that the secret of Rome's weakness is disclosed, many a nomadic horde wandering over the Scythian steppes has heard the strange exciting history, and will not rest till it, too, has stood victorious on the Capitolian Hill. But we hear and we tell the adventures of Columbus, and of his fellow mariners, who could say

'We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea,'

with an interest which we do not accord to the journal of a modern passenger traversing the same waters with all the appliances and all the luxuries of our modern civilisation; and uninteresting as the latter class of travellers do some of the more recent ravagers of Rome appear, on their commonplace and easily accomplished errand of destruction.

Not yet however for another generation is the example of Alaric to be followed. Forty-two years, 410-452, of something like repose for Italy have first to elapse. In journeying over this long piece of level ground we shall find our attention chiefly attracted by the story of the sister of Honorius and the sister-in-law of Alaric, the Queen of the Goths and the Augusta of the Romans, the lady Galla Placidia.

The second marriage of Theodosius, as the reader has already been told, was a somewhat romantic affair, springing out of the murder of Valentinian II and the flight of his mother and sisters to Constantinople. The issue of that marriage, his daughter Galla Placidia, was thus the representative of two Imperial houses, the granddaughter of the warrior Valentinian, the daughter of the warrior Theodosius. She was born probably about the year 390 and can have remembered little either of father or mother, the Empress Galla having died before she was four years old, and Theodosius having departed immediately after for his last campaign in the West. As she inherited one of her names from her mother, so she seems to have been the only member of the family who inherited anything of the vigour and capacity of her father's character, as is so often the case, not being transmitted according to sex.

For some reason unknown to us she did not follow her brother's court to the safe shelter of Ravenna, but remained in Rome at the time of the Gothic invasion. It is with sorrow that we find her at the time of the first siege assenting to the judicial murder of Serena, as decreed by the Senate. We can well believe that the wife of Stilicho had been a hard *duenna* towards her young kinswoman: and a few words of Claudian suggest the possibility that the suit of her son Eucherius for the hand of his cousin may have been too importunately pressed: still, the sanction which this young maiden of eighteen is said to have given to the death of one so unfortunate and so unjustly slain as Serena must remain as a stain upon her memory.

After one of the three sieges of Rome, probably the second, Placidia was taken captive by the barbarians; and though treated with all the courtesy and deference due to a lady of royal birth, was nevertheless distinctly spoken of as a hostage, obliged apparently to move as the

army moved, and used as a lever to bring the endless peace negotiations with the Court at Ravenna to a satisfactory issue.

But after the death of Alaric, and when his brother-in-law Ataulfus had been raised upon the shield and proclaimed King of the Visigoths, a change gradually came over these negotiations, and the restitution of the lady Placidia was less and less willingly offered by the barbarians. There was a change in the mind of Ataulfus, who was beginning to wish to be the champion rather than the enemy of Rome. 'When I was at Bethlehem,' says his contemporary Orosius, 'I heard a citizen of Narbonne, who had served with distinction under Theodosius, and who was besides a wise and religious person, tell the most blessed Jerome that he had been on terms of the greatest intimacy with Ataulfus at Narbonne, and that he had frequently heard him say that, in the first exuberance of his strength and spirits, he had made this his most earnest desire—to utterly obliterate the Roman name, and bring under the sway of the Goths all that had once belonged to them—in fact, to turn Romania into Gothia, and to make himself, Ataulfus, all that Caesar Augustus had once been. But when he had learnt, by long experience, that the Goths would obey no laws on account of the unrestrained barbarism of their character, yet that it was wrong to deprive the commonwealth of laws without which it would cease to be a commonwealth, he at least for his part had chosen to have the glory of restoring the Roman name to its old estate, and increasing its potency by Gothic vigour, and he wished to be looked upon by posterity as the great author of the Roman restoration, since he had failed in his attempt to be its transformer.'

Such were the plans which, during the years immediately following 410, were passing through the brain of the Gothic chieftain, and at the same time his heart was cherishing day by day more loving thoughts about the fair wise face of his captive Placidia. She appears to have been ready to return his affection; and it is therefore with some surprise that we find a space of four years elapse before the marriage ceremony takes place.

This delay seems to be chiefly due to the fact that the Visigoth had a powerful rival in the person of the Emperor's new general and adviser, Constantius, before whose rising star the influence of Olympius and Jovius successively succumbed. He too had set his heart on winning Placidia for his wife, and the effectual services which he rendered to her brother seemed to excuse the pertinacity of his suit. Therefore it was that whenever Goths and Romans met to negotiate a peace, the restitution of Placidia was the point most strongly insisted upon by the ministers of Honorius, most sedulously evaded by the envoys of Ataulfus. By a rare piece of good fortune we are favoured with some details as to the outward appearance of the two rivals, and can therefore imagine some of the contending emotions which agitated the heart of Placidia. Ataulfus, among his tall countrymen, was not distinguished for his stature, but his shapely figure and dignified countenance more than atoned for this deficiency. Constantius, on the other hand (an Illyrian by birth, who had served in many campaigns under the great Theodosius), is described as having a downcast, sulky look. His broad head was set upon a large neck; his great full eyes were darted with a scowl to right and left of him, so that men said he looked thoroughly like a tyrant: and when he rode he rolled forward on the neck of his horse. But this slouching, gloomy tyrant was agreeable enough in his cups. At suppers and banquets he showed himself a pleasant and polite person; nay, so great was his condescension that when the time came for the comic actors to enter and enliven the feast, he would often rise from the table and contend with them for the prize of buffoonery.

We must again interrupt for a time the course of the history of Italy in order to glance at the affairs of Gaul and Spain, in which Constantius played a prominent part.

The year 409, which witnessed the elevation and the short-lived glory of Attalus, saw also another anti-Emperor proclaimed in Spain, threatening the throne of the usurper Constantine. There was disaffection and mutiny among the Spanish troops of Constantine, which was

connected in some way (whether as cause or effect our authorities will not enable us to say) with the fact that the three barbarian nations, Vandals, Alans, and Suevi, who had once before ineffectually dashed themselves against the barriers of the Pyrenees, now succeeded in penetrating the mountain-passes, no longer defended by the old national militia, and were soon surging wildly over the fat and fruitful land which since the birth of Christ had scarcely seen a spear thrown in anger. Three-quarters of Spain at least were lost to the Empire, and in the remaining quarter usurper and counter-usurper were struggling for supremacy. For Gerontius, the British lieutenant of Constantine, being for some reason superseded in his command, refused to accept his dismissal, and proclaiming one of his dependants, a life-guardsmen named Maximus, Emperor, in his name waged bitter and on the whole successful war against Constans, the son of his former chief Constantine. In the year 410 he seems to have succeeded in driving Constans out of Spain, and to have followed him into Gaul, intent on overthrowing the new dynasty. Gerontius besieged and took Vienne, probably in the early part of 411, and having put the young Constans to death, turned southward to besiege the strong city of Arles, where Constantine, given over to gluttony and sloth, was dragging out his inglorious reign.

But not for Gerontius was reserved the glory of stripping the purple robe from the base-born usurper. At the same moment, apparently, that he was marching on Arles from the North, Constantius, eager to do some signal service to Honorius and to win by the sword the hand of Placidia, was approaching it from the East. Ere either army had formed the siege the bulk of the army of Gerontius had melted away from his standards and had joined themselves to the host of Constantius. Perhaps, in fighting Constantine, they had persuaded themselves that they were showing their loyalty to Honorius, and did not dare to oppose in arms the representative of the legitimate ruler of the Empire. Perhaps, as Spaniards, they shared that feeling of loyalty to the Theodosian house which had brought Didymus and Verenianus into the field. Whatever the cause, Gerontius, finding himself general of an ever-dwindling army, threw up the game, and stole away into Spain. But the soldiers among whom he came, despising him for what they deemed his cowardly flight, mutinied against him, and took counsel to slay him. They surrounded his house at nightfall, but he, with one faithful henchman, of Alan blood, and a few slaves, mounted to the top of the house and did such execution with their arrows that 300 of the besiegers fell. At length, the arrows were all exhausted; the slaves, under cover of the night, glided away from the house: and Gerontius might easily have done the like. But he would not leave his wife, who for some reason could not share his flight, and his Alan comrade would not leave him. So all three were still remaining on the house top when the day was dawning. The bloodthirsty mutineers gathered around and set fire to the house. Flight was impossible: the only thought of the defenders was how to escape ignominy and torture. At the earnest request of his friend, Gerontius cut off the head of the faithful Alan, then of his wife, a devout Christian, who with prayers and tears besought him thus to preserve her honour. Then he thrice struck himself with his sword, but failing each time to inflict a mortal wound, he drew forth the trustier dagger and stabbed himself to the heart.

Meanwhile, the siege of Arles, though of some length, had upon the whole gone favourably for the cause of legitimacy. After four months the siege seemed likely to be raised by the approach of Edobich, a Frank, in the usurper's service, who had been sent to collect auxiliaries among his barbarous countrymen on the lower Rhine. But by a clever stratagem, Edobich's army was surrounded and defeated: by the ingratitude of an old friend Edobich was slain, and Constantine was forced to recognise that the pleasant years of Empire were over. He took refuge in a church, and there received priest's orders. The people of Arles, on obtaining the assurance of the Imperial clemency both for themselves and their late lord, opened their gates to Constantius. As far as the citizens were concerned, the compact was honourably kept, but not so as to the late Augustus. He was sent, with his son Julian, to the court of Honorius,

but messengers met them at the twentieth milestone from Ravenna, bearing the orders of the Emperor, in whose mind the insult offered to his own majesty and the cruel murder of his kinsmen, outweighed the obligations of good faith and the respect due to his general's plighted word. Constantine and Julian were put to death, and their heads were fixed up outside the gates of Carthage, where those of Maximus and Eugenius, the usurpers of a previous generation, had already for many years been exposed, a ghastly memorial of an anti-Emperor's perils

But the lesson which these ghastly trophies were meant to teach was not learned even in Carthage itself. Heraclian, the murderer of Stilicho, whom we have seen valiantly and loyally holding Africa for Honorius, at length (in the year 413) raised the standard of rebellion himself, detained the usual tribute of corn which should have gone from his province to Rome, and set sail for the coast of Italy with an armament which the terror-stricken citizens believed to be larger than any squadron that had been seen since the days of Xerxes, and to consist of 3700 ships. Something however—perhaps the remains of the old Roman loyalty—lingering near his conscience, made him, who had been so staunch in his defence, falter in his attack. The Count Marinus resisted him with some vigour, and he immediately lost heart and fled, with one ship, to Carthage, where he was at once arrested and put to death. So was the death of Stilicho avenged. Constantius asked for the confiscated property of the rebel, and obtained it, the historian says, 'at one asking'—so ductile was the soft nature of Honorius. It amounted to £4600 in gold, and about £92,000 worth of landed estate: much less than Constantius had reckoned on receiving, but sufficient to enable him to celebrate his consulship (in the year 414) with becoming splendour.

We return to Ataulfus and his Visigoths. Two years after the sack of Rome they quitted Italy, never again to come back through the Alpine passes. The reason of their departure is not made clear to us. It may be that Gaul, whither they at first directed their steps, seemed a fairer prize than the much-ravaged plains of Italy: it may be that the desire of conserving instead of destroying 'Romania' induced the Gothic chieftain to withdraw from a land, the security of which was essential to the recovery of the prestige of Rome: it may be that the departure of the barbarians from the near neighbourhood of Ravenna was meant to soothe the Roman Emperor into giving that consent to the marriage with Placidia which threats had been unable to extort.

But strangely enough, if this was the aim of Ataulfus, he next appears as supporting the cause of Jovinus, one of the many usurpers of the Empire, who, relying on the aid of the Tartar Alans and the Teutonic Burgundians, had lately raised the standard of revolt at Mayence.

That pitiable shadow of an Emperor, Attalus, who still followed in his train, had counselled Ataulfus to make this inexplicable move. One important result followed from the visit to the camp of Jovinus. The hereditary enemy, or, as the Germans would say, the *Erbfeind*, of Alaric and of his successor, he who was in heart the murderer of Stilicho, Sarus, was coming to the same headquarters of mutiny, disgusted with the ungrateful feebleness of Honorius, who had allowed his faithful servant, Belleridus by name, to be murdered at the Imperial Court without making any inquisition for his blood.

Unawares, the revolter Sarus rushed into the deadly embrace of his enemy. Ataulfus waylaid him with 10,000 men, against whom the eighteen or twenty followers of Sarus fought with useless intrepidity. At length one of this immensely superior force, anxious to take the captive alive to his master, threw a piece of coarse sacking over the head of Sarus, and so brought him helpless, but still living, into the presence of Ataulfus, by whose orders he was slain.

Except this event, little followed from the visit of Ataulfus to the camp of Jovinus. The usurper deeply offended his powerful friend by proclaiming, contrary to that friend's advice, Sebastian, his brother, as his partner in the Imperial dignity.

With the opening of the year 413, Ataulfus sent an embassy to Ravenna offering to bring in the heads of all the usurpers if a just and honourable peace were concluded. The offer was accepted, oaths were exchanged, and the ambassadors returned. First of all, Sebastian's head was despatched as a present to Honorius; then Jovinus, besieged and taken prisoner, was sent in bonds to Ravenna, and there slain by the Praetorian Prefect with his own hand. The heads of the two brothers were then exposed outside the gate of Carthage, where the two pairs of usurpers had already preceded them.

Great services were these which the Visigoth had rendered to the Emperor : still, the cardinal point, the restitution of Placidia, could not be agreed upon. Constantius began to press more eagerly for her return. Ataulfus, to evade this demand, raised his terms, for concessions in land, in money, in corn, yet higher and higher. In the midst of the peace negotiations, he even made a sudden attack upon the town of Marseilles. The general commanding there, Bonifacius, a man who afterwards played a great part in the service of Placidia, repulsed him with great loss, and he scarce escaped with life. Still, however, Ataulfus pushed on his preparations for the marriage; and at last, in the year 414, the year which witnessed the consulship of the other lover, Constantius, Honorius was induced, chiefly by the good offices of a certain general, Candidianus, to give his consent to the match.

The time was the early part of the month of January; the place where the marriage was solemnised was the city of Narbonne, the capital of Gallia Narbonensis, the chief province of Gaul. The house of Ingenus, one of the principal personages of the city, was given up for the ceremony. Here, in the inner apartment which was adorned after the manner usual with wealthy Romans, sat Placidia in the seat of honour, arrayed in royal robes. To her entered Ataulfus, not wearing the furs and carrying the great battle-axe of the Goths, but dressed in the fine woollen tunic which was the appropriate wedding garment of the Romans, and in all other respects costumed like a countryman of the bride. The religious ceremony may probably enough have been performed by Sigisarius the Arian bishop who baptized Attalus, and who seems to have acted as a kind of chaplain to the Visigothic army.

And so the complicated and unsatisfactory negotiations of the last four years were brought to a successful issue. Romans and barbarians were made for the time one people; the captor and captive were fond husband and devoted wife.

The gorgeousness of the wedding presents which the Visigoth gave to his bride was long remembered. Fifty beautiful youths dressed in silken robes (the material for which came not then from Lyons, but across trackless deserts from the far East of Asia) knelt before the bride, whose slaves they were henceforward to remain. Each held in his hands two chargers, one filled with gold, the other with precious, or more properly, priceless, stones. The gold and the jewels were the spoils of Rome, but Placidia must have been more or less than woman if at that moment the thought of the possession of so many lustrous gems did not in some measure efface the remembrance of the woes of 'the daughter of her people.'

After the presentation of the wedding gifts came the singing of wedding songs, in which the aesthetic Attalus, ex-Praetorian Prefect, ex-Emperor of Rome, but ever true to his Greek instinct for Art, led the chorus.

The day ended with loud demonstrations of joy on the part of both the populations whose union was figuring typified by this event. And, in truth, small as was the result which actually followed from this marriage, we can hardly attribute to it too great an importance as symbolical of that amalgamation between the Roman and the Germanic races which was yet to be, though confused and bloody centuries were to elapse before it was finally achieved. Augustus or Tiberius would have as soon accepted a menial slave for a son-in-law as the German hero Arminius. In the four centuries which have elapsed since those days, 'Gothia' has risen much in the scale of civilisation, and 'Romania' has learned that her very existence may depend on

the clemency of these barbarians. And so it comes to pass that the sister of the Roman Augustus and the *Thiudam* of the Teutonic people are joined with mutual love and reverence in the honourable estate of holy matrimony; the word Barbarian loses half its potency as an epithet of reproach, and Mediaeval History begins to show itself above the horizon.

The issue of this marriage was a son, named after his maternal grandfather Theodosius. It might well be thought that high fortunes were in store for this child, that he would one day mount the throne of the Caesars and restore to Rome, by the arms of his father's soldiers, all and more than all that she had lost by the might of one uncle and the weakness of another. But it was not so to be. Ataulfus, though more than ever, since this infant's birth, disposed to be friendly towards the Empire, found his overtures for peace persistently declined on account of the predominant influence of Constantius. Nay more : without actual battle he appears to have been, by a kind of blockade of the Gallic coast, forced over the Pyrenees, and obliged to enter Spain where Vandals, Alans, and Sueves, having penetrated before him, left little to be plundered and much toil to be undergone by the latest comers. Soon after the Visigothic host had entered Spain the infant Theodosius died. His parents made great lamentation over him, and buried him in a silver coffer in a church outside their new capital, Barcelona.

The death of the child was speedily followed by that of the father. Ataulfus had among his servants a Goth named Dobbius (or Dubius), whose former master, the chief of some petty tribe, he had conquered and slain. Dobbius was loyal to the memory of his earlier servitude, and watched for an opportunity of revenge. It came one morning when the king, according to his usual custom, was, like many a Teuton since, going the round of his stables and enjoying the sight of his horses feeding. Then, apparently, the treacherous groom came behind him and stabbed him in the back. Dying, for he was not killed on the spot, he was able to whisper his commands to his brother, 'If possible live in friendship with Rome, and restore Placidia to the Emperor.' And with those words surely a spasm of grief shook the frame of the dying warrior as he remembered all the years wasted on windy negotiations. Four years of these and only one of actual possession of his fair young bride. The thought lent a fresh bitterness to death as the soul of Ataulfus went forth whither Alaric had preceded him.

The successor of Ataulfus was Singeric, the brother of Sarus. Seeing the brother of the *Erbfeind* thus reaping the advantage of Dobbius's crime, we shall probably not be far wrong in supposing that he was an accomplice before the fact. His acts are those of a man determined to pursue the blood-feud to the uttermost. He tore the sons of Ataulfus (children of an earlier marriage than that with Placidia) out of the very arms of Bishop Sigisarius and put them to death. Placidia he durst not slay, but he dared to insult her. Mingled with a crowd of other captives she was forced to walk before his horse out of the gates of Barcelona, and this insulting procession was continued till it reached the twelfth milestone from the city. Strange reverse of fortune for the daughter, sister, and grand-daughter of Emperors, humbled thus before an insolent barbarian on the soil of her own ancestral Spain!

But the reaction, if such there was in the Visigothic camp in favour of the family of Sarus, was but for a moment. After a reign of only seven days Singeric was slain, and the brave Walia, a worthy successor, though not, as far as we know, a relative of Alaric and Ataulfus, was raised upon the shield in his stead.

Almost the first act of King Walia was to restore Placidia to the Romans. His chamberlain Euplutius was charged to escort her to the foot of the Pyrenees, whither came Constantius with almost regal pomp to receive her. A firm treaty of peace between the two nations was at length concluded, and in return for the surrendered princess the Visigoths received 600,000 measures (nearly 19,000 quarters) of corn. This was possibly the amount of pay which had been stipulated for and wrangled over in the previous negotiations between Ataulfus and Honorius.

And in truth the state of Spain, wasted and trodden or Spain, under foot by four barbarian tribes (Vandals, Alans, Suevi, and Visigoths), as well as by the remaining Roman soldiery, was such that any considerable quantity of corn might well seem a good exchange for a princess. The usual terrible stories of cannibalism are told of this time. In one Spanish town, it is said, a woman who had four children ate them all. As the first and the second and the third disappeared, she pleaded the necessity of affording some sustenance, however dreadful, to the remainder, but when the fourth was eaten this plea availed her no longer, and she was stoned to death by her horrified townsmen. One commercial transaction, long remembered and talked of beside many a barbarian camp-fire, marked this time of famine. Some Gothic soldiers bought from some Vandals a *trula* of wheat for an *aureus*. As the *Trula* was only a third part of a pint, and the *Aureus* was worth about twelve shillings, the bargain did not redound greatly to the profit of the Visigoths, who received from the other nation the contemptuous nickname of *Truli*. Many a time, as we can well imagine, were the streets of Spanish towns made red with Teuton blood, and the yellow locks of slain barbarians lay thick across the pathway, after the taunting shout *Truli, Truli*, and some unknown word of answering defiance had greeted the ears of the trembling provincials.

The thought that Rome would be the gainer by all these dissensions among her invaders is expressed by the barbarians themselves with a plainness which seems most improbable (were we not reading the words of a contemporary) in the following passage of Orosius:—

‘Vandals, Alans, and Suevi, all sent embassies to Honorius, at the same time as the Visigothic king Walia, and on the same errand. “Do thou live at peace with all of us,” said they, “and accept the hostages of all. We fight with one another, perish with one another, conquer for thee : thy commonwealth will reap immortal gain if both parties among us perish.”

Orosius upon this remarks, ‘Who would believe these things, unless the fact itself persuaded him of it. But so it is, that up to this very time we hear from numerous messengers that wars are being daily waged among the barbarous nations in Spain, and that the bloodshed on both sides is enormous: especially that Walia, the king of the Goths, is earnest in keeping the peace which he has made with us. Wherefore I would for my part concede that the age of Christianity should be abused as much as ever you please, if you can show me anything from the foundation of the world till the present time that has ever been managed with similar success.’ And so, with a few complimentary words to St. Augustine, he ends his ‘history of the passions and punishments of men during 5617 years, namely, from the creation of the world till the present day.’

Here we part company with the worthy ecclesiastic, not entirely convinced that the then condition of the Roman Empire was the most fortunate thing that the world had ever seen, nor regretting that the truth of the Christian Revelation rests upon some other arguments besides those alleged in the Seven Books of the Histories of Orosius.

Here also our path diverges from that of the Visigothic nation. In order to trace the fortunes of Placidia, the type of alliance between Rome and the barbarians, we have followed the Visigoths over the Alps and the Pyrenees. It is now time to return within the frontier of Italy. But having accompanied their waggons so long, we may in parting from them give a brief glance at their future history.

The successors of Alaric will establish a powerful and well-ordered kingdom on both sides of the Pyrenees, the capital of which will be the city of Toulouse, its northern frontier the River Loire, and its southern the Mediterranean and Atlantic. They will take a leading part in repelling the invasion of the Huns. Towards the close of the fifth century the fairest of their possessions north of the Pyrenees will be wrested from them by the Franks under Clovis and his sons. In the sixth century they will consolidate their Spanish kingdom, they will renounce

Arianism, and be numbered among the most steadfast supporters of the Catholic faith. The elective character of their monarchy, the predominance of the great nobles, and then of the great ecclesiastics, will continue during the seventh century special marks of their polity, in which the power wielded by the great Councils of Toledo will also be a remarkable feature. But during all this time the Gothic conquerors, while daily losing that rough and martial vigour which gave them the ascendancy over the Roman provincials, will still treat them as a subject population, and will but slowly and grudgingly admit them to even theoretical equality with themselves. And thus, when in 711 the wave of Saracen fanaticism shall break against the throne of Roderic the last of the Goths, the whole fabric of the state will fall like a house of cards, and one lost battle by the Guadalete will make the Moors masters of Spain for centuries. The new Christian state, which will emerge from the mountains of Asturias and slowly win back town by town and province by province for the Cross, will be one in which Goth and Roman and Spaniard will be all welded together into one homogeneous mass by the fires of adversity, though a few Gothic names may survive, and even 'the blue blood' of the future Spanish hidalgo will faintly keep alive the memory of those fair-skinned warriors of the Danube, who in the fifth century descended, conquering, among the sunburnt populations of the South.

We return from the history of the Visigoths to that of their late Queen, Galla Placidia. Constantius, who was waiting to receive her at the foot of the Pyrenees, had received from Honorius the assurance that by whatsoever means, peaceable or warlike, he might succeed in liberating Placidia, he should receive her hand in marriage.

Some little time may, for the sake of appearances, have been conceded to the widow so recently a wife. But soon the courtship of the successful general, backed by the Imperial mandate, commenced in good earnest.

Placidia again and again rejected his overtures. The sullen, broad-headed, loose-limbed soldier, whose large eyes shot forth tyrant-glances on all around, could not understand why the widow of the comely and courteous Ataulfus should prefer the remembrance of the dead, to union with the living, lover, and was full of wrath against her confidential servants, to whose hostility he attributed her coldness.

At length the fortress surrendered. The year 417 was distinguished by the eleventh consulship of Honorius and the second of Constantius. On the day when the new consuls entered office, the Emperor took his sister by the hand and delivered her over to his colleague as a bride. The wedding festival, celebrated probably at Ravenna, was of unusual magnificence. It may have been a point of honour with the Roman general to eclipse the splendour of the far-renowned marriage-feast at Narbonne in the house of Ingenuus. Two children were the issue of this marriage niamage, first, a girl, named after her Imperial uncle, Honoria, and then (in the year 419), a boy, who, in remembrance of his great-grandfather, the sturdy soldier-emperor, received the name of Valentinian. For this son Placidia obtained from her brother the title *Nobilissimus*, a sort of recognition of his presumptive heirship to the Empire.

The same year, 417, which witnessed Placidia's second wedding-feast, witnessed also the final degradation of the unfortunate child of Genius, who so gracefully led the revels at her first—the ex-Emperor Attalus. It is said that this poor piece of jetsam and flotsam had once more mounted to the top of the waves, and had been again proclaimed Emperor in Gaul in the year 414.

If so, he was soon again deposed, and as bearing the empty simulacrum of empire, was carried by the Goths into Spain. There he wandered, miserable and aimless, till he could endure his life no longer, and took ship to sail any whither away from his barbarian protectors. He was

captured at sea by the ships of Honorius, brought to Constantius, and by him sent to Rome to await the Emperor's pleasure.

This capture of an old antagonist, and some successes obtained in Spain by King Walia, fighting as the Emperor's lieutenant, against the Vandals and other barbarous tribes, suggested and seemed to justify the idea of a triumph at Rome. It was not much for which to stand in the triumphal car, and to ascend the *Clivus Capitolinus*; but it was as much of a pretext as was likely to be found in the lifetime of Honorius.

The outward appearance of the city was doubtless much improved since the three sieges by Alaric. Shortly before this time, the Prefect, Albinus, had reported to the Emperor that the largesse of victuals to the people must be greatly increased, since the population was rapidly augmenting, and as many as 14,000 had passed in through the gates in one day. The largesse may explain part of the influx of population, and the narrative may show not so much the recovery of Rome as the more profound exhaustion of Italy. Still it seems probable that the city was not much changed in outward seeming from the days when real triumphs were exhibited within its walls, and that a crowd of curious and not discontented citizens 'climbed up' as of old 'to walls and battlements, to see' Honorius 'pass the streets of Rome.'

All that we hear concerning the pageant is that the Emperor, having ascended the tribunal, ordered Attalus to come to the lowest step of it; and, after his old rival had humbled himself in the dust before him, he (reminding that rival doubtless of his own similar menaces when Alaric stood before Ravenna) ordered the thumb and forefinger of his right hand to be cut off, and then despatched him to one of the Lipari islands, where, as one of the annalists epigrammatically expresses it, he was 'left to life'.

Four comparatively uneventful years followed the marriage of Constantius and Placidia. Then, with the reluctant assent of Honorius, his brother-in-law was associated with him on the Imperial throne, and his sister took the title of Augusta.

The tidings of this addition to the Imperial partnership were not welcomed at Constantinople, where the young Theodosius, or rather his sister Pulcheria, who administered the government in his name, refused to recognise the new Emperor or to receive his statues, which, according to the etiquette of the period, were sent for erection in Constantinople.

Great was the wrath which this refusal kindled at Ravenna, and the long-smouldering jealousy between the two courts seemed likely to break forth into a flame of discord. And yet in a short time no one perceived more clearly than Constantius himself his unfitness for the position of dignified nothingness to which he had been raised, and no one more heartily regretted that elevation. The jovial, active soldier could no longer come and go as he pleased, no longer vie with the comic actors in provoking the laughter of the banqueters: every step which he took in the purple buskins of royalty was prescribed by the tedious court ceremonial invented by Diocletian, and perfected by the eunuchs of an earlier Constantius. His health began to give way, and, like many men of high animal spirits, he fell an easy prey to nervous depression. One night, six months after he had begun to reign, a figure appeared to him in a dream, and uttered the words, apparently innocent, but, to his ear, full of evil omen: 'Six are finished: the seventh is begun.' He was shortly afterwards attacked by pleurisy, and justified the dream and the interpretation thereof by dying before the end of his seventh month of royalty.

Rarely has the world had so frank a confession of the unjoyousness of a kingly life as it received from this clumsy, roystering, and yet not altogether odious husband of Placidia.

Not long before his death a transaction was proposed, which reminds us of the Roman senate's dealings with the Etruscan soothsayers during Alaric's siege. A certain Libanius, a mighty magician, sprung from Asia, appeared in Ravenna, and promised, with the Emperor's leave, to perform great marvels against the barbarians, entirely by means of his art-magic, and

without the aid of any soldiers. Constantius gave his consent to the meditated experiment, but Placidia, a fervent Christian always, and not too fondly attached to her second husband, sent him word that if he permitted that faithless enchanter to live she would apply for a divorce. Upon this Libanius was killed.

After her second widowhood Placidia was for a time the object of extravagant and foolish fondness on the part of her brother, whose uncouth kisses, frequently bestowed upon her in public, moved the laughter of the people. Then his fatuous mind wavered round from fondness to mistrust and from mistrust to aversion. He was jealous of her nurse, her waiting-woman, her grand chamberlain; the jealousy of the masters reflected itself in the squabbles of the domestics: the Gothic followers of Placidia, the veterans who had served under the standard of Constantius often came to blows with the Imperial soldiers in the streets of Ravenna, and wounds were inflicted, if no lives were lost.

At length the quarrel became so embittered that Placidia, finding herself the weaker of the combatants, withdrew with her two children to the court of her nephew Theodosius II at Constantinople.

Soon after, on the 26th of August of the same year (423), Honorius died of dropsy—his feeble mind and body having no doubt been shaken by these domestic storms—and his poultry and his people passed under other masters. The child ‘more august than Jove,’ whose birth and whose destinies Claudian had depicted in such glowing colours, died at the age of thirty-nine, having been by his weakness the cause of greater changes than are often accomplished by the strength of mighty heroes.

On the death of Honorius some obscure palace intrigue raised Joannes, the chief of the Notaries, to the vacant throne. The office of the *Primicerius Notariorum*, though useful to the state, was not one which put the holder of it in the foremost rank of the official hierarchy. He could only claim to be addressed as *Spectabilis*, not as *Illustris*, and his chief duty seems to have been the editing of that very *Notitia Imperii* which has been so often quoted in these pages.

It is not easy for us to understand why a comparatively obscure member of the Civil Service should have been permitted to array himself with the still coveted Imperial purple, until we ascertain that Castinus, who was then master of the soldiery, and who the following year shared the honours of the Consulship, supported the pretensions of Joannes to the diadem, intending doubtless to enjoy the substance of power himself while leaving its shadow and its dangers to his creature.

At the inauguration of Joannes an event occurred which showed the influence still exerted over the minds of the people by the omen of the voice. While the officers of the court were proclaiming the style and titles of *Dominus Noster Joannes Pius Felix Augustus*, a cry, by whom uttered none could tell, was suddenly heard. ‘He falls, he falls, he does not stand.’ The multitude, as if desiring to break the spell, shouted with one accord, ‘He stands, he stands, he does not fall’; but the ill-omened words were none the less remembered.

It was not to be expected that the family of the great Theodosius, having still the resources of the Eastern Empire at their disposal, would tamely acquiesce in the assumption of the Western diadem by a clerk in the Government Offices. The only question was whether Theodosius II would interfere for her cousin or for himself. He chose the former and the more generous course, confirmed Placidia in her title of Augusta, and Valentinian in that of *Nobilissimus* (titles which on account of the quarrel with Constantius had not previously been recognised at Constantinople), and equipped an army to escort them to the palace at Ravenna (A.D. 424). He himself accompanied them as far as Thessalonica, but was prevented by sickness from further prosecution of the journey. However, he caused his young kinsman to be arrayed in the Imperial robes, and conferred upon him the secondary title of Caesar.

Ardaburius, the general of horse and foot, and his son Aspar, whose names betoken their barbarian origin, were entrusted with the chief conduct of the expedition. Candidianus also, he who, ten years before, had so zealously promoted the marriage of Ataulfus and Placidia, was now entrusted with a high command in her service.

Ardaburius, after some successes in Dalmatia, set sail for Aquileia. An unfavourable wind carried him to a different part of the coast: he was separated from his followers, and taken in chains to Ravenna. Feigning treachery to the cause of his Imperial mistress, he received from Joannes the gift of his life, and was kept in such slight duress that he was able to sow the seeds of real treachery among the generals and courtiers of the usurper.

Aspar, however, was deeply distressed and terrified for his father's life, and Placidia feared that her cause was hopeless; but the brilliant victories of Candidianus, who captured many towns in North Italy, revived their drooping spirits.

What follows is related by the contemporary ecclesiastical historian Socrates, and the compiler feels himself therefore in some sort bound to insert it for the reader to deal with as he thinks fit.

'The capture of Ardaburius made the usurper more sanguine in his hope that Theodosius would be induced, by the urgency of the case, to proclaim him Emperor, in order to preserve the life of this officer. But at this crisis the prayer of the pious Emperor again prevailed. For an angel of God, under the appearance of a shepherd, undertook the guidance of Aspar and his troops, and led them through the lake near Ravenna. Now, no one had ever been known to ford that lake before: but God then rendered that passable which had hitherto been impassable. Having therefore crossed the lake, as if going over dry ground, they found the gates of the city open, and seized the tyrant.'

Philostorgius, who was a contemporary historian in a stricter sense than Socrates, being a middle-aged man when these events occurred, attributes the defeat of Joannes to the treachery of his followers, who had been tampered with by Ardaburius; and he knows nothing of the angelic shepherd.

Joannes was thus deposed after a reign of about eighteen months. He was led a prisoner to Aquileia, where Placidia and her son were abiding. In the hippodrome of that city his right hand was cut off. He was then sent in derisive triumph round the town riding upon an ass, and, after many similar insults had been heaped upon him by the soldiery, the Notary-Emperor was put to death.

Placidia with the Caesar her son entered Ravenna, which was given up to sack by the soldiers of Aspar to punish the inhabitants for their sympathy with the usurpation of Joannes.

Ardaburius was of course liberated. Helion, the master of the offices, and patrician, escorted the little Valentinian, now seven years old, to Rome, and there, amidst an immense concourse of citizens, arrayed him with the purple of empire, and saluted him as Augustus.

The tidings of all these prosperous events reached Constantinople while Theodosius and his people were watching the sports of the hippodrome. 'That most devout Emperor' called upon the people to come with him to the Basilica, and offer thanks to God for the overthrow of the tyrant. They marched through the streets singing loud hymns of praise, and the whole city became, as it were, one congregation at the Basilica, nor ceased from their religious exercises till daylight faded.

NOTE. USURPERS IN THE WESTERN EMPIRE DURING THE REIGN OF HONORIUS.

Orosius remarks that the fall of all the five usurpers by whom Honorius was attacked was a manifest proof of Divine favour, and a reward for his zeal in persecuting the heretics who disturbed the unity of the African Church. It may be convenient to have a short summary of these obscure and complicated transactions. The five tyrants were :—

(1) Constantine, proclaimed Emperor in Britain in 407; conquered Gaul in that year, Spain in 408 (death of Didymus and Verenianus); defeated by Gerontius in 411; taken prisoner by Constantius at Arles, and slain in the neighbourhood of Ravenna in the same year.

(2) Maximus, proclaimed Emperor in Spain by his patron Gerontius (rebellng against Constantine) in 409. In the year 411 Gerontius took to flight on hearing of the approach of the victorious Constantius. His soldiers mutinied, and he committed suicide as related in the text. Maximus, hearing the news, escaped to the barbarian auxiliaries in Spain. In the year 417, when Orosius wrote, he was still wandering about in Spain a needy exile. He is said, but on the rather doubtful authority of Marcellinus, to have been brought to Ravenna and executed in the year 422.

(3) Attalus, proclaimed at Rome by Alaric in 409. Dethroned the same year; restored (possibly) in 414; surrendered to Honorius in 416; punished by the loss of a hand, but not slain.

(4) Jovinus, a general of troops on the Rhine, proclaimed at Mayence in 412 by Goar, a chief of the Alans, and Guntiar, a chief of the Burgundians. He associated his brother Sebastian with him. Ataulfus slew Sebastian and sent Jovinus a prisoner to Ravenna in 413.

(5) Heraclianus, Count of Africa, proclaimed Emperor, invaded Italy, was defeated, fled to Carthage, and was put to death, all in the same year, 413

CHAPTER XIX

PLACIDIA AUGUSTA

WE have now followed the varying fortunes of Placidia's life till we behold her in the thirty-fifth year of her age, seated upon the throne of the Western Empire, which for the next twenty-five years she governs, first with absolute sway as regent for her son, and then with power not less real, though apparently veiled, as the chief adviser of an indolent and voluptuous young man.

Ravenna continued to be the head-quarters of the Imperial authority. Would that it were possible to convey to the mind of the reader who has not seen Ravenna, a small part of the impressions which it produces on him who visits it in the spirit of a pilgrim of history, not caring about Nineteenth Century interests or pleasures, but solely intent on studying its weird antiquities and learning from them the spell by which he can bridge over fourteen swiftly-flowing centuries, and stand again in that Ravenna which heard of the downfall of Rome and saw the marriage of Placidia.

Lying in a vast alluvial plain, with only the sharp ridge of the mountains of San Marino to break its monotonous horizon, Ravenna is now doubly stranded; for the sea which once lapped its walls, and brought the commerce and the squadrons of the world under its towers, has retreated to a distance of five miles, and is only discernible from the top of its church spires, while the railway has left it thirty miles or more out of its main course, and only recognises its existence by two feeble branches provided with infrequent trains. Yet, as the inhabitants point out to the visitor, this silent and desolate-looking town is by no means devoid of commercial activity. As an agricultural centre it transacts a large trade in pollenta and flour; above all, it is famous for its eels, which swarm in the mud of the canals that once sheltered Honorius, and which are so highly esteemed throughout Italy that a Neapolitan fisherman would rather sell the coat off his back than dispense with his Ravenna eel on Christmas Eve.

This mud, poured forth age after age by the sluggish river which has gathered it out of the black loam of Lombardy, has sealed up Ravenna, immuring her from the busy world. The process still goes on visibly. The last deposit made by the river is mere marsh (like that through which the troops of Aspar found their mysterious way) and this marsh can only be used for the cultivation of rice. You see with pity bare-legged peasants in March or April, toiling in this sticky slime, preparing the ground for the crop, and the thought occurs to you whether similar scenes were present to the mind of Dante when he condemned the irascible and the sullen to immersion in a muddy marsh:—

‘And I, who stood intent upon beholding,
Saw people mud-besprent in that lagoon,
All of them naked and with angry look.
Fixed in the mire, they say, “We sullen were
In the sweet air which by the sun is gladdened,
Bearing within ourselves the sluggish reek;
Now we are sullen in this sable mire”. ’

Gradually, as the muddy deposit increases, the soil becomes firmer, and that which was only a rice swamp becomes solid soil suitable for the cultivation of maize.

When Honorius took refuge in Ravenna, it was probably defended by islands and lagoons, and approached by deep-sea channels, nearly in the same way as Venice now is. The islands protected the inner pools from the fury of the ocean, and allowed the deposit of the river to go forward quietly, while the lagoons, counterfeiting at high water the appearance of sea, made navigation difficult and almost impossible to those who were not accurately acquainted with the course of the deep-sea channels which wandered intricately amongst them.

Here Augustus, with his usual wise intuition, had fixed the great naval station for the Adriatic. The town of Ravenna was already three miles distant from the sea (no doubt owing to a previous alteration of the coast line), but he improved the then existing harbour, to which he gave the appropriate name of Classis, and connected it with the old town by a cause-way, about which clustered another intermediate town called Caesarea.

Classis, then, in the days of the Roman emperors, was a busy port and arsenal—Wapping and Chatham combined—capable of affording anchorage to 250 vessels, resounding with all the noises of men whose cry is in their ships. Go to it now and you will find one of the loneliest of all lonely moors, not a house, scarcely a cottage in sight: only the glorious church of San Apollinare in Classe, which, reared in the sixth century during the reign of Justinian, still stands, though the bases of its columns are green with damp, rich in the unfaded beauty of its mosaics. Beside it is one desolate farm-house occupied by the guardian of the church.

Looking seaward, you cannot, even from thence, see the blue rim of the Adriatic, only the dark masses of the *Pineta*, the ‘immemorial pinewood’ of which Dante, Dryden, and Byron have sung, and which is the one feature of natural beauty in all the dull landscape of Ravenna.

It may be said that this picture of Ravenna offer sbut little inducement to any traveller to turn out of his way to visit it. It is true: and as Plato wrote over the doors of his school, ‘Let none enter in but the geometrician,’ so may it be said of Ravenna,

‘Let no man who has not the historic enthusiasm strong within him set his face towards that city of the dead.’ But for such a one, notwithstanding all the monotony of her landscape and the dullness of her streets, she has treasures in store which will make the time of his sojourn by the Ronco noteworthy even among Italian days. He will see the tombs of Western emperors and Gothic kings; he will look upon the first efforts of Christian art after it emerged from the seclusion of the catacombs; he will walk through stately basilicas in which classical columns, taken from the temple of some Olympian god, support an edifice dedicated to the memory of a Christian Bishop; he will be able to trace some of the very earliest steps in that worship of the Virgin which, in the fifth and sixth centuries, was beginning to overspread Christendom : above all, he will gaze in wonder upon those marvellous mosaics which line the walls of the churches— pictures which were as old in the time of Giotto as Giotto’s frescoes are now, yet which retain (thanks to the furnace through which the artist passed his materials) colours as bright and gilding as gorgeous as when they were first placed on those walls in the days of Placidia or Justinian.

Mosaics: it may be well to pause for a moment upon this word, in order to remind the reader of the special characteristics of the pictures thus produced, and wherein they differ from that other great branch of wall-decoration, the Fresco. The Mosaic is as it were a painted window deprived of its transparency. Fragments of glass carefully pieced together are the artist’s sole material. Richness of colour, and deep metallic lustre, are his chief pictorial resources. Beauty of form, strength of outline, wonders of foreshortening, do not seem naturally to belong to the Mosaic, whether from the necessary conditions of the art or from the character of the ages in which it was chiefly practised. Domes of dark blue studded with golden stars, golden glories round the heads of saints, garments of deep purple and crimson, and faces which, though not beautiful, often possess a certain divine and awful majesty: these are found in the Mosaic, and most conspicuously in that great temple in which Venice sets herself to

copy and to outdo the splendours of Byzantium—the Basilica of St. Mark. Owing to the fact that mosaic decoration was then reintroduced into Italy from the East, it has long been invested with a specially Byzantine character; but the existence of chapels and baptisteries at Ravenna, dating from the time of Honorius and Placidia, and richly ornamented with mosaic work, shows that it was originally common to both Western and Eastern empires. Always, whether the work be—well or ill executed, dimly majestic or uncouth and ludicrous, we have the satisfaction of feeling that we are looking upon a picture which is substantially, both in colour and in form, such as it was when it left the hand of the artist, perhaps fourteen centuries ago.

All these conditions are completely reversed in the art of Fresco-painting, as exhibited, for instance, by Giotto in the Arena Chapel at Padua, by Fra Angelico in San Marco at Florence, or by Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel at Rome. Here we have a material which necessitates rapid workmanship, and invites to free and flowing outline; we have beauty of form, fertility of thought, and facility of expression; we have a continual progress from the conventional to the natural; but here we have not now what the artist first painted, but only a faded, almost colourless picture, which, even where it has escaped the whitewash of the eighteenth century, is not, cannot be, anything but the ghost of that which the artist's contemporaries gazed upon.

Cardinal Wiseman has truly said that for him who wishes to study the remains of early Christian Art undisturbed by the admixture of the great works of Pagan architects, Ravenna is a better place than Rome.

A negative recommendation certainly. Yet he who has visited Rome, and been at times almost bewildered by the converging interests of so many ages, nations, schools of art, and confessions of religion, will admit that to some moods of his mind the advice comes soothingly.

We may say the same thing from an opposite point of view. In Ravenna that varied wealth of mediæval and modern memories which enriches nearly every other Italian city is almost entirely absent, and the fifth and sixth centuries rule the mind of the beholder with almost undivided sway. Almost, but not quite; are three noteworthy exceptions. Byron lived here for a year and a half, in 1820 and 1821. Here, three centuries before, in 1512, the young Gaston de Foix, nephew of Louis XII of France, gained a bloody victory over the leagued powers of Spain, Venice, and the Pope; and then, pushing on too hastily in pursuit, fell, pierced by fourteen pike wounds, on the banks of the Ronco, a few miles from the walls. Here, too, remounting the stream of time to the thirteenth century, we meet with the austere figure of Dante, wandering through the congenial shade of the Pineta, yet sighing in vain for the hills of Fiesole and the swift Arno of his home. But when we have visited these three places of pilgrimage, the Casa Byron, the Column of Gaston (or Colonna dei Francesi), and the Tomb of Dante, there is nothing left to distract our attention from these dying days of the Western Empire, of which even the names at the street corners, 'Rione Galla-Placidia,' 'Rione Teodorico', continually remind us.

The aspect of Ravenna in the fifth century is represented in the following passage from a letter of the Gaulish nobleman, Apollinaris Sidonius, who in 467 (seventeen years after the death of Placidia) visited this city on his road to Rome:—

'It is hard to say whether the old city of Ravenna is separated from the new harbour or joined to it by the Via Caesaris which lies between them. Above the town the Po divides into two branches, of which one washes its walls, the other winds among its streets. The whole stream has been diverted from its main channel by large mounds thrown across it at the public expense, and being thus drawn off into the channels marked out for it, so divides its waters that they furnish protection to the walls which they encompass, and bring commerce into the city which they penetrate. By this route, which is most convenient for the purpose, all kinds of

merchandise arrive, especially food. But against this is to be set the fact that the supply of drinking water is miserable. On the one side you have the salt waves of the sea dashing against the gates, on the other the canals filled with sewage and of the consistency of gruel, are being constantly churned up by the passage of the wherries; and the river itself, here gliding along with a very slow current, is made muddy by the punt-poles of the bargemen, which are continually being thrust into its clayey bed. The consequence was that we were thirsty in the midst of the waves, since no wholesome water was brought to us by the aqueducts, no cistern was free from sewage-pollution, no fresh fountain was flowing, no well was without its mud.' This scarcity of drinking-water was an old joke or grievance against the city of the Adriatic. Thus Martial, writing at the end of the first century, says:

'I'd rather, at Ravenna, own a cistern than a vine,
Since I could sell my water there much better than my wine.'

And again, rather more elaborately—

'That landlord at Ravenna is plainly but a cheat;
I paid for wine and water, and he has served it neat.'

We have another picture of Ravenna, still less complimentary, from the pen of Sidonius in the Eighth Epistle of the First Book. It is easily seen, however, that he is speaking in a tone of raillery, and that his words are not to be taken too literally.

He is writing to his friend Candidianus: 'You congratulate me on my stay at Rome, and say that you are delighted that your friend should see so much of the sun, which you imagine I seldom catch a glimpse of in my own foggy Lyons. And you dare to say this to me, you, a native of that furnace, not town, which they call Cesena' (a city about fifteen miles south of Ravenna), 'and who showed what your own opinion was of the pleasantness of your birthplace by migrating thence to Ravenna. A pretty place Cesena must be if Ravenna is better; where your ears are pierced by the mosquito of the Po, where a talkative mob of frogs is always croaking round you. Ravenna, a mere marsh, where all the conditions of ordinary life are reversed, where walls fall and waters stand, towers flow down and ships squat, invalids walk about and their doctors take to bed, baths freeze and houses burn, the living perish with thirst and the dead swim about on the surface of the water, thieves watch and magistrates sleep, clergymen lend on usury and Syrians sing Psalms, merchants shoulder arms and soldiers haggle like hucksters, greybeards play at ball and striplings at dice, eunuchs study the art of war and the barbarian mercenaries study literature. Now reflect what sort of city contains your household gods, a city which may own territory, but cannot be said to own land [because it was so frequently under water]. Consider this, and do not be in such a hurry to crow over us harmless Transalpines, who are quite content with our own sky, and should not think it any great glory to show that other places had worse. Farewell.'

Having quoted this long tirade from Sidonius, it ought in fairness to be added that Strabo (who lived, it is true, more than four centuries before him) praises the healthiness of Ravenna, and says that gladiators were sent to train there on account of its invigorating climate. When he attributes this healthiness to the ebb and flow of the tide (practically non-existent on the Western shore of Italy) and compares Ravenna in this respect with Alexandria, when all the swampy ground about it has been turned into lakes by the rising Nile of summer, we can at least understand his argument. But when he says that 'much mud is washed into the town by the combined action of the rivers and the tides, and thereby the malaria is cured,' we can only

conclude that then, as now, the causes of heath and disease in Italy must have been inscrutable by the Transalpine mind.

We cannot properly understand the conditions of the mosphere life led by the Augusta and her counsellors at Ravenna without imbuing our minds with some of the eccleesiastical ideas already associated with the place. It seems probable that there was here none of that still surviving conflict between the old faith and the new, which disturbed the religious atmosphere of Rome during the early part of the fifth century. Ravenna, like Constantinople, owed all its glory as a capital to Christian emperors, and contentedly accepted the Christian faith from the hands that so honoured it. As an important Christian city, it claimed to have its special connecting link with the history of the Apostles. The mythical founder-bishop of the Church of Ravenna was Saint Apollinaris, a citizen of Antioch, well versed in Greek and Latin literature, who, we are told, followed Peter to Rome, was ordained there by that Apostle, and eventually was commissioned by him to preach the Gospel at Ravenna. Before his departure, however, he had once passed a night in St. Peter's company at the monastery known by the name of the Elm ('ad Ulmum'). They had slept upon the bare rock, and the indentations made by their heads, their backs, and their legs were still shown in the ninth century.

The arrival of St. Apollinaris at Ravenna was signalised by the restoration of sight to a blind boy. He overthrew the idols of the false gods, healed lepers, raised a young man from the dead, cast out devils, baptized multitudes in the river Bedens, in the sea, and in the Basilica of St. Euphemia, where once more the hard stone upon which he was standing became soft and retained the impress of his feet. When persecution arose he was loaded with heavy chains and sent to the 'capitol' of Ravenna, where angels ministered to him.

Three years of exile in Illyricum and Thrace followed: on his return he was again seized by the persecutors, forced to stand upon burning coals, and subjected to other tortures, which he bore with great meekness, only addressing the Imperial Vicar as a most impious man, and warning him to escape from eternal torture by accepting the true faith. At length he received the crown of martyrdom during the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, a name which is not usually branded with the stigma of persecution.

How much of the story which is here related obtained credence in the fifth century we cannot precisely say, for our chief authority is Agnellus, who lived a generation later than the Emperor Charles the Great. Yet the evidence of the Basilicas of the Honorian period and that immediately following it, shows that the names of St. Apollinaris and others illustrated by the catalogue of Agnellus, were already considered holy. True, this chronicler, with more candour than many of his tribe, remarks, 'Where I have not found any history of these bishops, and have not been able by conversation with aged men, or inspection of the monuments, or from any other authentic source, to obtain information concerning them, in such a case, that there might not be a break in the series, I have composed the life myself with the help of God and the prayers of the brethren.' But notwithstanding this honest avowal, as it is clear that he wrote from frequent reference to mosaic pictures, many of which are now lost, we may conjecture that he represents, fairly enough, the traditions of the fifth and sixth centuries, though with some subsequent legendary incrustations which we should now vainly seek to remove.

The quaint and vivid details of the personal appearance of the bishops seems to confirm the supposition that Agnellus wrote much on the authority of the mosaics. Thus, one bishop was bent double by the too great fulness of his years; another was crowned with the grace of white hairs; another's countenance, like a clear mirror, shone over the whole congregation; and so on.

The story of the election and episcopate of Severus, a bishop of the fourth century, must have been still fresh in the minds of the people of Ravenna when Placidia reigned there, and it would be interesting to know what shape it had then assumed. Four hundred years later it was

told on this wise. Severus was a journeyman woolcomber, and one day when he was wearied with his work, he said to his wife who wrought with him, 'I will go and see this wonderful sight, how a dove shall descend from the high heaven and light upon the head of him who is to be chosen bishop.' For this was the day of the election of a new bishop of Ravenna, and it was the special boast of the Church of that city that her prelates were thus manifestly designated by the descent of a dove from heaven.

But the wife of Severus began to mock at him, and to scold him, saying, 'Sit here; go on with thy work; do not be lazy; whether thou goest or not, the people will not choose thee for Pontiff.' But he pressed, 'Let me go,' and she said, jeeringly, 'Go, then, and thou wilt be ordained Pontiff in the same hour.' So he rose, and went to the place where the people with their priests were gathered together; but having his dirty working clothes on, he hid himself behind the door of the place where the people were praying. As soon as the prayer was ended, a dove, whiter than snow, descended from heaven and lighted upon his head. He drove it away, but it settled there a second and a third time. Thereupon all the authorities who were present crowded round him, giving thanks to God, and hailed Severus as bishop. His wife, too, who before had mocked at him, now met him with congratulations.

The woolcomber-bishop appears to have occupied the episcopal throne for many years. He sat in the Council of Sardica in 344, and subscribed the decrees which refused to make any alteration in the Nicene Formula.

After some time, his wife Vicentia (or Vincentia) died, and, some years later, his daughter Innocentia. When the mourners came together to lay Innocentia in her mother's tomb, it was found to be too small to hold both bodies. Severus, mindful evidently of many a matrimonial altercation in long-past years, cried out, 'Ah! wife, why wilt thou be thus vexatious unto me? Why not leave room for thy daughter, and receive back from my hands her whom I once received from thine? Let the burial proceed in peace, and do not sadden me by thy obstinacy.' At these words the bones of his dead wife gathered themselves together, and rolled away into one corner of the stone coffin with a swiftness which the living body could scarcely have equalled, and room was left for the dead Innocentia by her side. When his own time came to die, after celebrating mass, he ordered the same coffin to be opened, and, arrayed as he was in his pontifical robes, he laid him down between his dead wife and child, and there drew his last breath.

The chronology of the see of Ravenna at this period is very confused, but Severus appears to have ended his episcopate about the middle of the Fourth Century. Near the close of that century lived Ursus, who built the great cathedral which still bears his name. During the first half of the fifth century, the two most honoured names in the hagiology of Ravenna were those of John the Angel-seer (Joannes Angeloptes) and Peter the Golden-worded (Petrus Chrysologus). The former was so called on account of the tradition that shortly before his death, when he was celebrating mass in the Church of St. Agatha, an angel descended at the words of consecration, and standing beside him at the altar, handed him the chalice and paten, fulfilling throughout the service the office of an acolyte. Peter, who, like Chrysostom, received his surname from the golden stores of his wisdom and eloquence, was no citizen or priest of Ravenna, but a native of Imola, who was designated for the high office of bishop by the voice of Pope Sixtus III, in accordance with the apostolic monition of St. Peter and St. Apollinaris conveyed to him in a dream. Notwithstanding his alien extraction, no name is now more living in Ravenna than that of 'San Pier Crisologo,' who built the marvellously beautiful little chapel in the Archbishop's Palace, on whose vaulted ceiling four great white-robed angels, standing between the emblems of the four Evangelists, support with uplifted arms, not a world, nor a heavenly throne, but the intertwined letters XP, the mystic monogram of Christ.

It was into this world of ecclesiastical romance, of embellishment by legend and by mosaic, that Galla Placidia entered when she returned to Ravenna, destined herself to contribute no unimportant share to its temples and to its traditions. Near her palace she built the Church of the Holy Cross, now ruined and modernised. But a much more interesting monument to her fame is the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, now flanked by the Strada Garibaldi and the road to the railway-station. The basilica itself was rebuilt in the twelfth or thirteenth century, and its mosaics have been for the most part replaced by the frescoes of Giotto; but a bas-relief over the chief entrance, sculptured at the time of the rebuilding, still retains, not indeed the contemporary, but the mythical portraiture of the Augusta herself. There she is represented as prostrating herself at the feet of the Evangelist, who is arrayed in priestly garb, and engaged in incensing the altar. Meanwhile his Imperial worshipper clasps his feet, and with gentle compulsion constrains him to leave one of his sandals in her hands.

This bas-relief, executed about 800 years after the death of Placidia, illustrates, not inaptly, the growth of ecclesiastical tradition. On her voyage from Constantinople to Ravenna, the Augusta and her children were terrified by the arising of a great storm, which threatened to overwhelm them in the deep. In her distress she vowed a temple to the son of Zebedee—himself a fisherman, and well acquainted with stormy seas—if he would deliver her from so great a danger. The wind ceased, she reached Italy in safety, and, as we have already seen, wrested the sceptre from the hands of Joannes the Notary. In fulfilment of her vow she built the Basilica of St. John the Evangelist, had it consecrated either by Joannes Angeloptes or Petrus Chrysologus, and bade the mosaics on the walls and even the wavy outlines of the pavement tell the story of her escape. Round the apse of the basilica, and over the heads of the mosaic portraits of the Imperial family, ran this inscription: ‘Strengthen, O Lord, that which thou hast wrought for us: because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee.’ And higher yet was an inscription to this effect: ‘To the Holy and Most Blessed Apostle John the Evangelist. Galla Placidia Augusta, with her son Placidus Valentinianus Augustus and her daughter Justa Grata Honoria Augusta, in fulfilment of a vow for deliverance from peril by sea.’

So far the contemporary monuments as described. The legend faithfully no doubt, by Agnellus, in the ninth century. Four hundred years later, when the original church had fallen into ruin and was replaced by a new edifice of Italian-Gothic architecture, a legend had grown up that the Augusta, when she had built her church, was filled with sadness by the thought that she had no relic of the Apostle wherewith to enrich it. She imparted her grief to her confessor, St. Barbarian, and besought his prayers. At length, upon a certain night which they had determined to spend in watching and prayer in the precincts of the church itself, it came to pass that they both fell into a light slumber. To Barbarian, between sleeping and waking, appeared a man with noble countenance, vestments of snowy whiteness, and with a golden censer in his hand. The confessor awoke, the form did not vanish, he pointed it out to the Augusta, who rushed forward and seized his right sandal with eager hands. Then the Apostle John, for he it must have been, vanished from their sight, and was carried up into heaven. The 27th of February, when this event was supposed to have occurred, was kept as a festival by the Church of Ravenna, ‘but the place where the sandal was laid up by the Empress is unknown to all men. Meanwhile in many places is still to be seen a title, writ long ago, to this effect: (Here) rests the Sandal of the Blessed Apostle and Evangelist John.

Nor was Placidia’s the only head which was surrounded with this halo of ecclesiastical tradition. It was believed (at the time of Agnellus) that to a niece of hers, named Singleida, as to whose existence history is silent, appeared in vision a man in white raiment and with hoary hair, who said to her, ‘In such and such a place, near the church which thy aunt hath reared to the Holy Cross do thou build a monastery, and name it after me, Zacharias, the father of the

Forerunner' [John the Baptist]. She went to the place next day, and saw a foundation already prepared for the building, as if by the hand of man. She returned, with joy to her aunt, and received from her thirteen builders, by whose labours, in thirteen days, the house was finished, which she then adorned with all manner of gold and silver and precious stones.

It is remarkable that the ecclesiastical historian, Sozomen, in closing his history, comments on the special favour shown by God to the Emperor Honorius, in permitting the relics of many holy men to be discovered during his reign. Chief among these discoveries was that of the body of Zachariah, son of Jehoiada, by the command of Joash, king of Judah. A richly-dressed infant lay at the feet of the holy man, and was believed to be the child of the idolatrous king, whose death was the punishment of his father's sin, and who was therefore buried in the grave of the victim. The identity of the name suggests the probability that the vision of the unknown Singleida and the discovery of the relics of the prophet may be variations of one and the same story.

But it is time to leave the moonlight of ecclesiastical tradition, and come back into secular history.

Two great events, both of them calamities, marked the quarter of a century of Placidia's reign, for during the whole of this time Placidia truly reigned, though her son's effigy appeared on the coins. They were the Vandal invasion of Africa and the uprising of the power of Attila, king of the Huns. These events will be dealt with more fully in the next volume, and as the appearance of the Huns in Italy preceded that of the Vandals, we shall have to deal with their story first, though strictly speaking the Vandal was the terror of the earlier, and the Hun of the later years of Placidia and her counsellors.

But as the loss of Africa is said to have resulted from a certain ill-advised step taken by Placidia, it will be well to narrate here so much of the story of that event as is connected with the Empress herself, and the feud between her two chief advisers, Bonifacius and Aetius. 'Each of these men', says Procopius, 'had the other not been his contemporary, might truly have been called the last of the Romans.' We may add that each alone might have possibly saved the life of the Empire, or at least prolonged it for a century, but that their contemporaneous existence destroyed it.

The chorus of a Greek tragedy would have found in the parallel history of these two men a congenial subject for its meditations on the strange ways of the Gods and the irony of Fate. Bonifacius, the heroic, loyal-hearted soldier, 'whose one great object was the deliverance of Africa from all sorts of barbarians,' stands conspicuous to all after-ages as the betrayer of Africa to the Vandals; Aetius, the brave captain, but also the shifty intriguer, Roman by birth, but half-barbarian by long residence at the Hunnish Court, deserves the everlasting gratitude of posterity as the chief deliverer of Europe from the dominion of Attila, as he who more than any other individual man kept for the Romance and Teutonic nations a clear course to glory and happiness, free from the secular misery and desolation which are the effects of Tartar misrule.

We first hear of Bonifacius in the year 412 as repelling a sudden assault of Ataulfus in the city of Marseilles. The Gothic king was wounded by Bonifacius himself, and hardly escaping death fled to his own encampment, leaving the city in joy and triumph, and all the citizens sounding the praises of the most noble Bonifacius. Our next dear trace of him is in the year 422. An expedition has been ordered against the Vandals in Spain. Castinus, at that time the chief Minister at War of Honorius, decides to take the chief command, but will give no suitable place on his staff to Bonifacius, notwithstanding the renown for skill in war which he has already acquired. Thereupon Bonifacius refusing to serve under this insolent commander in any subordinate post breaks away from the expedition altogether, journeys rapidly to Portus, and thence sets sail for Africa. We know nothing of the circumstances in which that province was left after the revolt of Heraclian had been quelled, but in the general paralysis of authority

which resulted from the incapacity of Honorius it would almost seem as if Africa had become a sort of No-man's land, which any stout soldier might enter and rule if he would only defend it from the ever more desolating raids of the tribes of Mount Atlas.

This service, Bonifacius, though holding only the rank of Tribune, did effectually perform. The irregularity, if such it was, of his first occupation of the seat of government was apparently condoned, and the legitimacy of his position was assured when after the death of Honorius he steadfastly refused to recognise the rule of Joannes, the aspiring notary, whom his old enemy Castinus had robed in the purple. Amid the general defection from the Theodosian house Bonifacius alone preserved his loyalty, sending large sums from his wealthy province to Placidia, and throwing all his energies into her service. And in fact, as we are expressly told, it was the necessity under which the usurper found himself of sending large detachments of troops for the reconquest of Africa which more than anything else promoted the success of the expedition of Ardaburius and Aspar.

Bonifacius had a high reputation for justice and even for holiness. His justice was shown when a peasant came to his tent to complain that his wife had been seduced by one of the barbarian mercenaries in the army of Bonifacius. The general desired the complainant to return on the morrow; meanwhile, at dead of night, he rode a distance of nine miles to the peasant's house, satisfied himself of the truth of the accusation, was himself both judge and executioner, and returned to his tent with the head of the offender, which next morning he exhibited to the husband, astonished, but delighted at the swift foot of avenging Justice.

His holiness—as that age accounted holiness—was shown by a correspondence with Augustine, which induced him, after the death of his wife, to take a vow against remarriage, though without retiring from the active business of life. This vow he afterwards broke, taking to himself a rich wife named Pelagia, who was doubly objectionable to his spiritual advisers as a woman and as an Arian; and modern ecclesiastical commentators trace to this fall from the high ideal of ascetic virtue the whole of his subsequent errors and calamities.

Such then was the career and such the high reputation of Bonifacius. Aetius, his great rival, was born at Durostorum, a town on the Lower Danube, well known to us under the name of Silistria. His father, Gauden- tius, a man probably of barbarian origin, rose high in the service of the Western Empire, being successively Master of the Cavalry and Count of Africa. In this latter capacity he was entrusted by Honorius with a commission to root out idolatry and destroy the idol-temples in Carthage. At a later period he figures as Master of the Soldiery in Gaul, and while holding that command was killed by his own soldiers in a mutiny. Aetius himself when quite young, and serving among the Imperial Guards, was given over as a hostage to Alaric, and remained in that condition in the Gothic camp for three years. Later on, he was again given, probably by Honorius, as a hostage to the Huns. The hardy and athletic young soldier seems to have made many friends among the barbarian armies; perhaps, also, he acquired a knowledge both of their strong and weak points, which made him a wiser enemy when he had to take the field against them than the incompetent generals of Honorius.

After the death of the latter Emperor, he adhered to the faction of the Secretary Joannes, who, in the crisis of his own affaire, sent Aetius northward to obtain assistance from his friendly Huns. He returned with 60,000 Huns at his back, but only to find that the power of Joannes had, three days before, fallen before the armies of Placidia. It is said that a battle between the Huns and the forces of Aspar, the Byzantine general, then took place. We may conjecture that it was but a hollow contest meant to enhance the price of peace.

At any rate, we find the barbarians shortly after concluding a treaty with the Romans, under which they receive a sum of gold, and agree to return quietly to their homes. Aetius does not suffer by the general reconciliation. He is raised to the rank of Count (probably Count of Italy), and becomes thenceforward the chief adviser of Placidia and her son.

It was not unnatural that between these two, who were now the foremost men of the Empire—Bonifacius, *Vir Spedabilis, Comes Africae*, and Aetius, *Vir Spedabilis, Comes Italiae*—rivalry and dissension should arise. Bonifacius felt that his lifelong fidelity to the house of Theodosius was scantily rewarded by his mistress. Aetius could not deem himself secure in his post of confidential adviser at the Court of Ravenna, while there ruled at Carthage a man with such transcendent claims upon the Imperial gratitude.

The manner in which this rivalry worked out into daylight is not disclosed to us only by Procopius, one of the most cynical of historians, and separated by nearly a century from the events which he records. One cannot therefore claim the reader's entire confidence for the story which follows, but it must be told thus because no other version of it has come down to us.

It appears, from the not very precise language of Procopius, that during a visit of Count Bonifacius to the Imperial Court, Placidia had bestowed upon him some higher rank than he already bore, in connection with the government of the African province. Aetius concealed his real dissatisfaction at this promotion of his rival under a mask of apparent contentment and even friendship for Bonifacius. But as soon as he had returned to Africa, the Count of Italy began to instil into the mind of Placidia suspicions that Bonifacius would prove another Gildo, usurping supreme authority over the whole of Roman Africa. 'The proof,' said he, 'of the truth of these accusations was easy. For if she summoned him to her presence, he would not obey the order.' The Augusta listened, thought the words of Aetius full of wisdom, obeyed his counsels, and summoned Bonifacius to Ravenna. Meanwhile Aetius wrote privately to the African Count, 'The Augusta is plotting to rid herself of you. The proof of her finally adopting that resolution will be your receipt of a letter from her, ordering you, for no earthly reason, to wait upon her in Italy.' Bonifacius, believing his rival's professions of friendship, accepted the warning, refused to obey the Empress's summons, and thereby at once confirmed her worst suspicions. In the year 427 he was declared a public enemy of Rome.

Feeling himself too weak to grapple with the Empire alone, Bonifacius began to negotiate for the alliance of the Vandals, who were still struggling with Visigoths and Suevi for the mastery of that Spain which they had all made desolate. The Vandals came, under their young king Gaiseric, and never returned to the Peninsula.

The details of the Vandal conquest of Africa, which occupied the years from 428 to 439, are postponed to a later portion of this history; our present business is only with the unhappy author of all those miseries which marked its progress. Not many months after Gaiseric had landed in Africa, some old friends of Bonifacius at Rome, who could not reconcile his present disloyalty with what they knew of his glorious past, crossed the seas and visited him at Carthage. He consented to see them; mutual explanations followed, the letter of Aetius was produced, and the whole web of treachery was at once in their hands. They returned with speed to Placidia, who, though she did not feel herself, in that sore emergency, strong enough to break with Aetius, sent, nevertheless, assurance of her forgiveness to Bonifacius and earnest entreaties to forsake his barbarian alliances and re-enter the service of Rome. He obeyed, but could not now conjure down the storm which he had raised. He made magnificent promises to the Vandals if they would consent to quit Africa. They laughed at his promises; the Vandal vulture had her talons too deep in the rich province of Africa to have any thought of returning to Spain, where her sister birds of prey would have given her a gory welcome.

And thus it came to pass that Bonifacius was soon engaged in battle against his previous allies. In the year 431 he fought with some success, but in 432, though he had received large reinforcements from Constantinople under the command of Aspar, he was utterly beaten by the Vandals in a pitched battle, and compelled to fly to Italy. Notwithstanding his defeat, he was received with enthusiasm at Rome, and with perfect trustfulness and oblivion of his past

disloyalty by Placidia. She conferred upon him the title of *Magister Utriusque Militiae*, which had been borne for three years by his rival Aetius, and she seems to have been about to bestow upon him her full confidence, and to make him virtually chief ruler of the Empire. At this point, however, Aetius reappeared upon the scene, fresh from a successful war against the Franks. A battle ensued between them, in which Aetius was defeated; but in the single combat which took place, and which seems already to show the influence of Teutonic usages on the dying world of classicalism, Bonifacius received a wound from a javelin (or dart) of unusual length, with which his enemy had provided himself on the eve of the combat, and from the effects of that wound he died three months after (A.D. 432).

Though there is so much of fraudulent intrigue about the conduct of Aetius, it is impossible not to feel a kind of foretaste of the coming age of chivalry about the five years' duel between these two mighty champions, 'each one worthy to have been called the last of Romans.'

Nor is this impression weakened when we find Bonifacius on his death-bed exhorting his wife to accept no one's hand in remarriage but his rival's only, 'if his wife, who was then living, should die.' The ecclesiastical advisers of the Count of Africa perhaps would see in this strange command a legacy of woe such as the dying Centaur bequeathed to his victor, Hercules, and might thus claim Bonifacius himself as a voucher for their theory that his second marriage had been his ruin. But a more probable explanation of the story, be it true or false, is the popular belief that each hero recognised in the other his only worthy competitor in war, in politics, or in love.

As for Aetius, he did not immediately regain his old position at the Court of Ravenna. The remembrance of his treacheries was too vivid, the power of the party of Bonifacius still too strong, and he was fain to betake himself once more to exile among the friendly Huns. Again he was restored to power, apparently by their aid, in the year 433, and for the remaining seventeen years of the joint reign of Placidia and Valentinian he was, as before, the ruling spirit of the Western Empire. He was often battling in the distracted province of Gaul, with Visigoths, with Burgundians, with Franks, and generally obtained successes in the field; but no military successes could root out the barbarian multitudes from the Gaulish soil, or do more than keep alive some semblance of Imperial authority in certain of the towns by the Rhone and the Garonne and in the mountain fastnesses of Auvergne.

It is during this period and in the year 446 that the well-known legend related by Gildas (a rhetorical and untrustworthy historian) places the abject supplication, entitled *The Groans of the Britons*. 'To Aetius for the third time Consul. The barbarians drive us to the sea: the sea drives us back upon the barbarians,' and so forth. It is a tribute to the greatness of Aetius that, even in a legend like this, the appeal should be represented as being addressed to him rather than to his Imperial masters.

Four years after Aetius' restoration to power an event happened which threw a gleam of gladness over the clouded horizon of the Court at Ravenna. This was the marriage of Valentinian III with Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius II. The two cousins had been betrothed to one another while yet children during Placidia's exile at Constantinople, and now in the nineteenth year of his age the young Augustus of the West set forth to claim his Imperial bride. Theodosius offered to meet his intended son-in-law at Thessalonica, and celebrate the nuptials there, but Valentinian courteously waived the offer, and passed on to Constantinople, where, in the presence of a brilliant throng of courtiers from both sections of the Empire, he received from the Patriarch Proclus the hand of the princess, the daughter of the beautiful Athenian, the grand-daughter of the beautiful Frank, and herself perhaps not less beautiful than either. As the only child of the Emperor of the East she might reasonably cherish the hope of

bearing to Valentinian a son who should one day rule over the whole re-united Empire: but far other was the destiny reserved for her and for her offspring in the days that were to come.

In their political aspect, the twenty-five years of the reign of Placidia represent the slow settling down of the Roman Empire of the West into irretrievable ruin and disorganisation. There was during this interval no great stroke of the enemy upon Italy itself, such as Alaric's three sieges of Rome; on the contrary, the soil of Italy seems to have enjoyed a strange immunity from barbarian invasion. But the hope of recovering any of the lost provinces of the Empire—Britain, Gaul, Spain—was becoming more and more visionary; the crowns of the barbarian kings were passing from father to son, and the new intruding dynasties were deriving a sanction and a kind of legitimacy from time.

Meanwhile Africa, the great granary of Rome, was being severed from the Empire. We need only turn back to Claudian's picture of the distress occasioned by Gildo's usurpation, to know what that involved for Italy and Rome. If one year's stoppage of the supplies of African grain had caused the Mistress of the World to 'speak low as out of the dust,' and 'all the faces of her citizens to gather blackness,' what must, first the devastation, and then the permanent hostile occupation, of the province have done? Soon after Alaric's sieges, as we have been told by Olympiodorus, the population came flocking back into Rome at the rate of 14,000 a day, so that the former largesse of victuals was no longer found sufficient. Now, we may fairly conjecture, the Imperial largesse would no longer be given. 'Circenses,' (at least the gladiatorial part of them) had been stopped by the command of the Most Christian Emperor; the more needful 'Panis' would have to be stopped also, however reluctantly, by his sister; and we shall surely not be wrong in supposing that now commenced that decline in the population of the Imperial City, which went, on at a still more rapid rate in the latter half of the century.

Still, however, the fortunes of the great Roman nobility survived in some of their old magnificence. It is of a time nearly coincident with the commencement of Placidia's rule that Olympiodorus writes when he tells that every one of the great houses of Rome had in it all the appliances which a well-ordered city might be expected to contain—a hippodrome and forum, temples and fountains and magnificent baths. At sight of all this stateliness the historian exclaimed—

One house is a town by itself: ten thousand towns to the city.

Many Roman families received revenues of 4000 pounds of gold (£160,000) yearly, besides corn and wine and other produce, which, if sold, would bring in one-third of that amount. The noble families of the second rank received from £40,000 to £60,000 per annum. Probus, the son of Olympius, who was prefect of the city during the short-lived tyranny of Joannes, spent £48,000 in order to illustrate his year of office. Symmachus the orator, who as we have seen was a senator of moderate rank, spent £80,000 over the shows of his son's praetorship. This, it is true, was before the taking of Rome by Alaric. Even he however was surpassed by a certain Maximus, who, upon his son's praetorial games, expended no less than £160,000. And the shows upon which these large sums of money were lavished lasted only for one week.

To Placidia herself and her innermost circle of friends it is probable that the ecclesiastical aspect of her reign, as has been hinted in the description of her capital, seemed infinitely more important than the political. She signalled her accession to supreme power by the usual bead-roll of laws against the Jews, forbidding them to practise in the courts of law or to serve in the Imperial armies; against the Manicheans, the astrologers, and the heretics generally, banishing such even from the environs of the cities. At the same time she ordained that the clergy should be subject only to ecclesiastical judges, according to the ancient edicts. It may be doubted whether this provision applies to civil rights and wrongs; and if any exemption from the ordinary tribunals in such cases were granted to them, it seems clear that it was revoked by an

edict of her son, two years after her death. But the very discussion seems to show us the ecclesiastical theories of the Middle Ages asserting themselves by the death-bed of the classical mythology: seven centuries pass away like a dream, and we hear the voice of Becket arguing against the Constitutions of Clarendon.

For yet other reasons, the period during which Placidia presided over the destinies of the Western Empire looms large in the history of the Church. In the year 431 was held the Council of Ephesus, which anathematised the doctrine of Nestorius; in 451, the year after her death, the famous Council of Chalcedon condemned the opposite heresy of Dioscorus. During those twenty years therefore (and in the East for half a century longer) raged the furious and to us almost incomprehensible struggle concerning the two natures of Christ. Old and mighty states were falling to pieces; new and strange barbaric powers were enthroning themselves in the historic capitals of the West; shepherds were becoming kings, and patricians were being sold into slavery as swineherds; but still the interminable metaphysic talk flowed on. Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, said each his say. To them entered Protagoras and Gorgias, and the whole brilliant progeny of the sophists. With Oriental long-windedness and Hellenic subtlety they argued as to the precise limits of the divine and the human in the person of our Saviour; and an outbreak of insane monks, a robber-Council beating a bishop to death, an insurrection of the Byzantine populace against their 'Manichean' Emperor varied the otherwise monotonous manufacture of creeds and anathemas.

The rage of this conflict, though felt in Italy, was not so fierce there as in the East; and Placidia, more fortunate than her nephew Theodosius II, trod the narrow path of orthodoxy with reputation unimpaired, so that the ecclesiastical historians generally speak of her with high respect.

The weak point in her historical record is her failure to mould the character of her children. Both her son and her daughter in various ways, as we shall see hereafter, brought scandal and calamity upon the Empire by their sensualities. Procopius (whose delight it is to find fault) plainly accuses her of having given the young Valentinian an effeminate and enervating education, and invites us to conjecture that his character was thus intentionally enfeebled in order that his mother might retain the reins of power in her hands, after her duty as regent would naturally have terminated. The conjecture is an obvious one, but there does not seem to be any evidence to support it. Doubtless the relation of a Queen Mother to a son growing up to manhood is a difficult one at the best of times and where both are actuated by the highest principle. A better illustration of this could not perhaps be found than that which is afforded by Maria Theresa and the Emperor Joseph II. But Placidia, we must remember, was really the man of her family. She had the energy and the wisdom of her father; her brothers, her son, her nephew exhibited through life that strange lethargy which at intervals crept even over him. And her husband, the coarse and brutal buffoon, may well have contributed to the natures both of Valentinian and Honoria a taint of sensuality which the wisest mother would have found it difficult to eradicate. The Theodosian sullenness and the Constantian vulgarity were poor materials out of which to form an Emperor of Rome.

Upon the whole issue, without palliating her alleged share in the judicial murder of Serena, or denying her ill-success in the training of her children, one may plead for a favourable verdict as to the character of Placidia. Her love for Ataulfus, her grief at his death, her brave endurance of the insults of his murderer, long ago enlisted me on her side; and now, after carefully reading all that her detractors have to urge against her, I look upon her still as the sweetest and purest figure of that dreary time.

She died at Rome on the 27th November, 450, near the 60th year of her age. Apparently the whole Imperial Court removed in this year to the city by the Tiber; but Placidia's body was carried back to that Ravenna which she had so lavishly adorned.

The mausoleum of Galla Placidia, otherwise called the church of St. Nazarius and St. Celsus, is a little building shaped like a Latin cross, measuring about 38 feet by 30. At the centre of the cross you see above you a dome covered with mosaics. On a deep blue ground are scattered golden stars, and in the zenith is a jewelled cross. In the arches immediately below the dome stand eight prophets, two on each side of the Square chapel. Below these again are other arches more deeply recessed; in one of them the Good Shepherd, lifting his cross on high, sits surrounded by his sheep; in another, Christ, wielding his cross like a sword, and by his form and attitude reminding one of the description in the first chapter of the Apocalypse, stands with an open book, probably the Gospel of St. Mark, in his hand; at a little distance off, an opened bookcase discloses the other three gospels; between him and them is a great brazier, in which heretical books, perhaps those of the Nestorians, are seen to be burning, the flames and the smoke being very vividly rendered. In each of the side arches corresponding to these, two stags, surmounted and surrounded with strange arabesques, are pressing through their intricacies to drink at a pool in the forest. All this picture-work is of course mosaic.

Below, on the floor of the chapel, stand three massive sarcophagi of Greek marble.

In the sarcophagus on the left repose the remains of Valentinian III and Constantius, the son and the husband of Placidia. In the bas-relief outside two lambs, standing between two palm-trees, look up to another lamb standing in the middle of the picture, upon a little eminence whence proceed four streams, probably the four rivers of Paradise. The glory round the head of this central figure and the anagram XP show that it is intended as a type of Christ.

The sarcophagus on the other side shows the central lamb (but without the glory round the head) standing on the hillock whence issue the four streams, together with three crosses. On the transverse bar of the central cross sit two doves, a somewhat unusual addition. The spiral columns, the pediment resting upon them, and some other features, remind us of the work of the Renaissance. Yet there is no doubt that all the mosaics and sculpture in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia are entirely contemporary, fifth-century work.

Let the beholder give one more look at that mighty sarcophagus on his right, for it contains all that earth is still cumbered with of Honorius.

At the end of the mausoleum, immediately behind the altar, which is made of semi-transparent alabaster, stands the largest of all the sarcophagi, which contains the ashes of Galla Placidia. There are no bas-reliefs on this tomb, which is said to have been once covered with silver plates, long since removed. For eleven centuries the embalmed body of the Augusta remained undisturbed in this tomb, sitting upright in a chair of cypress wood, and arrayed in royal robes. It was one of the sights of Ravenna to peep through a little hole in the back and see this changeless queen. But unhappily, three hundred years ago some careless or mischievous children, determined to have a thoroughly good look at the stately lady, thrust a lighted taper through the hole. Crowding and pushing, and each one bent on getting the best view possible, they at length brought the light too near to the corpse: at once royal robes and royal flesh and cypress wood chair were all wrapped in flames. In a few minutes the work of cremation was accomplished, and the daughter of Theodosius was reduced to ashes as effectually as any daughter of the Pagan Caesars.

With this anecdote of the year 1577 ends the story of Galla Placidia.

CHAPTER XX

SALVIAN ON THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT

NEAR the end of the life of Placidia, a book was written in Gaul, and circulated from monastery to monastery, which evidently produced a profound impression on the minds of the generation who first read it, and which remains to this day one of our most valuable sources of information as to the inner life of the dying Empire and the moral character of its foes. This work is the treatise of St. Salvian, Presbyter of Marseilles, concerning the Government of God, in eight books.

The author was born in Gaul, possibly at Cologne, towards the end of the fourth century. He appears to have spent several years of early manhood at Trier, and to have gone thence to Marseilles, in which city he passed the middle and later portion of his life. He was married, and had a daughter named Auspicola, after whose birth he and his wife Palladia, according to the not infrequent custom of the times, took the so-called vow of perpetual chastity, and consecrated themselves to the religious life. He was still living, at a good old age, about the year 480, and was then spoken of by a contemporary ecclesiastic as 'a Presbyter of Marseilles, well furnished with divine and human learning, and, not to speak invidiously, the master of the holy bishops Salonus and Veranius.' His book 'De Gubernatione Dei' was probably composed between 440 and 450.

The enigma which demanded solution from Salvian, as it must have done from all of his contemporaries who looked forth with any intelligence upon the catastrophe of the Roman Empire, was this, 'Why, if this world be ordered by Divine Providence, is the framework of society, which is now no longer Anti-Christian but Christian, going to pieces under the assaults of the barbarians?'

Augustine had dealt with one half of this question, but he had treated it merely as a part of Christian polemics. He had contended, in the 'De Civitate Dei,' that these calamities were not the result of Rome's renunciation of Paganism. He had not, except casually and incidentally, sought to investigate what was their true cause. Orosius, while to some extent following his master's lead, had ultimately come to the conclusion that the state of the Empire was not unsatisfactory, and therefore that the enigma did not exist. A transitory improvement in the affairs of Honorius in the year 417, a slight bend backwards towards prosperity of the stream which had been flowing long and steadily towards ruin, might make this contention plausible in the eyes of a small religious *coterie*; but such desperate optimism was sure to be rejected sooner or later by the common sense of mankind.

With a truer perception of the real conditions of the problem than either of his predecessors, and with the answer increased knowledge afforded by another generation of the manifest decline, Salvian set himself to answer the same question, and arrived at this conclusion, the sum and substance of his whole treatise, 'The vices of the Romans are the real cause of the downfall of their Empire'. The fuller and more complete solution of the problem, namely, the Divine purpose to weld the Latin and Teutonic elements together into a new and happier Europe, does not seem to have presented itself to his mind. Such a conception was hardly possible to a Roman of that age to whom the Barbarian was as much out of the pale of political capability as the Gentile was out of the pale of spiritual privilege in the eyes of the Pharisee. But as a truthful man, enthusiastic, like one of the old Hebrew prophets, on behalf of

pure living and just dealing, he saw and could not escape bearing witness to the immense moral superiority of the Barbarians over the Romans. This contrast gives emphasis to all his denunciations of the vices of his fellow-countrymen. 'You, Romans and Christians and Catholics,' he says, 'are defrauding your brethren, are grinding the faces of the poor, are frittering away your lives over the impure and heathenish spectacles of the amphitheatre, you are wallowing, in licentiousness and inebriety. The Barbarians, meanwhile, Heathens or Heretics though they may be, and however fierce towards us, are just and fair in their dealings with one another. The men of the same clan, and following the same king, love one another with true affection. The impurities of the theatre are unknown amongst them. Many of their tribes are free from the taint of drunkenness, and among all, except the Alans and the Huns, chastity is the rule.'

A contrast so drawn between the Teuton and the Latin nations cannot fail to be highly gratifying to the former, and we too, on the strength of our Teutonic ancestry, claim our share in these laudations. But on the other hand, it is impossible not to feel in reading Salvian's book that though he is thoroughly truthful and in deadly earnest, one must not accept as literal truth every point of the contrast which he draws between Roman immorality and Barbarian purity. As Tacitus in the *Germania* undoubtedly sometimes paints up German freedom in order to render the slavery of Rome under Domitian more hateful by contrast; as the philosophers of last century drew many an arrow from the quiver of the Red Indian to discharge it against the rotten civilization of which France under Louis XV was the centre, so doubtless has Salvian sometimes used the German chastity, the German simplicity of life, to arouse a sense of shame in his Roman reader. Besides, he is preacher as well as man of letters. In reading his pages, one every now and then seems to hear his hand descend upon the rail of the arribo in the centre of the crowded cathedral; and at such a time it would be obviously indecorous to suggest a doubt whether a whole German nation could be literally described by one epithet of praise and a whole Roman province by another term of vituperation.

It must be added, moreover, that Salvian admits many blots on the character of his barbarian clients. 'Only', as he contends, 'not one of these tribes is altogether vicious. If they have their vices they have also virtues, dear, sharp, and well-defined. Whereas you, my beloved fellow-provincials, I regret to say, with the exception of a few holy men among you, are altogether bad. Your lives from the cradle to the grave are a tissue of rottenness and corruption, and all this notwithstanding that you have the sacred Scriptures in your hands, drawn from the purest sources and faithfully translated, while their sacred books have suffered all manner of interpolations and mistranslations at the hands of evil authors'.

The following are the chief passages in which Salvian describes the special vices of the different barbarian races:—

'The nation of the Saxons,' he says, 'is fierce, that of the Franks untrue, of the Gepidae inhuman, of the Huns immodest. In short, it may be said that the life of all the barbarous nations is a course of vice. But are their vices as blameable as ours? Is the immodesty of the Hun, the perfidy of the Frank, the drunkenness of the Alaman, the rapacity of the Alan, as blameworthy as similar crimes committed by Christians?' [All of these were heathen, not Arian, nations.] 'If the Hun or the Gepid deceive, what marvel, since the criminality of falsehood is unknown to him? If the Frank perjure himself, is that strange, since he looks upon peijury as a mere fashion of speech, not a crime?'

Then, side by side with the periury of the Franks he places the new form of profanity, the oath 'per Christum', which had come in among the lioman provincials. 'By Christ I will do this', 'By Christ I say that,' were the perpetually recurring exclamations of the Christian inhabitants of Gaul. Nay, sometimes one heard, 'By Christ I will kill so-and-so', or 'By Christ I will rob him of his property.' In one case it happened to Salvian himself to plead earnestly

with some powerful personage that he would not take away from a poor man the last remnant of his substance. ‘But he, already devouring the spoil with vehement desire, shot forth savage glances from his eyes against me, enraged at my daring to interfere, and said that it was now his religious duty, and one which he dared not neglect, to do the thing which I besought him not to do. I asked him “Why?” and he gave me the astounding answer, “Because I have sworn per Christum that I would take that man’s property away from him.” ’

In another passage he balances the virtues and vices of the chief races of the barbarians against one another in the following fashion:—‘The nation of the Goths is perfidious but modest, that of the Alans immodest but less perfidious; the Franks are liars but hospitable, the Saxons wild with cruelty but to be admired for their chastity. All these nations, in short, have their especial good qualities as well as their peculiar vices’ . Combining these two passages, and comparing them with hints uttered in other parts of the book we may conclude that, in the relations between the sexes, the Tartar hordes of Huns and Alani stood exceptionally low, and the Goths and Saxons exceptionally high, in the scale of sexual morality. Want of loyalty to solemn treaty-obligations was the chief fault attributed to both Franks and Goths by their Roman neighbours in Gaul. Peculiarly wild and savage cruelty was the besetting sin of our Saxon forefathers. Drunkenness was not then generally laid to their charge, as it was to that of the nation of the Alamanni, who occupied the region of the Black Forest and skirmished by the upper waters of the Rhine.

After all, however, Salvian’s sketches of barbarian character, though the most frequently quoted parts of his book, are not as valuable as his distinct and carefully-coloured pictures, evidently drawn from the life, of Roman society and Roman institutions. How vividly he brings before us the debates of a *conventus* (or assembly of *notables*, to borrow a phrase from a much later period of French history) assembled for purposes of taxation in the capital of a Gaulish province.

‘Messengers arrive express, bringing letters from the highest Sublimities’ [the Emperors] ‘which are addressed to a few illustrious persons, to work the ruin of the multitude. They meet, they decree certain additions to the taxes, but they do not pay those taxes themselves, they leave that to be done by the poor. Now, then, you rich men, who are so prompt in ordaining fresh taxes, I pray you be prompt likewise in paying them. Be foremost in the liberality of your contributions, as you are foremost in the liberality of your words. You have been paying long enough out of my pocket; be good enough to pay now out of your own. Does it seem unreasonable to complain that one class orders the taxes which have to be paid by another class? The injustice of the proceeding is most evidently shown by the wrath of these same rich men, when by any chance taxes have been passed in their absence and without their consent. Then you shall hear them saying “What a shameful thing! Two or three persons have ordered a levy which will be the ruin of thousands.” Not a whisper of this before, when they were present at the assembly. All which plainly shows that it is a mere matter of pique with the rich that any important matter of taxation should be settled in their absence, and that they have no feeling of justice which would be offended by unrighteous edicts being passed in their presence.

‘And as the poor are first to pay, so they are the last to be relieved. If it should happen, as it did on a late occasion, that the Supreme Powers [the Emperors] should, in consideration of the ruined state of the cities, decree a return of some part of the contribution of the Province, at once these rich men divide among themselves alone the gift which was meant to be for the solace of all. Who, then, remembers the poor? Who, then, calls in the needy to share the imperial bounty? When it was a question of laying on taxes, the poor were the only persons thought of. Now that it is a question of taking them off it is conveniently forgotten that they are tax-payers at all.

‘In what other race of men would you find such evils as these which are practised among the Romans? Where else is there such injustice as ours? The Franks know nothing of this villainy. The Huns are clear of crimes like these. None of these exactions are practised among the Vandals, none among the Goths. So far are the barbarian Goths from tolerating frauds like these, that not even the Romans, who live under Gothic rule, are called upon to endure them. And hence the one wish of all the Romans in those parts is that it may never be necessary for them to pass under the Roman jurisdiction. With one consenting voice the lower orders of Romans put up the prayer that they may be permitted to spend their life, such as it is, alongside of the barbarians. And then we marvel that our arms should not triumph over the arms of the Goths, when our own countrymen would rather be with them than with us.

‘Although the fugitives from the Empire differ in religion, differ in speech, differ even in habit of body from the barbarians, whose very smell, if I may say so, is offensive to the Provincial, yet they would rather put up with all this strangeness among the barbarians than submit any longer to the rampant tyranny of the Roman revenue officers. And thus the name of Roman citizen, formerly so highly valued and even bought with a great price, is now voluntarily abandoned, nay, it is shunned; nay, it is regarded with abomination. Hence it comes to pass that a large part of Spain, and not the smallest part of Gaul, is filled with men, Roman by birth, whom Roman injustice has de-Romanised’.

Such was the fiscal condition of the provinces which remained to the Empire in the middle of the Fifth Century. How easily we could imagine, in listening to that description of a Gaulish *conventus*, that we had glided unconsciously over thirteen centuries, and were listening to the preparation of a *cahier*, setting forth the wrongs of the iniquously-taxed *Tiers État* before the convocation of the States General.

The lamentable consequences of such exactions on the condition of the poorer classes are clearly traced in the pages of Salvian. The poor Provincial, who could not fly to the Goths because his whole property was in land, hunted to despair by the tax-gatherer, would transfer that land to some wealthy neighbour, apparently on condition of receiving a small life annuity out of it. He was then called the *dedititius* (or surrenderer) of the new owner, towards whom he stood in a position of a certain degree of dependence.

Not yet, however, were his sorrows or those of his family at an end, for the tax-gatherer still regarded him as responsible for his land, and required the old amount of taxes at his hands. From the life-rent for which he had covenanted he might possibly be able to satisfy this demand, but on his death his sons, who had utterly lost their paternal inheritance, and still found themselves confronted with the claim for taxes, were obviously without resource. The next stage of the process accordingly was that they abdicated the position of free citizens and implored the great man to accept them as *coloni*, a class of labourers, half-free, half-enslaved, who may perhaps with accuracy be compared to the *serfs adcripti glebae* of the middle ages. But they had already begun to drink, as Salvian says, of the Circean cup of bondage, and they could not stay the transforming process. Before long they became mere slaves without a shadow of right or claim against their new lords. Such was the downward course by which the free Roman landholder was changed into the mere beast of burden of some rich noble who was influential enough to hold at bay for himself the ruinous visits of the tax-gatherer.

Of the condition of the slaves themselves, Salvian draws a melancholy picture. Insufficiently supplied by their avaricious masters with the bare necessities of life, they were almost compelled to rob in order to keep soul and body together, and the masters, however they might affect to blame their thievish habits, knew in their secret hearts that no other resource was left to them. Even when the master himself was tolerably kind-hearted, the common herd of slaves suffered torment from the fellow-slaves who were set over them. The steward, the driver, the confidential valet, were so many petty tyrants who made the life of the

poor drudge, whether in the house or in the field, well-nigh unendurable. Sometimes, in desperation, a slave would fly from his fellow-slaves to their common master, and would find a shade more of compassion from him than from them.

The spirit of injustice, and hard, un pitying selfishness, according to Salvian, pervaded all classes. The prefect looked upon his prefecture as a mere source of plunder. The life of the merchant was one long tissue of fraud and perjury, that of the *curiales* (*burgesses*) of injustice, that of the officials of calumny, that of the soldiers of plunder.

The long indictment against the Empire, of which only a few counts are here transcribed, may be closed by Salvian's description of the fall of the two cities of Trier and Carthage, the capitals of the two great provinces of Gaul and Africa. Of both cities he seems to speak from personal knowledge. He resided many years at the former, and a hint which he lets fall makes it probable that he had at least visited the latter.

Three times had Trier, the most opulent city in Gaul, been besieged and taken by the barbarians. Still it repented not of its evil ways. The gluttony, the wine-bibbing, the immersion in carnal delights ceased not; and it was a special characteristic of the place that in all these degrading pleasures old men took the lead. Some of the citizens perished of cold, some of hunger; the naked bodies lay at the head of all the streets, and death exhaled new death. Still the hoary sinners sinned on; and, after the third sack of the city, a few of the oldest, and by birth the noblest among them, petitioned the Emperor for shows in the amphitheatre (*circenses*) by way of consolation for their losses. The theatrical and amphitheatrical performances of that age, idolatrous in their origin and unspeakably immoral in their tendency, always excited the opposition of an earnest ecclesiastic, and one of the most eloquent passages in the whole book is that in which Salvian rebukes this request of the nobles of Trier for such exhibitions.

'Citizens of Trier, do you ask for games? and that, when your country has been laid waste, when your city has been taken, after the bloodshed, the tortures, the captivity and all the calamities of your ruined town? What can be imagined more pitiable than such folly? I confess I thought you of all men most miserable when I heard of the destruction of your city; but I think you more miserable now when you are begging for games. So then, oh man of Trier! thou askest for public amusements. Where, pray, shall they be celebrated? Over tombs, over ashes, over the bones and the blood of the slain? What part of the city is free from these dread sights? Everywhere is the appearance of a sacked city, everywhere the horror of captivity, everywhere the image of death. The city is black with her burning, and wilt thou put on the sleek face of the merry-maker? All around thee mourns, and wilt thou rejoice? Nay, more, wilt thou with thy flagitious delights provoke the Most High, and draw down the wrath of God upon thee by the vilest idolatries? I do not wonder now, I do not wonder that all these evils have befallen thee. For if three catastrophes failed to correct thee, thou deservedst to perish by the fourth'.

In yet stronger colours does this prophet of the Fifth Century paint the magnificence, the sins, and the downfall of Carthage: Carthage, which had risen again from the dust to be the rival of the towers of Rome; Carthage, rich in all the appliances of the highest civilization, in schools of art, in schools of rhetoric, in schools of philosophy; Carthage, the focus of law and government for the continent of Africa, the head-quarters of the troops, the seat of the Proconsul. In this city were to be found all the nicely graduated orders of the Roman official hierarchy, so that it was scarcely too much to say that every street, every square had its own proper governor. Yet this was the city of which the great African, Augustine, had said, 'I came from my native town to Carthage, and everywhere around me roared the furnace of unholy love.' And too plainly does the language of Salvian, after all allowance made for rhetorical exaggeration, show what Augustine was thinking of when he wrote those words. Houses of ill-fame swarming in each street and square, and haunted by men of the highest rank, and what should have been venerable age; chastity outside the ranks of the clergy a thing unknown and

unbelieved, and by no means universal within that enclosure; the darker vices, the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, practised, avowed, gloried in such is the picture which the Gaulish presbyter draws of the capital of Africa. Perhaps the weight of his testimony is slightly lessened when he complains in a later passage of the hatred which existed in Carthage against monks, so that when one of that order of men appeared with his pale face and tonsured head in the streets of the city, abase and execration were wont to arise from the inhabitants against him. The description is so vivid, and Salvian's picture of the vices of the citizens is so black, as to suggest the possibility that he himself, as an ecclesiastic visiting Carthage from Marseilles, had once been subjected to one of these outbursts of fury. But the chief facts to which he bears witness were too notorious to admit of falsification, and are moreover too well confirmed by other evidence.

Into this City of Sin marched the Vandal army, one might almost say, when one reads the history of their doings, the army of the Puritans. With all their cruelty and all their greed they kept themselves unspotted by the licentiousness of the splendid city. They banished the men who were earning their living by ministering to the vilest lusts. They rooted out prostitution with a wise yet not a cruel hand. In short, Carthage, under the rule of the Vandals, was a city transformed, barbarous but moral.

The pages of Salvian's treatise are unrelieved by one gleam of brightness or of hope, and it is therefore of necessity a somewhat dreary book to read or to comment upon. But drearier than anything which he has written would be the thought that such a fabric as the Roman Empire, so splendid a creation of the brain of man, an organization upon the whole so beneficial to the human race, could have perished without an adequate moral cause. That cause he gives us, the deep corruption of life and manners in the Roman world. At the same time he truly remarks that this taint was not found in the genuine old Roman character, but was imported into it from Greece. Looking back through the mists of prehistoric time we can dimly discern the Aryan progenitors of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Goths cherishing certain religious beliefs and certain ideas of a strong and pure morality which guarded the sanctity of the home. The Teutons, when they descended upon the dying Empire, still preserved that precious Aryan inheritance intact. The Greeks had long since lost it or bartered it away for other gifts, the products of their delicious climate, their sensibility to artistic impressions, an analytical intellect and a capacity for boundless doubt. In later ages Home, influenced by her Hellenic sister, had lost it too, and the corruption of her great cities showed in all its hideousness the degradation which might be achieved by a civilization without morality and without God.

One of her own poets had said, 'Abeunt studia in mores', or as we might express it, 'Literature colours morality.' It is almost a truism to say that the maxim might be thus developed, 'Morals colour politics.' The character and actions of the individual must affect the character and actions of the community; the more or less of righteousness and purity in the citizen influences for good or for evil the duration of the State. By fraud, by injustice, by power abused, by an utter want of sympathy between the classes of society, by a generally diffused recklessness of unclean living even more than by the blows of the barbarians, fell the commonwealth of Rome.

**BOOK II.
THE HUNNISH INVASION**

CHAPTER I.
EARLY HISTORY OF THE HUNS.

THERE is a race on Scythia's verge extreme
Eastward, beyond the Tanais' chilly stream.
The Northern Bear looks on no uglier crew :
Base is their garb, their bodies foul to view;
Their souls are Ne'er subdued to sturdy toil
Or Ceres' arts : their sustenance is spoil.
With horrid wounds they gash their brutal brows,
And o'er their murdered parents bind their vows.
Not e'en the Centaur-offspring of the Cloud
Were horsed more firmly than this savage crowd.
Brisk, lithe, in loose array they first come on,
Fly, turn, attack the foe who deems them gone."

Claudian, In Rufinum,

Such is the account which the courtier-poet of Rome gave of the Huns half a century before the name of Attila became a terror to the nations. In the fifth chapter of the first book we witnessed the effect which the appearance of these wild Tartar hordes produced upon the Gothic warriors. The swarthy faces, without either beard or whisker, the twinkling black eyes, the squat figures, the perfect understanding which seemed to exist between the riders and their little steeds, were there described in the words of the Gothic bishop, Jordanes, and we heard what he had to say concerning their '*execranda origo*', descended, as he believed them to be, from Gothic sorceresses and from evil spirits.

The German professor of today emerges from his library to gaze at the descendants and representatives of the Huns, and liking them as little as his primeval kinsmen did, brands them with a term of deeper condemnation than Jordanes's epithets of "witch-born" or "fiend-begotten"—the terrible name, *Turanian*. For by thus defining their ethnological position he cuts them off from all connection with the great Aryan stem whose branches have overspread Europe, America, and Australia, Persia, and India; he equally destroys their claim to share in any of the glory of the Semitic races through whose instrumentality Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism were given to the world; and he shuts them up with a multitude of dull barbarians, mighty in destruction, powerless in construction, who have done nothing for the cause of civilization or human progress, and who, even where they have adopted some of the varnish of modern customs, have remained essentially and incurably barbarous to the present day.

Now this Turanian (or, to speak popularly and with less accuracy, Tartar) race which burst upon the affrighted Goths in the reign of the Emperor Valens, being a people of unlettered nomads, neither cared to give, nor probably could give to the European nations whom they terrified, any information as to their history in the remote past. Some traditions of a mythical kind as to the origin of their race they probably possessed, and had they established themselves in Europe permanently, these might, like the Scandinavian sagas, have floated down into a literary age and been so preserved. But the Huns vanished out of Europe almost as suddenly as they came, leaving no trace behind of their history, their language, or their religion. But for one somewhat disputed source of information, all is dark concerning them. That source is the History of China. If the Huns be the *Hiong-nu*, whose ravages are recorded

in that history, then we have a minute account of their doings for centuries before the Christian era, and we know, in fact, far more about them than about the inhabitants of Gaul or Britain before the time of Julius Caesar : if they are not, our ignorance is complete.

A learned and laborious Frenchman, M. Deguignes, in the middle of last century, conceived the idea that the Huns might be thus identified, and with infinite pains he wrote out their history from Chinese sources, and exhibited it in its connection with that of the various Tartar conquerors who, since their day, have poured down upon the civilized kingdoms of Europe and Asia, and wasted them. As before hinted, this identification has been questioned, and it must be admitted that mere similarity of name is dangerous ground to build upon in the history of barbarous races. But as the hypothesis though looked upon with much less favor than it received a century ago, does not seem to be yet absolutely disproved, we may be permitted to spend some pages on the history of the Hiong-nu, in the possibility that we are thus contemplating the formation of that volcano which hurled forth Attila. From the description which physical geographers give of Central Asia, it would surely be one of the most striking features of our globe, in the sight of any visitor who might be approaching us from another sphere. Eastwards from longitude 73° it rises, we are told, to the almost incredible average height of 8000 feet, bearing the character of a vast insulated upland, and, its extent and average elevation being taken into account, it may be said to form on the whole the most considerable projection on the surface of our planet.

From this mighty upraised altar great rivers flow down in all directions, the Obi, Yenisei, and Lena through Siberia into the Arctic Sea, the Amour and the two great rivers of China, the Hoang-ho and Yang-tsi-kiang, into the Pacific; the Irawaddy, Brahmahpootra, Ganges, Indus, into the Indian Ocean; the Oxus and Jaxartes into the sea of Aral. Rivers of its own it has none (or only one, the Yar-kiang), having apparently no deep valleys : the small streams which it does possess find their way to some insignificant inland lake, and are lost there. Four great mountain chains, limiting or traversing it, run from west to east. The mountains of Altai mark it off from Siberia on the north. The Thian Shan, or Mountains of Heaven, pass across the middle of it at about the 42nd parallel of latitude. The Kuen-Lun fence off what is now Chinese Tartary from Thibet. The Himalayas bound the great plateau to the south. No mountain chain of any importance appears to intersect the country from north to south till we reach the Bolor Mountains (longitude 73), which are its western boundary, and which form a kind of step down into the lower, but still lofty plateau (4000 feet high) of Eastern Turkestan.

The dominions of the Hiong-nu at the time of their greatest supremacy reached over the whole of the northern and central sections of this plateau—from Mount Altai, that is, to the Kuen-Lun. And westwards, their rule extended beyond the Bolor Mountains down into Turkestan, down lower still to the old seabed between Lake Aral and the Caspian, nay, even across the Ural Mountains to the Volga. In its more contracted state, their empire still touched the Irtish (long. 80) on the west; but it seems to have receded to the Thian-Shan Mountains on the south; and the proper home of the race—if nomads can be said to have a home—was that district between China and Siberia bounded on the east by the Inshan Mountains (long. 115), which is marked in modern maps Mongolia. Very roughly estimated, it is probably about as large as Germany and Austria put together. Across the center of it stretches the great sandy desert of Gobi or Shamo. Here, then, if we may trust our French guide, the nation of the Huns was roaming before the date usually assigned to the Call of Abraham. In winter they crowded down upon the Northern frontier of China, which lies in the latitude of Madrid; in summer they drove their cattle northwards, across the great desert of Gobi, and took refuge from the heat in the cool valleys under the mountains which lie to the south of Lake Baikal, and which are in the same latitude as London.

Under the first two historic dynasties of China (the *Hia*, BC. 2207-1767, and the *Shang*, 1767-1122), the Huns—if it be indeed the same race—are spoken of under the name of Chan-yong (barbarians of the mountains) and Tchong-yo. Their country was called Kuei-fang, “the country of spirits”, so denominated by the same unchanging nation which at this day calls us Europeans foreign devils.

Chow Dynasty, B.C. 1122-258

About one hundred years before the building of Solomon’s Temple, the Chow dynasty ascended the Chinese throne, and slumbered there for nearly nine centuries, till the year 258 BC. These were the Carolingians of China, monarchs nominally supreme, but really overshadowed and overawed by their great feudatories; in their personal character debauched and cruel—in short, conspicuous offenders against the golden-mean maxims of morality so dear to the Chinese heart. This cycle of anarchy (it would probably have lasted but a century in Europe) was the harvest-time of the northern barbarians, who are now spoken of as *Hien-yun*. The three northern provinces of the Chinese Empire, Shen-se, Shan-se, and Pe-tche-li (which comprise an area about equivalent to the whole of Great Britain) seem to have been in a state of perpetual border-warfare with these savage enemies, who after each inroad retired laden with booty to the northern portion of their own territory. Their fleet ponies and trackless wildernesses rendered hopeless any attempt on the part of regular troops to pursue or to avenge. At length, about the middle of the third century B.C., the long-smouldering light of the Chow dynasty went out, and the Tsin dynasty succeeded. Ching-wang, otherwise Che-Hwang-te, the greatest monarch of this new house, the Napoleon of China, united her warring provinces into one compact empire, took the title of the *Hwang-te* (universal Emperor) instead of *Wang* (King), which had been borne by all previous monarchs, drove back the *Hiong-nu* (for such is now the name of the barbarians) to their deserts, and finally, about the time of the Second Punic War, completed the Great Wall of China (portions of which had been already built by two provincial sovereigns) in order to protect the northern frontier from their incursions. Thus then (if only the theory of Deguignes be true) this great work, 1500 miles long, the name of which has been familiar to all of us from our childhood, was really built to guard the civilization of Eastern Asia from the inroads of the ancestors of Attila, and might as fairly be called the Huns’ Wall as Hadrian’s barrier across the Northumbrian isthmus is called by many the Picts’ Wall. Che-Hwang-te in the course of his great career found himself frequently thwarted by the traditions, the etiquette, the state-maxims of the literati, who seem to have been even then a powerful class in China. To recur to a former simile, the Napoleonic idea could not be made to accord with the Bourbon tradition. Violently breaking with the Past of his country, he ordered, it is said, that all the books of history which could be found should be destroyed, sparing however those on medicine, agriculture, astrology, and other branches of science. This strange story may be the invention of national vanity, unable to trace up the written history of China beyond the third century B.C. In this case, all that has been hitherto said as to the early history of China and the *Hiong-nu* must be relegated to dreamland, for an oral transmission of the events of sixteen centuries may be set aside as an impossibility. On the other hand, if the story be true, and if Che-Hwang-te was in the main successful in his onslaught on the works of the earlier historians, it does not follow that Chinese history must necessarily begin with him. For if the Chinese were by this time a literary nation, which the story seems to imply, no mere destruction of books would avail to wipe out from the fully-formed historical consciousness the general outlines of their past national life. Had every roll of manuscript perished out of the world at the time of the Peloponnesian war, the Greeks of that period would still have been able to reconstruct, with sufficient distinctness, by an act of memory, both the mythical and the historical record of previous ages which they had read from

their childhood. Considering the apparently early development of the literary character in this enigmatic nation with which we are dealing, one is inclined to conjecture that this is the true view of the subject, and that there is at least some historic value in the Chinese annals previous to the third century B.C.

From this time onwards, at any rate, the chronicle seems to be complete, and full, to the reader's exhaustion, of the doings of the robber-nation, the Hiong-nu. These latter had now taken to themselves a king after the manner of the nations. He was called the *Tan-jou*, which we are told is a contraction of the formidable title *Tcem-li-ko-to-tan-jou* (mighty son of Heaven). The Tan-jou's queen was always called Yen-chi. All the great commands of the state were filled up in duplicate, one officer for the Right and one for the Left. Characteristically enough, as showing how their faces were ever set towards the fertile and opulent South, the Left with them meant the east and the Right the west. The Left was, as we are informed that it is still with their Tartar nephews at Constantinople, the post of honors; and thus "Hien-wang" (which signifies 'wise-king') being the highest grade of office under royalty, the Hien-wang of the Left, or Viceroy of the East, was the next greatest person to the Tan-jou, and the office was generally held by the heir-apparent of that monarch. In their prosperous days the sovereigns of the Hiong-nu trampled upon the civilized and literary pride of the Chinese Emperors with the greater pride of the uncouth barbarian. On tablets, the exact size of which had been prescribed by generations of Masters of the Ceremonies, the Chinese monarch thus wrote with the vermilion pencil, "The Emperor respectfully begs the Great Tan-jou of the Hiong-nu, &c." To which, on much larger tablets, the Tan-jou replied, "The Great Tan-jou of the Hiong-nu, born of the Heavens and the Earth, established by the Sun and Moon, respectfully begs the Emperor of China, &c." Frequently an invading Tan-jou would ask for the hand of a Chinese princess as the price of his return to his own land, and the Court, not unwilling to plant by the side of the robber-king a representative of its own interests, would comply with the request. National vanity however will not allow the Chinese historians to confess that one of the princesses of the blood-royal was really given in marriage to a barbarian, and they accordingly relate that a custom prevailed of adopting for the occasion a female slave into the family of the Emperor, giving her the title of Kum-tcheou, or Princess of the Blood, and then sending her off to be the bride of the Tan-jou. An improbable story doubtless; but what is certain is that the transition from the highly civilized luxurious life of a Chinese palace to the squalor of the Tan-jou's home would be keenly felt by the sufferer, whatever her station in life might be, and perhaps even more by the domestic than by the mistress. Here is the melancholy outpouring in verse of one of these victims of policy, sent indeed not to a king of the Hiong-nu but to a prince of the neighbouring nation, the Ou-sioun, whose mode of life was indistinguishable from theirs :

Me to a husband have my kindred tied,
 And in a far-off land have bid me bide;
 A wretched tent is now my palace-hall,
 And a rough paling is its only wall.
 Raw flesh must now my hunger satisfy,
 And curdled milk, my thirst : nought else have I.
 Oh native land! I still must think of thee,
 And my heart's wound bleeds ever inwardly.
 Why am I not a happy bird of air
 To thee, dear home, that I might straight repair"

The Hiong-nu were ignorant of the art of writing, but the Chinese historians, with a candor which we should scarcely have expected, admit that when they had verbally pledged

themselves to a treaty they generally showed strict good faith in the observance of it. The children were early trained in the use of missile weapons. It is said that they were first taught to ride on the wild scampering moorland sheep, and to shoot with their little bows at birds and mice. As boys they hunted hares and foxes, as young men they assumed the weapons of war. They were not deemed full-grown men till they had slain a foe. When they reached old age they fell into poverty and contempt, all the good things being reserved for the active warriors of the nation. Flight was, as hinted in the verses of Claudian, a great part of their strategy. Like the Parthians, they would discharge a cloud of arrows at the pursuing foe, and even if their rapid return failed to throw his ranks into confusion, they easily vanished into the terrible solitudes of those trackless deserts whither for many generations their harassed neighbors feared to pursue them.

Of the two chief residences of the Tan-jous, one appears to have been situated in the north of their dominions, under the continuation of the Altai mountain-range, and near the place which, as the capital of later Tartar chieftains, was known as Karakorum; the other near the Inshan mountains on the eastern frontier, where a large manufactory of bows and arrows was established.

At the first moon of each year there was a general assembly of all the officers of the kingdom and army at the Tan-jou's court, and a solemn sacrifice was then offered up. They met again in the fifth month, and sacrificed to the Heavens, the Earth, and the Spirits of their ancestors. At another assembly held in the autumn they numbered the people and their flocks, thus taking stock, and striking a balance of the profit or loss of the summer's operations in the way of plunder.

Every morning the Tan-jou issued from his tent on the left hand of the camp to pay his devotions to the Sun, and in the evening he offered similar adoration to the Moon, presumably during that part of the month only when she was visible. Such was the simple and primitive nature-worship of this tribe. We are informed that one of the other tribes of Central Asia stuck a naked sabre hilt-downwards into the earth, and then gathered round to adore it.

The great aim of the Hiong-nu in war was to take as many prisoners as possible. They reduced them, of course, to a state of slavery, and employed them to tend their flocks and herds, that they themselves might be left more free to practise the one art of the barbarian—war. If one of their number fell in battle, the comrade who succeeded in carrying off his dead body (as in the Homeric combats) to a place of safety, might claim his inheritance. In the later days of the Hiong-nu empire, when we might have expected that their contact with the Chinese would have exerted some civilizing influence upon them, we find the Tanjou Hou-han-sie confirming an oath by drinking blood from the skull of a hostile chief who had been slain by one of his ancestors 130 years before.

Such was the general character of the relations between the Hiong-nu and their southern neighbors. A few striking features of the history of the two nations, selected from a mass of monotonous details, will sufficiently explain the movement which eventually launched the Hunnish nation, not upon Pekin (Beijing), but upon Rome.

In China the Tsin dynasty, founded by the book-destroying Che-Hwang-te, was of short duration, like that of the Buonapartes, to which it has been already compared.

In the year 207 BC. another period of anarchy was ended by Kaou-te, who, gathering up again all China under his rule, founded the celebrated Han dynasty, which flourished till 220 AD., or, roughly speaking, from the days of Hannibal to those of Caracalla.

Mé-tée-Tanjou

Contemporaneously with Kaou-te in China, the terrible Mé-tée-Tanjou reigned over the Hiong-nu. His father, his step-mother, his half-brother, all atoned to him with their lives for an

abortive attempt to exclude him from the succession. Yet, fierce as he had shown himself against his own flesh and blood, he appeared to submit with patience to the accumulated insults of the Sien-pi, a nation perhaps of Tungusic origin on the east of his dominions. Mé-té had in his stable a horse of fabulous speed and endurance, which could travel, it was said, 150 miles in one day. The Sien-pi sent to ask for this horse; he gave it up to them. Emboldened by this act of submission, they demanded one of his wives; she was sent to their king's tent. Then came a requisition for some waste lands, on a disputed frontier between the two nations, and at last the pent-up rage of Mé-té burst forth, "Whatever touched my own honor or profit I have given up for the sake of peace, but of the land of my people I will not surrender, to you a foot's-breadth". And he smote the people of the Sien-pi with a great destruction, and pursued them till they took refuge in the mountains of Manchuria, where they remained a crippled and enfeebled remnant, but ever brooding over their wrongs, till, after the lapse of nearly three centuries, they sallied forth to enjoy their long-delayed vengeance.

Towards China, Mé-té assumed an attitude of permanent hostility. He fixed his court at Ta-tum-fou, or Tai-tong, just south of the Great Wall, and pushed forward his Hien-wang of the Left as far as Changkow, and him of the Right to Yen-gan, both apparently from 100 to 200 miles within the Chinese frontier.

The Emperor Kaou-te levied an army of 320,000 men and marched against him, but was out-manuevered, and shut up in a fortress near Ta-tum-fou, where for seven days his army was left without provisions. By the favor of the Tanjou's wife he escaped from this perilous position; but those seven days of semi-starvation were long remembered by the sleek Chinese troops. Peace of some sort was patched up between the two powers, but after the death of Kaou-te an audacious Hien-wang of the Right pushed his inroads so far that his barbarian hordes came almost within sight of Sin-gan-fou (in the province of Shen-si), which was then the capital of the empire. The Chinese Court complained, and the Tanjou sent his too zealous Viceroy of the West on a tour of conquest through Central Asia. Tibet, all that we now call Eastern and Western Turkestan, and part of Siberia, were made subject to Mé-té's domination, and it is even said that the conquering Hiong-nu reached on this occasion as far as the Volga itself. With a great show of courtesy, the Tanjou sent an embassy to inform the Chinese Emperor these conquests, by which he had become the greatest potentate in Asia; and hereupon, after a copious exchange of compliments, the Emperor, we are informed, concluded to accord to him a renewal of the treaty of peace. As it is clear that at this time China was almost helpless in the hands of her barbarian foe, the Tanjou's humble supplications for peace, and the gracious concession of it by the Emperor, were probably recorded by the literati of that day, the contemporaries of Hannibal, with about as much accuracy as may be evinced by some Chinese historian, upon whom in our own day may have devolved the duty of chronicling the destruction of the Summer Palace, and the treaty graciously conceded to El-gin and Mon-to-ban.

From the death of Mé-té-Tanjou, which occurred BC 174, we have, for the space of 260 years, a history of the wars of China and the Huns, almost as detailed and circumstantial as the records of Roman conquest during the same period. Happily for the reader there is no necessity to reproduce these details here. The same kind of events repeat themselves with monotonous regularity. The Tanjou sought for peace from the Chinese Emperor. A wife was sent to him, and presents were exchanged. The Hiong-nu at once recommenced their inroads and ravaged a great belt of country in the three provinces of Shen-se, Shan-se, and Pet-che-li. The Emperor sent three armies, amounting to 200,000 men, into the country of the Hiong-nu. Two of the generals obtained great successes, the third lost all his men in a march through the desert. He ought to have returned to China, and there submitted to degradation from all his posts of honor, and afterwards committed suicide. But he preferred to take refuge at the Court of the Tanjou,

where the information which he gave as to the movements of the troops and the strength of the frontier-cities proved extremely injurious to the interests of China. The Tanjou now supplicated for peace; rich presents were exchanged, and various complimentary speeches were made, but both parties understood that there was no reality in the peace thus arranged. A Chinese princess was sent as a wife for the heir-apparent, the Hien-wang of the Left. The Hiong-nu recommenced their invasions of the three provinces of Shen-se, Shan-se, and Petcheli, and so on as before.

There was however during all this period a pretty steady decline of the power of the barbarians, and an equally steady increase in that of their civilized neighbors. Especially noteworthy in this respect was the reign of the great Emperor Woo-te, which lasted from BC 140-86, or, shall we say, from the time of Cato the Censor to that of Cicero. This monarch Woo-te, whose victorious arms extended to Pegu, Siam, and Bengal, and who was a zealous patron of the morality of Confucius, was contemporary with seven successive Tanjous, and, but that his prosperity did not desert him at the end of his reign, he might, not inaptly, be called the Louis XIV of China.

The lives of three of his servants may be briefly noticed here for the sake of the light which they throw on the history of the Hiong-nu.

Chang-kiao was instructed by his master to establish communications with the Yue-ché, a Tartar people whom the Hiong-nu had driven from the east to the west of Central Asia, and who had now established themselves in great force between the Oxus and Jaxartes, and even within the confines of the present Persian kingdom. *Chang-kiao* was made prisoner by the Hiong-nu while seeking to pass through their country in disguise. After ten years of captivity he escaped, reached the country of the Yue-ché (the modern Khorasan), remained there some time, storing up a large amount of valuable political information, and returned by way of Thibet, but even so was unable to escape from the Hiong-nu. His second captivity however was of short duration. Under cover of the troubles of a disputed succession, he again made his escape, and after an absence of twelve years, returned to his master's court.

Li-kwang-li, one of the bravest of the Chinese officers, was for sixty years perpetually giving and receiving hard blows in the wars with the northern barbarians. They themselves so highly esteemed the skill and rapidity of his movements that they called him the "Winged General". Once, it is said, at the head of 100 horsemen, he put a large body of their cavalry to flight. Yet even he, after a defeat, had to endure the systematic ingratitude of his countrymen, and after counterfeiting death on the field of battle, was on the point of receiving it at the hands of the executioner. He was permitted, however, to redeem his life by the payment of a large sum of money, but was degraded from all his dignities. But in the very next year the Emperor found himself compelled to restore him to the chief military command, so pressing was the danger from the northern invaders.

In the decline of life, this veteran soldier had the misfortune to see the honors of his family tarnished by the treason of his grandson *Li-ling*, one of the many Chinese generals who after defeat fled to the Court of the Tanjou, and sold their knowledge of the strategic combinations of their countrymen for honors and offices in the barbarian court.

About nine years later, the brave old general, who must now have been fully eighty years of age, again headed a grand attack upon the Hiong-nu. He met at first with complete success, and pushed the foe before him to the mountain-barrier at the extreme north of their dominions. The forced marches, however, across the terrible desert of Gobi had too much weakened his troops. The Tanjou brought 50,000 fresh men into the field, dug in the night a deep ditch in the rear of the Chinese forces, and thus added to the disorder and panic of their flight after the defeat of the morrow.

Li-kwang-li was compelled to surrender at discretion, and taken prisoner to the Court of the Tanjou, who treated him with such marked favor (partly, perhaps, on account of his relationship to the already exiled (Li-ling) that all the barbarian officers became jealous of his predominating influence. Superstition was enlisted on the side of envy; in a dangerous illness of the Queen-mother, the soothsayers declared that the gods of the Hiong-nu were offended because they received no more human sacrifices as of yore, but prisoners of war were now preserved alive, and even received into favour. Li-kwang-li was seized and sacrificed; a terrible succession of snow-storms followed, which destroyed a vast number of cattle, and prevented the seeds from germinating in the earth. Then they changed their minds and said that they had mistaken the will of the gods; but the fine old warrior, after his sixty years of battle, was beyond the reach of their repentance.

Woo-soo was sent by the Emperor *Woo-te* upon one of those endless embassies for the arrangement of a lasting and honorable peace, which vary with their ill-treated monotony of fraud the monotony of bloodshed. In the course of the discussions on this subject, he addressed himself to one of the Chinese fugitives, who had been promoted to a subordinate kingship in Western Siberia, and reproached him so bitterly for his treason and want of patriotism, that the Tanjou, disregarding the sanctity of an ambassador's person, seized him and cast him into a ditch. There he lived for several days, exposed to all the rigor of the climate, and feeding only upon snow and the offal of the camp. The barbarians conceived that there must be something divine in the nature of a man who could endure such hardships, but they chose a singular means of testifying their admiration. They carried him off to the inhospitable shores of Lake Baikal, in the east of Siberia, where he dragged out life for nineteen years, his food being mice and the bitter fruits of the desert. Some of his countrymen, deserters, tried to reconcile him to his lot, and to persuade him to accept, as they had done, the bounty of the barbarian. "No", said he, "I will remain true to my country, whatever tortures her enemies may inflict upon me. A minister owes to his king the same affectionate duty which a child does to his parent". And when he heard of the death of his master, the great *Woo-te*, he turned his face to the beloved South, looked towards China, and burst into tears. The remorse which the Tanjou felt for the death of Li-kwang-li turned out beneficially for *Woo-soo*, who, after his weary captivity, was at length restored to his country.

In the early days of the conquering Tanjous, Tibet appears to have felt their influence, and the whole of Eastern Turkestan (or what *Deguignes* calls "Little Bukharia") seems to have been in complete dependence upon them. Even then, however, for some reason which is not explained, but which is probably connected with the physical geography of the country, their invasions of China were always made on the north, never on the west frontier. If they thus missed an opportunity of taking their enemy in flank, he, when his turn of superiority came, showed more skillful strategy; and the great triumph of the reign of *Woo-te* was the series of conquests and alliances by which he turned the south-west flank of the Hiong-nu position.

China gradually gains the ascendancy.

Anyone who now looks at the map of Asia will see a long thin slice of territory stretching forth at the north-western angle of China (from the Hoang-ho to Su-chow, long. 98°). This is ground won from the barbarians, and made strong by the Chinese monarchs for the defence of the Empire. It is, in fact, an arm stretched forth into the desert, by which China seems to say, "Not this way, barbarians of the North! fight, if you will fight, fairly, face to face; but you shall not come round to my left side, and there deal me stealthily an assassin's blow".

After the conquest of this territory came the secret mission of *Chang-kiao* through Tibet, to the country between the Oxus and Jaxartes, and this produced immense results. Where the stealthy emissary had gone, victorious armies followed. Khotan, Yarkand, Kashgar accepted

the alliance, or became the subjects of the Chinese Emperor. The Ou-sioun, a powerful people, kindred with but hostile to the Hiong-nu, and dwelling to the south of Lake Balkhash, were encouraged to lean on China for protection against the common intervening foe : and a Chinese governor was permanently established at Aksou, under the steepes of the Thian Shan (about 78° long, and 42° lat).

In the year 71 BC a great army amounting, it is said, to 200, 000 men, was sent against the Hiong-nu under the command of seven generals. Notwithstanding the mismanagement and cowardice of some of the generals, this expedition seems, more than anything else, to have broken the power of the Hiong-nu.

It was not without some protest from the timid conservatism of the Chinese ministers that this energetic policy was pursued. When Siven-ti, the great-grand-son of Woo-te, was meditating an expedition, half-hostile, half-friendly, to the country of the Ouigours (near Turfan, long, 89°) he was met by the outspoken remonstrances of a wise old counsellor named Goei-siang. This sage appears not to have been perplexed by any of those difficulties as to the triumph of injustice and the downfall of the good which have troubled the sages and seers of other nations.

“There are five sorts of wars”, said he. “The first, for the suppression of civil tumult. This is a war of Justice, and it is sure to be successful. The second, in which you oppose a foreign invader, is a war of Necessity, and is generally crowned with victory. In the third kind of war, one of Rage and Fury, in which men take up arms about mere trifles, one is often beaten. To invade the lands of others for the sake of spoil is the fourth species of war, that of Avarice, and in this success is not to be expected. But when a monarch fights only in order to acquire glory, to render his family illustrious and become a terror to his neighbors, that is a war of Ambition and Pride, the results of which are uniformly disastrous. These five points are so many maxims founded on the dealings of Heaven. At present the Hiong-nu desire peace, while our own internal condition is far from satisfactory. It is no rare occurrence to see a son murder his father, a younger brother the elder, a wife her husband. Twenty-two crimes of this kind have occurred in the course of the past year. We ought to apply a remedy to these social disorders instead of carrying war into the country of our neighbors”.

Notwithstanding these excellent remarks, the policy of war and annexation prevailed. The Ouigours became tributary, and the Hiong-nu felt the predominant influence of China all round their southern and western frontiers. The barbarians saw that their Empire was departing from them, and fell into confusion and anarchy. In the year 58 BC five Tanjous were warring against one another. Hou-han-sie, apparently the rightful heir, at length emerged from the contest, sole Tanjou; but, almost immediately after, had to enter upon a new and fiercer contest with two fresh competitors, one of them his own brother. The upshot of the whole business was, that he humbly presented himself at the court of the Chinese Emperor, promised subjection and tribute, and received from this hereditary enemy assistance which at length enabled him to reign without a rival.

In a feeble and crippled state, the Hiong-nu Empire lasted on for a century and a half from this time, but never again as the equal foe, generally as the vassal, occasionally as the revolted subject of the Court of China.

About the middle of the first century after Christ, the nation became finally divided into two hostile sections—a northern and a southern. Doubtless the Southern dwellers in the immediate neighbourhood of China became more dependent on the good things which accompany civilization than the wild nomads of the north-west; and then the physical barrier of the great desert of Gobi would probably intensify and perpetuate the moral division. From this time forwards the Tanjou of the south becomes one of the most eager enemies of the northern kingdom, ever besieging the ear of the Chinese Emperor with cries for its demolition.

At the same time a new enemy pressed upon them from the east. The neighbouring tribe of the Sien-pi whom the great Tanjou Mé-té had cooped up in the mountains of what is now called Mantchuria, after brooding for three centuries over their wrongs, now found the longed-for opportunity of vengeance. After forty years of more or less constant warfare with this triple league of foes, symptoms of dissolution began to show themselves in the northern kingdom. Vast hordes of the Hiong-nu, in one case amounting to a quarter of a million of fighting men, went over bodily to the Chinese. A terrible famine, the work of some locust-like insect, then wasted the country. A combined invasion of the Chinese and the southern Hiong-nu on a large scale took place in the year 89. The Chinese general, Teou-hien, put the Tanjou to flight, and having advanced 1000 miles into his kingdom, left upon one of the mountain ranges an inscription composed by the historiographer who accompanied the expedition, recording the success of his arms. In two years however even this effort was surpassed : the Chinese troops reached the Irtysh, the western frontier of the dominions of the Hiong-nu, the Tanjou had again to take shelter in some Siberian desert, and his mother was taken prisoner.

Teou-hien, though victorious, recommended his imperial master to spare his fallen foes. But on his death sterner counsels prevailed. A new Tanjou who had been raised to the throne was driven into revolt, a revolt hopeless from the first. He himself fell into the hands of the Chinese forces, and was beheaded. The Sien-pi poured into the defenseless country like a torrent. Great multitudes of the Hiong-nu consented to pass under their yoke and bear their name, the rest fled westwards across the Irtysh, settling by the Ural River and near the modern Russian Government of Orenbourg. Thus did the great barbarian empire, which for 2000 years had been measuring its forces against the civilization of China, fall, with apparently irretrievable ruin.

All this occurred in the reign of Domitian. It was not till nearly three centuries later that the Huns, during the reign of Valens, crossed the Sea of Azof or the stream of the Volga, and fell upon the affrighted and disgusted Gothic subjects of King Hermanric. This long interval of quiescence and of obscurity is the weak place in the identification of the Hiong-nu and the Huns. It is impossible not to feel that many changes might have occurred during that time, and that mere similarity of name is a slight clue by which to traverse so vast a distance.

The Chinese historians necessarily give during this interval far scantier information than previously as to the affairs of Central Asia. The expulsion of the northern Hiong-nu appears to have been a victory of Pyrrhus' for the Chinese Empire. The southern Hiong-nu and the Sien-pi, under various barbarous names, formed settlements within its limits and erected dynasties which disputed the throne of China itself with its native princes. In such a state of things the historians of that country had but little inducement or opportunity to record the revolutions of Western Asia. We are enabled however, dimly and at long intervals, to trace the continued existence of a Hiong-nu people along the line of the Volga and the northern shores of the Caspian.

To the west of them, but separated by one fierce Tartar people, the Chinese historians placed the great kingdom of Ta-Tsin. Their description of this kingdom is so curious that a few of its leading features may be here inserted. It is a country of large extent with many dependent kingdoms. The walls are built of stone; inns are placed along the lines of road. All sorts of trees and plants are found there. The inhabitants are given to agriculture, and even understand how to keep silkworms. They cut their hair and wear very fine clothes. They have all sorts of chariots with white coverings : in war they have drums, flags, and tents. The capital is thirty-four miles in circumference; it contains five palaces by the waterside, supported on pillars. Every day the king goes to one or other of these palaces to administer justice. Before his chariot walks an officer holding an open bag in which are placed the petitions of all who present themselves, which are examined by the king when he enters the palace. Thirty-six

generals of the army form a Council of State to deliberate on the affairs of the Empire. The king does not always hold his office for life; they generally endeavor to choose a wise man, but should any extraordinary calamity occur, for instance any great whirlwind or inundation, they change their ruler, and he who is thus deposed appears to descend into private life without a sigh.

‘Gold, silver, precious stones, rich and beautifully embroidered vestments abound in this country. They have both gold and silver money : ten pieces of the latter are equivalent to one of the former. They trade both with the Parthians and Indians. They have often endeavored to enter into direct commercial relations with China, but have always been prevented by the Parthians. Recently’ [in the year corresponding to A.D. 166] ‘the king of the Ta-Tsin named Gan-tun succeeded in sending ambassadors, who were followed by merchants, to China by way of India. The inhabitants of Ta-Tsin are tall and well-made like the Chinese, whence their name’ [Ta = Great : Tsin = China or the Chinese]. This last sentence will probably have disclosed to the reader the real name of the country in question. Only the Romans of that day could be considered worthy of being called by a Chinese historian Great as the Chinese. He has been reading a description of *Imperium Romanum* by a Chinese pen, and the king, Gan-tun, is the Emperor Marcus (Aurelius) *Antoninus*.

The question will naturally be asked, Why if this Hiong-nu, marauders as they were by nature, had wandered so near to the confines of this alluring kingdom of Ta-Tsin, did they allow three centuries to elapse before they commenced their invasions of that empire? Dimly and vaguely, through the faint twilight of their history, we may conjecture the following reasons for their quiescence : there may have been hundred others which are to us undiscoverable.

First, their eyes were still turned eastwards; their expeditions still sometimes reached as far as Khamil (Long. 95. E.), and for generations they seem to have cherished the hope of once more ravaging the valley of the Hoang-ho. At length their old enemies, the Sien-pi, under the dynasty of the Topas, built up, in the old country of the Hiong-nu, a sufficiently solid empire to check all eastward incursions on their part. But, secondly, between their new home and western civilization a strong barrier was presented by the fierce nation of the Alani, Turanian nomads like themselves, who, under the name of Alanna, are spoken of by the Chinese historians as occupying the country of Yen-Tcai, the extensive district which is bounded by the Volga on the north, the Caucasus on the south, the Sea of Azof and the Don on the west, and the Caspian and Volga on the east. These are the people who for so many generations adored a naked sabre stuck into the earth as their only divinity. They were at length, after contests the duration and severity of which are hidden from us, overcome by those neighbors of theirs whom we may now without fear of contradiction venture to call the Huns. Some, the Alani of the Don, became amalgamated with the armies of the conqueror, others fled westwards and bore a part, recognized in history, in the subversion of the Roman Empire, though it did not fall to their lot to found any enduring kingdom within its borders.

Hopes of Chinese spoil on the east, the reality of Alan resistance on the west, were doubtless two reasons for the long sojourn of the Hiong-nu eastwards of the Volga. A third, which it is sufficient merely to indicate, is the prestige, slowly and with difficulty impaired, of the Roman Empire, of that Ta-Tsin “which Gantun” and his immediate predecessors had ruled so wisely and made so strong.

A fourth is the utterly broken and dispirited state of the Hiong-nu themselves. After their flight from their old home in Central Asia, they seem to have ceased to elect Tanjous; the unity of the nation was gone, the degree of organization, the semblance of a polity which they had before possessed, probably vanished. Removed from the civilizing influences of contact with China they doubtless sank lower and lower into mere squalid savagery, becoming a loosely

united bundle of roving hordes, until at length increase of numbers brought with it confidence, the remembrance of past supremacy stirred up shame at their present abject condition, the success of their conflict with the Alans assured them of victory, and turning their backs definitively on the East, they crossed the Cimmerian Bosphorus—whether guided by a demon-stag or not we need not inquire—to work, both directly and indirectly, more ruin and greater changes in the fair kingdoms of Ta-Tsin than their mightiest Tanjous had ever done in the often-wasted provinces of the real China.

This chapter was commenced by Claudian's poetical description of the Huns; at its close let us listen to the historian Ammianus Marcellinus, a soldier, and more strictly a contemporary, describing in what guise they showed themselves when first 1500 years ago, they burst upon Europe.

Ammianus on the Manners of the Huns

“The nation of the Huns, little known to ancient records, but spreading from the marshes of Azof to the Icy Sea, surpasses all other barbarians in wildness of life. In the first days of infancy, deep incisions are made in the cheeks of their boys, in order that, when the time comes for whiskers to grow there, the sprouting hairs may be kept back by the furrowed scars : and hence they grow to maturity and to old age beardless as eunuchs. They all, however, have strong and well-knit limbs and fine necks. Yet they are of portentous ugliness and so crook-backed that you would take them for some sort of two-footed beasts, or for the roughly-chipped stakes which one sees used for the railings of a bridge. And though they do just bear the likeness of men (of a very ugly pattern), they are so little advanced in civilization that they make no use of fire, nor of any kind of relish, in the preparation of their food, but feed upon the roots which they find in the fields, and the half-raw flesh of any sort of animal. I say half-raw, because they give it a kind of cooking by placing it between their own thighs and the backs of their horses. They never seek the shelter of houses, which they look upon as little better than tombs, and will only enter upon the direst necessity : nor would one be able to find among them even a cottage of wattled rushes : but wandering at large over mountain and through forest, they are trained to bear from their infancy all the extremes of cold, of hunger, and of thirst.

They are clad in linen raiment, or in the skins of field-mice sewn together, and the same suit serves them for use in-doors and out. However dingy the color of it may become, the tunic which has once been hung round their necks is never laid aside nor changed till through long decay the rags of it will no longer hold together. Their heads are covered with bent caps, their hairy legs with the skins of goats; their shoes, never having been fashioned on a last, are so clumsy that they cannot walk comfortably.

On this account they are not well adapted to pedestrian encounters; but then on the other hand they are almost welded to their horses, which are hardy, though of ugly shape, and on which they sometimes ride women's fashion. On horseback every man of that nation lives night and day; on horseback he buys and sells; on horseback he takes his meat and drink, and when night comes he leans forward upon the narrow neck of his horse and there falls into a deep sleep, or wanders into the varied phantasies of dreams.

When a discussion arises upon any matter of importance they come on horseback to the place of meeting. No kingly sternness overawes their deliberations, but being upon the whole well-contented with the disorderly guidance of their chiefs, they do not scruple to interrupt the debates with anything that comes into their heads.

When attacked, they will sometimes engage in regular battle. Then, going into the fight in order of columns, they fill the air with varied and discordant cries. More often, however, they fight in no regular order of battle, but being extremely swift and sudden in their movements,

they disperse, and then rapidly come together again in loose array, spread havoc over vast plains, and flying over the rampart, they pillage the camp of their enemy almost before he has become aware of their approach. It must be owned that they are the nimblest of warriors; the missile weapons which they use at a distance being pointed with sharpened bones admirably fastened to the shaft : when in close combat, they fight without regard to their own safety, and while their enemy is intent upon parrying the thrusts of their swords, they throw a net over him and so entangle his limbs that he loses all power of walking or riding.

Not one among them cultivates the ground, or ever touches a plough-handle. All wander abroad without fixed abodes, without home, or law, or settled customs, like perpetual fugitives, with their wagons for their only habitations, in which their wives weave their foul garments, and bring forth children, and rear them up to the age of puberty. If you ask them, not one can tell you what is his place of origin; he was conceived in one place, born in another, educated perhaps in some yet more distant one. They are great truce-breakers, fickle, always ready to be swayed by the first breath of a new desire, abandoning themselves without restraint to the most ungovernable rage.

Finally, like animals devoid of reason, they are utterly ignorant of what is seemly and what is not; they are tricksters with words, and full of dark sayings they are never moved by either religious or superstitious awe; they burn with unquenchable thirst for gold, and they are so changeable and so easily moved to wrath, that many times in the day they will quarrel with their comrades on no provocation, and be reconciled having received no satisfaction”.

CHAPTER II.

ATTILA AND THE COURT OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

For half a century after the irruption of the Huns into Dacia, they exercise but little direct influence on the course of Roman history. Occasionally they made a predatory inroad into the Empire, as, for instance, in the year 395, when, at the instigation, it was said, of the Prefect Rufinus, they moved southwards from Caucasus upon Armenia, and pressed on through Cappadocia and Cilicia, until

‘The pleasant fields of Syria waste were laid,
And hostile chargers trampled down the glade
Of soft Orontes, to her children’s dance
And song more used than War’s dread dissonance.’

And thirteen years later, under the guidance of a chief named *Uldis*, they crossed the Danube and penetrated far into Bulgaria. When the Prefect of Thrace sought humbly for peace, Uldis proudly pointed to the sun and said, ‘All that *he* shines upon I can conquer if I will.’ But in the midst of his boastings his power was undermined : the imperial emissaries were at work among his troops, contrasting the hard life of a Hunnish marauder with the ease and the dignity of a stipendiary of Rome. So large a part of his army yielded to these suggestions that Uldis was obliged to fly, and escaped but with life to the Dacian shore.

Upon the whole, during this period, while their enemies the Visigoths and other Teutonic tribes were still hovering about the Danube and the eastern ranges of the Alps, the attitude of the Huns seems to have been more often friendly than hostile to the Romans, in whose armies we saw them serving when Honorius decreed the overthrow of Stilicho, and when Aetius came too late to the succor of Joannes against Placidia.

And, mere barbarians as they remained to the end of their history, it is easy to see that this half-century of intercourse with Rome had taught them some few of the needs and enjoyments of civilized life. The whole character of Attila’s court and camp was sensual, but the sensuality was by many degrees less squalid and less disgusting than that of the men who first crossed the Sea of Azof, and whose habits were described by Ammianus.

Doubtless it was the interposition of the Teutonic nations which, during this half-century, prevented the Huns from coming to close quarters with the Roman power. After the Visigoths, the Vandals, and the Suevi had settled in Spain, the Alans in Gaul, the Burgundians in that province which yet bears their name, the Huns, having only the Danube and the Alps between them and the Empire, began to make the two Augusti, but especially him of Constantinople, feel their heavy hand.

In 432 we find a certain *Roua* or *Rugula* reigning over the Huns, and receiving from Theodosius II an annual payment, which might be called either subsidy or tribute, of 350 pounds weight of gold. Finding that the Romans had dared to make alliances with some barbarous tribes, dwellers by the Danube, whom he claimed as his subjects, Roua in great wrath declared that all his treaties with Rome should be at once made null and void unless the Emperor renounced his alliance with these nations. Another question of a more personal nature also arose now, if it had not arisen before, and was the subject of ceaseless negotiation for the next seventeen years. Many deserters had fled from the harsh yoke of Roua, and taken shelter on Roman territory. The demand was made, and was pressed home with every circumstance of

insult upon the trembling Theodosius, 'Restore to me my fugitives.' Imagine such a request having been hinted, ever so courteously, to any Roman magistrate who in the old days sat upon the curule chair, with his lictors and fasces round him. Had it not been better for the omnipotent Mistress of the Nations to have died rather than live on to endure such degradation?

But Theodosius II, who was a meek man and an excellent illuminator of manuscripts, if not a born king of men, was preparing to send an embassy to mitigate the wrath of Roua, when tidings arrived that he was dead, and that the kingdom of the Huns had devolved upon his two nephews, sons of his brother Mundzuk, men in the vigor of early manhood, named *Attila* and *Bleda*.

It was in the year 433 that the two brothers ascended the throne. Bleda is to us the mere shadow of a name, but it is far otherwise with Attila.

It is almost needless to say that no coin, or picture, or bust remains to bring before us the lineaments of the terrible savage. Yet he seems almost to live again in the pages of Jordanes and Priscus. We see him short of stature, with the small, bead-like eyes, and snub nose and swarthy skin of his Tartar ancestors, yet with a haughty step, and a fierce way of darting his glances hither and thither, as though he felt himself lord of all, and were perpetually asking of the by-standers, 'Who is he that shall deliver you out of my hand?' He had a broad and well-formed chest and a large head, a scanty beard, like most of the Tartar race, and his hair was early sprinkled with white.

Few men that ever lived have had such a power of inspiring fear in the minds both of their subjects and their enemies as this Turanian chieftain. Enthusiasm, loyalty, gratitude, these were not the motives by which he swayed mankind, but the amount of abject, slavish fear which this little swarthy Kalmuck succeeded in instilling into millions of human hearts is not to be easily matched in the history of our race.

Whether he had much military talent may be doubted, since the only great battle in which he figured was a complete defeat. The impression left upon us by what history records of him is that of a gigantic bully, holding in his hands powers unequalled in the world for ravage and spoliation, by the mere threat of loosing which he extorts from trembling Caesars every concession which his insatiable avarice, or his almost superhuman pride, requires, and by the same terror compelling Ostrogoths and Gepidae, and other Germanic races far nobler than his own, to assist in drawing his triumphal chariot. But of true constructive genius, of any notion of the right way to found an enduring empire, of the statesmanship of Ataulfus, or even of Alaric, he shows not a trace. To drink out of vessels of gold and silver, to put his foot upon the neck of his enemies, to be the terror of the world, these seem to be his only delights as a ruler of men.

Some doubt has recently been thrown on the received accounts of the wide extent of Attila's power. So much of our information, it is said, is derived from Gothic sources, and a proud nation like the Goths had so obvious an interest in magnifying the might of the monarch by whom they themselves had been humbled, that we are bound to make considerable deductions from their statements, and may perhaps reduce the dominions of the worldwide conqueror to an extent not quite equal to that of the modern Austrian Empire. But it may fairly be urged on the other hand that the Greek historian Priscus confirms, or even amplifies the statements of the Goth. According to him, when the ambassadors from the Eastern and Western Empires were met in trembling conference, consulting how they might possibly obtain a reasonable answer from the haughty barbarian, the Romans said, 'His head is turned by his successes. No ruler of Scythia or of any other country has ever achieved so much in so short a time as he has. He rules over the islands in the ocean' (by which we must probably understand the Scandinavian islands and peninsulas); 'he has made the whole of Scythia his own; he has

put the Roman Empire to tribute, and he thinks of renewing his attacks upon Persia. The road to that eastern kingdom is not untrodden by the Huns; already they have marched fifteen days' journey from a certain lake [the Sea of Azof the Romans thought, but more probably the Caspian], and have ravaged Media.'

Add to this apparently trustworthy statement of Priscus the firm belief of Deguignes that he has found traces in the historians of China of a confederacy between Attila and the rulers of that country, and we have reasons for not lightly abandoning the old belief in the wide extent of the Empire of Attila. The prince who felt China on his left, who threatened Persepolis, Byzantium, Ravenna in front, who ruled Denmark and its islands in his rear, and who ultimately appeared in arms on the soil of Champagne on his right, was no minor monarch, and had his empire been as deep as it was widespread, he might worthily have taken rank with Cyrus and Alexander.

At the same time it is well to remember that over far the larger part of this territory, Attila's can have been only an overlordship, Teutonic, Slavonic, and Tartar chieftains of every name bearing rule under him. His own personal government, if government it can be called, may very likely have been confined nearly within the limits of the modern Hungary and Transylvania.

For nineteen years, from 434 to 453, the sullen might of Attila lay like a thunder-cloud over Europe. During that time the Eastern and Western Courts were so closely united, as well by the bonds of relationship as by the overwhelming sense of their common danger, that it is not possible to disentangle their histories. Let us give a glance at the chief personages in the two Courts.

The younger Theodosius, son of Arcadius, and Emperor of the East, was in the twenty-fifth year of his age when we met with him, leading his people from the Hippodrome to the Basilica, to return thanks for the victory of his generals at Ravenna, which replaced his kinsfolk of the West on the Imperial throne. The fatuous dullness of his father and uncle no longer repels us in this member of the Theodosian family; he has some other employment than hunting; he illuminates sacred manuscripts with such skill as to earn the title of the Calligrapher; and he does not rush from blind confidence in his ministers to equally blind suspicion, with the instability which was so conspicuous in Arcadius and Honorius. Still, he is not a true King; he possesses no real momentum in the affairs of the state: as a rule, every important measure is decided upon by his sister Pulcheria, who is two years older than himself, who governs the East—as her aunt Placidia governs the West—respectably, but without genius, powerless to stem the quick-rushing torrent of barbarian ravage and change, but not conspicuously adding to the calamities of Rome by vices of her own.

Theodosius himself, all through these years of political trouble and anxiety, is much engrossed in the controversy concerning the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, but he does not win from it the same ecclesiastical renown which the Council of Constantinople brought to his more celebrated namesake and grandfather. At the Council of Ephesus he appears (through his ministers) to favor the heresy of Nestorius; at the close of his reign he leans towards the opposite heresy of Dioscorus and Eutyches, which is, immediately after his death, condemned by the great Council of Chalcedon. At no time does he conspicuously defend the narrow *via media* of Orthodoxy.

It is strange that the marriages of the Emperors of this family, which were daring and unconventional, did not remove from the race that effete and worn-out character which attaches to its later scions. The mother of Theodosius II was a Frankish princess, beautiful and impetuous, who bore the name of Eudoxia. His wife, the equally beautiful but portionless daughter of an Athenian rhetorician, brought up in the worship of the Olympian gods, was known in childhood by the name of Athenais, which, on her conversion to Christianity, she

exchanged for that of Eudocia. She was twenty-seven when her marriage with Theodosius, who was seven years her junior, raised her to the Imperial throne; but her influence seems never to have outweighed that of her sister-in-law Pulcheria, and after twenty-three years of married life, at the mature age of fifty, she incurred a suspicion of unfaithfulness to her husband, and was banished to Jerusalem, where she died in 460, after an exile of sixteen years.

The only child of this marriage, with whom history has to concern itself, is a daughter, a *third* Eudoxia (for that name and Eudocia seem to be interchangeable), who, as we have seen, was betrothed in her babyhood, and in the sixteenth year of her age married, to Valentinian III, son of her father's aunt, but her own contemporary, with whom we have already made acquaintance as Emperor of the West, reigning, but not governing, under the tutelage of his mother Placidia.

After one more granddaughter of the great Theodosius has been named, the sketch of the two Imperial groups in the East and West will be complete. Besides, her son Valentinian III, Placidia had a daughter Honoria, whose name was, for nearly twenty years, a by-word and a horror in the two Courts of Ravenna and Constantinople. Inheriting the coarse and sensual temperament of her father Constantius, and, like him, probably chafing at the restraints imposed on all the family of the 'sacred' Emperors, she was detected in a low intrigue with one of the chamberlains of the palace. Her mother sent her to Constantinople, where, for the next sixteen years of her life, she was kept more or less closely guarded, at the court of her cousin Theodosius. The foolish girl, who was but in the seventeenth year of her age, filled with wild resentment against her family and her native land, hating the calm and sorrowful face of her mother, hating the severe dignity of Pulcheria, the psalmodies, the weaving, the visitations of the poor, in which she and her sisters passed their lives, looked away to the gloomy North for vengeance, and called upon the squalid Hun to be her deliverer. She contrived to send a ring to Attila, who had become King of the Huns in the year preceding her disgrace, and begged to be considered as his wife, or rather, probably, as one of his wives, for the Huns, unlike the Goths, were polygamists. It was the wild act of a girl of sixteen, perhaps half-crazy with passion. We hear nothing of Attila's reply, nothing of any renewed applications on Honoria's part for his assistance. Probably her apartments in the palace at Constantinople were thenceforward too strictly guarded to allow of her repeating the message. But Attila treasured the ring, and in after-days pulled through that tiny circlet long threads of diplomacy and a bloody skein of war.

Immediately upon Attila's accession, an embassy from Theodosius waited upon him and Bleda, in order to settle the various questions which had been raised between the Emperor and their deceased uncle Roua. The ambassadors met the kings at Margus, a town which stood at the point where the Morava, now the chief river of Servia, empties itself into the Danube. Not only the Hunnish kings, but all their retinue remained seated on horseback, and, that the dignity of Rome might not suffer in their persons, the ambassadors did the same. Yet, though etiquette might be maintained, Plinthis and Epigenes, the Roman envoys, did not win any very brilliant diplomatic triumph for their master. The *honorarium*, or stipend, or by whatever name the Romans chose to style that yearly payment which Attila, with ever-increasing frankness, called by its true designation, tribute, was raised from £14,000 to £28,000; the fugitive Huns and Romans were to be surrendered, or a fine of £8 per head paid for each who was not forthcoming; there were to be free markets at which the Romans and Huns should meet on equal terms, and any barbarian tribe upon which Attila might choose to levy war, was to be excluded from the alliance of Rome. In compliance with this treaty, two children of the royal blood of the Huns were surrendered by the Roman officers, and crucified on Roman territory by the orders of Attila. Their only crime was flight.

The next eight years are a blank in the Roman annals, as far as the Huns are concerned. It was at this time probably that Attila made those extensive conquests northwards and eastwards

to which reference has already been made, that he pushed his dominion to the shores of the German Ocean, and sent his armies fifteen days' march from the Caspian into Media. According to some accounts, he also, during the same interval, marched into the country watered by the Rhone, and fought the Burgundians. However this may be, in 441 the curtain again lifts, and the first scene of conflict is that same Servian town of Margus on the Morava, where we last saw Attila doubling the Roman tribute and discussing terms of peace with Plinthas and Epigenes. The bishop of this place had crossed the Danube on a marauding expedition, and robbed one of the royal treasure-houses of the Huns of the wealth deposited therein. Naturally this imitation of their own predatory tactics excited the fierce wrath of the barbarians. At the time of one of the great markets by the banks of the Danube, which were arranged for by the last treaty, the Huns made a savage attack on the unsuspecting Romans. To the expostulations of the Imperial Court but one reply was returned: 'Give us up our refugees, and with our refugees the marauding bishop of Margus.' It began to be discussed among Prefects and Chamberlains whether it might not be better to give up this one rash bishop, that the whole nation should not perish. The rumor reached the ears of the reverend prelate, who determined to be beforehand with Fate. Stealing across to the camp of the barbarians, he undertook to put them in possession of the city of Margus if the kings of the Huns would hold him harmless. Claspng his right hand, they swore to confer upon him all sorts of benefits if he would fulfill this promise. Then, having planted the barbarian host in a well-selected ambuscade on the northern shore of the Danube, he returned into the city, unsuspected by his fellow-citizens, and at a given signal opened the gates to his new allies. They rushed in and sacked the place, and one of the chief border cities of Moesia was thus lost to the Empire.

An incident like this seems worth recording, since it marks the rapidly changing manners and positions of men during this century of barbarian invasion. Of course the occupant of the see of Margus was no fair specimen of his order, either in his first marauding expedition, or in his subsequent treachery: but when we look back over two centuries, from the time we have now reached to the days of Cyprian, or over one century to the courtly theologian-disputants who hurried to the numberless councils of Constantius, and compare them with this mitred combatant, we feel that we have already passed from Ancient History into the Middle Ages: we might imagine ourselves standing before the warrior bishop of Beauvais, or one of the robber-bishops of the Rhine.

Out of the invasion, for which the fall of Margus gave the signal, another ecclesiastical complication, this time not with the Eastern but the Western Empire, took its rise. The town of Sirmium on the Save, situated in what is now the Austrian province of Slavonia, though it has left no modern representative of its former glories, was once one of the most important cities of Pannonia. The bishop of Sirmium, seeing his city invested by the Hunnish army, gathered together the chalices and patens and other sacred vessels of his church, all of gold, and apparently of considerable value, and contrived to send them secretly to one Constantius, a Gaul, who was at that time officiating as Attila's secretary. The object of the trust hereby created was to liberate the bishop if he should survive the capture of the city, or if he should die, then to ransom as many as possible of the citizens. The city was taken, and what became of the bishop we know not; but Constantius, ignoring the trust reposed in him, went off to Rome on private business, and there pawned the golden chalices for a large sum of money to a silversmith, named Silvanus. Meanwhile his masters, Attila and Bleda, who probably did not like this journey to Rome on urgent private affairs, came to the conclusion that their secretary was playing the traitor, and soon after Constantius's return, he was crucified. Sometime afterwards, the story of the embezzlement of the golden chalices came to the ears of Attila, and filled him with wrath. 'Had my secretary,' said he, 'not deposited these chalices at Rome, they would have come into my possession on the death of the swindler. Silvanus therefore has really

stolen my property, and unless the Emperor of the West can restore the chalices, I insist that he shall surrender Silvanus to my vengeance.' How the affair, which dragged on for many years, at length terminated we know not, but we shall meet hereafter with an embassy from Valentinian III commissioned to treat on this important subject.

Three years after these events Bleda died, and Attila became sole ruler of the Huns. Historians have accepted, perhaps too readily, a version of the story which attributes to the great Hun the guilt of fratricide, not in passion, but with premeditation and cunning. With all his vices, treachery and secret assassination scarcely seem consonant with the rest of his character.

In the year 447, Attila led his barbarian warriors waste on the most formidable of all his expeditions against the Eastern Empire. No detailed account of it has been preserved, but it is evident that no inroad of so destructive a kind had pierced the provinces between the Adriatic and the Aegean since Alaric met Stilicho in the Peloponnesus. The Huns pushed southwards as far as Thermopylae, and eastwards to the shore of the Dardanelles, where, at Gallipoli, they inflicted a disastrous defeat on the Roman troops. The walls of Constantinople, on this occasion as on so many subsequent ones, saved the very existence of the Empire. But though the tide of barbarian invasion rolled back into its old bed when there was nothing more left to ravage in the open country, a panic fear seized the rulers of the state, who submitted with abject eagerness to every demand which their Master, for such they now considered him, might please to make upon them. Anatolius, a man of high rank who had held the office, still regarded with some of its old veneration, of Roman Consul, was sent to Attila's camp to negotiate terms of peace. The yearly tribute, which had been doubled at Attila's succession, was now tripled, and stood at £84,000, and at the same time £240,000 in gold were handed over as a settlement of past arrears. In order to raise this sum, all the usual fiscal expedients the tribute, of a weak, yet tyrannical government were resorted to. To have the reputation of wealth was the surest passport to misery. Each senator was assessed upon a certain sum, often greatly in excess of his real fortune; but the amount which stood opposite to his name had to be provided, whether he possessed it or not. Blows and insults enforced the demands of the officers of the Imperial Exchequer, and the upshot of the whole was that in some cases the family jewels of ladies of high rank, or the articles of household furniture of men who had passed all their lives in affluence, were exposed for sale in the market-place; while in other yet more desperate cases, the unhappy Roman noble escaped by the aid of a cord, or by the slower process of self-starvation, into a land whither even the ministers of Theodosius could not follow him. And all this time the misery of the situation was aggravated by the thought that while the defence of the country was neglected, and, in consequence, these frightfully heavy subsidies had to be paid to her invaders, the country's wealth and the royal treasures were being applied, not to their proper uses, but to ridiculous shows, tawdry pageants, and all the pleasures and all the extravagances of sensuality, such as no sensible man would have wasted money upon, even had the state been in the height of prosperity. Far less ought these men to have thus acted, who had so far neglected the military art that not only the Huns, but all the other barbarous tribes round had bound the Roman State to the payment of tribute.

The ruler of the Huns marked well the abject terror of the Byzantine Court, and traded upon it with the low cunning of a savage. Scarcely had the treaty of Anatolius been concluded, when Attila sent ambassadors to Theodosius, demanding, in the usual formula, 'the surrender of the fugitives.' The Roman Emperor could only reply, 'We have surrendered all who were in our power'; but in order to secure powerful friends in the Hunnish encampment, he not only treated the ambassadors with splendid hospitality, but loaded them with rich presents on their departure. Again, and again, and again, four times in the space of a twelve month, did Attila repeat this process, selecting always for his ambassador some needy favorite whom he had a

desire to enrich, and inventing such ridiculous pretexts for his embassies that all could see his real motive in sending them. This plan of pacific invasion began to tire out the patience of the meek Emperor and his ministers. His sister Pulcheria no longer now exercised a predominant influence in the affairs of state. Theological discussions seem to have divided the Imperial pair. She adhered to that side which was eventually, at the Council of Chalcedon, decreed to be the side of orthodoxy; while the rival, and now reigning influence at court was that of the eunuch Chrysaphius, godson and partisan of Eutyches, the fanatic asserter of the absolute oneness of the nature of Christ even during the time of his Incarnation. Judging by the acts of Chrysaphius, we may safely conclude that any opinion of his on such a question was as valuable as the opinion of an Australian savage concerning the philosophy of Plato.

In the year 448, yet another embassy arrived at Constantinople, more famous and more fateful than any which had preceded it. Let us observe well the names of the two chief ambassadors, for these are men who either by themselves or by their offspring will make a deep and ineffaceable mark on the history of their time. *Edecon* is introduced to us as a 'Scythian,' that is, a Hun, 'who had accomplished mighty deeds in war.' He was evidently also one of the most intimate counsellors of Attila. No small degree of jealousy existed between him and his colleague Orestes. This man, as we might have inferred from his name, was not of barbarian extraction. He was of 'Roman' descent (a term which is of course consistent with any provincial nationality within the limits of the Roman Empire), and 'he dwelt in that part of Pannonia which borders on the Save,' that is to say, within the limits of the modern Austrian province of Sclavonia. He was at this time a regular subject of Attila, his country, which was included in the Western Emperor's share of Illyricum, having recently been ceded by Aetius to the Huns. He married the daughter of a certain Count Romulus, who dwelt at Patavio in Noricum, the place which is now called Passau, and which marks the junction of the mountain-nourished Inn with the more placid Danube. From this marriage was born to Orestes, probably about ten years after the date at which we have now arrived, a son who was named after his maternal grandfather Romulus, and upon whom history has fastened the unkind nickname of Augustulus. The other ambassador, Edecon, was probably already the father of a son whom he had named Odovacar (Odoacer). These two ambassadors, on arriving at the Imperial Court, presented the letters of their lord, in which, as usual, he expressed his high displeasure at the conduct of the Romans with reference to the refugees. War, immediate war, was threatened unless these were surrendered. Further, there must be no attempt on the part of the Romans to cultivate the district which would in later times have been called the March of the Danube. This was a belt of territory about 100 miles wide on the southern side of the great stream, which Attila claimed to have annexed by right of conquest after his recent campaign. If this condition were not observed, war. The position of the great market for the interchange of Roman and Hunnish commodities must be shifted. It had been fixed at Margus, on the Danube; now it was to be at Naissus, the modern Nisch, 150 miles up the Morava, in Servia. And, lastly, ambassadors were to be sent to Attila, to talk over the points in dispute; and these were to be no men of second-rate position in the state, but men who had sat in the curule chair of the consuls, and the most eminent even among them. If these high dignitaries were afraid to undertake so long and wild a journey, he, the great king, would condescend to come as far as Sardica to meet them. Such was the imperious mandate of Attila, uttered by the lips of Edecon, and translated by the interpreter Vigilas to him, who was saluted by the names, once so mighty, Emperor and Augustus. Edecon then went to the house of Chrysaphius to confer with that minister as to the subject of his embassy. On his way he said to the interpreter, Vigilas, 'How beautiful is the Emperor's palace, how richly adorned with all precious things, and how happy must be the lives of the lords of such magnificence.' Vigilas repeated the remark to Chrysaphius, and with the words a wicked thought entered the mind of the Monophysite

eunuch. He said to Edecon, 'You, too, might sit under gilded ceilings of your own, and be lord of vast wealth, if you would leave the party of the Huns and take up ours'.

Edecon. 'I could not do that, being another man's servant, without my lord's consent.'

Chrysaphius. 'Have you free access to your lord's person?'

Edecon. 'Yes. I am one of the nobles selected for the purpose of keeping watch in arms over his person. We serve for so many days and then are relieved.'

Chrysaphius. 'If you will promise secrecy, I can tell you something very greatly to your advantage. Come to dine with me, without Orestes and your other colleagues, and we can talk the matter over at our leisure.'

So a secret meeting was arranged at the house of the eunuch, and there in the presence and by the assistance of Vigilas, evidently a Byzantine dragoman of the worst type, a vile plot was hatched. Chrysaphius first swore that what he had to say should in no case injure Edecon. Edecon swore a counter oath that he would not reveal, even if he could not accomplish, the designs of the minister; and then Chrysaphius at length uttered the fatal secret. 'If when you return to Scythia you will slay Attila and then come to us, you shall have a happy life here and vast wealth.'

Edecon. 'I promise to do so. But I shall want some small sum of money to be paid me in advance, say about fifty pounds of gold, in order to ensure the cooperation of the common soldiers under my command'

Chrysaphius. 'There will be no difficulty about that. You shall have the money at once.'

Edecon. 'No, I will not take it at once, for Attila will ask me on my return, as he asks all his ambassadors, how much the mission has been worth to me; and I could not deceive him because all my colleagues will know what weight of gold I am carrying back. You must let me return to report the answer of your master as to the refugees, and Vigilas must come with me to receive the rejoinder of mine. Then, through Vigilas, I will send you word how the rest of the gold (beyond the ordinary gratuity to an ambassador) had better be sent to me.'

This plan met with the full approval of the eunuch, who, as soon as he had dismissed his guest, hurried away to the palace to inform Theodosius of the new prospect of an early termination of Attila's embassies. The Imperial Calligrapher, the Illuminator of Sacred Manuscripts, at once accepted the proposal, and calling in Martialius, the *Magister Officiorum*, and chief of what we should call 'the Secret Service Department,' consulted with him what shape the return embassy to Attila should now assume. Of a truth many things were changed, and not altogether for the better, since the Consul Fabricius handed over to Pyrrhus the traitor, who proposed to purchase the favor of Rome by administering poison to his master.

In order to cloak the atrocious scheme thus concocted, the Emperor and his minister decided to send to the coast of Attila a sham embassy, in whose train the intending murderers might travel unsuspected, regardless, of course, of the danger to which they exposed the innocent envoy, who in the event of the plot being discovered was likely to plead in vain the sanctity of an ambassador's person. The man selected for this post was Maximin, an officer of high, but not the highest, rank, and of illustrious lineage, but whose name had not figured in the Consular Fasti. He invited Priscus 'the sophist,' or, as we should say, professor of rhetoric and man of letters, to accompany him, and it is to the diary of the embassy kept by Priscus, and afterwards interwoven by him into his history, that we are indebted for almost all trustworthy details of the Court and Camp of Attila. He assures us emphatically, and the whole course of the history tends to confirm his statement, that the murder-secret was not confided either to him or to his patron, but that the ostensible object of their mission was to them the real one. As both Maximin and Priscus seem still to have adhered to the worship of the Olympian divinities, we are driven, however reluctantly, to the conclusion that by this time the traitors, the time-servers, and the hypocrites had ranged themselves on the side of successful Christianity, and

that when the Emperor wanted a man of indisputably high character and sterling honesty to mask by his innocence a dark and nefarious design, his thoughts naturally turned to the few remaining Pagan statesmen, who probably held at his court a position not unlike that of the Roman Catholics under Queen Elizabeth or the Huguenots under Louis XIII.

The message which was entrusted to Maximin was couched in a less servile tone than the recent replies of Theodosius. As if they already saw the knife of the assassin piercing the heart of the great Hun, the Emperor and the eunuch began to express their weariness of Attila's perpetual reclamations. 'You ought not to overleap the obligations of treaties and invade the Roman territory. As for fugitives, besides those already surrendered, I now return you seventeen, and I really have no more.' So ran the letter. Verbally Maximin was instructed to say that Attila must not expect ambassadors of any higher rank than him who now spoke to be sent to him, since this had not been the usage with his own ancestors or any of the other northern rulers, but the custom had hitherto been to send any chance person, soldier or letter-carrier, whose services were available. And as for the king's proposition to come and meet an ambassador of consular rank at Sardica, he himself had made that impossible by his sack of that very town. Such was the contemptuous reply of the Byzantine to the Hunnish court as it was intended to have been delivered; but not such was the actual message which reached the ears of Attila; for, as we shall see, like good wine it mellowed considerably on the journey.

The first fortnight of travel seems to have been pleasant and uneventful enough. During all this time the Roman and barbarian ambassadors were passing through the comparatively tranquil and prosperous province of Thrace. At the end of it they reached Sardica, about 350 miles from Constantinople, and the first city of Dacia Mediterranean. This was the place at which almost exactly a century before (343) the celebrated council had been held which enunciated again the Nicene Creed, and gave to the See of Rome the right of deciding whether a bishop had been lawfully deposed. Other matters, however, than theological wrangles had of late forced themselves on the attention of the unhappy inhabitants of Sardica. As we have just heard from the lips of Theodosius, the town had been terribly pillaged and laid waste by Attila. The destruction, however, was not complete. There were still houses and some inhabitants from whom it was possible for the ambassadors to buy sheep and oxen. These they killed and roasted; and having prepared a goodly repast, they thought it would be but courteous to ask Edecon and the barbarians attending him to partake with them. As they sat long over the meal, conversation turned upon the greatness and majesty of their respective masters. The Huns, of course, magnified the might of Attila; the Romans tried to extol their great Augustus. At this point of the conversation, Vigilas, with an indiscretion which can only be accounted for by supposing that he had plied the wine-cup too freely, said, 'I cannot think it right to compare gods and men together. Attila, after all, is but a man, while Theodosius I look upon as a god.' At these words the Huns started up with flushed cheeks and angry eyes; and the pleasant diplomatic banquet was on the point of ending in bloodshed. Priscus and Maximin however succeeded in silencing their noisy colleague, guided the conversation into safer channels, and by their civility mollified the wrath of the Huns. That there might be no chance of any rancorous feeling remaining in their minds, Maximin, when the banquet was over, made handsome presents, both to Edecon and, Orestes, of silken raiment and Indian jewels.

The bestowal of these presents led to another curious outburst of angry feeling. Orestes sat out all his companions, and when they were gone came up to Maximin and thanked him heartily for his presents. 'You,' said he, 'are a wise man, of a most excellent disposition. You are not like those insolent courtiers at Byzantium, who gave presents and invitations to Edecon but none to me.' 'When? where? how?' gasped out the puzzled ambassador; but Orestes, vouchsafing no more particular statement of his grievances, stalked moodily out of the room.

Next day, on the journey, Maximin and Priscus reported this strange conversation to

Vigilas. He, of the course, knew well enough to what it referred, but did not choose to explain. He only said, 'Orestes has no business to be offended. He is but a secretary, a mere squire of Attila : Edecon is of course differently treated. He is a great warrior and a Hun by birth, and far superior in position to the other.' Already then, in the estimation of a Byzantine dragoman, to be 'a Hun by birth' was a higher position than that of a well-born Roman provincial. Vigilas afterwards repeated this conversation to Edecon and had much difficulty, so he told his companions, in soothing the barbarian's resentment against the pretensions of Orestes to be put on an equality with him.

A further hundred miles of travel brought the ambassadors to Naissus (now Nisch, on the confines of Servia), and here they found such traces of the ravage of the Hun as his Turkish kinsman has often in later days left behind him in the same regions. A city utterly empty of inhabitants, in the churches a few sick folk too weak to fly, every place down to the river's bank full of human bones and skulls : that is how the Turanian leaves his mark. 'But we found,' says Priscus, with simplicity, 'a clean spot a little above the river and there we rested for the night.'

Near to this city, which had become a tomb, lay the Imperial 'army of Illyricum,' under the command of the General-in-chief, Agintheus. Five out of the seventeen fugitives, whom Theodosius had promised to surrender to Attila, were there, imagining themselves safe under the shelter of the eagles. But the Emperor's orders were clear. The Roman General had to give up the five suppliants to the Roman ambassador for him to hand over to the Hunnish king. Agintheus spoke kindly to them; but as they knew, in all probability, that they were going to a death of torture, kind words from the ghost of the old Roman war-wolf were not much to the purpose.

At length the ambassadors reached the shores of the Danube. The roads leading down to the river were crowded with Huns; and ferrymen were plying across the stream in their uncouth boats, each made of a single tree roughly hollowed out. They were thus without delay transported to the northern bank of the river; but if they had supposed that all this stir was made in expectation of their own arrival they were soon undeceived. The barbarian king had announced that he meant to cross over into the Romans' land to hunt, and the expectation of his coming had caused this stir among his subjects. Like the Percy's 'Hunting of the Cheviot,' Attila's hunting meant war, war over the endless grievance of the unsundered refugees. It was in fact the barbarian's device to accomplish what the modern strategist calls 'Mobilization.'

On the second day after crossing the Danube, the Roman party came in sight of the numerous tents of Attila, and were about to pitch their own on a hill-top near. But this the Huns around them would by no means permit: 'they must come down and pitch their tents in the plain: it would be quite improper for the Roman ambassador to occupy the hill while Attila was below in the valley.' When this difficulty was settled, the Romans, as it was still early afternoon, expected doubtless an audience that day with Attila. Instead of this, however, several of the Hunnish nobility came, together with Edecon and Orestes, to their tent, and demanded to know the tenor of their message to the king. Naturally the ambassadors replied that their commission was for Attila alone, and they would disclose it to no other person. At that reply, Scotta, one of the Hunnish magnates, burst out with a passionate question, 'Do you take us for busybodies, who came here out of our own prying curiosity? Attila sent us, and we must have your answer.' The ambassadors firmly declined, pleading the invariable usage of their profession. Whereupon the Huns galloped away, and soon returned, ominous exception, without Edecon.

'Your commission,' said they, 'to our king is so and so; such concessions about refugees, such messages about future ambassadors. Deny that this is the purport of your instructions if

you can. If you have nothing to add to this, return at once to your own country.’ In vain did the Romans try to maintain the proper official reserve and refuse to say whether this was indeed a true summary of their instructions or not. Their faces doubtless showed that the arrow had hit the mark : the barbarians’ version of their commission was correct in the smallest particulars, and to all further protestations of the Romans the Huns had but one reply continually repeated, ‘Begone directly.’

Maximin and Priscus were bewildered, as well they might be, by this strange innovation on the customs of diplomacy, Vigilas, who knew that for his part, the darker part of the enterprise, access to the court of Attila and some days’ sojourn there were essential, bitterly complained of his colleagues’ truthfulness. ‘They might have vamped up some other matter, and declared that the Huns had not revealed the whole of the commission. It would have been better to be detected eventually in a falsehood, than to return without even seeing Attila.’

Little did the false interpreter guess upon what a volcano he himself was standing. The true cause of Attila’s strange demeanor was that Edecon had revealed the plot. Either he had only feigned compliance from the first—the more probable supposition—or else that wild conversation at Sardica and the tidings which Vigilas himself had brought him, of the rage and jealousy of Orestes, had satisfied him that the risk was too great to run, with such an unwise person as the interpreter for confederate, and with such an angry rival as the secretary for spy on his movements. And therefore, at the very first opportunity when he found himself alone with Attila, he rehearsed to him the whole plan for his intended assassination, and at the same time furnished him with the particulars of the intended Roman reply, which Edecon had, no doubt, received from Chrysaphius.

It was night when the party of the ambassadors received their peremptory orders to depart. With heavy hearts they were watching their attendants loading the beasts of burden, when they received another message, giving them an ungracious permission to remain where they were till daybreak. A present of an ox for roasting, and some fish, salted, no doubt, as it came from the Euxine, attested the surly hospitality of Attila. Next morning, they thought, ‘Surely some act of kindness and gentleness will now be shown to us the same harsh command, ‘Begone, if you have no other commission to unfold.’ Hereupon Priscus, seeing the deep dejection of his patron, resolved to try what prayers and promises could accomplish with one of Attila’s ministers. His chief minister, Onégesh, who was well-known by the Romans, and on the whole favorably inclined towards them, was absent; but Scotta, the brother of Onégesh, was in the Hunnish camp, and to him Priscus betook himself, using another interpreter than Vigilas. He enlarged on the advantages to the two nations, but still more to the house of Onégesh, which would result from the peaceful outcome of the negotiations, on the presents which were in store for Onégesh at Constantinople, and on those which Maximin would immediately bestow on Scotta. And finally, he wound up with a diplomatic appeal to the vanity of the Hun. ‘I have heard,’ said he, ‘that Attila pays great deference to the advice of Scotta, but I shall never believe it if you cannot accomplish so small a matter as to obtain for us this interview.’ ‘Doubt not that I can do it’, he answered : ‘my influence with the king is just as great as my brother’s.’ And with that he mounted his horse and galloped off to the king’s tent. The faithful Priscus returned to his master, who was lying on the grass with Vigilas, while again the packing of the horses was going forward. As soon as they heard of the slight hope which had arisen, and of the influence which Priscus had brought to bear on the mind of Attila, they sprang to their feet, and while warmly commending the sophist for his happy inspiration, began to discuss what they should say to the king, and how the presents of Theodosius and of Maximin himself should be offered for his acceptance.

Soon Scotta returned and escorted them to the royal tent. ‘When we obtained admittance,’ says Priscus, ‘we found the monarch seated on a wooden stool. We stood a little way off from

the throne, but Maximin went forward, and after making obeisance to the barbarian, and handing him the emperor's letter, said, "Our Sovereign prays for the safety of thyself and all around thee." Attila answered, "May the Romans receive exactly what they desire for me." Then, turning sharp round to Vigilas, "Shameless beast!" he said, "How have you dared to come to me, knowing, as you do right well, the terms of peace which I settled with you and Anatolius; and how I then said that no more ambassadors were to come to me till all the fugitives were given up." When Vigilas replied that the Romans no longer had with them any refugees of Scythian origin, since we had surrendered all that were with us, Attila grew still more furious, and shouted out with a loud voice every opprobrious epithet that he could think of; "I would impale you," he roared out, "and leave you as food for vultures, if it were not for your sacred character of envoy, which I would not seem to outrage, fitting as the punishment would be for your impudence and your reckless falsehoods. As for Scythian refugees, there are still many among the Romans." And here he bade his secretaries read out their names, inscribed on a roll of paper. When they had rehearsed them all, he bid Vigilas depart without delay. With him was to go Esclas the Hun, commissioned to order the Romans to restore all the fugitives who had gone over to them from the days of Carpilio, son of Aetius, who was sent as a hostage to his court, and had escaped. "For," continued Attila, "I will never endure that my own servants should come forth and meet me in battle, all useless though they may be to help those with whom they have taken refuge, and who entrust to them the guardianship of their own land. For what city, or what fortress has any of these men been able to defend when I have determined on its capture?"

After this outburst the king condescended to accept the presents which Maximin had brought, and then he repeated his commands as to the future conduct of the negotiations. Having satisfied himself, probably, in the course of this interview that Maximin was an honest man, and guiltless of any complicity in the design against his life, he felt that he could safely indulge in the pleasures which such an embassy brought to him— gifts for himself, gifts for his dependents, and the gratification of trampling on the pride of Rome by exhibiting the Imperial ambassadors as frightened suppliants for his favor. All, therefore, except Vigilas, received orders to repair to his palace in the interior, and there to wait for the written reply which he would send to Theodosius.

Vigilas, on the other hand, whose presence doubtless suggested, even to the brave Hun, uncomfortable thoughts of midnight alarms and the assassin's dagger, was ordered to return at once to Constantinople with the routine message and menace concerning the refugees. Esclas went with him as a spy on his movements: Edecon visited him immediately after the interview in the royal tent, to assure him that he was still true to the plot, and to press him to bring back the promised gold. At the same time, with considerable ingenuity, Attila issued a proclamation, 'forbidding Vigilas to purchase any Roman captive or barbarian slave, or horses, or anything else but necessary food until the differences between the Romans and Huns should be arranged.' The effect of this proclamation was to deprive Vigilas of any plausible pretext for bringing back any large amount of gold from Constantinople. If, notwithstanding this prohibition, he still brought gold with him, that gold could only be the blood-money of Attila.

There is no need to trace the return of the base and blundering Vigilas to Constantinople, whither he went still entirely unwitting that Attila had sapped below his mine. We follow honest Maximin and his friend as they journey northwards into the recesses of Hungary. For a certain distance they travelled in the train of the Barbarian; then they received orders to turn off into another road. Attila was about to visit a certain village, and there add to his numerous harem another wife, the daughter of one Escam; and apparently he did not choose that the courtly Byzantines should look on the rude wedding festivities of a Hunnish polygamist. The ambassadors had to cross three large rivers in the course of their journey. The names of these

rivers are not easy to recognize, but they may possibly be represented by the Drave, the Temes, and the Theiss. They crossed them, as before, in tree-trunk boats; while, for the smaller streams and the marshes, they availed themselves of the convenient rafts which the Huns always carried about with them on their wagons in all their journeys through that often inundated country. They were kindly entertained in the Hunnish villages, and received such provisions as the inhabitants had to offer; no wheat, indeed, but millet, for food, and for drink *medus* and *camus*, two beverages which seem to correspond to our mead and beer.

One night, after a long day's march, they pitched their tent beside a lake which offered them the advantage of good and sweet water. 'Suddenly', said Priscus, 'there arose a great storm of wind, accompanied by thunderings and frequent flashes of lightning and torrents of rain. Our tent was blown down, and all our travelling furniture was rolled over and over into the waters of the lake. Terrified by this accident and by the din of the storm which filled all the air, we left the spot and soon wandered away from each other, everyone taking what he supposed to be the right road. At length, by different paths, we all reached the neighbouring village, and turned in to the huts for shelter. Then, with loud outcry, we began inquiring into our losses. Housed by our clamor, the Scythians started up, kindled the long reeds which serve them for candles, and which threw a good light upon the scene, and then asked us what on earth we wanted that we were making such an uproar. The barbarians who were with us explained how we had been thrown into confusion by the storm, whereupon they kindly called us into their houses, and by lighting a very great number of torches did something to warm us.

'The chieftainess of the village, who was one of the wives of Bleda [Attila's brother], sent us a supply of food, of which we gladly partook. Next morning, at daybreak, we set about searching for our camp furniture, and were fortunate enough to find it all, some in the place where we pitched our tents, some on the shore, and some in the lake itself, from which we succeeded in fishing it up. The whole of that day we spent in the village, drying our things, for the storm had now ceased and the sun was shining brightly. After attending to our beasts, we visited the queen, saluted her respectfully, and repaid her for her hospitality with presents. These were three silver bowls, some red skins, Indian pepper, and other articles of food, which the barbarians prize as foreign to their climate. Then we wished her health and happiness in return for her hospitality to us, and so we departed.'

At length, after seven days' journey, they reached a village, where they were ordered to stop. Their road here joined that by which the royal bridegroom would be approaching, and they were not to presume to proceed till Attila should have gone before them. In the little village where they were thus detained they met some unexpected companions. Primitus, the Roman governor of Noricum, Count Romulus of Passau, the father-in-law of Orestes, and Romanus, a general of legionaries, with probably a long train of attendants, were already testing, perhaps somewhat severely, the resources and accommodation of the Hunnish village. They, too, had come on an embassy : they represented the Emperor of the West, and it is needless to say that the subject which they had come to discuss was that interminable one, the sacred vases of Sirmium. The father of Orestes, and Constantius the Roman secretary of Attila, journeyed, in an unofficial capacity, with the ambassadors. It was certainly a striking scene : the ambassadors from Ravenna and Constantinople, the representatives of the dignity of the two Imperial courts, the functionaries who between them could set forth the whole majesty that might still survive in the title *Senatus Populus Que Romanus*, meeting in a dingy little village in Hungary, and waiting with abject submission till a snub-nosed Kalmuck should ride past and contemptuously toss them a permission to follow in his train. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Attila, who had a genius for scenic effect in the enhancement of his glory, not unlike that which our century has witnessed in the Napoleons, had purposely arranged this confluence of the two embassies, and partly for this cause had invited Maximin to follow him

into Hungary.

After crossing a few more rivers, the united embassies came in sight of the village in which was situated the palace of Attila. Students have discussed whether this Hunnish capital is represented by the modern city of Pesth, by Tokay, or by some other less-known name; but we may dismiss with absolute indifference the inquiry in what particular part of a dreary and treeless plain a barbarian king reared his log-huts, of which probably, twenty years after his death, not a vestige remained.

As Attila entered the village he was met by a procession of maidens in single file wearing linen veils, thin and white, and so long that under each veil, held up as it was by the hands of the women on either side of the path, seven maidens or more were able to walk. There were many of these sets of girls, each set wearing one veil; and as they walked they sang national songs in honor of the king. The last house which he reached before his own was that of his favorite and chief minister Onéges, and as he passed it the wife of the owner came forth with a multitude of attendants bearing food and wine—‘the highest honor,’ says Priscus, which one Scythian can pay to another’—saluted him, and begged him to partake of the repast which she had provided as a token of her loyalty. The king, wishing to gratify the wife of his most trusted counselor, partook accordingly, without dismounting from his horse, his attendants holding high before him the silver table on which the banquet was spread. Having eaten and drunk he rode on to his palace.

This edifice, the finest in all the country round, stood on a little hill, and seemed to dominate the whole settlement. Yet it was in truth, as has been already said, only a log-hut of large dimensions. Externally it seems that it was built of half-trunks of trees, round side outwards, and within, it was lined with smoothly-planed planks. Round the enclosure in which the dwellings of the king and his wives were placed ran a wooden palisading, for ornament, not defence; and the top of the palace was fashioned into the appearance of battlements. Next to the king’s house in position, and only second to it in size, rose the dwelling of Onéges. The only stone building in the place was a bath, which Onéges had built at a little distance from his palisading. The stone for this building had been brought from quarries in the Roman province of Pannonia; and in fact all the timber used in the settlement had been imported likewise, for in the vast and dreary plain where the nomad nation had pitched its camp, not a tree was growing, not a stone underlay it. With the building of the bath of Onéges a grim jest was connected. The architect, a Roman provincial, who had been carried captive from Sirmium, hoped that his ingenuity would at least be rewarded by the boon of freedom, if no other architect’s commission was paid him. But no such thoughts suggested themselves to the mind of Onéges. When he had completed his task, the architect was rewarded by being turned into bath-man, and had to wait upon his master and his master’s guests whenever they had a mind for the pleasures of the *sudatorium* and the *tepidarium*. Thus, as Priscus remarks, with a hint, no doubt, at the personal uncleanliness of the Huns, the unhappy man of science had prepared for himself unconsciously a worse lot than that of ordinary servitude among the Scythians.

Onéges himself, who was absent when Priscus sought an interview with his brother Scotta, had now returned to his master’s court. He had been engaged in quelling the last remains of independence among the Acatziri, a people possibly of Slavonic origin, who dwelt on the Lower Danube. The Byzantine ministers had endeavored to parry Attila’s attack by stirring up some of the petty chieftains of this nation against him. But, with their usual tendency to blunder, they had sent their most costly and honorable presents to the wrong man, and consequently Curidach, the real head of the confederacy, having received only the second gift, called in the aid of Attila to avenge the insult and beat down the power of his associated kings. The Hun was nothing loth, and soon succeeded in quelling all opposition. He then

invited Curidach to come and celebrate their joint triumph at his court; but that chieftain, suspecting that his benefactor's kindness was of the same nature as the promised boon of Polyphemus to Ulysses, 'I will eat Outis last', courteously declined. 'It is hard,' he said, 'for a man to come into the presence of a god; and if it be not possible to look fixedly even at the orb of the sun, how shall Curidach gaze undistressed upon the greatest of gods?' The compliment served for the time, but Attila understood what it was worth, and at a convenient season sent his Grand Vizier, Onégesh, to dethrone Curidach and to proclaim the eldest son of Attila king of the Acatziri in his stead. From this expedition the Prime Minister had now just returned successful and in high favor with his master.

The ambassadors were hospitably entertained by the wife and family of Onégesh. He himself had to wait upon the king to report the success of his mission, and the only drawback which had befallen his party, an accident namely to the young prince, who had slipped off his horse and fractured some of the bones of his right hand. At nightfall Maximin pitched his tents a little way off the enclosure of the royal dwellings, and next morning he sent Priscus early to the house of Onégesh with servants bearing presents both from himself and from Theodosius. The zealous rhetorician was actually up before the barbarian. The house was still close barred and there was no sign of any one stirring.

While Priscus was waiting, and walking up and down before the palisading which surrounded the house turned of Onégesh, a man, with the dress and general appearance of a Hun, came up and saluted him with a well-pronounced Greek. A Hun speaking Greek was an anomaly which aroused all the attention of the Sophist, for, as he says, 'though it is true that this people, who are a kind of conglomerate of nations, do sometimes affect the speech of the Goths, or even that of the Italians, in addition to their own barbarous language, they never learn Greek, except indeed they be inhabitants of Thrace or Dalmatia, who have been carried captive into the Hunnish territory. And these captives or their offspring may be easily known by their ragged garments and scabby heads, and all the other tokens of their having changed their condition for the worse. But this man seemed like a flourishing Scythian, handsomely dressed, and having his hair neatly clipped all round his head. So, returning his salutation, I asked him who he was, and from what part of the world he had come into that barbarian land to adopt the Scythian life. "What has put it into your head to ask me such a question as that?" said he. "Your Greek accent," answered I. Then he laughed and said, "Tis true I am of Greek parentage, and I came for purposes of trade to Viminacium, a city of Moesia, on the Danube" [about sixty miles below Belgrade]. "There I abode for a long time, and married a very wealthy wife. But on the capture of the city by the Huns I was stripped of all my fortune, and assigned as a slave to this very Onégesh before whose door you are standing. That is the custom of the Huns: after Attila has had his share, the chiefs of the nation are allowed to take their pick of the wealthiest captives, and so Onégesh chose me. Afterwards, having distinguished myself in some actions with the Romans and the Acatziri, I surrendered to my master all the spoils which I had taken in war, and thus, according to the law of the Scythians, I obtained my freedom. I married a barbarian wife, by whom I have children: I am admitted as a guest to the table of Onégesh, and I consider my present mode of life decidedly preferable to my past. For when war is over, the people of this country live like gentlemen, enjoying themselves to the full, and free from worry of any kind. But the people in Roman land are easily worsted in war, because they place their hopes of safety on others rather than themselves. Their tyrants will not allow them the use of arms, and the condition of those who are armed is even more dangerous, from the utter worthlessness of their generals, who have no notion of the art of War. Then, too, Peace has its injuries not less severe than War. Think of all the cruelties practised by the collectors of the revenue, the infamy of informers, and the gross inequalities in the administration of the laws. If a rich man offends, he can always manage to escape punishment; but a poor man, who does not

know how to arrange matters, has to undergo the full penalty, unless indeed he be dead before judgment is pronounced, which is not unlikely, considering the intolerable length to which lawsuits are protracted. But what I call the most shameful thing of all is that you have to pay money in order to obtain your legal rights. For a man who has been injured cannot even get a hearing from the court without first paying large fees to the judge and the officials who serve him.”

In reply to this angry outburst, Priscus entered into a long and sophistical disquisition on the advantages of division of labor, the necessity that judges and bailiffs, like men of other occupations, should live by their calling, and so on. It is easy to see that Priscus felt himself to be talking as sagely as Socrates, upon whose style his reply is evidently modeled; but that reply has the fault so common with rhetoricians and diplomatists, of being quite up in the air, and having no relation to the real facts of the case. His conclusion is the most interesting part of the speech : “As for the freedom which you now enjoy, you may thank Fortune for that and not your master, who sent you to war, where you were likely to have been killed by the enemy on account of your inexperience. But the Romans treat even their slaves better than this. True, they correct them, but only for their good as parents or schoolmasters correct children, in order that they may cease to do evil and behave as is suitable for persons in their station. The Roman master is not allowed, as the Hun is, to punish his slave so as to cause his death. Besides, we have abundant legal provisions in favor of freedom, and this gift may be bestowed not only by men who are in the midst of life, but also by those who are on the point of death. Such persons are allowed to dispose of their property as they please, and any directions of a dying man concerning the enfranchisement of his slaves are binding on his heirs.” Thus I reasoned with him. He burst into tears, and said, “The laws are beautiful, and the polity of the Romans is excellent; but the rulers are not like-minded with the men of old, and are pulling down the state into ruin.”

By the time that this conversation was ended, the household of Onégesh had awoke, and the door was unbarred. Priscus obtained an interview with the minister and delivered the presents, which were graciously received. It is needless to transcribe the memoranda, almost tediously minute, which Priscus has kept of his various conversations. The general drift of them was, on the Roman side, to press for an interview with the king of the Huns, and to urge Onégesh to undertake in person the return embassy, and win for himself eternal glory and much wealth by bringing his candid and impartial mind to bear upon the points in dispute, and settling them in favor of the Romans. Onégesh indignantly repudiated the idea that any arguments of the Romans could ever induce him to betray his master, to forget his Scythian life, his wives, and his children, or to cease to consider servitude with Attila preferable to wealth among the Romans. He could be far more useful to them, he said, by remaining at Attila’s court and mollifying his resentment against their nation, than by coming to Byzantium and negotiating a treaty which his master might very probably disavow. On the other hand, he pressed them repeatedly with the question, ‘What man of consular dignity will the Emperor send as ambassador?’ The fact that Maximin, a man who had never filled the office of consul, should have been selected as envoy, evidently rankled in the mind of the barbarian king, sensitive, as all upstarts are, about his dignity. And at length, Attila having named three, Nomus, Anatolius, and Senator, any one of whom would be, in the language of modern diplomacy, a *persona grata* at his court, declared that he would receive no one else. The envoys replied that to insist so strongly on the selection of these three men would bring them into suspicion at the Imperial Court; a charming piece of inconsistency in the men who were constantly petitioning that Onégesh and no one else might undertake the return embassy. Attila answered moodily, ‘If the Romans will not do as I choose, I shall settle the points in dispute by war.’

While diplomacy was thus spinning her tedious web, the ambassadors saw some sights in the barbarian camp palace, which deserved to be recorded by the careful pen of the professor of rhetoric. One day he had an audience of the Queen Kreka, the chief in dignity of the wives of Attila, and mother of three of his sons. Her palace was built of well-sawn and smoothly-planed planks, resting on the ends of logs. Arches at certain intervals, springing from the ground and rising to a pretty considerable height, broke the flat surface of the wall. Here Kreka was to be found, lying on a soft couch, and with the floor around her covered with smooth felts to walk upon. Carpets were evidently still an unwonted luxury in Hun-land. There was no trace of the Oriental seclusion of women in the palace of Kreka. A large number of men-servants stood in a circle round her, while her maids sat on the floor in front, and were busied in dying linen of various colors, intending afterwards to work it up into ornamental costumes of the barbarian fashion.

When Priscus had offered his gifts and emerged from the queen's dwelling, he heard a stir and a clamor, and saw a crowd of men hurrying to the door of Attila's palace. These were the signs that the king was coming forth, and the rhetorician obtained a good place to watch his exit. With a stately strut Attila came forth, looking this way and that. Then he stood with his favorite Onégesh in front of the palace, while all the multitude of his people who had disputes one with another came forward and submitted them to him for his decision. Having thus in true Oriental fashion administered justice 'in the gate,' he returned into the interior of his palace in order to give audience to some barbarian ambassadors who had just arrived at his court.

Scarcely was this scene ended when Priscus fell in with the ambassadors of the Western Empire with whom he naturally began to compare notes. 'Are you dismissed,' said they, 'or pressed to remain?' 'The very thing,' he answered, 'that I myself want to know, and that keeps me all day hanging about near the palisading of Onégesh. Pray has Attila vouchsafed a gentle answer to your petition?' 'No; nothing will turn him from his purpose. He declares he will either have Silvanus or the sacred vessels, or else will make war.' Priscus then expressed his wonder at the folly of the barbarian; and Romulus, who was an old and experienced diplomatist, answered, 'His extraordinary good fortune and unbounded power have quite turned his head : so that he will listen to no argument which does not fall in with his own caprices. For no former ruler of Scythia or of any other land has ever achieved so much in so short a time as this man, who has made himself master of the islands in the ocean, and besides ruling all Scythia has forced even the Romans to pay him tribute.' Then Romulus proceeded to tell the story of Attila's intended Persian campaign, to which reference has already been made. The Byzantine ambassadors expressed their earnest desire that he would turn his arms against Persia and leave Theodosius alone; but Constantiolus, a Pannonian in the retinue of Romulus, replied that he feared if Attila did attack and overcome, as he assuredly would, the monarch of that country, 'he would become our lord and master instead of our friend. At present,' said he, 'Attila condescends to take gold from the Romans and call it pay for his titular office of General in the Roman armies. But should he subdue the Parthians, and Medes, and Persians, he would not endure to have the Roman Empire cutting in like a wedge between one part and another of his dominions, but would openly treat the two Emperors as mere lacqueys, and would lay upon them such commands as they would find absolutely intolerable. Already he has been heard to remark, testily, "The generals of Theodosius are but his servants, while my generals are as good as emperors of Rome." He believes also that there will be before long some notable increase of his power; and that the gods have signified this by revealing to him the sword of Mars, a sacred relic much venerated by the Huns, for many years hidden from their eyes, but quite lately rediscovered by the trail of the blood of an ox which had wounded its hoof against it, as it was sticking upright in the long grass'

Such was the conversation between the representatives of Ravenna and Constantinople,

amid the log-huts of the Hungarian plain. Later on in the same day they all received an invitation to be present at a banquet of the great conqueror.

‘Punctually at three o’clock we, together with the ambassadors of the Western Romans, went to the dinner and stood on the threshold of Attila’s palace. According to the custom of the country, the cup-bearers brought us a bowl of wine, that we might drink and pray for the good-luck of our host before sitting down. Having tasted the bowl, we were escorted to our seats. Chairs were ranged for the guests all-round the walls. In the centre Attila reclined on a couch, and behind him a flight of steps led up to his bed, which, hidden by curtains of white linen and variegated stuffs tastefully arranged, looked like the nuptial bed, as the Greeks and Romans prepare it for a newly-wedded couple.

‘The seat of honor on the right hand of Attila’s couch, was occupied by Onégesh. We did not receive even the second place, that on his left, but saw Berich, a Hun of noble birth, placed above us there. Opposite to Onégesh, on a double chair, sat two of the sons of Attila. His eldest son sat on the king’s couch, not near to him, however, but on the very edge of it, and all through the banquet he kept his eyes fixed on the ground in silent awe of his father.

‘When we were all seated the cup-bearer came in and handed to Attila his ivy-wood drinking-cup, filled with wine. Remaining seated, the king saluted the one nearest to him in rank. The slave standing behind that person’s chair advanced into the centre of the hall, received the cup from the hand of Attila’s cup-bearer, and brought it to the guest, whom etiquette required to rise from his seat and continue standing till he had drained the cup and the slave had returned it into the hands of Attila’s cup-bearer.’ This process of salutation and drinking was gone through with each guest and in the intervals of every course. The length of the solemnity, and perhaps the tediousness of it, seem greatly to have impressed the mind of Priscus, who describes it in much detail. After the banqueters had all been ‘saluted’ by Attila, the servants began to bring in the provisions, which were set upon little tables, one for every three or four guests, so that each could help himself without going outside the row of seats. ‘For all the rest of the barbarians,’ says Priscus, ‘and for us, a costly banquet had been prepared, which was served on silver dishes; but Attila, on his wooden plate, had nothing else save meat. In all his other equipments he showed the same simple tastes. The other banqueters had drinking cups of gold and silver handed to them, but his was of wood. His clothes were quite plain, distinguished by their cleanness only from those of any common man : and neither the sword which was hung up beside him, nor the clasps of his shoes (shaped in the barbarian fashion), nor the bridle of his horse, was adorned, as is the case with other Scythians, with gold or jewels, or anything else that is costly.

‘When evening came on, torches were lighted, and two barbarians coming in, stood opposite to Attila and chanted verses in praise of his victories and his prowess in war. The banqueters, looking off from the festal board, gazed earnestly on the minstrels. Some gave themselves to the mere delight of the song; others, remembering past conflicts, were stirred as with the fury of battle; while the old men were melted into tears by the thought that their bodies were grown weak through time, and their hot hearts were compelled into repose.’ After tears laughter, and after the tragedy a farce. A mad Hun next came in, who by his senseless babble made all the guests laugh heartily. Then entered a Moorish dwarf named Zercon, hump-backed, club-footed, with a nose like a monkey’s. Almost the only anecdote that is preserved to us about Bleda, Attila’s brother, records the inextinguishable mirth which this strange creature used to awaken in him, how he had him always by his side at the battle and in the banquet, and how when at last the unlucky dwarf tried to make his escape together with some other fugitives, Bleda disregarded all the others, and devoted his whole energies to the recapture of the pigmy. Then when he was caught and brought into the royal presence, Bleda burst into another storm of merriment at seeing the queer little creature in the dignity of chains. He

questioned him about the cause of his flight: the dwarf replied that he knew he had done wrong, but there was some excuse for him because he could get no wife in Hun-land. More delicious laughter followed, and Bleda straightway provided him with a wife in the person of a Hunnish damsel of noble birth who had been maid of honor to his queen, but had fallen into disgrace and been banished from her presence. After Bleda's death, Attila, who could not abide the dwarf, sent him as a present to Aetius. He had now come back again, apparently to beg to have his wife restored to him, a prayer which Attila was not inclined to grant.

This strange being came into the banquet-hall, and by his grotesque appearance, his odd garb, his stuttering voice, and his wild promiscuous jumble of words, Latin, Hunnish, Gothic, hurled forth pell-mell in unutterable confusion, set every table in a roar. Only Attila laughed not; not a line in his rigid countenance changed till his youngest son Ernak came, laughing like everybody else, and sat down beside him. He did not shrink away like his elder brother and sit on the edge of the couch. His bright, happy eyes looked up into the face of his father, who gently pinched his cheek and looked back upon him with a mild and softened gaze. Priscus expressed aloud his wonder that the youngest son should be so obviously preferred to his elder brethren: whereupon one of the barbarians who sat near him, and who understood Latin, whispered to him confidentially that it had been foretold to Attila by the prophets that the falling fortunes of his house should by this son be restored.

The drinking-bout was protracted far on into the night, and the ambassadors left long before it was over. At daybreak next morning they again sought an interview with Onégesh, and petitioned that without further loss of time they might receive Attila's answer and return to their master. Onégesh set his secretaries, Roman captives, to work at the composition of the letter of reply. Then they preferred another request, for the liberation of the widow and children of a certain Sulla, a citizen of Ratiaria, who had apparently been killed at the same time when they were taken captive and their home destroyed. Onégesh entirely refused to hear of their gratuitous liberation, but at length, when the ambassadors begged him to reflect on their former prosperity, and to pity their present misfortunes, he laid the matter before Attila, and obtained a reluctant consent to send the children back as a present to Theodosius. As to the widow the Hun remained inexorable: the price of her freedom was fixed at £500. Such abject entreaties to a squalid barbarian for the liberation of the family of a Roman bearing the name of him

'Whose chariot rolled on Fortune's wheel,
Trumphant Sulla,'

seem to intensify the force of Byron's magnificent apostrophe—

' Couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal, or that so supine
By else than Romans Rome could e'er be laid;
She who was named Eternal, and arrayed
Her warriors but to conquer, she who veiled
Earth with her haughty shadow, and displayed,
Till the o'er canopied horizon failed,
Her rushing wings—oh! she who was Almighty hailed?'

Another visit to Attila's chief wife beguiled the tedium of the ambassadors' sojourn in the royal village. 'She received us,' says Priscus, 'both with honeyed words and with an elaborate repast. And each of the company wishing to do us honor in Scythian fashion, arose and

presented us with a full cup of wine; and when we had drank it they put their arms round us and kissed us, and then received it back from our hands.’

A final supper with Attila himself followed. The monarch seems to have had an increasing appreciation of the worth and honesty of Maximin : and now that the ‘shameless beast,’ Vigilas, was gone, and Attila no longer had the unpleasant sensation as of the near presence of a venomous reptile, which was always suggested by his false smile and cringing salutation, the companionship of the Roman ambassadors agreeably diversified the monotony of the barbarian carousals. This time the relative who shared his royal divan was not one of his sons but Odbarsh, his uncle. Attila treated the ambassadors during this meal with great politeness, but at the same time frequently reminded them of a grievance which for the moment absorbed all his thoughts, to the exclusion of the Hunnish refugees and the vases of Sirmium. Aetius, who was continually sending presents to the Hunnish monarch or receiving them from him, had consigned to him, perhaps in exchange for the Moorish dwarf, a Latin secretary, named Constantius. This secretary, the second of that name who had entered Attila’s service, was eager, like all the adventurers who hovered on the confines between barbarism and civilization, to consolidate his position by marrying one of the enormously wealthy heiresses who were to be found among the Romans. Such an one seemed to be within his grasp when he was sent a few years before as an embassy to Constantinople, and when he succeeded in smoothing some of the negotiations between Theodosius and the Hun. The Emperor, a facile promiser, undertook to bestow upon the secretary the hand of the daughter of Saturninus, a man of high lineage and fortune, who held the office of *Comes Domesticorum*. Shortly after, however, Eudocia the Empress revenged herself on Saturninus for having, in obedience to her husband’s commands, put two favorite ecclesiastics of hers to death, by sending him to join them. The fortunes of the house of Saturninus declined, and a powerful general, Zeno, bestowed the daughter of the fallen minister in marriage on one of his creatures named Rufus. The disappointed secretary, Constantius, who had doubtless boasted not a little of the ‘enormously wealthy’ bride that was to be assigned to him, besieged the ear of Attila with his clamors, and even promised him money if he would still obtain for him one of the longed-for heiresses. All through this banquet therefore Attila urged the fortune-hunter’s claims upon Maximin, saying repeatedly, ‘Constantius must not be disappointed. It is not right for kings to tell lies’.

Three days after this banquet the ambassadors from the Eastern Court, after receiving presents which Priscus acknowledges to have been suitable were at length dismissed under the escort of Berich, the Hunnish nobleman who had sat above them at their first repast in Attila’s presence. It is singular that we hear nothing as to the success or failure of the Embassy of the West.

The return journey of Maximin and Priscus was not marked by any striking adventures. They saw a Scythian refugee, who had crossed the Danube and returned into his own country as a spy, subjected to the cruel punishment of impalement, common among these Turanian nations. And two Scythian slaves who had murdered their masters were put to death by crucifixion, a mode of execution which the Christian Empire, from religious rather than humane sentiment, had by this time abandoned. But the only other incidents of their journey were caused by the testy and capricious Hunnish humour of their companion Berich, who seemed bent on picking a quarrel with them. His ill-temper was chiefly shown by his violent resumption of the horse which, at Attila’s command, he had presented to Maximin. Indeed all the Hunnish nobility had been ordered to make tender of their horses to the ambassador; but he had shown the wise moderation of his character by accepting only a few. Among these few however was Berich’s; and considering the centaur-like union which had for generations existed between the Huns and their steeds, we may conjecture that it was the pain of daily

beholding his favorite horse bestridden by an unwarlike stranger which caused the irritability of the Hunnish nobleman.

Vigilas had started from Constantinople before the return of the ambassadors, and met them on their road. They communicated to him the final answer of the barbarian, and he continued his route. As soon as he reached the camp of Attila, a detachment of Huns, who had been watching for his arrival, made him their prisoner, and took from him the £2000 which he was bringing, as he supposed, to Edecon as the price of blood. They carried him at once before the king, who enquired why he travelled with so much money about him. 'To provide for my own wants and those of my attendants,' said Vigilas, 'lest by any mischance my embassy should lack its proper splendor. Also for the redemption of captives, since many persons in the Roman territory have begged me to purchase the liberation of their kinsfolk.' 'Evil beast!' said Attila, 'thou in truth shalt not blind Justice by all thy quibbles, and no pretext shall be strong enough to enable thee to escape punishment. Thou hast provided far more money than could possibly be wanted for the purchase of beasts of burden and for the redemption of captives, which last I expressly forbade thee to undertake when thou earnest hither with Maximin.'

With these words he signaled to his attendants to seize the son of Vigilas, who had for the first time accompanied his father on this journey. 'Next moment,' said Attila, 'hew him down with the sword, unless his father will say to whom and for what purpose he has brought this money into my territory.' Vigilas burst into passionate lamentations, begged the executioner to slay him instead of his son, and when he saw that all was of no avail, confessed the whole plot, told how Chrysaphius had originated it, how Edecon had accepted it, how Theodosius had sanctioned it, and then once more earnestly entreated Attila to put him to death and to spare his son. The king, who from his previous information knew that Vigilas had now disclosed the whole truth, coldly replied that for the present he should be loaded with chains and await, in close confinement, the return of his son who must start at once for Constantinople to obtain another sum of £2000, which, with that already taken from him, should constitute their joint ransom.

Leaving Vigilas in this dangerous predicament, let us now see what kind of messages Theodosius had to listen from the King of the Huns. Maximin seems to have been instructed to dwell principally on the Emperor's breach of promise to Constantius. 'No one,' Attila argued, 'could have dared to betroth the daughter of Saturninus to another than Constantius without the Emperor's consent. For either he who had presumed to do such a deed would have suffered condign punishment, or else the affairs of the Emperor were in such a state that he could not manage his own servants, against whom therefore, if he desired it, Attila would be ready to grant him the advantage of his alliance.' The taunt, which must surely have proceeded from the lips of Berich, not of Maximin, struck home; and Theodosius showed his anger by confiscating the fortune of the 'enormously wealthy' young lady whose matrimonial affairs had caused him so much annoyance. This act was of course followed by a loud outcry from her husband Rufus and his patron Zeno, whose position towards his Imperial master was in fact pretty accurately described by the sneers of Attila. Zeno chose however to attribute the whole incident to the machinations of Chrysaphius, and began to clamor for the eunuch's life.

Such was the position of affairs at Constantinople when the two special ambassadors of Attila, Orestes and Eslas, arrived. Their message was yet harder to digest than that which had preceded it. When they appeared in the Imperial presence, Orestes wore, suspended round his neck, the purse (or rather the large bag) in which the blood-money had been packed. Turning first to Theodosius and then to the Eunuch, he asked each of them: 'Dost thou recognize this bag?' Then Eslas, the Hun, took up his parable, and said roundly, 'Theodosius is the son of a well-born father. Attila too from his father Mundzuk has inherited the condition of noble birth, which he has preserved. Not so Theodosius, who fell from the estate of an *ingenuus* and

became Attila's slave, when he submitted to pay him tribute. He has now conspired against the life of a better man than himself, and one whom Fortune has made his master. This is a foul deed, worthy only of a caitiff slave, and his only way of clearing himself from the guilt which he has thus contracted is to surrender the Eunuch to punishment.'

How this harangue, every word of which had been composed by Attila himself, was received by Theodosius, as he sat surrounded by his courtiers, we know not. The general expectation of the Court was that it would go hard with Chrysaphius, whose punishment was thus simultaneously demanded by the two men whom the Emperor most feared, Zeno his general, and Attila his torment. But threatened men live long and the Eunuch seems to have been not unpopular with the other courtiers, who exerted themselves zealously for his deliverance.

Anatolius and Nomus were selected as the new ambassadors to the Hunnish Court. Both had been named by Attila as persons of sufficiently exalted rank to visit him, such as he would be willing to welcome. Anatolius, who had been the chief figure of the embassy of 447, was a man of high military rank, in fact, general of the household troops. Nomus, a patrician as well as his colleague, was in the civil service as Master of the Offices, renowned not only for his wealth, but for his willingness to spend it lavishly, and moreover kindly disposed towards Chrysaphius. They were commissioned to employ money freely, to deprecate Attila's resentment against the Eunuch, and to assure Constantius that he should yet have a wealthy Roman bride, though the law would not permit the Emperor to give him the daughter of Saturninus, as she was married to another man from whom she did not desire to be divorced. The trifling circumstance of the confiscation of her property appears not to have been mentioned in the instructions of the ambassadors.

This embassy was completely successful. Attila came as far as the river Drave, in order to testify his respect for the persons of the envoys, and to spare them the fatigue of too long a journey. At first his speech was full of arrogance and wrath, but when he saw the beautiful things which the ambassadors had brought for him, the presents of Theodosius, the presents of Chrysaphius, the presents of the lavish Nomus, the child-nature in the heart of the barbarian asserted itself, his eyes gleamed with pleasure, and he suffered himself to be mollified by their gentle words. Peace was concluded pretty nearly on the old terms : in fact, he seems even to have surrendered his claim to the belt of territory, five days' journey wide, south of the Danube. He promised to worry the Emperor no more about any refugees whom he might have received in past times; 'only' he said, 'Theodosius must receive no more of these men in future.' Vigilas was liberated, his son having brought the £2000 of ransom; and the demand for the head of Chrysaphius seems to have been quietly withdrawn. Of his own accord, in order to mark his special esteem for Anatolius and Nomus, he liberated many captives without ransom; and he made them presents of several horses (whether belonging to himself or to his courtiers we are not informed), and of the skins of wild beasts, 'such as the royal family among the Scythians wear by way of ornament.' For once, diplomacy really prevented war.

The important question of satisfying the noble longings of Constantius for a wealthy bride was soon solved. He returned with the ambassadors to Constantinople, and was there mated to a lady of very high birth and large fortune, the widow of a certain Armatius, who had died when on service against some of the fierce tribes of Libya, and the daughter-in-law of Plinthas (Consul 419), who had headed the first Embassy to Attila in the year 433. Thus the last point in dispute between the son of Mundzuk and the son of Arcadius was disposed of.

In the following year (450) Theodosius II died in the 0th year of his age and the 43rd of his reign. His death was the result of an accident in hunting, his horse having run away, swerved aside into a stream and thrown him off. He was carried home to his palace in a litter, but he had received a fatal injury to the spine, and died on the following night (July 28, 450).

He left no male offspring, and his sister Pulcheria ascended the throne, which she shared with a brave and honest soldier, Marcian, whom, for the good of the state, she consented to call her husband.

The immediate results of this change were, the calling of the Council of Chalcedon (451), at which the orthodox Roman view of the union of the two natures in Christ was finally adopted; the execution of Chrysaphius, whether as maladministrator, as Eutychian heretic, or as private foe to the new Augusta, we are not informed; and, lastly, the assumption of an altered and more manly tone in reply to the intolerable pretensions of Attila. When that monarch claimed his arrears of tribute, the new Emperor sent as ambassador to his court, Apollonius, the brother of that Rufus who had words of married the ‘enormously wealthy’ bride, for whose fortune Constantius had languished. Apollonius crossed the Danube, but when Attila learned that he had not brought the tribute, which—to use the words of the Hun—had been promised to him by better and more king-like men than the present ambassador, he refused to grant him an audience. Attila said expressly that he acted thus in order to show his contempt for the envoy, whom, nevertheless, he ordered, on pain of death if he refused, to hand over the presents which the Emperor had sent. ‘Not so,’ said Apollonius, who spoke with a boldness worthy of old Rome, and in a tone which was now strange to Scythian ears. ‘The Huns may kill me if they like, and then my presents will be spoils of war (if they choose to call murder warfare). Or they may receive me as ambassador, and then I willingly offer my gifts. But if not admitted to an audience, I do not part with these presents while I live.’ The boldness of the ambassador prevailed. He returned with his gifts and his message alike undelivered, but Attila saw that he had now at length men to deal with at Constantinople, and that the policy of braggadocio would avail no longer. He did not care for a campaign in the often-harried plains of Moesia, but looked out for some richer if not easier prey. And thus, with a dignity which we had ceased to hope for in any Emperor of Byzantium, the long negotiations terminate, and we close the chapter of the doings of Attila in the East.

CHAPTER III.

ATTILA IN GAUL.

A story of very doubtful authority represents the monarch of the Huns as sending, shortly before the death of Theodosius II, a Gothic messenger to each of the two Roman Emperors, with this insulting mandate, "Attila, your master and mine, bids you to prepare a palace for his reception". Whether any such message was actually sent or not, the story indicates not inaptly the attitude which the great Hun maintained for the ten years between 440 and 450, hovering like a hawk over the fluttered dove-cots of Byzantium and Ravenna, and enjoying the terrors of the Eastern and the Western Augustus alternately.

Now that the palace by the Bosphorus was occupied by an inmate whose beak and claw looked more like those of the old Roman eagle than any that had been seen there for the last half-century, the Barbarian began to turn his thoughts more definitely to the hapless pigeon of the West. He needed to be at no loss for pretexts in making war on Rome. Whether the great grievance of the communion-plate of Sirmium was still unredressed we cannot say, for History, after wearying us with the details of this paltry affair, forgets to tell us how it ended, whether the vases were surrendered to the service of the king or the silversmith to his rage, or whether the latter was deemed to be "a bona-fide holder of the goods for valuable consideration", and his title respected accordingly.

But the grievances of the Princess Honoria undoubtedly still remained, possibly even were increased by the death of the easy-tempered Theodosius and the accession to the Byzantine throne of that severe model of feminine virtues, the Augusta Pulcheria, who was now fifty-one years of age, while her cousin was but thirty-two, a juniority which was in itself almost treason against a female sovereign. It is possible that the unhappy princess was removed at this time from the Eastern to the Western court, for we find Attila sending one of his usual insulting embassies to Valentinian III, "to say that Honoria, whom he had betrothed to himself, must suffer no harm, and that he would avenge her cause if she were not also allowed to wield the imperial scepter". The Western Emperor replied, "that Honoria could not enter into the married state with him, having been already given to a husband" (to whom, when, or under what circumstances, we are not informed); and they met the audacious claim set up on behalf of the princess by an equally audacious misstatement of their own customs, daring to assert in the face of the still-existing royalty of Placidia and Pulcheria, "that Honoria ought not to receive the scepter, since the succession to the throne among the Romans was vested not in females, but in males". Both parties probably felt that the claim was an unreal one: the Hun was determined on war, and would have it, whether he redeemed the ring of Honoria or no. One more embassy takes place, in which Attila prefers the modest claim to one half of the Western Empire, "as the betrothed husband of Honoria, who had received this portion from her father, and was wrongfully kept out of it by her brother's covetousness". This request is of course refused. Then Honoria too, like the vases of Sirmium, fades out of history; whether she ever saw the fierce face of her affianced, when he wasted Italy in her name, nay even whether she was present at the death-bed of her mother Placidia, who expired at Rome in the same year as Theodosius (450), and there received and conferred a mutual forgiveness, we know not.

Two more pretexts for war must Attila accumulate, or at least two more alliances must he conclude, and then all would be ready for his great westward movement.

One was with a Frankish prince. A certain king of the Franks, whose name is not recorded, had just died, and there was strife between his sons as to the succession to his rude royalty. The younger son was the candidate whom the Romans favored. He had been to Rome (probably some years before) on an embassy from his father. He had gazed there, doubtless, on the still undiminished glories of the Palatine and the Forum and the great Flavian Amphitheatre, and while he gazed, the observant eye of the rhetorician Priscus, who happened to be at Rome, had likewise gazed on him. A young warrior, with not even the first down of manhood on cheek or lip, but with a cloud of yellow hair descending thickly upon his shoulders, such is the appearance of the first Frankish king whom we meet with in history. Whether he was Meroveus himself (the so-called grandson of Pharamond and grandfather of Clovis), the half-mythical ancestor of the Merovingian dynasty, may be it doubted, and cannot now be ascertained; but that long tawny *chevelure* identifies him with the race who reigned in France for 250 years, till the hair of the last *fainéant king* fell beneath the scissors of Pepin.

The all-powerful Aetius regarded this young Frankish chief with favor. He loaded him with presents, conferred upon him the title of his adopted son, and sent him back to his father as the bearer of a treaty of friendship and alliance. It may have been this title of adopted son of the great Aetius which suggested ambitious thoughts to the mind of the young prince. At any rate, on the death of his father, he, though the younger son, with Roman help, made good his claim to the succession to the kingdom. His elder brother fled to the court of Attila, who undertook to recover for him his lost inheritance.

The other alliance of Attila was with Gaiseric, king of the Vandals. This monarch, whose career we shall have to trace in the following book, was now undisputed master of the whole Roman province of Africa, had ravaged Sicily, and was making the name of Carthage, his capital city, as terrible to Italian hearts as ever it had been in the days of Hannibal. There can be little doubt that if the Hunnish hordes by land, and the Vandal pirates by sea, had simultaneously attacked the Western Empire, they must have achieved a complete and crushing success. But for some reason or other, perhaps because neither nation wished to share so rich a booty with a rival, this united action was not taken; and though the Hunnish king received large sums of money by way of subsidy from the Vandal, it may be doubted whether he did not lose far more than he gained by an alliance which made him accessory after the fact to a cruel and impolitic outrage. For Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, who was at this time far the most powerful ruler in the Gaulish provinces, had bestowed his daughter in marriage on Hunneric, the son of Gaiseric. Gaiseric chose to suspect, apparently on very trifling grounds, that the new bride had attempted to poison him; and with a cruelty which seems to have been characteristic of the Vandal nature, he cut off the nose and ears of the Visigothic princess, and in this condition sent her back to the palace of Theodoric, a living and daily remembrancer of the vengeance due to the Vandal, and therefore an argument against any cooperation with Attila, who was that Vandal's friend.

One more, not ally, but summons to war must be mentioned, which may perhaps have assisted powerfully in turning the hosts of Attila towards Gaul rather than towards Italy. The iniquities of judges and the exactions of tax-gatherers, which were so loudly complained of by the barbarianised Roman in the camp of Attila, had in Gaul stirred up the peasants to a tumultuary war not unlike that which the mediaeval knights termed a *Jacquerie*. The name given to the peasant warriors with whom we are now concerned was Bagaudae; and their insurrection, a striking proof of the hollowness of the fabric of Roman prosperity, had smouldered for more than a century and a half, ever since the days of Diocletian. A man, of whom we would gladly know more than the few lines which the chroniclers bestow on him, was the link between these marauders within the Empire and the great Barbarian without. In the year 448, as we learn from the Pseudo-Prosper, "Eudoxius, a doctor by profession, a man

of evil, though cultivated intellect, being mixed up with the movements of the Bagaudae at that time, fled to the Huns". It is probable enough that we have here to do with a mere selfish adventurer such as float ever upon the surface of revolutionary change: yet before condemning the man of "evil though highly-cultured intellect", who flashes thus for a moment upon the page of history, we would gladly have known whether he too may not have been in his day an apostle of "the Enthusiasm of Humanity", whether the miseries which Eudoxius' "arte medicus" saw among the pillaged peasants of Gaul were not the original cause of his being condemned as a 'Bagauda' by delicately-living senators and prefects, and forced to appeal against the injustices of civilization at the bar of its terrible antagonist.

At length, in the spring of 451, the preparations of Attila were completed, and the huge host began to roll on its way towards the Rhine. This army, like those which modern science has created, and under which modern industry groans, was truly described as a nation rather than an army; and though the estimates of the chroniclers, which vary from half a million to seven hundred thousand men, cannot be accepted as literally accurate, we shall not err in believing that the vast multitude who looked to the tent of Attila for orders were practically innumerable. Sidonius describes how the quiet life of the Roman provincial senator was suddenly disturbed by the roar of a mighty multitude, when barbarism seemed to be pouring over the plains of Gaul all the inhabitants of the North. If his enumeration of the invading tribes, which no doubt partakes of some of the vagueness of his style of poetry, be at all correct, the Geloni from the shores of the Volga, the Neuri and Bastarnae from the Ukraine, the Sciri, whom we are in doubt whether to place near Riga on the Baltic or Odessa on the Euxine, were serving in that army. The ethnological affinities of these obscure tribes are very doubtful. Some of them may have been of Sclavonic origin. The Teutonic family was represented by the Rugii from Pomerania, the Bructeri from the Weser; one half of the Frankish people from 'the turbid Neckar'; the Thuringians (*Toringi*) from Bavaria, and the Burgundians—these too only a portion of the tribe who had lingered in their old homes by the Vistula. The bone and marrow of the army were of course the Huns themselves, and the two powerful Teutonic tribes, enemies to the Hun in the past and to be his enemies in the future, but for the present his faithful allies and counselors, the Gepidae and the Ostrogoths. Thus if we go back to the old story of the Gothic migration from 'the island of Sweden', we have the crews of two of the ships being led on to attack their fellows in the other vessel, the Ostrogoths and the 'torpid' Gepidae marching right across Europe at the bidding of a leader whose forefathers came from Siberia, to overwhelm their Visigothic brethren, who are dwelling by the Garonne. The Ostrogoths, who possibly occupied a territory in the north of Hungary, were commanded by three brothers, sprung from the great Amal lineage, Walamir and Theudemir and Widemir; "nobler", as the patriotic Jordanes observes, "than the king whose orders they obeyed". The Gepidae, whose land probably bordered on the northern confines of the Ostrogothic settlement, were led to battle by Arderic, bravest and most famous of all the subject-princes, and him on whose wise and loyal counsels Attila chiefly relied.

While this vast medley of nations are hewing down the trees of the Thüringer Wald, in order to fashion their rude boats and rafts for the passage of the Rhine, let us glance for a moment at the tribes, scarcely less various and not so coherent, which, on the Gaulish side of the river, are awaiting their dreaded impact.

Near the mouths of the Rhine, the Scheldt, and the Somme, that is to say, in the modern countries of Belgium and Picardy, clustered the great confederacy of the Salian Franks. Their Riparian brethren held the upper reaches of the Great River, and it is to these probably that Sidonius refers when he places them by the turbid Neckar, and describes them as furnishing a contingent to the army of Attila. All the Franks were still heathen, the fiercest of the Teutonic settlers in Gaul, and they bore an ill repute for unfaithfulness to their plighted word and even to

their oaths. Small sign as yet was there that to them would one day fall the hegemony of the Gallic nations. In the opposite corner of the country, between the Loire, the Garonne, and the Bay of Biscay, the Visigoths had erected a monarchy, the most civilized and compact of all the barbarian kingdoms, and the one which seemed to have the fairest promise of a long and triumphant life. By the peace which their king Walia concluded with Honorius (416) after the restoration of Placidia, they had obtained legal possession of the district called Aquitania Secunda, together with the territory round Toulouse, all of which allotment went by the name of Septimania or Gothia. For ten years (419-429) there had been firm peace between Visigoths and Romans; then, for ten years more (429-439), fierce and almost continued war, Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, endeavoring to take Arles and Narbonne; Aetius and his subordinate Litorius striving to take the Gothic capital of Toulouse, and all but succeeding. And in these wars Aetius had availed himself of his long-standing friendship with the Huns to enlist them as auxiliaries against the warriors of Theodoric, dangerous allies who plundered friends and enemies, and carried back doubtless to their dreary encampment in Hungary vivid remembrance of the sunny vineyards of Languedoc and Guienne. For the last twelve years (439-451) there had been peace, but scarcely friendship, between the Courts of Ravenna and Toulouse.

North of the Visigoths, the Celtic population of Brittany, known by the name of the Armoricans, had risen in arms against their Roman rulers, and had with some degree of success maintained their independence. From this time, perhaps, we ought to date that isolation of Brittany from the politics of the rest of France, which has not entirely disappeared even at the present day. But the terrible invader from the East welded even the stubborn Breton into temporary cohesion with his neighbors, and in the pages of Jordanes we find the 'Armoritiani' fighting side by side with the Roman legions against Attila.

The same list includes a yet more familiar name, 'Saxones'. How came our fathers thither; they, whose homes were in the long sandy levels of Holstein? As has been already pointed out, the national migration of the Angles and Saxons to our own island had already commenced, perhaps in part determined by the impulse northward of Attila's own subjects. Possibly like the Northmen, their successors, the Saxons may have invaded both sides of the English Channel at once, and may on this occasion have been standing in arms to defend against their old foe some newly-won possessions in Normandy or Picardy.

In the south-east of Gaul, the Burgundians had after many wars and some reverses established themselves (443) with the consent of the Romans in the district then called Sapaudia and now Savoy. Their territory was somewhat more extensive than the province which was the cradle of the present royal house of Italy, since it stretched northwards beyond the lake of Neufchatel, and southwards as far as Grenoble. Here the Burgundian immigrants, under their king, Gundiok, were busy settling themselves in their new possession, cultivating the lands which they had divided by lot, each one receiving¹ half the estate of a Roman host or *hospes*, (for under such gentle names the spoliation was veiled,) when the news came that the terrible Hun had crossed the Rhine, and that all hosts and guests in Gaul must 451 unite for its defense.

The Alans, who had wandered thus far westwards from the country between the Volga and the Don, had received (440) the district round Valence for a possession from the Romans, on much the same terms probably as those by which the Burgundians held Savoy. Of all the barbarian tribes now quartered in Gaul they were the nearest allied to the Huns, and Sangiban, their king, was strongly suspected of having some secret and treacherous understanding with Attila.

This chaos of barbarian tribes occupied perhaps one half of Gaul, wherever some dominion remains of the old imperial Cosmos were still left unsubmerged, there was Romania.

We may conjecture that by this time very little of Roman domination remained in the Belgic Gaul. The eastern portions of Gallia Lugdunensis and Gallia Aquitanica, especially the city of Lyons and the mountains of Auvergne, seem to have been fervently loyal to the Emperor. Gallia Narbonensis with its capitals of Arles and Narbonne, but excepting Toulouse and its surrounding country, had successfully beaten back the Visigothic invader, and was almost more Roman than Rome itself.

But the question of transcendent importance for Gaul, and indirectly for the whole future of Western Europe was : “Would Chaos and Cosmos blend for a little space to resist the vaster and wilder Chaos which was roaring for them both, fierce from its Pannonian home? Especially could Aetius and Theodoric, so lately at death-grips for the possession of one another’s capitals—Aetius who had all but lost Arles, Theodoric who had all but lost Toulouse, unite heartily enough and promptly enough to beat back Attila?”

This was the doubt, and Attila thought he saw in it an opportunity to divide his foes. “A subtle man, and one who fought by artifice before he waged his wars”, he sent ambassadors to Valentinian, representing his intended invasion as only a continuation of the old joint campaigns of Roman and Hun against the Visigoth. To Theodoric he sent other messengers, exhorting him to break off his unnatural alliance with Rome, and to remember the cruel wars which so lately had been kindled against his people by the lieutenants of the Augustus.

Happily there was a little too much statesmanship both at Ravenna and Toulouse to allow of the success of so transparent an artifice. Valentinian’s ambassadors to Theodoric addressed the Visigothic nation (if we may believe their panegyrist Jordanes) in some such words as these :

“It will comport with your usual wisdom, oh bravest of the nations, to confederate with us against the tyrant of the universe, who longs to fasten the chains of slavery on the whole world, who does not seek for any reasonable excuses for battle, but thinks that whatsoever crimes he may commit are lawful because he is the doer of them. He measures the frontiers of his dominions by what? By the space that his arms can ravage. He gluts his pride by license, he spurns the ordinances of earth and of heaven, and shows himself the enemy of our common nature. Surely he deserves your hatred who proves himself the spiteful foe of all. Recollect, I pray you, (what assuredly he does not forget) blood has once flowed between you, and with whatever wiles he may now cover his thirst for vengeance, it is there, and it is terrible. To say nothing of our grievances, can you any longer tolerate with patience the pride of this savage? Mighty as you are in arms, think of your own griefs” [and here, doubtless, words were used which would recall to the mind of Theodoric the cruel outrages inflicted on his daughter by Attila’s Vandal ally], “and join your hands with ours. Help the Republic which has given you one of her fairest provinces for a possession. If you would know how necessary the alliance of each of us is to the other, penetrate the council-chamber of the foe, and see how he labors to divide us”.

Theodoric was probably already meditating the Roman alliance, but these words are said to have decided him, and he replied, “Romans, you have your will. Attila is your foe; you have made him ours also. Wheresoever the sound of his ravages shall call us, thither will we follow him; and all-inflated as he is with his victories over so many proud nations, yet the Goths too know how to do battle with the proud. Strong in the goodness of my cause, I deem no war laborious. No evil omen daunts me when the majesty of the Emperor of Rome smiles upon me”.

There is something hollow and unreal, doubtless, in these orations. In point of fact the Goths showed no alacrity in the defense of Roman Gaul till the storm of war rolled up to their own borders, and even then, according to one account, required a special messenger to rouse

them from their unreadiness. But the foundation for an alliance between Roman and Visigoth was laid, and it saved Gaul.

Attila, foiled in his diplomacy, swept with his vast host across the Rhine, and began the congenial work of destruction. City after city of the Belgic Gaul (which comprised all France north-east of the Seine) fell before him. What help he may have received from the Bagaudae, or rendered to the young Frankish chieftain, his ally, we know not. We only hear that one city after another was broken up (*effracta*) by his savage hordes; but no simple human voice comes out of the Chaos to tell us what common men and women suffered in that breaking up of the great deep. The ecclesiastics, intent on the glorification of their own favorite saint or chapel, tell us a little of what was done, or was not done in the way of miraculous interposition on behalf of particular places, and even for their childish legends, of uncertain date, and bearing elements of fiction on the face of them, we have to be grateful, so complete is the silence of authentic history as to the earlier events of the invasion.

The bishop of Tongres in Belgium, Servatius by name, implored God, amidst fastings and watchings and constant showers of tears, that he would never permit “the unbelieving and ever-unworthy nation of the Huns’ to enter Gaul”. Feeling sure in his spirit that this prayer was not granted, he sought the tomb of the Apostle Peter at Rome, and there, after three days’ fasting, pressed his suit. The Apostle appeared to him in a vision and told him that according to the councils of the Most High, the Huns must certainly enter Gaul and ravage it for a time. But so much was conceded to Servatius, that he should not see the misery which was coming on his flock. He was therefore to return at once to his home, choose out his grave-clothes, and set his house in order, and then should he “migrate from this body”. He returned accordingly, set all things in order for his burial, and told his flock that they should see his face no more. But they following him with great wailing and many tears, humbly prayed him—“Leave us not, oh holy father; forget us not, oh good shepherd!”. Then, as they could not prevail upon him to stay, they received his blessing, kissed him, and departed. He went to the city of Utrecht, where he was seized with a mild fever, and his soul departed from his body. His corpse was brought back to Tongres, and buried by the city wall. Such was the end of Servatius. Of the fate of his flock we have no further particulars.

“On the very eve of the blessed Easter, the Huns, coming forth out of Pannonia and laying waste everything on their march, arrived at Metz. They gave up the city to the flames, and slew the people with the edge of the sword, killing the priests themselves before the sacrosanct altar of the Lord. And in all that city no place remained unburnt except the oratory of the blessed Stephen, protomartyr and Levite”. Gregory of Tours then proceeds to describe at unnecessary length a vision in which someone saw the blessed Levite, Stephen, interceding for this oratory with the Apostles Peter and Paul, and obtaining a promise that it should remain unharmed, “that the nations might see that he availed somewhat with the Lord”.

From Lorraine into Champagne rolled on the devastating flood. St. Nicasius, bishop of Rheims, was hewn down before the altar of his church, while his lips were uttering the words of the Psalm, “My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word/”. Thus he attained the crown of martyrdom, though it has been truly remarked that the bishops and priests who fell beneath the swords of the Huns perished, not strictly as confessors of a religion, but as chief citizens of their dioceses, and as guardians of sacred treasure. Attila was a plunderer, but not a persecutor. He made war on civilization and on human nature, not on religion, for he did not understand it enough to hate it.

The inhabitants of a little town upon a clayey island in the Seine, near its junction with the Marne, were in such dread of its invasion by the Huns that they had made up their minds to flee, when a young girl of the neighboring village of Nanterre, named Genoveva, succeeded in communicating to the wives of the inhabitants her own calm and heaven-born confidence that

the place would not be assailed. The men disbelieved her mission, called her a false prophetess, would gladly have stoned her, or drowned her in the river. But the influence of the women, aided by the remembrance of the undoubted holiness of a neighboring saint, Germanus of Auxerre, who had in former days taken the part of Genoveva, saved her from insult, and her counsels from rejection. The inhabitants remained; the prayers of the women, or the insignificance of the place, saved it from the presence of the enemy. Could the squalid Pannonian hordes have overleapt fourteen centuries of time as well as the few miles of space which intervened, how their eyes would have sparkled, and their hearts well-nigh stopped beating with the ecstasy of rapine, for the town which was then scarcely worth attacking is now known by the name of Paris. Justly, if the story be true, are Sainte Geneviève and Saint Germain among the names still held in highest honor by the beautiful city on the Seine.

In the after-growth of mediaeval ecclesiastical chronicles it may well be supposed that Attila's destroying hand is made responsible for even more ruin than actually caused. Thus, 'Maistre Jacques de Guise' writing his history of Hainault in the fourteenth century, informs his readers that "they must know that no town, fortress, or city, however strong it might be, could resist this people, so cruel was it and malevolent. Moreover, by this tyrant Attila were destroyed nearly all the cities of Gaul and Germany. Firstly, Reims, Cambray; Treveres (Trèves), Mectz (Metz), Arras, Tongres, Tournay, Therouanne, Coulongne (Cologne), Amiens, Beauvais, Paris, and so many towns, cities, and fortresses that whoso should wish to put them all in writing he would too much weary the readers".

'Item, by him were destroyed in Germany, Mayence, a very noble city, Warmose (Worms), Argentore (Strasburg), Nymaie (?), Langres and Nerbonne (?). In this year, as saith Sigebert, were martirised the eleven thousand virgins in the city of Coulongne"

This extract does not, of course, possess any shadow of historical authority. It is certainly wrong as to Narbonne and Nimes (if that be the city intended by Nymaie), and it is probably wrong as to Paris. But, with these exceptions, the cities named are all either in or upon the confines of Gallia Belgica, the chief scene of Attila's ravages, and the list is not an improbable one, though we can well believe that, as every defaced tomb and mutilated statue in an English church claims to have been maltreated by "Cromwell's soldiers", so no monkish chronicler who had a reasonable opportunity of bringing 'Attila' and his malevolent Huns near to the shrine of his favorite saint would be likely to forego the terrible fascination.

When Belgic Gaul was ravaged to his heart's content, the Hun turned his footsteps towards Aquitaine, which contained the settlements of the Visigoths, and where, as he well knew, his hardest task awaited him. The Loire, flowing first northwards, then westwards, protects, by its broad sickle of waters, this portion of Gaul, and the Loire itself is commanded at its most northerly point by that city which, known in Caesar's of day as Genabum, had taken the name Aureliani from the great Emperor, the conqueror of Zenobia, and is now called Orleans. Three times has Aureliani played an eminent part in the history of Gaul. There broke out the great insurrection of B.C. 52 against the victorious Caesar; there Attila's host, in A.D. 451, received their first repulse; and there in 1429, the maid of Domremy, by forcing the Duke of Bedford to raise the siege, wrested from the English Plantagenets their last chance of ruling in France.

The hero of Orleans, in this defense of her walls, was the Bishop, Anianus. He had visited Aetius at Arles, and strongly impressed upon the mind of that general the necessity of relieving Orleans before the 24th of June at the very latest. Then returning to the city he cheered his flock with words of pious hope. The battering-rams of Attila thundered against the walls, and the hearts of the people began to fail them. To Anianus himself the promised help seemed to linger. He knew not, and we cannot with certainty state the true cause of the delay which is related to us only by one doubtful authority. Aetius, it is said, emerged from the Alpine passes

with only a slender and ill-officered train of soldiers, and then found that the Goths, instead of moving eastward to join him, were thinking of awaiting the attack of the dreaded foe in their own territory behind the Loire. In this unforeseen perplexity, Aetius availed himself of the services of Avitus, a Roman noble of Auvergne, and a *persona grata* at the court of Theodoric. His visit to the Gothic king proved successful.

“He aroused their wrath, making it subservient to the purposes of Rome, and marched in the midst of the skin-clothed warriors to the sound of the trumpets of Romulus”.

Meanwhile the consternation within the city of Orleans went on increasing, as the citizens saw their walls crumbling into ruin beneath the blows of the battering-rams of Attila. One day, when they were fervently praying in the church, Anianus said, “Look forth from the ramparts and see if God’s mercy yet succors us”. They gazed forth from the wall, but beheld no man. He said, “Pray in faith : the Lord will liberate you today”. They went on praying; again he bade them mount the walls, and again they saw no help approaching. He said to them the third time, “If ye pray in faith, the Lord will speedily be at hand to help you”. Then they with weeping and loud lamentation implored the mercy of the Lord. When their prayer was ended, a third time, at the command of that old man, they mounted the “wall, and looking forth they saw from afar, as it were, a cloud rising out of the ground. When they brought him word of it he said, “It is the help of God.” In the meanwhile, as the walls were now trembling under the stroke of the rams, and were already on the point of falling into ruin, lo! Aetius and Theodoric, the king of the Goths, and Thorismund, his son, come running up to the city, turn the ranks of the enemy, cast him out, and drive him far away”. It was apparently on the very day fixed between the bishop and the general (the 24th of June) that this relief came.

Foiled in his attempt to take Orleans and to turn the line of the Loire, Attila, with his unwieldy host, began to retreat towards the Rhine. It is the weakness of those marauding warriors of whom he may be considered the type, that their recoil must be as rapid as their onset. A ruined and devastated country cannot be compelled to furnish the subsistence for lack of which it is itself perishing. Everywhere along the line of march are thousands of bitter wrongs waiting for revenge. And the marauders themselves to whom pillage, not patriotism or discipline, has been the one inspiring motive, and the common bond of union, when the hope of further pillage fails, are each secretly revolving the same thought, how to leave the ravaged country as soon as possible with their plunder undiminished.

Doubtless Aetius and Theodoric were hovering on Attila’s rear, neglecting no opportunity of casual vengeance on the stragglers from the host, and endeavoring to force him to battle at every point where, from the nature of the country, he would be compelled to fight at a disadvantage. But we hear no details of his retreat till he reached the city of Troyes, 114 Roman miles from Orleans. The Bishop of Troyes was the venerable Lupus, a man who was by this time nearly 70 years of age, and who, in common with St. Germanus, had greatly distinguished himself by his opposition to the Pelagian heresy, which he had combated in Britain as well as in Gaul. Troyes was an open city, undefended by walls or arsenals, and the immense swarm of the Huns and their allies who came clamoring round it were hungering for spoil and chafed with disappointment at their failure before Orleans. Lupus, as we are told in the *Acta Sanctorum*, betook himself to his only weapon, prayer, and thereby successfully defended his city from the assaults of the enemy. The ecclesiastical biographer seems to be purposely enigmatic and obscure, but there are touches in the story which look like truth. It appears that Attila, who may have been partly swayed by the remembrance that the allies were close upon his track, and that a night of pillage would have been a bad preparation of his troops for the coming battle, was also impressed—“fierce wild beast as he was”—by something which seemed not altogether of this earth in the face and demeanor of Lupus, something unlike the servile and sordid diplomatists of Byzantium who had hitherto been his chief exemplars of

Christianity. In granting the bishop's prayer for the immunity of his city from pillage, he made one stipulation, that, "for the safety of himself and his own army the holy man should go with them and see the streams of the Rhine, after which he promised that he would dismiss him in peace. And so it was; as soon as they arrived at the river he offered him a free passage back, did not hinder his return, sent guides to show him the way; and even earnestly besought, by the mouth of the interpreter Hunagaisus, that the bishop would pray for him".

This Hunagaisus is undoubtedly the same minister with whom we have made acquaintance in the Hunnish camp under the name of Onegesius or Onégesh, and the introduction of his name here in a biography probably composed about the middle of the sixth century, affords some guarantee that we are on the track of a genuine tradition. If so, the thought that a Gaulish theologian was present in the camp of Attila during the scenes which are next to follow, gives a fresh interest to the picture, some of the details of which he may himself have described.

For in the interval between Attila's arrival before Troyes, and his dismissal of Lupus on the banks of the Rhine, occurred that great clash of armed nations which decided the question whether the West of Europe was to belong to Turanian or to Aryan nationalities. Posterity has chosen to call it the battle of Châlons, but there is good reason to think that it was fought fifty miles distant from Châlons-sur-Marne, and that it would be more correctly named the battle of Troyes, or, to speak with complete accuracy, the battle of *Mery-sur-Seine*

By what preceding arts of strategy the campaign was marked, whether Attila willingly offered battle or was so sorely harassed in his retreat that he was unable to decline it, we know not, except that we read of a skirmish between the Franks and Gepidae on the night preceding the general engagement. It was probably in the early days of July that the two great armies at length came together. What followed shall be told in the (freely rendered) words of Jordanes himself, who throws all his heart into the narration, rightly feeling that this death-grapple with the enemies of Rome was in some sense the mightiest deed that his kinsmen had achieved, and sympathizing, notwithstanding his own Ostrogothic descent, with Theodoric the Visigothic antagonist of Attila, rather than with Walamir his Ostrogothic feudatory.

After enumerating in the passage already quoted the various nationalities which fought under the banner of Aetius, he continues, "All come together therefore into the Catalaunian, which are also called the Maurician plains, 100 Gallic *leugae* in length and 70 in breadth. Now the *leuga* is equivalent to one Roman mile and a half. So then that district of the world becomes the parade ground of innumerable nationalities. Both the armies which there meet are of the mightiest; nothing is done by underhand machinations, but everything by fair and open fight. What worthy reason could be assigned for the deaths of so many thousands? What hatred had crept into so many breasts and bidden them take up arms against one another? It is surely proved that the race of man live but for the sake of Kings; since the mad onset of one man's mind could cause the slaughter of so many nations, and in a moment, by the caprice of one arrogant king, the fruit of nature's toil through so many centuries could be destroyed.

‘ Chapter 37.

"But before relating the actual order of the fight, it seems necessary to explain some of the preliminary movements of the war, because famous as the battle was, it was no less manifold and complicated. For Sangiban, king of the Alans, foreboding future disaster, had promised to surrender himself to Attila, and to bring into obedience to him the city of Orleans where he was then quartered. When Theodoric and Aetius had knowledge of this, they built great mounds against the city and destroyed it before the coming of Attila. Upon Sangiban himself they set a close watch, and stationed him with his own proper tribe in the very midst of their auxiliaries. Attila meanwhile, struck by this occurrence, distrusting his own powers,

fearing to engage in the conflict, and secretly considering the expediency of flight, which was more grievous to him than death itself, resolved to enquire as to the future from the augurs. These men, according to their wont, first poured over the bowels of some sheep, then pondered the direction of the veins in some scraped bones, and at last gave forth their augury, "Ill fortune to the Huns." They qualified it however with this crumb of comfort, "that the chief leader on the opposite side should fall in the midst of victory, and so mar the triumph of his followers." To Attila the death of Aetius [whom he supposed to be intended by the words "the chief leader of the enemy"] seemed to be worth purchasing even by the defeat of his army, yet being naturally rendered anxious by such an answer, and being a man of much address in warlike matters, he determined, with some fear and trembling, to join battle about the ninth hour of the day [3 p.m.], so that if his affairs turned out ill, impending night might come to his aid...."

‘Chapter 38.

"Now this was the configuration of the field of battle. It rose [on one side] into a decided undulation which might be called a hill; and as both parties wished to get the not inconsiderable advantage of the ground which this eminence conferred, the Huns took possession of the right-hand portion of it with their troops; the Romans and Visigoths of the left with their auxiliaries. Leaving for a while the fight for the possession of this ridge [let us describe the order of the main battle]. On the right wing stood Theodoric with the Visigoths, on the left Aetius with the Romans. In the middle they placed Sangiban, the leader of the Alans,—a piece of military caution to enclose him, of whose disposition they were none too confident, in a mass of loyal soldiers. For the man in the way of whose flight you have interposed a sufficient obstacle, easily accepts the necessity of fighting.

"The line of the Huns was drawn up on a different principle, for in their center stood Attila with all his bravest warriors. In this arrangement the king consulted his own personal safety, hoping that by taking his place in the very heart and strength of his own people he at least should be delivered from the impending danger. Upon the wings of his army hovered the many nations and tribes whom he had subjected to his dominion. Preeminent among these was the host of the Ostrogoths, led by the three brothers, Walamir, Theodemir, and Widemir, men of nobler birth than the king himself whom they then obeyed, since the mighty line of the Amals was represented by them. There too, at the head of the countless warriors of the Gepidae, was their king Ardaric, that man of valor and of fame who for his extraordinary fidelity towards Attila was admitted into his inmost counsels. For Attila, who had well weighed his sagacious character, loved him and Walamir the Ostrogoth, above all his other subject princes; Walamir, the safe keeper of a secret, the pleasant in speech, the ignorant of guile, and Ardaric, who, as we have said, was illustrious both by his loyalty and his wise advice. To these two nations Attila believed, not undeservedly, that he might safely entrust the battle against their Visigothic kindred. As for all the rest, the ruck of kings—if I may call them so—and the leaders of diverse nationalities, these, like subaltern officers, watched each nod of Attila; and, when a look of his eye summoned them, in fear and trembling they would gather round him waiting in submissive silence to receive his commands, or at any rate (i.e. if their subservience was less abject) they would carry out whatever he ordered. But Attila alone, king of all the kings, was over all in command, and had the care of all upon his shoulders.

"As I before said, the fight began with a struggle for the possession of some rising ground. Attila directed his troops to occupy the summit of the hill, but he was anticipated by Thorismund and Aetius, who [from the other side] struggled up to the highest point, and then, having the advantage of the hill in their favor, easily threw into confusion the advancing Huns".

‘Chapter 39.

“Then Attila, seeing his army somewhat disturbed by this skirmish, thought the time a suitable one for confirming their courage by an address.

‘SPEECH OF ATTILA.

“After your victories over so many nations, after a whole world subdued, if ye only stand fast this day, I should have deemed it a fond thing to whet your spirits with words, as though ye were yet ignorant of your business. Let a new general or an inexperienced army try that method. It were beneath my dignity to utter, and beyond your obligation to listen to, any of the commonplaces of war. For what other occupation are you practised in, if not in fighting? And to the strong man what is sweeter, than with his own right hand to seek for his revenge? It is one of the greatest boons which nature gives us to glut our souls with vengeance. Let us therefore go forward with cheerfulness to attack the enemy, since they who strike the blow have ever the boldest hearts. You who are united under my sway—I tell you to despise these jarring nationalities, leagued together for the momentary purpose of self-defense by an alliance which is in itself an index of their terror. Lo! ere they have yet felt our onset, they are carried to and fro by their fear; they look out for the rising ground, they are exciting themselves over the occupation of every little hillock, and bewailing too late their own rashness; they are clamoring for ramparts in these open plains. Known to you right well are the flimsy arms and weak frames of the Roman soldiers; I will not say at the first wound, at the first speck of dust on their armor they lose heart. While they are solemnly forming their battle array and locking their shields together into the *testudo*, do you rush into the conflict with that surpassing courage which it is your wont to show, and, despising the Roman line, charge at the Alans, press heavily on the Visigoths. It is there that we must look for speedy victory, for they are the key of the position. Cut the sinews and the limbs will be at once relaxed; nor can the body stand if you have taken away its bones.

“O ye Huns, raise your hearts battle-high and let your wonted fury swell your veins. Now put forth all your cunning; now use all your arms. Let him who is wounded seek still for at least one enemy’s death; let him who is unhurt revel in the slaughter of the foe. Him who is fated to conquer, no dart will touch; him who is doomed to die, fate will find in the midst of slothful peace. And, last of all, why should Fortune have set her mark upon the Huns as conquerors of so many nations, unless she was preparing them for the delights of this battle too? Who opened the way across the pool of Maeotis, for so many centuries an impenetrable secret from our ancestors? Who made armed men bow before them while they were still unarmed? Yonder motley host will never endure to look upon the faces of the Huns. The event cannot mock my hopes; this, this is the field of victory which so many previous successes have avouched us of. I shall be the first to hurl my weapon against the enemy, and if anyone can linger inactive when Attila fights, he is a thing without a soul, and ought to be buried out of hand”.

Their hearts were warmed at these words, and all rushed headlong into the fray.

‘Chapter 40.

“The position of their affairs was not without its suggestions of fear, but the presence of their king removed all tendency to delay even from the most hesitating.

Hand to hand the two armies were soon engaged. It was a battle,—ruthless, manifold, immense, obstinate—such as antiquity in all its stories of similar encounters has nought parallel to, such as, if a man failed to see, no other marvel that he might behold in the course of his life would compensate for the omission. For if we may believe the report of our elders, a brook which was gliding down between low banks through the aforesaid plain, receiving the

blood which gushed from thousands of wounds, was, not by showers of rain, but by that ghastly intermingling, swollen from a brook into a torrent. And those whom parching thirst, the consequence of their wounds, drove to its banks, found that murder was mixed with the draught. A miserable fate for them who drank of the gore which their own wounds poured forth.

Here the King Theodoric, while he was galloping backwards and forwards, cheering on his army, was thrown from his horse, and being trampled under the feet of his own party, thus ended his life in a ripe old age. Others however assert that he was smitten by a javelin from the hand of Andages, of the nation of the Ostrogoths who were then following the lead of Attila. This was the event which Attila's soothsayers had foretold to him in their divinations, though he understood them to speak of Aetius.

'Then the Visigoths, splitting off from the Alans, which rushed upon the squadrons of the Huns, and had well-slaughtered Attila himself, but he prudently fled, and straightway enclosed himself and his followers within the defenses of his camp, upon which he had placed the wagons by way of rampart. It seemed a frail bulwark to be sure, still they clung to it as their last chance of life; and yet these were the men whose desperate onset a little while ago stone walls could not stand against. Meanwhile Thorismund, the son of King Theodoric, the same who had taken part with Aetius in the occupation of the hill, and in driving down the enemy from that higher ground, lost his way in the blind night, and thinking that he was rejoining his own men on their line of march, came unawares upon the wagons of the enemy. Here, while he was fighting bravely, his horse was killed under him by a wound in the head. He fell to the ground, but was ° rescued by the care of his people, and persuaded to desist from the unequal encounter. Aetius in the same way was separated from his host in the confusion of the night, and went wandering through the midst of the enemy, trembling lest some untoward event should have occurred to the Goths, and ever asking the way, till at length he arrived at the camp of his allies, and passed the remainder of the night under the shelter of their shields.

'Next morning when day dawned, and the allied generals beheld the vast plains covered with corpses, but saw that the Huns did not venture to sally forth, they concluded that the victory was theirs. They knew perfectly well that it could have been no common slaughter which had compelled Attila to fly in confusion from the battle-field; and yet he did not act like one in abject prostration, but clashed his arms, sounded his trumpets, and continually threatened a fresh attack.

'As a lion, close pressed by the hunters, ramps up and down before the entrance to his cave, and neither dares to make a spring, nor yet ceases to frighten all the neighborhood with his roarings, so did that most warlike king, though hemmed in, trouble his conquerors. The Goths and Romans accordingly called a council of war and deliberated what was to be done with their worsted foe. As he had no store of provisions, and as he had so posted his archers within the boundaries of his camp as to rain a shower of missiles on an advancing assailant, they decided not to attempt a storm, but to weary him out by a blockade. It is said however that seeing the desperate condition of his affairs, the aforesaid King, high-minded still in the supreme crisis of his fate, had constructed a funeral pyre of horses' saddles, determined, if the enemy should break into his camp, to hurl himself headlong into the flames, that none should boast himself and say, "I have wounded Attila," nor that the lord of so many nations should fall alive into the hands of his enemies.

'Chapter 41.

'During the delays of this blockade the Visigoths were looking for their old king, and marveling at his absence from the scene of victory. After a long search they found him, as it wont to be the case with brave men, lying there where the bodies were thickest; and singing

their songs in his honor, they bore away his corpse from the gaze of the enemy. Then should you have seen the Gothic companies lifting up their untuned voices in a wild strain of lamentation, and, while the battle still raged around them, giving all heed to the exact observance of the rites of burial. Tears were shed, but they were the tears which are rightly paid to brave men dead. The death had been on our [the Gothic] side, but the Hun himself bore witness that it had been a glorious one, and even Attila's pride might bow when he saw the corpse of such a king borne out to burial with all his kingly ornaments about him.

'The Goths, while still paying the last honors to Theodoric, by the clash of their weapons hailed majesty of a new king, and the brave and glorious Thorismund, decked with that title, followed the funeral of his dearly-loved father as became a son. Then, when that was finished, grief for the loss which he had sustained, and the impulse of his own fiery valor, urged him to avenge the death of his father upon the Hunnish host. First, however, he consulted Aetius the patrician, as the senior general and a man of ripened experience, what step he would advise to be next taken. He, fearing lest if the Huns were destroyed root and branch, the Roman Empire might be still more hardly pressed by the Goths, earnestly tendered this advice, "that he should return to his own capital and grasp the kingdom which his father had left; lest otherwise his brothers should seize on his father's treasures, and so make the realm of the Visigoths their own, whereupon he would have to commence a laborious campaign, and one in which victory would be a wretched business, since it would be over his own flesh and blood."

'Thorismund received this advice as the best thing for his own interest, without perceiving the duplicity to which lurked beneath it, and leaving the Huns, he returned to his own district in Gaul. So does human frailty, if it becomes entangled in suspicion, often lose irretrievably the opportunity of achieving great results.

'In this most famous battle, which was fought between the bravest nations in the world, it is reported that 162,000 men were slain on both sides, not including 15,000 of Gepidae and Franks, who, falling foul of one another the night before the battle, perished by mutually inflicted wounds, the Franks fighting on the side of the Romans, the Gepidae on that of the Huns.

'When Attila learned the departure of the Goths, the event was so unexpected that he surmised it to be a stratagem of the enemy, and kept his troops within the camp for some time longer. But when he found that the absence of the enemy was followed by a long time of silence, his mind again rose with the hope of victory, future joys unfolded themselves before him, and the courage of this mighty king returned again to its old level. Meanwhile Thorismund, who had been clothed with the regal majesty on the Catalaunian plains on the very place where his father had fallen, entered Toulouse, and here, notwithstanding that his brothers had a strong party among the chiefs, he so prudently managed the commencement of his reign, that no dispute was raised as to the succession".

So far Jordanes. The battle then was lost but not won : lost as far as Attila's invasion of Gaul was concerned, but not won for the Roman Empire by the destruction of its most dreaded foe. In reading the story of Attila's escape from Aetius, one is naturally reminded of Alaric's escape from Stilicho, forty-eight years before, and of the imputations then thrown out as to the connivance of the Roman general. And the same remark which was made then may be to some extent applicable now. With troops of such uncertain temper, and, in this case, with such imperfect cohesion as the greater part of the Roman auxiliaries showed, it might be dangerous to animate the vast host of Attila with the irresistible courage of despair. In all ages, from Sphacteria to Saratoga, and from Saratoga to Sedan, the final operation of compelling the surrender of a beaten army, the landing, so to speak, of the fisherman's prize, has been an operation requiring some nicety of generalship and a pretty high degree of confidence in the discipline of the victorious troops. Even the clash of arms and the blast of trumpets in the camp

of the Huns—the lashing of the lion’s tail, and the deep thunder of his roar—may have struck some terror into the hearts of his hunters. But after all, Jordanes is probably not very wide of the mark when he imputes both to Aetius and to Thorismund a want of whole-heartedness in securing the fruits of victory.

Aetius had not, most probably, such accurately wrought-out views of the balance of power as the historian imputes to him, nor such an over-mastering dread of Gothic bravery as their countryman supposed. But, in the very outset of his career, his life had been passed alternately in the Hunnish camp and the Roman palace; he had been “mingled among the heathen and learned their works”. He had used the help of his barbarian friends in the marshes of Ravenna and under the walls of Toulouse. Reasons of sentiment as well as of policy may have made him reluctant to aid in obliterating the very name of the Huns from the earth. And above all, as the events of the next few years showed, he himself was safe only so long as he was indispensable. There was a dark and rotten-hearted Augustus skulking in the palace at Ravenna, who endured the ascendancy of Aetius only because he trembled at the name of Attila.

On the Gothic side there were also good reasons for not pushing the victory too far. It scarcely needed the whisper of the Roman general to remind Thorismund how uncertain was his succession to the royalty of his father. The kingly office among the Visigoths became, in days subsequent to these, a purely elective dignity. If at this time some notion of hereditary right, or at least of hereditary preference, hovered round the family of the dead king, it was by no means clear that one son alone must succeed, nor that son the eldest. All was still vague and indeterminate in reference to these barbaric sovereignties. In point of fact Thorismund, though he now succeeded to the throne, was, only two years later, deprived of crown and life by his brother Theodoric II, who, after a peaceful and prosperous reign, succumbed in like fashion to the fratricidal hand of his successor Euric. Every motive therefore of individual ambition and far-seeing patriotism concurred in recommending to Thorismund and his chiefs a speedy return to Toulouse, that the same army which brought the tidings of the death of Theodoric might also announce the election of his successor.

This is all that history can say with unhesitating voice concerning the death of the Visigothic king and the accession of his son on the Mauriac plain. Archeology, however, offers a contribution to our knowledge, which, if not raised beyond the reach of all contradiction, is at least curious and interesting. In 1842, a laborer digging for gravel near the little village of Pouan, on the south bank of the Aube, and about ten miles from Mery-sur-Seine, found at a depth of nearly a yard below the surface “some human bones, two rusted blades, and several jewels and golden ornaments of considerable weight”. Examined more in detail, the most interesting objects in this find appeared to be

I. A two-edged sword, 2 feet 8 inches long, and 3 inches broad. The point is protected by a little oblong hoop of iron, to prevent it from penetrating into the scabbard, which was probably of wood, and which of course has disappeared.

II. A cutlass, about 22 inches long, and 1 1/2 inch broad. Both of these two weapons have the hilts richly adorned with gold, and at the top a sort of lattice-work of gold and purple glass.

III. A golden necklace, serpent-shaped, weighing three ounces.

IV. A golden armlet, five ounces in weight, with the ends left open, so as to give it elasticity in fitting it on to the forearm.

V. Two golden clasps (*fibulae*) with the same latticework of gold and purple glass which is found on the hilts of the swords.

VI. A golden signet-ring, an ounce-and-a-half in weight, with the word HEVA in Roman capitals on the flat surface.

Some gold buckles and other ornaments, one of which has an inlay of garnets instead of purple glass, complete the treasure-trove, which, having been eventually purchased by the Emperor Napoleon III, was presented by him to the museum of the city of Troyes.

The question arises, "Can we form any probable conjecture whose grave is this in which we find a skeleton surrounded with articles of adornment, worth even now perhaps £100 in intrinsic value, and pointing by the style of their workmanship towards the fifth or sixth century, as the time of their fashioning, and towards a Gothic or Frankish artificer as their maker!"

M. Peigné Delacourt, to whom we are indebted for these details, answers unhesitatingly, "We can. It is probably the tomb of Theodoric I, king of the Visigoths". But how reconcile such a theory with the narrative of Jordanes? To accomplish this, M. Delacourt imagines a few unrecorded details, which of course no one is bound to accept, but which certainly seem to bring us a little nearer to that tremendous battle-field, dim with the haze of fourteen centuries. "When the servants of Theodoric", so his imagined story runs, "found that their king was wounded to death, they dragged him a little aside from the vast and manifold and ruthless conflict. They dug a shallow trench in the gravelly soil, and there they laid the bruised and trampled body of the snowy-bearded warrior. His golden-hilted sword was still by his side, his cutlass hung from the baldric, the purple robe of his royalty was fastened over his shoulders by the golden fibula. Round his neck was the golden torque, his forearm was clasped by the unclosed bracelet, on his finger was the ring of gold bearing the mysterious name *Heva*, perhaps a remembrance of his dead wife, perhaps a symbol of his kingship. All these things were buried with him. The only object of his henchmen was to find a temporary resting-place for their lord. When the tide of battle should have rolled away from that spot, they would come again and disinter him and carry him southwards, to be laid with proper pomp in Gothic Toulouse by the Garonne. Such was their thought, but Fortune, in making void their counsel, worked a strange reprisal for the barbarity practised in the burial of Alaric. As his tomb was dug by the unwilling hands of captives, whose instant death insured their secrecy, so the few faithful friends of Theodoric were all slain in the terrible turmoil of war which raged round the spot where he had fallen, and thus his grave remained unmarked for 1391 years. The battle was won, and the cry was raised, "Where is the body of the king?" They found it at last, says Jordanes, after a long search, lying under a heap of dead. Who knows if they really did find it? In those hot July days it might not be an easy task to identify a body gashed with wounds and lying under a pile of slain. Thorismund's interest was obviously to get his father's funeral and his own elevation to the sovereignty accomplished as speedily as possible. Perhaps he did not insist too punctiliously on the recovery of the right corpse out of all that vast slaughter-house, the one strangely missing body out of all those acres upon acres of dead Romans, Goths, and Huns".

And so, M. Delacourt suggests, the body round which the Visigothic warriors circled, singing their wild chorus of lamentation, may have been not that of Theodoric at all. He all the while lay in that shallow trench in the gravel-bed at Pouan, not to be disturbed there till Jacques Bonhomme, in blouse and sabots, came with his pick-axe in 1842 to break the repose of centuries. The story is well imagined, and certainly cannot be pronounced impossible. What militates most against it is that Jordanes says that the body was borne out to burial *with its ornaments*. In its favor is a certain peculiar silence of his concerning the actual interment of the corpse. He may have felt that it was improbable that the Goths should have left their beloved chieftain lying there in alien territory, in the cold Catalaunian plains, and yet no tradition authorized him to say that they took him back to the sepulcher of his predecessors at Toulouse, a course which Thorismund may have had sufficient reasons for emphatically prohibiting.

Finally, whether this body and these ornaments be Theodoric's, or belong to one of the 'turba regum,' who swarmed around the car of Attila; in either case their discovery, coupled as it appears to be with that of numerous other human remains in the not distant village of Martroy, seems to add great probability to the theory that here and not at Châlons (two days' march to the northward) was fought the great battle which decided that Europe was to belong to the German and the Roman, not to the Tartar race.

CHAPTER IV.

ATTILA IN ITALY.

IN the summer of 451, Attila, with his beaten army, recrossed the Rhine, and dismissed the courageous Lupus with a safe-conduct back to Troyes, bidding his chief minister and interpreter Onégesh intercede with the holy man that he might receive the benefit of his prayers.

All that autumn and winter we may imagine him dwelling, moody and sore of heart, within his wooden stockade upon the plains of Hungary, receiving the homage of his nobles as he drank to them out of his goblet of ivy-wood, scowling while all around were laughing at the gabble and the jests of Zercon, or passing his fingers through the dark locks of Ernak, while he whispered to himself, 'This boy shall build up the house of Attila.'

With spring, the spring of 452, came back the longing for 'the joys of strife' and the determination to wipe out the shame of the Mauriac plains on some fresh battle-field. But this time he would not try conclusions with the hardy Visigoth. Aetius, Valentinian, Italy, should bear the sole weight of his revenge. He marched, probably through the passes of the Julian Alps and down the valley of the Frigidus, by the route already trodden by Theodosius and Alaric, and stood, perhaps before the spring had ripened into summer, before the walls of Aquileia.

This town was then, both as a fortress and a commercial emporium, second to none in Northern Italy. It was situated at the northernmost point of the Gulf of Hadria, about twenty miles north-west of Trieste, and the place where it once stood is now in the Austrian dominions, just over the border which separates them from the kingdom of Italy. In the year 181 B. C. a Roman colony had been sent to this far corner of Italy to serve as an outpost against some intrusive tribes, called by the vague name of Gauls, who were pressing into the Adriatic shores over the passes of the Carnic Alps, those Alps which are so familiar to the sojourners in Venice as 'blue Friuli's mountains.' The colonists built their town about four miles from the sea by the banks of the river Aquilo (the River of the North Wind, now the Isonzo) from whence it probably derived its name. Possessing a good harbor, with which it was connected by a navigable river, Aquileia gradually became the chief entrepôt for the commerce between Italy and what are now the Illyrian provinces of Austria. Under the Emperors, and especially after Trajan's conquest of Dacia, these provinces, rich in mineral and agricultural wealth, and enjoying long intervals of settled government, attained to a high degree of prosperity, and had the glory of seeing many Illyrian brows bound with the Imperial diadem. Naturally Aquileia rose in importance with the countries whose broker she was. She sent the wine, the oil, the costly woven fabrics of the Mediterranean provinces over the Julian and Carnic Alps into Pannonia and Noricum, and she received in return their cattle, their hides, amber from the shores of the Baltic, and long files of slaves taken in the border wars which were being perpetually waged with the Germanic and Slavonic tribes beyond the Danube and the Carpathians. The third century after the Christian era was probably the most flourishing period of her commercial greatness, some of the springs of which must have been dried up by the troubles with the barbarians after the loss of the province of Dacia. Still, as far as can be ascertained from the language of contemporary authors, she was, at the time at which we have

now arrived, entitled to contest with Milan and Ravenna the distinction of being the most important city of Northern Italy. Ecclesiastical had followed commercial supremacy, and the Bishop of Aquileia ruled as Metropolitan over the provinces of Western Illyricum and Venetia, so that, between the years 350 and 450, Silistria on the lower Danube and Verona in the heart of Lombardy, both (though not both at the same time) owned his spiritual sway.

In a military point of view the city held a yet higher place. The strength which she derived from the river, the sea, perhaps the intervening marshes, had been increased by the elaborate fortifications of successive emperors. The savage Maximin (dethroned by the Senate in 238) had in vain attempted to take it, and had eventually been murdered under its walls by his mutinous soldiers. Equally vain had been the efforts of the army of Julian more than a century later, though they built huge wooden towers and floated them on rafts down the stream past the walls of the city. The inhabitants set the towers on fire, and were continuing a vigorous resistance when the news which arrived of the death of Constantius II, in whose cause they were fighting, released them from the necessity of further defence, and justified them in opening their gates to Julian, now sole and lawful Emperor. Rightly therefore might Aquileia have claimed to herself the proud title of a virgin fortress; and we can now understand why it was that Aetius, who apparently regarded the defence of all the rest of Northern Italy as hopeless, left troops—we know not how many, nor for how long a siege prepared—to hold the great fortress by the Natiso against the enemy.

The Roman soldiers of the garrison were of unusually good quality and high courage, and under their guidance the town made so long and stubborn a defence that Attila's soldiers began to weary of their work. Ominous murmurs began to be heard in the camp, and it seemed as if Aquileia was about to add another and more terrible name to the list of her unsuccessful assailants. But just then, while Attila was pacing round her walls, moodily deliberating with himself whether to go or stay, the flapping of wings and the cry of birds overhead arrested his attention. He looked up, and saw the white storks which had built their nests in the roofs of the city, rising high in the air, and inviting their callow young to follow them, evidently with the intention of leaving the beleaguered town, and contrary to their usual habits, betaking themselves to the open country. The mother-wit of the Hunnish chieftain caught at the expressive augury. 'Lo, there!' he cried to his grumbling soldiers. 'See those birds, whose instinct tells them of futurity; they are leaving the city which they know will perish, the fortress which they know will fall. It is no mere chance, no vague uncertainty which guides their movements. They are changed from all their natural love of home and human kind by their knowledge of the coming terror.' The wild hearts of the Huns were stirred by the speech of their king, and took courage from the fresh voice of Nature on their side. They again pushed up their engines to the walls, they plied the slings and catapults with renewed energy, and, as it were in an instant, they found themselves masters of the town.

In proportion to the stubbornness of the defence was the severity of the punishment meted out to Aquileia. The Roman soldiers were, no doubt, all slain. Attila was not a man to encumber himself with prisoners. The town was absolutely given up to the rage, the lust, and the greed of the Tartar horde who had so long chafed around its walls. The only incident of the capture which enables us to grasp more definitely these commonplaces of barbaric conquest, is the story of a noble lady, named Digna, eminent for beauty and virtue, whose house was situated upon the walls of the city. Close to her house was a high tower, overlooking the glassy waters (*'vitreis fluentis'*) of the Natiso. When she saw that the city was taken, in order to save her honor from the scornful outrages of those filthiest of foes (*'sordidissimis hostibus'*), she ascended the tower, and having covered her head in the old Roman fashion, plunged into the stream below.

When the barbarians could plunder no more, they probably used fire, for the very

buildings of Aquileia perished, so that, as Jordanes tells us, in his time, a century later than the siege, scarcely the vestiges of it yet remained. A few houses may have been left standing, and others must have slowly gathered round them, for the Patriarch of Aquileia retained all through the middle ages considerable remains of his old ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and a large and somewhat stately cathedral was reared there in the eleventh century. But the City of the North Wind never really recovered from the blow. Her star had fallen from the firmament, and from this time she almost disappears from history. At the present day two or three mean-looking little villages cower amid the vast enclosure, which is chiefly filled with maize-fields and cherry-trees, while the high-pitched roof of the Duomo, with its tall detached campanile, dominates the plain.

The terrible invaders, made more wrathful and more terrible by the resistance of Aquileia, streamed on through the trembling cities of Venetia. Each earlier stage in the itinerary shows a town blotted out by their truly Tartar genius for destruction. At the distance of thirty-one miles from Aquileia stood the flourishing colony of Julia Concordia, so named, probably, in commemoration of the universal peace which, 480 years before, Augustus had established in the world. Concordia was treated as Aquileia, and only an insignificant little village now remains to show where it once stood. At another interval of thirty-one miles stood Altinum, with its white villas clustering round the curves of its lagunes, and rivalling Baiae in its luxurious charms. Altinum was effaced as Concordia and as Aquileia. Yet another march of thirty-two miles brought the squalid invaders to Patavium, proud of its imagined Trojan origin, and, with better reason, proud of having given birth to Livy. Patavium, too, was levelled with the ground. True it has not, like its sister towns, remained in the nothingness to which Attila reduced it. It is now

‘Many domed Padua proud,’

but all its great buildings date from the middle ages. Only a few broken friezes and a few inscriptions in its museum exist as memorials of the classical Patavium.

As the Huns marched further away from Aquileia, and the remembrance of their detention under its ramparts became less vivid, they were less eager to spend their strength in mere blind rage of demolition. Vicenza, Verona, Brescia, Bergamo, all opened their gates at their approach, for the terror which the fate of Aquileia had inspired was on every heart. In these towns, and in Milan and Pavia (Ticinum), which followed their example, the Huns enjoyed doubtless to the full their wild revel of lust and spoliation, but they left the buildings unharmed, and they carried captive the inhabitants instead of murdering them.

At Milan a characteristic incident, which rests on fair if not contemporaneous evidence, is said to have occurred. The Hunnish king took up his quarters at the Imperial Palace, the stately edifice in which Constantine signed the edict for the legalization of Christianity, the same edifice in which, eighty years later, Theodosius expired, sick at heart for the ruin which he saw impending over the Empire. Besides other works of painting and sculpture with which the palace was no doubt liberally adorned, Attila beheld a picture representing ‘The Triumph of Rome over the Barbarians’. Here were the two Augusti of the East and West seated on their golden thrones, and here in the front of the picture were the figures of the vanquished Scythians, some slain, others crouching in abject submission before the feet of the Emperors. Even so may the King of Prussia have looked, in the long galleries of Versailles, upon the glowing battle-pieces in which the genius of Lebrun and of Vernet commemorates the prowess of France and the humiliations of Germany. Attila took the insult as aimed at his own ancestors, though it is almost certain that the ‘Scythians’ whom any painter at Milan delineated would be Goths rather than Huns. With that grim humour which flashed forth now and again upon the sullen background of his character, he called for an artist whom he commissioned to paint, perhaps on the opposite wall, a rival picture. In this, king Attila sat on his throne, and the

two Emperors bowed low before him. One still bore upon his shoulders a large miller's sack filled with pieces of gold, the other was already pouring out the contents of a similar sack at his feet. This reference to the tributary obligations which Attila had forced upon both Rome and Constantinople harmonizes with the language of Priscus, and seems to invest the story with a semblance of probability. Would that amidst the subsequent changes of fortune which have befallen the fair city of Milan, notwithstanding the despair of the Ostrogoths and the rage of Barbarossa, that picture might have survived to tell us what the great Hun looked like in his pride, the artistic Theodosius and the sensual Valentinian in their humiliation.

The valley of the Po was now wasted to the heart's content of the invaders. Should they cross the Apennines and blot out Rome as they had blotted out Aquileia from among the cities of the world? This was the great question that was being debated in the Hunnish camp, and strange to say, the voices were not all for war. Already Italy began to strike that strange awe into the hearts of her northern conquerors which so often in later ages has been her best defence. The remembrance of Alaric, cut off by a mysterious death immediately after his capture of Rome, was present in the mind of Attila, and was frequently insisted upon by his counselors, who seem to have had a foreboding that only while he lived would they be great and prosperous.

While this discussion was going forward in the barbarian camp, all voices were hushed, and the attention of all was aroused, by the news of the arrival of an embassy from Rome. What had been going on in that city it is not easy to ascertain. The Emperor seems to have been dwelling there, not at Ravenna. Aetius shows a strange lack of courage or of resource, and we find it difficult to recognize in him the victor of the Mauriac plains. He appears to have been even meditating flight from Italy, and to have thought of persuading Valentinian to share his exile. But counsels a shade less timorous prevailed. Someone suggested that possibly even the Hun might be satiated with havoc, and that an embassy might assist to mitigate the remainder of his resentment. Accordingly ambassadors were sent in the once mighty name of 'the Emperor and the Senate and People of Rome' to crave for peace, and these were the men who were now ushered into the camp of Attila.

The envoys had been well chosen to satisfy that punctilious pride which insisted that only men of the highest dignity among the Romans should be sent to treat with the Lord of Scythia and Germany. Avienus, who had, two years before, worn the robes of consul, was one of the ambassadors. Trigetius, who had wielded the power of a prefect, and who, seventeen years before, had been dispatched upon a similar mission to Genseric the Vandal, was another. But it was not upon these men, but upon their greater colleague that the eyes of all the barbarian warriors and statesmen were fixed. Leo, Bishop of Rome, had come on behalf of his flock, to sue for peace from the idolater.

Leo I the Great

The two men who had thus at last met by the banks of the Mincio are certainly the grandest figures whom the fifth century can show to us, at any rate since Alaric vanished from the scene. Attila we by this time know well enough : adequately to describe Pope Leo I, we should have to travel too far into the region of ecclesiastical history. Chosen pope in the year 440, he was now about half way through his long pontificate, one of the few which have nearly rivalled the twenty-five years traditionally assigned to St. Peter. A firm disciplinarian, not to say a persecutor, he had caused the Priscillianists of Spain and the Manichees of Rome to feel his heavy hand. A powerful rather than subtle theologian, he had asserted the claims of Christian common sense as against the endless refinements of Oriental speculation concerning the nature of the Son of God. Like an able Roman general, he had traced in his letters on the Eutychian Controversy the lines of the fortress in which the defenders of the Catholic verity

were thenceforward to entrench themselves, and from which they were to repel the assaults of Monophysites on the one hand, and of Nestorians on the other. These lines had been enthusiastically accepted by the great Council of Chalcedon (held in the year of Attila's Gaulish campaign), and remain from that day to this the authoritative utterance of the Church concerning the mysterious union of the Godhead and the Manhood in the person of Jesus Christ.

And all these, gifts of will, of intellect, and of soul, were employed by Leo with undeviating constancy, with untired energy, in furthering his great aim, the exaltation of the dignity of the Popedom, the conversion of the admitted primacy of the bishops of Rome into an absolute and world-wide spiritual monarchy. Whatever our opinions may be as to the influence of this spiritual monarchy on the happiness of the world, or its congruity with the character of the Teacher in whose words it professed to root itself, we cannot withhold a tribute of admiration from the high temper of this Roman bishop, who in the ever-deepening degradation of his country still despaired not, but had the courage and endurance to work for a far-distant future, who, when the Roman was becoming the common drudge and footstool of all nations, still remembered the proud words, '*Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento!*' and under the very shadow of Attila and Genseric prepared for the city of Romulus a new and spiritual dominion, vaster and more enduring than any which had been won for her by Julius or by Hadrian.

Such were the two men who stood face to face in the summer of 452 upon the plains of Lombardy. The barbarian king had all material power in his hand, and he was working but for a twelve-month. The Pontiff had no power but in the world of intellect, and his fabric was to last fourteen centuries. They met, as has been said, by the banks of the Mincio. Jordanes tells us that it was 'where the river is crossed by many wayfarers coming and going'. Some writers think that these words point to the ground now occupied by the celebrated fortress of Peschiera, close to the point where the Mincio issues from the Lake of Garda. Others place the interview at Governolo, a little village hard by the junction of the Mincio and the Po. If the latter theory be true, and it seems to fit well with the route which would probably be taken by Attila, the meeting took place in Virgil's country, and almost in sight of the very farm where Tityrus and Meliboeus chatted at evening under the beech tree.

Leo's success as an ambassador was complete. Attila laid aside all the fierceness of his anger and promised to return across the Danube, and to live thenceforward at peace with the Romans. But, in his usual style, in the midst of reconciliation he left a loophole for future wrath, for 'he insisted still on this point above all, that Honoria, the sister of the Emperor, and the daughter of the Augusta Placidia, should be sent to him with the portion of the royal wealth which was her due; and he threatened that unless this was done he would lay upon Italy a far heavier punishment than any which it had yet borne.'

But, for the present, at any rate, the tide of devastation was turned, and few events more powerfully impressed the imagination of that new and blended world which was now standing at the threshold of the dying Empire than this retreat of Attila, the dreaded king of kings, before the unarmed successor of St. Peter. Later ages have encrusted the history with legends of their own. The great picture in the Vatican, which represents the abject terror of the Huns in beholding St. Peter and St. Paul in the air championing the faithful city, gives that version of the story which has received eternal currency from the mint-mark impressed by the genius of Raphael. As mythology has added to the wonder, so criticism has sought of later days to detract from it. The troops of Marcian, the Eastern Emperor, are said to have been in motion. Aetius, according to one account, had at length bestirred himself and cut off many of the Huns. But on carefully examining the best authorities we find the old impression strengthened, that neither miracle, nor pious fraud, nor military expediency determined the retreat of Attila. He

was already predisposed to moderation by the counsels of his ministers. The awe of Rome was upon him and upon them, and he was forced incessantly to ponder the question, 'What if I conquer like Alaric, to die like him?'. Upon these doubts and ponderings of his supervened the stately presence of Leo, a man of holy life, firm will, dauntless courage—that, be sure, Attila perceived in the first moments of their interview—and, besides this, holding an office honored and venerated through all the civilized world. The Barbarian yielded to his spell as he had yielded to that of Lupus of Troyes, and, according to a tradition which, it must be admitted, is not very well authenticated, he jocularly excused his unaccustomed gentleness by saying that 'he knew how to conquer men, but the lion and the wolf (Leo and Lupus) had learned how to conquer him'.

The renown and the gratitude which Leo I earned by this interposition placed the Papal Chair many steps higher in the estimation both of Rome and of the world. In the dark days which were coming, the senate and people of Rome were not likely to forget that when the successor of Caesar had been proved useless, the successor of Peter had been a very present help. And thus it is no paradox to say that indirectly the king of the Huns contributed, more perhaps than any other historical personage, towards the creation of that mighty factor in the politics of mediaeval Italy, the Pope-King of Rome.

His share in the creation of another important actor on the same stage, the Republic of Venice, has yet to be noticed. The tradition which asserts that it and its neighbor cities in the Lagunes were peopled by fugitives from the Hunnish invasion of 452, is so constant, and in itself so probable, that we seem bound to accept it as substantially true, though contemporary, or nearly contemporary evidence to the fact is utterly wanting.

Origin of Venice

The thought of 'the glorious city in the sea' so dazzles our imaginations when we turn our thoughts towards Venice, that we must take a little pains to free ourselves from the spell, and reproduce the aspect of the desolate islands and far-stretching wastes of sand and sea, to which the fear of Attila drove the delicately-nurtured Roman provincials for a habitation. And as in describing the Hiongnu at their first appearance in history we had to refer to Physical Geography for an account of that vast Asian upland which was their home, so now that we are about to part with the Huns for ever, we must hear what the same science has to tell us of that very different region (the north-eastern corner of Italy) in which they, who came but to destroy, unwittingly built up an empire.

If we examine on the map the well-known and deep recess of the Adriatic Sea, we shall at once be struck by one marked difference between its eastern and its northern shores. For three hundred miles down the Dalmatian coast not one large river, scarcely a considerable stream, descends from the too closely towering Dinaric mountains to the sea. If we turn now to the north-western angle which formed the shore of the Roman province of Venetia, we find the coast-line broken by at least seven streams, two of which are great rivers. Let us enumerate them. Past the desolate site of Aquileia flows forth that *Isonzo*, once called the river of the North Wind, with which we have already made acquaintance. It rises in an all but waterless range of mountains on the edge of Carniola, and flows, milk-white with its Alpine deposits, through the little Austrian county of Goritzia. *Tagliamento* and *Livenza* rise in 'blue Friuli's mountains', and just before they reach the sea encircle the town of Concordia, with which we have also made acquaintance as the second Italian city which Attila destroyed. Rising among the mysterious Dolomites, and flowing through Cadore and Titian's country, then past Belluno and Treviso, comes a longer and more important river, the *Piave*. The shorter but lovely stream of the *Brenta*, rising within a few miles of Trient, and just missing the same Dolomite ancestry, washes with her green and rapid waters the walls of Bassano, full of memories of Ezzelin's

tyrannies, and of a whole family of Venetian painters, and then, running within sight of Padua, empties her waters into the sea a few miles south of Venice. *Adige* comes next, dear to the heart of the pedestrian traveller in South Tyrol, who has through many a mile of his pilgrimage towards Italy been cheered by the loquacious companionship of its waters, who has seen its tributary, the Eisach, swirling round the porphyry cliffs of Botzen, and the united stream rushing under the old battlemented bridge at Verona.

Last and greatest of all, the *Po*, the Eridanus of the poets, rising under the shadow of Monte Viso, flowing nearly 300 miles through the rich plain of Lombardy, and receiving in its course countless affluents from the southern gorges of the Alps and the northern face of the Apennines, empties its wealth of waters into the Adriatic about a dozen miles from the all but united mouths of the Brenta and the Adige. The Delta of this abundant, but comparatively sluggish river, projecting into the Adriatic Sea, makes a marked alteration in the Italian coastline, and causes some surprise that such a Delta should not yet have received its Alexandria; that Venice to the north, and Ravenna to the south should have risen into greatness, while scarcely a village marks the exit of the *Po*.

These seven streams, whose mouths are crowded into less than eighty miles of coast, drain an area which, reckoning from Monte Viso to the Terglou Alps (the source of the Isonzo), must be 450 miles in length, and may average 200 miles in breadth, and this area is bordered on one side by the highest mountains in Europe, snow-covered, glacier-strewn, wrinkled and twisted into a thousand valleys and narrow defiles, each of which sends down its river or its rivulet to swell the great outpour.

For our present purpose, and as a worker out of Venetian history, *Po*, notwithstanding the far greater volume of his waters, is of less importance than the six other smaller streams that we named before him. He, carrying down the fine alluvial soil of Lombardy, goes on lazily adding foot by foot to the depth of his Delta, and mile by mile to its extent. They, swiftly hurrying over their shorter course from mountain to sea, scatter indeed many fragments, detached from their native rocks, over the first meadows which they meet with in the plain, but carry some also far out to sea, and then, behind the bulwark which they thus have made, deposit the finer alluvial particles with which they too are laden. Thus we get the two characteristic features of this ever-changing coastline, the *lido* and the *laguna*.

The *lido*, founded upon the masses of rock, is a long, thin slip of *terra firma* which forms a sort of advanced guard of the land. The *laguna*, occupying the interval between the *lido* and the true shore, is a wide expanse of waters generally very few feet in depth, with a bottom of fine sand, and with a few channels of deeper water, the representatives of the forming rivers, winding intricately among them. In such a configuration of land and water the state of the tide makes a striking difference in the scene. And unlike the rest of the Mediterranean, the Adriatic does possess a tide, small it is true in comparison with the great tides of ocean, (for the whole difference between high and low water at the flood is not more than six feet, and the average flow is said not to amount to more than two feet six inches), but even this flax is sufficient to produce large tracts of sea which the reflux converts into square miles of oozy sand.

Here, between sea and land, upon this detritus of the rivers, settled the Detritus of Humanity. The Gothic and the Lombard invasions contributed probably their share of fugitives, but fear of the Hunnish world-waster (whose very name, according to some, was derived from one of the mighty rivers of Russia) was the great 'degrading' influence that carried down the fragments of Roman civilization and strewed them over the desolate lagunes of the Adriatic.

The inhabitants of Aquileia, or at least the feeble remnant that escaped the sword of Attila, took refuge at Grado. Concordia migrated to Caprularia (now Caorle). The inhabitants of Altinum, abandoning their ruined villas, founded their new habitations upon seven islands at

the mouth of the Piave, which, according to tradition, they named from the seven gates of their old city—Torcellus, Maiurbus, Boreana, Ammiana, Constantiacum, and Anianum. The representatives of some of these names, Torcello, Mazzorbo, Burano, are familiar sounds to the Venetian at the present day. From Padua came the largest stream of emigrants. They left the tomb of their mythical ancestor, Antenor, and built their humble dwellings upon the islands of Rivus Altus and Methamaucus, better known to us as Rialto and Malamocco. This Paduan settlement was one day to be known to the world by the name of Venice. But let us not suppose that the future Queen of the Adriatic sprang into existence at a single bound like Constantinople or Alexandria. For 250 years, that is to say for eight generations, the refugees on the islands of the Adriatic prolonged an obscure and squalid existence,—fishing, salt-manufacturing, damming out the waves with wattled vine-branches, driving piles into the sand-banks; and thus gradually extending the area of their villages. Still these were but fishing villages, loosely confederated together, loosely governed, poor and insignificant; so that the anonymous geographer of Ravenna, writing in the seventh century, can only say of them : ‘In the country of Venetia there are some few islands which are inhabited by men.’

This seems to have been their condition, though perhaps gradually growing in commercial importance, until at the beginning of the eighth century the concentration of political authority in the hands of the first doge, and the recognition of the Rialto cluster of islands as the capital of the confederacy, started the Republic on a career of success and victory, in which for seven centuries she met no lasting check.

But this lies far beyond the limits of our present subject. It must be again said that we have not to think of ‘the pleasant place of all festivity’, but of a few huts among the sand-banks, inhabited by Roman provincials, who mournfully recall their charred and ruined habitations by the Brenta and the Piave. The sea alone does not constitute their safety. If that were all, the pirate ships of the Vandal Genseric might repeat upon their poor dwellings all the terror of Attila. But it is in their amphibious life, in that strange blending of land and sea which is exhibited by the lagunes, that their safety lies. Only experienced pilots can guide a vessel of any considerable draft through the mazy channels of deep water which intersect these lagunes; and should they seem to be in imminent peril from the approach of an enemy, they will defend themselves, not like the Dutch by cutting the dykes which barricade them from the ocean, but by pulling up the poles which even those pilots need to indicate their pathway through the waters.

There, then, engaged in their humble beaver-like labors, we leave for the present the Venetian refugees from the rage of Attila. But even while protesting, it is impossible not to let into our minds some thought of what those desolate fishing villages will one day become. The dim religious light, half-revealing the slowly-gathered glories of St. Mark’s; the Ducal Palace—that history in stone; the Rialto, with its babble of many languages; the Piazza, with its flocks of fearless pigeons; the Brazen Horses; the Winged Lion; the Bucentaur; all that the artists of Venice did to make her beautiful, her ambassadors to make her wise, her secret tribunals to make her terrible; memories of these things must come thronging upon the mind at the mere mention of her spell-like name. Now, with these pictures glowing vividly before you, wrench the mind away with sudden effort to the dreary plains of Pannonia. Think of the moody Tartar, sitting in his log-hut, surrounded by his barbarous guests, of Zercon gabbling his uncouth mixture of Hunnish and Latin, of the bath-man of Onégesh, and the wool-work of Kreka, and the reed-candles in the village of Bleda’s widow; and say if cause and effect were ever more strangely mated in history than the rude and brutal might of Attila with the stately and gorgeous and subtle Republic of Venice.

One more consideration is suggested to us by that which was the noblest part of the work of Venice, the struggle which she maintained for centuries, really on behalf of all Europe,

against the Turk. Attila's power was soon to pass away, but in the ages that were to come, another Turanian race was to arise, as brutal as the Huns, but with their fierceness sharp-pointed and hardened into a far more fearful weapon of offence by the fanaticism of Islam. These descendants of the kinsfolk of Attila were the Ottomans, and but for the barrier which, like their own *murazzi* against the waves, the Venetians interposed against the Ottomans, it is scarcely too much to say that half Europe would have undergone the misery of subjection to the organized anarchy of the Turkish Pachas. The Tartar Attila, when he gave up Aquileia and her neighbor cities to the tender mercies of his myrmidons, little thought that he was but the instrument in an unseen Hand for hammering out the shield which should one day defend Europe from Tartar robbers such as he was. The Turanian poison secreted the future antidote to itself, and the name of that antidote was Venice.

Attila's Gaulish Campaign, 453

Our narrative returns for a little space to the Pannonian home of Attila. Before the winter of 452 he had probably marched back thither with all his army. Jordanes tells us that he soon repented of his inactivity, as if it were a crime, and sent one of his usual blustering messages to Marcian, threatening to lay waste the provinces of the East unless the money promised by Theodosius were immediately paid. Notwithstanding this message, however, he really had his eyes fixed on Gaul, and burned to avenge his former defeat upon the Visigoths. The Alans, that kindred tribe now encamped on the southern bank of the Loire, seemed again to hold out some hope of facilitating his invasion. King Thorismund, however, detected the subtle schemes of Attila with equal subtlety, moved speedily towards the country of the Alans, whom he either crushed or conciliated, then met the Hunnish king in arms once more upon the Catalaunian plains, and again compelled him to fly defeated to his own land. 'So did the famous Attila, the lord of many victories, in seeking to overturn the glory of his conqueror, and to wipe out the memory of his own disgrace, bring on himself double disaster, and return inglorious home.'

By the unanimous consent of historians, this second defeat of Attila by the Visigoths is banished from the historical domain. The silence of all contemporary chroniclers, the strange coincidence as to the site of the battle, the obvious interest of the patriotic Goth to give his countrymen one victory over the Hun, of which neither Roman nor Frank could share the credit: these are the arguments upon which the negative judgment of historians is based, and they are perhaps sufficient for their purpose. It may be remarked, however, that the events assigned by the chroniclers to the year 453 do not seem absolutely to preclude the possibility of a Gaulish campaign, and that it is somewhat unsafe to argue against positive testimony from the mere silence even of far more exhaustive narrators than the annalists of the fifth century.

For the next scene, however, we have far more trustworthy authority, for here the words of Jordanes —'ut Priscus refert'— assure us that we have again, though at second-hand, the safe guidance of our old friend the Byzantine ambassador.

It was in the year 453, the year that followed his Italian campaign, that Attila took to himself, in addition to all his other wives (and, as we have seen, his harem was an extensive one), the very beautiful damsel, Ildico. At the wedding-feast he relaxed his usual saturnine demeanor, drank copiously, and gave way to abundant merriment. Then when the guests were departed, he mounted the flight of steps that led up to his couch, placed high in the banqueting hall, and there lay down to sleep the heavy sleep of a reveller. He had long been subject to fits of violent bleeding at the nose, and this night he was attacked by one of them. But lying as he was upon his back in his deep and drunken slumber, the blood could not find its usual exit, but passed down his throat and choked and death him. The day dawned, the sun rose high in the heavens, the afternoon was far spent, and no sign was made from the nuptial chamber of the king. Then at length his servants, suspecting something wrong, after uttering loud shouts,

battered in the door and entered.

They found him lying dead, with no sign of a wound upon his body, the blood streaming from his mouth, and Ildico, with downcast face, silently weeping behind her veil. Such a death would, of course, excite some suspicion—suspicion which one of the Eastern chroniclers expanded into certainty—of the guilt of Ildico, who was probably regarded as the Jael by whose hand this new and more terrible Sisera had fallen. It is more probable, however, that the cause assigned by Jordanes, apparently on the authority of Priscus, is the true one, and that the mighty king died, as he says, a drunkard's death.

It seems to be a well-attested fact, and is a curious incidental evidence of the weight with which the thought of Attila lay upon the minds even of brave men, that on the same night in which he died, the stout-hearted Emperor of the East, Marcian, who had gone to sleep anxious and distressed at the prospect of a Hunnish invasion, had a dream in which he saw the bow of Attila broken. When he awoke he accepted the omen that the Huns, whose chief weapon was the bow, were to be no longer formidable to the Empire.

In proportion to the hope of other nations was the grief of Attila's own people when they found that their hero was taken from them. According to their savage custom they gashed their faces with deep wounds in order that so great a warrior might be honored by the flowing, not of womanish tears, but of manly blood. Then in the middle of the vast Hungarian plain they erected a lofty tent with silken curtains, under which the corpse of the great chieftain was laid. A chosen band of horsemen careered round and round the tent, like the performers in the Circensian games of the Romans, and as they went through their mazy evolutions they chanted a wild strain, rehearsing the high descent and great deeds of the departed. What the form of these Hunnish songs may have been, it is impossible to conjecture; but the thoughts, or at least some of the chief thoughts, have been preserved to us by Jordanes, and may perhaps, without unfitness, be clothed in metre, for in truth his prose here becomes metrical.

THE DIRGE OF ATTILA.

Mightiest of the Royal Huns,
 Son of Mundzuk, Attila!
 Leader of Earth's bravest ones,
 Son of Mundzuk, Attila!
 Power was thine, unknown before.
 German-Land and Scythia bore,
 Both, thy yoke. Thy terror flew
 Either Roman Empery through.
 O'er their smoking towns we bore thee,
 Till, to save the rest, before thee,
 Humbly both the Caesars prayed.
 Thy wrath was soothed, and sheathed thy blade.
 Slave-like at thy feet they laid
 Tribute, as their master bade,
 The son of Mundzuk, Attila.
 At the height of human power
 Stood the chieftain, Attila,
 All had prospered till that hour
 That was wrought by Attila.
 Thou diedst not by the foeman's brand,
 Thou felt'st no dark assassin's hand.

All thy landsmen, far and wide,
 Were safe from fear on every side.
 In the midst of thy delight,
 'Mid the joys of Wine and Night
 Painless, thou hast taken flight
 From thy brethren, Attila!
 Shouldest thou thus have ended life,
 With no pledge of future strife?
 Thou art dead: in vain we seek
 Foe on whom revenge to wreak
 For thy life-blood, Attila!

When the wild dirge was ended, the great funeral-feast, which they call the *Strava*, was prepared, and the same warriors who but a few days before had been emptying great goblets of wine in honor of the marriage of Attila, now with the same outward semblance of jollity, celebrated his death. Even while the feast was proceeding, the dead body was being secretly consigned to the earth. It was enclosed in three coffins; the first of gold, the second of silver, the third of iron, to typify the wealth with which he had enriched his kingdom, and the weapons wherewith he had won it. Arms won from valiant foes, quivers studded with gems, and many another royal trinket, were buried with him. Then, as in the case of Alaric, in order to elude the avarice of future generations and keep the place of his burial secret for ever, the workmen, probably captives, who had been engaged in the task of his sepulture, were immediately put to death.

As far as we know, the grave of Attila keeps its secret to this day. But his deeds had made an indelible mark on the imagination of three races of men—the Latin peoples, the Germans, and the Scandinavians; and in the ages of darkness which were to follow, a new and strangely-altered Attila, if we should not rather say three Attilas, rose as it were from his mysterious Pannonian tomb, gathered around themselves all kinds of weird traditions, and hovered ghost-like before the fascinated eyes of the Middle Ages.

To trace the growth of this Attila-legend, however interesting the work might be as an illustration of the myth-creating faculty of half-civilized nations, is no part of my present purpose. Moreover, the task has been so well performed by M. Amedée Thierry in the last section of his *Histoire d'Attila*, that little remains for any later inquirer but simply to copy from him.

It will be sufficient therefore to note as briefly as possible the chief characteristics of the different versions of the legend.

1. The traditions of the Latin races, preserved and elaborated by ecclesiastics, naturally concerned themselves with the religious, or rather irreligious, aspect of his character. To them he is, therefore, the great Persecutor of the Fifth Century, the murderer of the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, but above all, he is the *Flagellum Dei*, the scourge of God, divinely permitted to set forth on his devastating career for the punishment of a world that was lying in wickedness.

This title, 'Flagellum Dei,' occurs with most wearisome frequency in the mediaeval stories about Attila; and wheresoever we meet with it, we have a sure indication that we are off the ground of contemporaneous and authentic history, and have entered the cloud-land of ecclesiastical mythology. Later and wilder developments in this direction, attributed to him the title of 'grandson of Nimrod, nurtured in Engedi, by the grace of God King of Huns, Goths, Danes, and Medes, the terror of the world.' There may have been a tendency, as Mr. Herbert thinks, to identify him with the Anti-Christ of the Scriptures, but this is not proved, and is

scarcely in accordance with the theological idea of Anti-Christ, who is generally placed in the future or in the present rather than in the past.

2. Very unlike the semi-Satanic Attila of ecclesiastical legend is the Teuton's representative of the same personage, the Etzel of the *Nibelungen Lied*. In the five or six centuries which elapsed between the fall of the Hunnish monarchy and the writing down of this poem, the German seems to have forgotten almost everything about his mighty lord and foe, except that he dwelt by the Danube, that there was glorious feasting in his palace, and that he had relations both in peace and war with the Burgundians and the Franks. Hence, in the *Nibelungen Lied* all that is distinctive in Attila's character disappears. He marries the Burgundian princess Kriemhilde, the widow of Siegfried, and at her request invites her kindred, the Nibelungs, to visit him in Hunland. There, good-nature and hospitality are his chief characteristics; he would fain spend all day in hunting and all night at the banquet; he is emphatically the commonplace personage of the story. True, it is in his hall that the terrible fight is waged for a long summer day between the Nibelungs and the Huns, till the floor is slippery with the blood of slaughtered heroes. But this is not his doing, but the doing of his wife, that terrible figure, the Clytemnestra or the Electra of the German tragedy, 'reaping the due of hoarded vengeance' for the murder of her girlhood's husband Siegfried. Her revenge and Hagen's hardness, and the knightly loyalty of Rudiger only serve to throw the genially vapid king of the Huns yet further into the background. This round and rubicund figure, all benevolence and hospitality, is assuredly not the thunder-brooding, sallow, silent Attila of history.

3. The Scandinavian Atli, the husband of Grudruna, is a much better copy of the original. He himself is the cause of the death of the Niblung heroes, he plots and diplomatizes and kills in order to recover the buried treasure of Sigurd, just as the real Attila moved heaven and earth for the recovery of Honoria's dowry or the chalices of Sirmium. Above all, the final scene in which he with a certain grand calmness discusses, with the wife who has murdered him, the reason of her crime and appeals to her generosity to grant him a noble funeral, is not at all unlike what Attila might have said to Ildico, if the suspicion of the Byzantine courtiers had been correct, that he had met his death at her hand.

That the King of the Huns should be mentioned at all, far more that he should play so large a part in the national epic of the far-distant Iceland, is a strange fact, and suggests two interesting explanations. First: the statement of the Western ambassadors to Priscus that Attila had penetrated even to the isles of the Ocean may have been more nearly true than one is disposed, at first, to think possible, and he may have really annexed Norway and Sweden (the island of *Scanzia*, as Jordanes calls it) to his dominions. Second : throughout the early Middle Ages there was probably an extensive reciprocal influence between the literatures of the countries of Western Europe, especially a borrowing of plots and scenery and characters by the minstrels of various nations from one another, and it may have been thus that the fiction of the King of the Huns and his murdered guests travelled from the Danube to the North Sea. It seems a paradox, yet it is probably true that the thought of Austria had more chance of blending with the thought of Iceland in the days of the Skald and the Minnesingers than in the days of the Railroad and the Telegraph.

Another line of inventions rather than of traditions must be referred to, only to reject them as containing no valuable element for the historian or the archaeologist. The Magyars, a race of Turanian origin, and bound by certain ties of kindred to the Huns, entered Europe at the close of the 9th century, and established themselves in that country which has since been known as Hungary. As they slowly put off the habits of a mere band of marauders, as they became civilized and Christian, and as they thus awoke to historical consciousness, like a man sprung from the people who has risen to riches and honor, they looked about them for a pedigree. Such

a pedigree was found for them by their ecclesiastics in an imagined descent from Attila, *Flagellum Dei*. Little of course did they then foresee that their own noble deeds would furnish them with a far prouder escutcheon than any that even a genuine affinity to the great Marauder could bestow upon them. So, from the 11th to the 15th century a series of Magyar chroniclers, Simon Keza, Thurocz, Nicolaus Olahus, and others, made it their task to glorify the nation of the Hungarians by writing out the great deeds of Attila. There is no sufficient evidence that they were recording that which had been truly handed down, however vaguely, from their ancestors.

On the contrary, there is everything to show that they were, as they supposed, embellishing, and certainly expanding the literary history of Attila by imaginations of their own. Inventions of this kind are valuable neither as fact nor as legend. They no more truly illustrate the history of Attila than the Book of Mormon illustrates the history of the Jews; and they probably reflect no more light on the genuine traditions of the Asiatic and heathen Magyars than is thrown by the 'Mort d'Arthur' on the thoughts of British minds in the days of Cassivelaunus and Boadicea. All this invented history should be sternly disregarded by the student who wishes to keep before his mind's eye the true lineaments of the great Hunnish warrior.

We return for a moment, in conclusion, to the true historic Attila, whose portrait, as painted by Priscus and Jordanes, has been placed, it may be with too great fullness of detail, before the reader. It is impossible not to be struck by a certain resemblance both in his character and in his career to those of the latest world-conqueror, Napoleon. Sometimes the very words used to describe the one seem as if they glanced off and hit the other. Thus a recent German historian in an eloquent passage, contrasting the Hun and his great Roman antagonist, Aetius, says—

'Conspicuous above the crowd, the two claimants to the lordship of the world stood over against one another. Attila in his wild dream of building up a universal empire in the space of one generation : opposite to him the General of that Power which, in the course of a thousand years, had extended its dominions over three Continents, and was not disposed to relinquish them without a struggle. But in truth, the idea of a world-empire of the Huns had passed out of the sphere of practical politics even before the battle on the Catalaunian plains. Far and wide Attila enslaved the nations, but the more the mass of his subjects grew and grew, the more certain they were, in time, to burst the fetters which the hand of one single warrior, however mighty, had bound around them. With Attila's death at latest his empire must fall in ruins, whether he won or lost on the battle-field by Troyes. But the Roman would still stand, so long as its generals had the will and the power to hold it together.

Do we not seem to hear in these words a description of Napoleon's position, sublime but precarious, when he was at the zenith of his glory? As the Hun led Scythia and Germany against Gaul, so the Corsican led Gaul and Germany against Scythia in the fatal campaign of 1812. The Kings of Saxony and Bavaria were his Ardaric and Walamir; Moscow his Orleans; Leipsic his 'Campus Mauriacensis.' He won his Honoria from an 'Emperor of the Romans,' prouder and of longer lineage than Valentinian. Like Attila, he destroyed far more than he could rebuild; his empire, like Attila's, lasted less than two decades of years; but, unlike Attila, he outlived his own prosperity. Of course, even greater than any such resemblance are the differences between the uncultured intellect of the Tartar chieftain, and, the highly-developed brain of the great Italian-French man who played with battalions as with chessmen, who thought out the new Paris, who desired 'to go down to posterity with his code in his hand.' But in their insatiable pride, in the arrogance which beat down the holders of ancient thrones and trampled them like the dust beneath their feet, in their wide-stretching schemes of empire, in the haste which forbade their conquests to endure, in the wonderful ascendancy over men

which made the squalid Hun the instrument of the one, and the Jacobin of the other, and above all, in the terror which the mere sound of their names brought to fair cities and widely-scattered races of men,—in all these points no one so well as Napoleon explains to us the character and career of Attila.

BOOK III
THE VANDAL INVASION
AND
THE HERULIAN MUTINY.

CHAPTER I.

EXTINCTION OF THE HUNNISH EMPIRE AND THE THEODOSIAN DYNASTY

WITH dramatic suddenness the stage after the death of Attila is cleared of all the chief actors, and fresh performers come upon the scene, some of whom occupy it for the following twenty years. Before tracing the character and following the fortunes of the Vandal invaders of Rome, let us briefly notice these changes.

The death of Attila was followed by a dissolution of his empire, as complete and more ruinous than that which befell the Macedonian monarchy on the death of Alexander. The numerous progeny of his ill-assorted harem were not disposed to recognize any one of their number as supreme lord. Neither Ellak, the eldest son, who had sat uneasily on the edge of his chair in the paternal presence, nor Ernak, the youngest, his father's darling, and he upon whom the hopes of Attila had most confidently rested, could obtain this preeminence. There were besides, Emnedzar, Uzindur, Dinzio, and one knows not how many more uncouthly-named brethren; in fact, as Jordanes says, 'these living memorials of the lustful disposition of Attila made a little nation themselves. All were filled with a blind desire to rule, and so between them they upset their father's kingdom. It is not the first time that a superabundance of heirs has proved more fatal to a dynasty than an absolute deficiency of them.'

To end the quarrel, it was decided that this tribe of sons should partition between them the inheritance of their father. But the great fabric which had been upheld by the sullen might of Attila was no longer a mere aggregation of nomad clans, such as the Hunnish nation had once been. If it had still been in this rudimentary condition, it might perhaps have borne division easily. But now it contained whole nations of more finely fibred brain than the Huns, astute statemen-kings like Ardaric, sons of the gods like the three Amal brothers who led the Ostrogoths to battle. These men and their followers had been awed into subservient alliance with the great Hun. They had elected to plunder with him rather than to be plundered by him, and they had perhaps found their account in doing so. But not for that were they going to be partitioned like slaves among these loutish lads, the sons of Attila's concubines, men not one of whom possessed a tithe of their father's genius, and who, when they had thus broken up his empire into fragments, would be singly but petty princelings, each of far less importance than many of their own vassals. Should the noble nation of the Ostrogoths lose the unity which it had possessed for centuries, and be allotted part to Ellak and part to Ernak? Should the Gepidae be distributed like agricultural slaves, so many to Emnedzar, and so many to Uzindur? That was not Germania's understanding of the nature of her alliance with Scythia, as it would not have been the King of Saxony's or the King of Bavaria's understanding of the tie which bound them to Napoleon. Ardaric, king of the Gepidae, lately the chosen confidant of Attila, now stepped forth to denounce this scheme of partition, and to uphold Teutonic independence against Attila's successors. The battle was joined near the river Nedao, a stream in Pannonia which modern geographers have not identified, but which was probably situated in that part of Hungary which is west of the Danube. 'There,' says Jordanes, whose Gothic heart seems to beat faster beneath his churchman's frock whenever he has a bloody battle to describe, 'There did all the various nations whom Attila had kept under his dominion meet and look one another in the face. Kingdoms and peoples are divided against one another, and out of one body divers limbs are made, no longer governed by one impulse, but animated by mutual rage, having lost their presiding head. Such were those most mighty nations which had never found their peers

in the world if they had not been sundered the one from the other, and gashed one another with mutual wounds. I trow it was a marvelous sight to look upon. There should you have seen the Goth fighting with his pike, the Gepid raging with his sword, the Rugian breaking the darts of the enemy at the cost of his own wounds; the Sueve pressing on with nimble foot; the Hun covering his advance with a cloud of arrows; the Alan drawing up his heavy-armed troops; the Herul his lighter companies, in battle array'. We are not distinctly told what was the share of the Ostrogoths in this great encounter, and we may reasonably doubt whether all the German tribes were arranged on one side and all the Tartars on the other with such precision as a modern ethnologist would have used in an ideal battle of the nationalities. But the result is not doubtful. After many desperate charges, Victory, which they scarcely hoped for, sat upon the standards of the Gepidae. Thirty thousand of the Huns and their confederates lay dead upon the field, among them Ellak, Attila's firstborn, 'by such a glorious death that it would have done his father's heart good to witness it.' The rest of his nation fled away across the Dacian plains, and over the Carpathian mountains to those wide steppes of Southern Russia, in which at the commencement of our history we saw the three Gothic nations taking up their abode. Ernak, Attila's darling, ruled tranquilly under Roman protection in the district between the lower Danube and the Black Sea, which we now call the Dobrudscha, and which was then 'the lesser Scythia.' Others of his family maintained a precarious footing higher up the stream, in Dacia Ripensis, on the confines of Servia and Bulgaria. Others made a virtue of necessity, and entering 'Romania,' frankly avowed themselves subjects and servants of the Eastern Caesar, towards whom they had lately shown themselves such contumelious foes. There is nothing in the after-history of these fragments of the nation with which any one need concern himself. The Hunnish empire is from this time forward mere drift-wood on its way to inevitable oblivion.

What is more interesting for us, as affecting the fortunes of the dwellers in Italy during the succeeding century, is the allotment of the dominions of Attila among the Teutonic tribes who had cast off the Hunnish yoke. Dacia, that part of Hungary which lies east and north of the Danube, and which had been the heart of Attila's domains, fell to the lot of the Gepidae, under the wise and victorious Ardaric. Pannonia, that is the western portion of Hungary, with Sclavonia, and parts of Croatia, Styria and Lower Austria, was ruled over by the three Amal-descended kings of the Ostrogoths. What barbarous tribe took possession of Noricum in the general anarchy does not appear to be clearly stated, but there is some reason to think that part of it at least was occupied by the Heruli, and that the south-eastern portion, Carinthia and Carniola, received those Sclavonic settlers (coming originally in the triumphant train of Attila) whom, to increase the perplexity of the politicians of Vienna, it still retains.

The death of Attila and the disruption of his empire removed the counterpoise which alone had for many years enabled the Western Emperor to bear the weight of the services of Aetius. It is true that quite recently vows of mutual friendship had been publicly exchanged and sealed with the rites of religion between these two men, the nominal and the real rulers of Italy. It is true that a solemn compact had been entered into for the marriage of the son of Aetius with the daughter of Valentinian, and thus, as the Emperor had no son, a safe path seemed to be indicated in the future, by which the ambition of the general might be gratified, yet the claims of the Theodosian line not sacrificed. All this might be, but nothing could avail against the persuasion which had rapidly insinuated itself into the Emperor's mind that the minister, so useful and so burdensome, was now no longer needed. Just as Honorius forty-six years before had planned the ruin of Stilicho, so now did the nephew of Honorius plot the murder of the only Roman general who was worthy to rival Stilicho's renown. The part which was then played by Olympius was now played by the Eunuch Heraclius. Whether, as some chroniclers say, the Eunuch filled his master's mind with suspicions as to the revolutionary

designs of Aetius, or whether, as others, the Emperor first resolved on the murder of his general, and secured the grand chamberlain's assistance, does not greatly signify. As planet attracts planet and is itself attracted by it, so villain works on villain, and is worked upon by him, when a great crime, profitable to both, presents itself as possible.

The Emperor enticed Aetius into his palace without an escort. Possibly the pretext was some further conversation as to the marriage treaty between their children. Possibly when the general had entered the presence-chamber, his master announced that he must consider this contract as at an end, for we are told that Aetius was urging with uncourtly warmth the pretensions of his son, when he was suddenly stabbed by the Emperor himself. The swords of the bystanders finished the work with unnecessary circumstances of cruelty, and the chief friends of the murdered minister having been on one pretence or other allured singly into the palace, were all slain in like manner. Among them was his most intimate friend, Boethius, the Praetorian Prefect, and the grandfather, probably, of the celebrated author of the 'Consolations of Philosophy.'

In narrating this event, the Count Marcellinus (writing about a century after it had occurred) rises above his usual level as a mere chronicler, and remarks, 'With Aetius fell the whole Hesperian realm, nor has it hitherto been able to raise itself up again.' We seem, in the faded chronicle, to read almost the very words of Shakespeare—

'O, what a fall was there, my countrymen!
Then I, and you, and all of us fell down,
Whilst bloody treason flourished over us.'

Another historian tells us that immediately after the murder, a certain Roman uttered an epigram, which made no small reputation for its author. The Emperor asked him if in his opinion the death of Aetius was a good deed to have accomplished. Whereupon he replied, "Whether it was a good deed, most noble Emperor, or something quite other than a good deed, I am scarcely able to say. One thing, however, I do know, that you have chopped off your right hand with your left."

A contemporary author, the Gaulish poet Apollinaris Sidonius, in some verses written a year or two after the event, alludes in passing to the time when

'The Thing, scarce Man, Placidia's fatuous son
Butchered Aetius.'

So that this deed at least had not to wait for a late posterity to be judged according to its desert.

It was probably towards the end of 454 that the murder of Aetius was perpetrated, and the scene of the crime was Rome, which for ten years previously seems to have been the chief residence of the Emperor, though Ravenna was occasionally visited by him.

In the middle of the succeeding March the Emperor rode out of the city one day to the Campus Martius. He halted by two laurel bushes in a pleasant avenue, and there, surrounded by his court and his guards, was intently watching the games of the athletes. Suddenly two soldiers of barbarian origin, named Optila and Traustila, rushed upon him and stabbed him. The Eunuch Heraclius, the confidant who had planned the death of Aetius, was also slain. No other blood seems to have been shed, and apparently it must be taken as an evidence how low the Emperor had fallen in the esteem of his subjects, that in all that courtly retinue, and in all that surrounding army, not a hand stirred to avenge his death. The murderers were well known as henchmen of Aetius, who, moved partly by resentment at his fate, and partly, no doubt, by chagrin at the interruption of their own career of promotion, had for months been dogging the steps of the heedless Emperor with this black design in their hearts.

Valentinian III left no son, and thus the Imperial line of Theodosius became extinct, after it had held the Eastern throne seventy-four years (379-453); and the Western sixty-one (394-455). The choice of the people and army fell on Petronius Maximus, an elderly senator, who assumed the purple with every prospect of a wise and perhaps even a successful reign.

The new Emperor was apparently related to Probus, the eminent Roman, whose two sons were made consuls in the same year (395) amid the high-flown panegyrics of Claudian. He is said to have been also grandson of that usurping Emperor Maximus, who was taken prisoner by the soldiers of Theodosius at the third milestone from Aquileia. But his own career as a member of the civil hierarchy had been so much more than merely respectable, that it seems impossible to deny to him the possession of some ability, and even of some reputation for virtue, as Roman virtue went in those days. At the age of nineteen he was admitted into the Imperial Council as tribune and notary; then Count of the Sacred Largesses, and then Prefect of Rome, all before he had attained his twenty-fifth year. When he was holding this last office, the Emperor Honorius, at the request of the senate and people, erected a statue to his honor in the great Forum of Trajan. Consul at the age of thirty-eight, Prefect of Italy from the age of forty-four to forty-six, again Consul at forty-eight, and again Prefect, he had attained at fifty the crowning dignity of the Patriciate. This was evidently a man whom both prince and people had delighted to honor, and from whom, now that he had reached his sixtieth year, a reign of calm and statesmanlike wisdom, and such prosperity as those evil days would admit of, might not unreasonably have been hoped for.

How different was the result, and how far he was from attaining, much more from bestowing, happiness during the seventy days, or thereabout, that he wore the Imperial Purple, we learn from a letter addressed, sometime after his death, by one who was himself acquainted with the inner life of courts, to Serranus, a faithful friend, who still ventured to proclaim his attachment to an unpopular and fallen patron.

‘I received your letter,’ says Sidonius, dedicated to the praises of your patron the Emperor Petronius Maximus. I think, however, that either affection or a determination to support a foregone conclusion has carried you away from the strict truth when you call him most happy (*felicissimus*) because he passed through the highest offices of the state and died an emperor. I can never agree with the opinion that those men should be called happy who cling to the steep and slippery summits of the State. For words cannot describe how many miseries are hourly endured in the lives of men who, like Sulla, claim to be called Felix because they have clambered over the limits of law and right assigned to the rest of their fellow-citizens. They think that supreme power must be supreme happiness, and do not perceive that they have, by the very act of grasping dominion, sold themselves to the most wearisome of all servitudes : for, as kings lord it over their fellow-men, so the anxiety to retain power lords it over kings.

‘To pass by the proofs of this that might be drawn from the lives of preceding and succeeding emperors, your friend Maximus alone shall prove my maxims. He, though he had climbed up with stout heart into the high places of Prefect, Patrician, Consul, and had, with unsatisfied ambition, claimed a second turn at some of these offices, nevertheless when he arrived, still vigorous, at the top of the Imperial precipice, felt his head swim with dizziness under the diadem, and could no more endure to be master of all than he had before endured to be under a master. Then think of the popularity, the authority, the permanence of his former manner of life, and compare them with the origin, the tempestuous course, the close of his two months’ sovereignty, and you will find that the least happy portion of his life was that in which he was styled *Beatissimus*.

‘So it came to pass that he who had attracted universal admiration by his well-spread table, his courtly manners, his wealth, his equipages, his library, his consular dignity, his patrimonial inheritance, his following of clients,—he who had arranged the various pursuits of

his life so accurately that each hour marked on the water-clock brought its own allotted employment—this same man, when he had been hailed as Augustus, and with that vain show of majesty had been shut up, a virtual prisoner, within the palace walls, lamented before twilight came the fulfillment of his ambitious hopes. Now a host of cares forbade him to indulge in his former measure of repose; he had suddenly to break off all his old rules of life, and perceived when it was too late that the business of an emperor and the ease of a senator could not go together. Moreover, the worry of the present did not blind him to the calamities which were to come, for he who had trodden the round of all his other courtly dignities with tranquil step, now found himself the powerless ruler of a turbulent court, surrounded by tumults of the legionaries, tumults of the populace, tumults of the barbarian mercenaries; and the forebodings thus engendered were but too surely justified when the end came—an end quick, bitter, and unlooked-for, the last perfidious stroke of Fortune, which had long fawned upon the man, and now suddenly turned and stung him to death as with a scorpion's tail. A man of letters, who by his talents well deserved the rank which he bore of quaestor, I mean Fulgentius, used to tell me that he had often heard Maximus say, when cursing the burden of empire, and regretting his old freedom from cares, 'Ah, happy Damocles! it was only for one banquet's space that you had to endure the necessity of reigning.'

Sidonius then tells in his most elaborate style the story of Damocles feasting sumptuously under the suspended sword-blade, and concludes, 'Wherefore, Sir Brother, I cannot say whether those who are on their way to Sovereign Power may be considered happy; but it is clear that those who have arrived at it are miserable.'

Let the reader store up in his mind this picture of a sorely worried Emperor vainly striving to maintain his authority amid the clamors of mutinous legionaries full of fight everywhere but on the battlefield, of Roman demagogues haranguing about Regulus and Romulus, and of German *foederati* insatiable in their claims for donative and land. For this picture, or something like it, will probably suit equally well for each of the eight other weary-browed men who have yet to wear the diadem and be saluted with the name of Augustus.

As for the Emperor Maximus, his mingled harshness and feebleness, both misplaced, soon earned for him the execration of his subjects. They saw with astonishment the murderers Optila and Traustila not only not punished, but received into the circle of the Emperor's friends. This might be only the result of a fear of embroiling himself with the Barbarians, but it was only natural that it should be attributed to a guilty participation in their counsels. Then, after a disgracefully short interval, all Rome heard with indignation that the Empress Eudoxia had been commanded to cease her mourning for Valentinian, whom, notwithstanding his many infidelities, she fondly loved, and to become the wife of the sexagenarian Emperor.

At the same time he compelled her to bestow the hand of one of her daughters on his son, the Caesar Palladius. The widowed Empress, who was now in the 34th year of her age, was one of the loveliest women of her time. The motive of Maximus may have been passion, but the double marriage looks rather like policy, like a determination on the part of the fire-new Emperor to consolidate his dynasty by welding it with all that yet remained on earth of the great name of Theodosius.

If this was the object of Maximus, he signally failed, and the precautions which he took to ensure his safety accelerated his ruin. Eudoxia, the daughter, the niece, and the wife of emperors, writhed under the shame of her alliance with the elderly official. As a still mourning widow she resented her forced union with the man whom some deemed an accomplice in her husband's murder. Her aunt Pulcheria was dead, and she feared that it was vain to hope for succor from Byzantium. In her rage and despair, she imitated the fatal example of Honoria, and called on the Barbarian for aid. Not the Hun, but the Vandal was the champion whose aid she invoked. Her emissary reached Carthage in safety. Gaiseric, only too thankful for a good

pretext for invading Rome, eagerly promised his aid. He fitted out his piratical fleet, and soon from mouth to mouth in Rome flitted the awful tidings, 'The Vandals are coming'. Many of the nobles fled. The Emperor, torn from his sweet clepsydra-round of duties and pleasures, and depressed by the scorn of the beautiful Avenger, whose love he could not win, devised no plan for defence, but sat trembling and helpless in his palace, and when informed of the flight of the nobility could think of no more statesmanlike expedient than to publish a proclamation, 'The Emperor grants to all, who desire it, liberty to depart from the city'. The fact was that he was meditating flight himself. Better the immediate abandonment of Empire than to sit any longer under that ever-impending sword of Damocles. But then the smouldering indignation of all classes against the man whom they deemed the author of the coming misery, burst forth. The soldiers mutinied, the rabble rose in insurrection, the servants of the Imperial Palace, faithful probably to the old Theodosian traditions, prevented the meditated escape. Soon the tragedy, which near sixty years before had been perpetrated at Constantinople (after the fall of Rufinus), was repeated in Rome. The Imperial domestics tore their new master limb from limb, and after dragging the ghastly fragments through the city, scattered them into the Tiber, so that not even the rites of burial might be granted by anyone to Petronius Maximus.

This event happened on the 31st of May, less than three months after the new Emperor's accession. The sails of Gaiseric's fleet are already upon the Tyrrhene sea, and before three days are ended the third great Barbarian Actor, the Vandal nation, will appear upon the stage of Italy. But, before they come, we must turn back the pages of history for a while, and trace the successive steps of the migration which had led them from the forests of Pomerania to the burning shores of Africa.

CHAPTER II.

THE VANDALS FROM GERMANY TO ROME.

IN the *Germania* of Tacitus, the best contribution made by any Roman writer to the science of ethnology, the author says (cap. 11.):

‘My own opinion is that the Germans are the aboriginal inhabitants of their country, with the least possible admixture of any foreign element. For in old times all national migrations were made by sea rather than by land, and the inhospitable ocean which washes the shores of Germany has been seldom visited by ships from our world. Besides, putting the perils of a tempestuous sea out of the question, who would leave behind him the pleasant shores of Asia, Africa, or Italy, and set sail for Germany, with its ugly landscape, its rigorous climate, its barren soil; who, I mean, except a native of that land, returning thither?’

‘In ancient songs, the sole kind of annals possessed by this people, they celebrate the name of a certain Tuisco, an earth-born deity, and his son Mannus, as the original founders of their race. To Mannus they assign three sons, after whom are named three tribes, the Ingaevones, who live nearest to the ocean, the Hermiones in the middle of the country, the Istaevones who occupy the remainder. Some, however, presuming on the antiquity of their tribes, affirm that the aforesaid god had many other sons, from whom many gentile appellations are derived, e.g. Marsi, Gambriuii, Suevi, Vandalii. These, they say, are the real and ancient names, that of Germans is a modern one, first given in fear by the vanquished Gauls to the warriors who crossed the Rhine to invade them, and afterwards proudly assumed by the conquerors.’

This interesting passage, besides showing us the Deutsch nationality in its earliest stage, then as now called German by the foreigner but not in its own home; besides giving us the name of the primeval Mann, who corresponds to the Adam of the Hebrews, and suggesting some other interesting ethnological speculations; brings before us the Vandals as already a powerful and long-descended tribe in the days of Tacitus, that is at the close of the first century of our era.

The slightly earlier author, Pliny, in the geographical part of his *Historia Naturalis*, mentions the Vindili as one of the five great Germanic races, and the Burgundians as one of their sub-branches. There can be no doubt that these are the same people as the historic Vandals, who are indeed always called Bandili or Bandeli by the Greek historians.

The Vandals were nearly allied in blood to the Goths. ‘The greatest names of this confraternity nations,’ says Procopius, ‘are Goth and Vandal and Visigoth and Gepid. They all have fair skins and yellow hair; they are tall of stature, and goodly to look upon. They all possess the same laws, the same faith, Arian Christianity; and the same language, the Gothic. To me they appear all to have formed part of one nation in old time, and afterwards to have been distinguished from each other by the names of their leaders.’ The general description therefore which has been already given of the Visigoths will apply to the Vandals; but by combining the testimonies of various chroniclers, we may find some traits of character which belonged specially to the Vandal race. Thus, their disposition seems to have been wanting in some of the grander features of the Gothic. They were perhaps more subtle-witted, but they were even more greedy of gain. They were confessedly less brave in war, and they were more cruel after victory. On the other hand, they were conspicuous even among the chaste Teutonic warriors for their chastity, and both in Spain and Africa their moral standard was, and for some

time continued to be, far above that of the uncleanly-living Roman provincials.

The home of the Vandals, when we first meet with them in history, appears to correspond with the central and eastern part of Prussia, but a loose aggregation of restless tribes must not be too definitely assigned to any precise district on the map. While they were settled here they fought under their two leaders, Ambri and Assi, a memorable battle with their neighbors, the Langobardi. The legends concerning this battle, which resulted in the complete defeat of the Vandals, are reserved for the Lombard portion of this history. As the Roman Empire grew weaker, the Vandals pressed southward, and eventually they gave their name (*Vandalici Montes*) to the Riesen Gebirge (Giant Mountains) between Silesia and Bohemia.

The southward movement of the barbarians, of which this Vandal migration formed part, brought on that great struggle known as the Marcomannic War, in which the German tribes on the Middle Danube strove, almost successfully, to pierce the gap between Pannonia and Dacia, and to establish themselves permanently within the limits of the Empire. In the heroic contest which Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher-Emperor, waged against these barbarians, a contest which well-nigh over-taxed both his energies and those of the Empire, he seems to have had at first the Vandals for his foes; but, at the conclusion of the war, we find the Asdingi, whom we know to have been a Vandal tribe, making their peace with Rome, and receiving from the Emperor settlements in Dacia. When, upon the death of Marcus, his son Commodus made his unsatisfactory peace with the Marcomanni, the Vandals were one of the tribes taken under Roman protection, against whom the Marcomanni were forbidden to declare war.

A generation later, the Emperor Caracalla, in one of his boastful letters to the Senate, prided himself on the fact that whereas the Vandals and Marcomanni had previously been friendly to one another, he had succeeded in setting them at variance. If we look at that curious specimen of map-making, the Tabula Peutingeriana (which is thought to have been originally executed in the time of Caracalla's father Severus), we shall see a striking comment on these words : for there, immediately on the other side of the broad limitary stream of the Danube, we see in straggling letters the name VANDULI, and a little beyond, but almost intermingled therewith, the name MARCOMANNI. Such close juxtaposition was very likely to breed hostility between two barbarous tribes.

More than half a century passes: and the Emperor Aurelian, the great restorer of the Roman power in the Danubian lands, gains a signal victory over the Vandals. We know nothing concerning the battle; we only hear of the negotiations which followed it. The Vandals sent ambassadors to sue for peace. After hearing their lengthy harangues, on the following day Aurelian mustered his army and asked for its advice whether he should accept or reject the terms of the barbarians. With one consent the army shouted for peace, which was accordingly granted, the Kings of the Vandals and several of their chief nobles, readily giving their sons as hostages for its due observance. The mass of the Vandal host returned to their Dacian home, the Emperor granting them sufficient provisions to last them till they reached the Danube. Notwithstanding this concession, 500 men, straggling from the main body of the returning host, committed cruel devastations on the plains of Moesia. For this breach of the treaty all the marauders who could be caught were put to death by their King.

A select portion of the Vandal host remained in the Imperial camp. One of the conditions of the peace was that they should supply 2000 horsemen as *foederati* to the Roman army; and this stipulation seems to have been faithfully observed, for the army list of the Roman Empire at the commencement of the fifth century shows us the Eighth Wing of the Vandals serving in Egypt. It was probably in this way that in the next century Stilicho, a man of Vandalic extraction, entered the service of that Empire which he afterwards ruled.

A few years later a fragment of the Vandal nation, which seems to have wandered to the Rhine in company with a troop of Burgundians, was by adroit tactics defeated by the Emperor

Probus. Many were slaughtered, but some were taken prisoners; Igil, the Vandal leader, being one of the latter class. These prisoners were all sent to the island of Britain, where, in some obscure insurrection against the Emperor, they did good service to their recent conqueror.

Near the end of the reign of Constantine there came a crisis in the fortunes of the Vandal nation. They were then dwelling in Moravia and the north-west of Hungary, having the Marcomanni of Bohemia as their eastern neighbors, and the Danube for their frontier to the south. Geberich, king of the Goths, whose territory bordered upon theirs to the east, determined to get him glory upon the Vandals, and sent a challenge to their king, Visumar. The two armies met by the Hungarian river Maros, and fought through a long day doubtfully. At length the Goths prevailed, and Visumar, with a great part of his host, lay dead upon the field. The scanty remnant of the nation entreated Constantine to permit them to enter the limits of the Empire, and settle as his subjects in the province of Pannonia. The position was not unlike that in which the Visigoths themselves were placed forty years later when they sought the Moesian shore of the Danube, flying from the terrible Huns. The permission was granted, and for nearly seventy years the Vandals were obedient subjects of the Roman Emperors. During this time it is likely that they made some advances in civilization; they probably often served in the Roman army, and learnt something of the legionary's discipline. It was without doubt during the same period that they embraced Christianity under that Arian form which Ulfilas was teaching to their Gothic neighbors and conquerors. At a later date, when they were invading Spain, we are told that they carried the Bible with them and consulted it as an oracle. It was of course the translation of Ulfilas which thus became the Urim and the Thummim of the Vandal.

At length, in the year 406, the Vandals, or a portion of the confederacy which went by that name, left their Pannonian settlements, and linking their destinies with those of the Turanian tribe of Alans and with their High-German kinsmen the Suevi, they marched north-westwards for the Rhine, intent on the plunder of Belgic Gaul. There is no need to accept the suggestion that Stilicho invited them. After the fall of that statesman, everything that had gone wrong in the Empire for the last twenty years was conveniently debited to his account. But no invitation was needed to set any Germanic tribe in motion towards the Empire in the year of the Nativity 406. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. Radagaisus and Alaric, with their mighty nation-armies, had crossed the Alps and poured down into Italy. One, indeed, had failed, and the other had only partially succeeded, but both had shown plainly to all 'Varbaricum' that 'Romania' was now at its last gasp, and would have enough to do to defend itself in Italy, without any hope of permanently maintaining its hold on its rich outlying provinces, such as Gaul and Spain. The Teuton adventurer was swept across the Roman boundary by a current as strong as that which drew the Spanish adventurer across the Atlantic in the days of Cortez and Pizarro.

Of the struggles of the Vandals with the Franks we have only dim rumors. We hear, however, of a great battle, in which 20,000 Vandals were slain, their king Godigisclus, himself of the royal lineage of the Asdings, being among the number of the dead. It is said, indeed, that only the timely arrival of their allies, the Alans, saved them from utter destruction; but, however this may be, they crossed the Rhine frontier, and after three years of war and probably of wild ravage of the cities of Gaul, drawn southwards by the impulse which ever attracted the barbarian to the sunnier climate, and powerfully helped by the dissensions among the Romans themselves, which had arisen out of the sudden elevation of the upstart British soldier Constantine, they stood, after three years' time, at the foot of the Pyrenees and thundered at the gates of Spain. The kinsmen of Honorius, Verenianus and Didymus, who had loyally straggled to guard this rampart against usurpers and barbarians, had been, rather more than a year before, treacherously slain by Constantine, and thus but a feeble resistance, or no resistance at all, was opposed to the fierce tide of Vandals, Alans, Suevi, which swept through the Pyrenean passes

and ravaged the Hither and Farther Spain without mercy.

Of the twenty years which followed, some mention has already been made in describing the career of Ataulfus. It may be remembered that in 414, five years after the Vandals had entered Spain, the Visigothic chieftain followed them thither. There he and his successors carried on a long and bloody struggle with their fellow-Teutons, during part of which time the Goths professed to fight as champions of Rome, and for the remainder on their own account. The provinces, lately fertile and flourishing, were so harried by friend and foe that the Vandal soldiery were fain to buy wheat at thirty-six shillings a pint, and a mother slew and ate her own children.

At length the barbarians and the representatives of the Empire concluded some sort of peace or truce, of which a hint is given us by the declamation of the Orosius, and a somewhat more detailed but still perplexing account in the pages of Procopius. 'Then', says he, 'Honorius made an agreement with Godigisclus, on condition that they [the Vandals] should settle there, not for the devastation of the country. And whereas the Romans have a law that if men do not keep their property in their own hands, and an interval of time elapses which amounts to thirty years, then they have no longer the right to proceed against those who have dispossessed them, but their recourse to the Courts is barred by prescription. The Emperor passed a law that the time during which the Vandals should sojourn in the Roman Empire should by no means be reckoned towards this thirty-years prescription'. Difficult as it is to see how such a law would work out in the actual experience of Roman or Vandal land-holders, it well illustrates the attitude of Imperial statesmen and jurists towards all the barbarian intruders. Every peace made with them was considered to be really only a truce. However securely the Visigoth might seem to reign at Toulouse, the Ostrogoth at Ravenna, or the Vandal at the New or the Old Carthage, the Roman Augustus and his counsellors looked upon their dominion as only a parenthesis, an unfortunate parenthesis, in the age-long life of the great Republic, and in their own counsels admitted no derogation thereby to the imprescriptible rights of the sovereign Empire.

The settlement of the barbarian nations in Spain seems to have been on this wise. The Suevi were in the North-west of the peninsula, the Visigoths in the North-east, the Alans in Portugal, while the Vandals occupied two widely-sundered allotments. One tribe which seems to have borne the same name as the royal clan, that of Asdingi was settled close to the Suevi in Galicia; the other and probably the larger tribe, that of the Silingi, took up its quarters in Baetica, the modern Andalusia.

In the year 416 Constantius, then the accepted suitor of Placidia, by some cunning stratagem captured a king of the Vandals named Fredibal, and sent him as a captive to Honorius, before whose chariot he may possibly have walked in chains when the phantom-Emperor in the following year celebrated his triumph at Rome. But on the whole it was the hand of Wallia the Visigoth that fell most heavily on the Vandals and their allies. In 418 the Silingian Vandals in Baetica were absolutely 'extinguished' by the Goths, and the Alans were so terribly cut to pieces by the same people, that the few survivors willingly merged their nationality in that of the Gallician Vandals, whose king is said to have assumed thenceforward the title 'King of the Vandals and Alans.'

In 419 war broke out between this latter, newly united people and their neighbors the Suevi. Guntheric apparently gained a victory over the Suevic king Hermanric, and drove him and his followers into the fastnesses of the Asturias, where they were subjected to a strict blockade. In the following year, however, under pressure from Asterius, the Roman governor of Spain, Guntheric broke up this mountain-siege, left Suevi and Romans alike to work their will in the North of Spain, and marched across the Peninsula to Baetica. There the Asdingian Vandals settled themselves in the fair land lately occupied by their Silingian brethren (some remnants of which nation may possibly have joined them), and there gazing Eastward and

Westward over the waters of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, they began to dream of maritime greatness.

In the closing years of Honorius, the Court of Ravenna, moved by some strange impulse of spasmodic energy, made an attempt to recover Baetica from the Vandals. Castinus, Master of the Soldiery (the same officer who in the following year set up the Arch-notary Joannes as Emperor in derogation of the claims of the son of Placidia), set sail with a large body of troops, and, having effected a junction with the Goths, invaded Baetica. But there were jealousies and divided counsels at the Imperial head-quarters. We have seen how although, by the admission of all men, one of the bravest soldiers of the day, unable to bear the petty jealousy and insulting arrogance of his incapable superior, hastily travelled from Ravenna to Porto, and thence set sail for Africa, which province he afterwards held for Placidia and her children against his rival's puppet-Emperor Joannes. Still, notwithstanding this defection, the Imperial arms in Spain seemed likely to be victorious. The Vandals were besieged, apparently in one of the cities of Baetica, and suffered such severe privations that they were on the point of surrender. Castinus, however, 'that inept commander', rashly engaged in battle with men made desperate by famine, was deceived by his Gothic allies, sustained a signal defeat, and fled in disorder to Tarragona.

At length, after the Vandals had sojourned nearly twenty years in Spain, came the day when Count Bonifacius, ill-requited for his loyalty to Placidia and her children, slandered, outlawed, and driven to the brink of destruction, sent that fatal Embassy, fatal for himself and for his country, by which he invited the barbarians into Africa. The Vandals had already, without this invitation, shown that they were not disposed to accept the frontiers of Baetica as the fate-fixed limit of their dominion. In 425, after sacking Carthage and Seville, and roaming for plunder over the whole Tarraconensian province, they had laid waste the Balearic Isles—which came perhaps at this time permanently under their rule—and had invaded Mauritania, but apparently without then gaining any foothold south of the Pillars of Hercules. The messengers of Bonifacius found Guntheric and his bastard brother Gaiseric at the head of the Vandal state. They proposed (it is said) that the conquests to be effected in Africa should be considered as made on joint account, and should eventually be divided into three parts, one for each of the barbarian kings, and one for the Roman Count. The proposal was accepted, and the Vandals began to prepare ships and men for the great expedition. But before the enterprise was set in hand, Guntheric died. A century after the event, a rumor obtained credence that he, like Bleda, the brother of Attila, was slain by the partner of his throne. But the contemporary chronicler Idatius, writing as he does in Spain, gives no hint of any such an imputation, but in some mysterious manner connects the death of the Vandal king with an act of sacrilege at Seville. 'Gunderic, king of the Vandals, having taken Hispalis [Seville], when, in his impious elation, he had stretched forth his hand against the church of that city, speedily perished, being by the judgment of God attacked by a demon.' A fever (Spain's natural revenge upon her northern invaders), followed by raging madness and death, is perhaps the historical equivalent of this rhetorical statement.

But, whatever the cause of the death of Guntheric, the result was that the chief power in the Vandal state, and the sole conduct of the African invasion, were thereby vested in the hands of his bastard brother. For fifty years that brother was, except during the short meteoric career of Attila, the foremost figure in Europe, and we pause therefore for a moment to collect such light as the faint tapers of the chronicles afford us on the character and aspect of Gaiseric (commonly written Genseric).

Till he arose, his nation, though willing enough to join in the great plundering expeditions of the North, can scarcely be said to have prevailed in any encounter with an enemy. Defeated long ago by Geberich in Moravia, defeated more recently by the Franks on the borders of the

Rhine, generally worsted in Spain by the Visigoths, the nation seemed upon the whole to be gradually losing ground, and justifying the general impression of Varbaricum, that the Vandals were less warlike than their neighbors. During the long lifetime of Gaiseric this imputation at any rate was never made against them. His nimble mind and his unshaken courage proved to be the steel point needed to give penetrating power to the Vandal impact. He was cruel, not a doubt of it; his savage deeds look ghastly by the side of the knightly career of Alaric or Ataulfus. He was greedy of gain, but none of the northern invaders was greatly superior to him in this respect. But he had that power of estimating his own resources and the resources of his foe, that faculty of inventing useful political combinations, that transcendent ability in adapting his means to his chosen ends, which denote the successful man of business in the marketplace of Empire. In his strong, remorseless common-sense, in the awe-struck tone with which, a century after his death, people still spoke of him as the cleverest of all men there is something which reminds us of his fellow-Teuton (we might almost say his fellow-Prussian), who, like him, besieged and took the chief city of the Latin races. If Attila was the Napoleon of the fifth century, we may perhaps look upon Gaiseric as its Bismarck.

Yet the outward presentment of the Vandal king was by no means like that of the stalwart Prussian colonel of cuirassiers. 'A man of moderate stature,' says Jordanes, 'and limping in his gait, owing to a fall from his horse.' He goes on to say that this man, 'most renowned in the world by his slaughter of the Romans, was deep in mind, sparing of speech, a despiser of luxury, tempestuous in his wrath, greedy of gain, full of far-reaching schemes for harassing the nations, ever ready to sow the seeds of contention, and to play upon the animosities of mankind.'

Another Byzantine rhetorician, speaking of the change which came over the Vandal nation after the death of their mightiest king, says, 'they fell into every kind of effeminacy and had no longer the same vigor in action, nor kept together their former reserves, which Gaiseric always held in readiness for every expedition, so that he was quicker in striking than anyone else in making up his mind to strike.'

The resources wielded by this iron will and remorseless heart were pertinaciously directed to two great objects, the humiliation of the Roman Empire and the extirpation of the Catholic faith. His hatred towards the professors of the orthodox creed was, according to the Spanish Bishop, Idatius, attributed by some persons to the fact that he was himself an apostate from their ranks. If this story be true (it will be seen that Idatius himself does not vouch for its accuracy), it may be owing to the fact that the Vandal prince as the son of some Gaulish or Spanish concubine of Godigisclus was brought up in his mother's form of faith which, on attaining manhood, he abjured in favor of the Arian creed of his martial forefathers.

Such was the man, who, in the month of May, 428, mustered all the families of his nation and of the Alans on the northern shore of the Straits of Gibraltar in obedience to the call of Bonifacius. But before he set sail on his new enterprise, he struck one parting blow at an old enemy. Hearing that Hermigarius, King of the Suevi, was devastating some of the provinces near to his line of march, he turned back with a troop of his followers, pursued the pursuing marauder, and came up with him near the city of Merida. Many of the Suevi were slain; Hermigarius fled from the field, mounted on a steed which as he trusted should carry him swifter than the east wind, but was whelmed in the rapid waters of the Gaudiana. He died almost in sight of the towers of Merida, and the churchmen of that city saw in his fall a divine judgment for an insult which he had offered to their saintly patroness Eulalia, one of the child-martyrs in the persecution of Diocletian.

The Suevi thus punished, Gaiseric again addressed himself to the invasion of Africa. Before embarking, in order doubtless to facilitate the orderly transport of the assembled multitude, the king had all the males of his nation numbered, 'from the feeble old men to the

babe born yesterday,' and found that they amounted to 80,000 persons. Such a number, representing at the utmost 50,000 fighting men, encumbered with women, children, and dotards, should not have been formidable to the once well-garrisoned and well-stored provinces of Africa. But the line to be defended was a long one, there was discord in the camp of the defenders, and although twelve legions of Infantry and nineteen 'vexillations' of Cavalry were nominally assigned to the defence of Africa, in the attenuated state of the Imperial army in the fifth century, that force, even if it were all enlisted on the side of loyalty, probably composed a less powerful army than two legions in the days of Caesar the Dictator. It should be stated, however, that there were certain limitary garrisons, probably composed in great part of barbarian *foederati*, whose warriors, from the analogy of the troops who defended the frontier walls of Britain and Germany, may well have amounted to a very considerable number.

Let us briefly survey the political and social condition of the vast territory for which Gaiseric and his Vandals have set sail, determined to reap from it a harvest of plunder, and possibly hoping to erect in it an enduring empire. The whole coast line from the Pillars of Hercules to the borders of the Cyrenaic Pentapolis was under Diocletian divided into seven provinces.

- 1 Mauretania Tingitana.
- 2 Do. Caesariensis.
- 3 Do. Sitifensis.
- 4 Numidia.
- 5 Africa Proconsularis or Zeugitana.
- 6 Byzacena.
- 7 Tripolitana.

(1) With the westernmost province, that of which Tangiers was the capital and which corresponds with the modern kingdom of Fez, we have now no concern. At the time of Diocletian's reconstitution of the Empire it was separated from the other African provinces, and assigned to the diocese of Spain and the prefecture of the Gauls. The reason for this arrangement doubtless was that the province comprised nothing but a strip of Atlantic coast-line reaching from Tangiers to Sallee, separated by more than 200 miles of roadless desert from the next province on the east, and therefore, as accessible only by sea, most naturally connected with the great and civilized country on the northern side of the Straits of Gibraltar. Probably, then, from all that is about to be said touching the Vandal conquests in Africa, Tingitana may be safely excluded. We may infer that, in so far as it had any government at all and was not abandoned to mere Moorish barbarism, it still formed a part of the Roman Empire.

(2&3) The two next provinces, *Mauretania Caesariensis* and *Sitifensis* once belonged to the kingdom of Bocchus (who in the great Civil War took the side of Caesar against the Senate), and for more than seventy years after his death were governed by his descendants, but under Caligula they were formally annexed to the Empire, the general employed in suppressing the revolt, which was occasioned by this change, being the same Suetonius Paulinus who, twenty years later, was to lead his legions against the black-robed Furies of Anglesea, and to pierce the dense masses of Britons that swarmed round the indignant Boadicea.

These two provinces, which occupied about three-quarters of the modern territory of Algiers, had shared very imperfectly, if at all, in the civilizing influence of Carthage, and though there were in them probably large breadths of cornland between the mountains and the sea, there were not many towns besides the great commercial city of Caesarea, once the capital of the Mauretanian kings. No doubt these provinces formed a part, but neither the most highly prized nor the most hardly won part of the new heritage of the Vandals.

(7) The same description would probably suit the easternmost province, which from its three chief cities derived that name of *Tripolitana* by which it is still known. Fourteen limitary'

bodies of Imperial troops attested the difficulty with which the long and straggling frontier was guarded from the invasions of the Garamantes and the other nomadic tribes of Fezzan, who, from the ambush of their oases, poured fitfully across the desert to attack the cities of the sea-borne stranger. A strange and mysterious region it is : almost unknown in history except for the fact that it gave the Emperor Severus to Rome; but one of which we may possibly hear more, if ever the pressure of population or the means of subsistence should force the Italian or some other nation on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean to see what harvests may be reaped in the land of the Lotus-eaters of the Odyssey.

(4,5&6) The three provinces which have not yet been described, *Numidia*, *Proconsularis* or *Zeugitana*, and *Byzacena*, formed the very heart and centre of the Roman dominion in Africa. On this subject I cannot do better than quote the words of the great German scholar who has written, with a fullness which no future historian is likely to surpass, the history of the Imperial provinces. ‘Roman civilization entered upon the heritage partly of the city of Carthage, partly of the kings of Numidia, and if it here attained considerable results, it should never be forgotten that it, properly speaking, merely wrote its name and inscribed its language on what was already there. Besides the towns, which were demonstrably founded by Carthage or Numidia, both states guided the Berber tribes, which had some inclination to agriculture, towards fixed settlements. Even in the time of Herodotus the Libyans westward of the bay of Gabes were no longer nomads, but peacefully cultivated the soil; and the Numidian rulers carried civilization and agriculture still further into the interior. Nature, too, was here more favorable to husbandry than in the western part of North Africa; the middle depression between the northern and the southern range is indeed here not quite absent, but the salt lakes and the steppe proper are less extensive than in the two Mauretaniae. The military arrangements were chiefly designed to plant the troops in front of the mighty Eurasian mountain-block, the Saint-Gothard of the southern frontier-range, and to check the irruption of the non-subject tribes from the latter into the pacified territory of Africa and Numidia. ... Of the details of the warfare [against these tribes of the desert] we learn little; it must have been permanent, and must have consisted in the constant repelling of the border-tribes, as well as in not less constant pillaging raids into their territory.’

The plains between the Eurasian mountains and the sea, well-irrigated and rich in grain, in oil, and in wine, so far back as in the days of Agathocles, had probably increased in fruitfulness during at least the earlier centuries of the Empire. Carthage herself, indeed, lay in ruins for the greater part of the two centuries which intervened between the Third Punic War and the dictatorship of Julius Caesar; but there seems no reason to suppose that even during this interval the smaller cities (such as Utica and Hippo, which had sided with Rome against Carthage), or the bright villas which dotted the plain, and attested the long influence of the Carthaginians, were abandoned to desolation. At any rate, when the new Roman Carthage arose in all her luxury and pride, the three provinces nearest her, or so much of them as was embraced between the mountains and the sea, basked in the sunshine of her prosperity. An unfavorable element in the condition of the African provinces was probably the vast estates belonging to the Imperial exchequer. Enormous confiscations were practised in the days of Nero, and that the process had not ceased in the days of Honorius is evident from the fact that a special Count was appointed to administer ‘the patrimony of Gildo’, whose rebellion was suppressed by Stilicho in the year 398. These latifundia, cultivated by slaves and administered too often by corrupt and oppressive functionaries, were probably a blot upon the general prosperity of the province. And no doubt, here as elsewhere throughout the Empire, the process of the degradation of the cultivator into a serf, and the cruel impoverishment of the middle classes by ruinous taxation had been going on throughout the fourth century. Still, from the pages of Salvian and Augustine we may safely infer that there was, at any rate relatively, a

large amount of wealth, and culture, and prosperity in the three most important African provinces, up to the day when the first footprint of the Vandal was seen on the Numidian sands.

It would be an interesting enquiry, had we sufficient evidence on which to form a judgment, how far the civilization which prevailed in Africa in the fifth century of our era was Aryan, and how far still Semitic in its character. The language of the Phoenician settlers who first founded cities and established markets on the Libyan shore, the language in which Hiram spoke to Solomon and Jezebel to Ahab, was still spoken from Tangier to Tripoli at the time of the Christian era, and was even used in the days of Tiberius by the colonies which prided themselves on their derivation from Rome. Gradually, however, Punic gave way to Latin, first in official then in social life. At the end of the fourth century the relative position of the two languages seems to have resembled that of English and Welsh in our own day in the Principality. Latin was the language of the wealthy and fashionable, but a priest who was unacquainted with Punic was in danger, at least in the country districts, of becoming isolated from his congregation. Just in the same way, too, as the representatives of the earlier race in our own land call themselves not Welsh but Cymry, so the true old national name, that name which recalled to a Hebrew the contemporaries of his forefather Abraham, the name of *Canaanites* was still naturally applied to themselves by the Punic contemporaries of St. Augustine.

But upon the whole there can be no doubt that during the five centuries of the Empire the Latin language and literature had been striking deeper and deeper roots in the African world. It is one of the common-places of Church history that in the early ages of Christianity the chief of the Latin-speaking champions of her cause were African provincials. Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, Lactantius, all men of African birth, were conspicuous as Christian apologists in the third and fourth centuries, and the catalogue ends with the name of the greatest of all, Augustine of Hippo. The first translation of the Bible into Latin, the so-called 'Itala' is generally supposed to have been due in great part to the labors of African ecclesiastics; and—a less enviable distinction—the first great schism, Novatianism undoubtedly originated in the Church of Carthage.

A century after the Vandal invasion of Africa it was still the opinion of the men of letters at Constantinople that the Roman provincials, in that continent, spoke Latin more fluently than the citizens of Rome itself. It is very likely true that there was an affected prettiness, a want of spontaneity and naturalness about this Carthaginian Latin; still, the fact that Roman rhetoric was so extensively and successfully taught in the African provinces—a fact which receives abundant confirmation from the 'Confessions' of St. Augustine—throws an important light on the progress of Roman civilization in that region.

Such then, in brief outline, was the state of the African provinces in the fifth century after Christ; and their prosperity—for after making every necessary deduction we must still believe them to have been prosperous—was all summed up and symbolized in the glory and magnificence of their capital, the 'happy Carthage' of her Roman lords. We have already seen the picture drawn by the stern Salvian of the seductive immorality of the great African city, but even through all his denunciations there runs a reluctant acknowledgment of her surpassing beauty. Topographers dispute, and will perhaps long dispute, as to the exact limits of the old Phoenician city, but there cannot be much doubt as to the general position of its Roman successor, and the main features of the landscape around it are still unchanged. There Carthage lay upon her superb isthmus looking forth upon her lake and her sea, even the sea land-locked and with the two-horned mountain of the Hot Springs rising to the south of it. Below, was her harbor the celebrated Cothon, once blocked up by the mole constructed by Scipio during the last fatal siege, but now probably again opened to the commerce of the world. Northwards, the

long sad street of tombs stretched up to the Hill of Camart. In the city itself, besides the baths, the forum, the amphitheatre, and all the other accustomed splendors of a Roman city, were five temples bearing witness by the names of their tutelary gods to that antique civilization of the sons of Canaan which Rome might crush but could not obliterate. These were the temples dedicated under the Empire to Aesculapius, to Saturn, to Juno, to Hercules, and to Mercury, but which had once borne the means of Ashmon, of Moloch, of Ashtaroth, of Melkarth, and of Baal-Ammon. Some of these, it is true, may have been destroyed in the outbreak of Christian zeal which marked the close of the fourth century in Africa; but the temple of Juno Coelestis at any rate still remained, for it was consecrated in 425 by Aurelius, Bishop of Carthage, as a temple of the newer faith which had come forth from Palestine to claim all the shores of the Mediterranean for its heritage.

On an eminence within the city rose the stately Byrsa, the Acropolis of Carthage, bounded by a wall two miles in circumference. Here, according to the legend transmitted by the Greeks, was the scene of Dido's famous purchase from the natives of a hide of land which she interpreted to mean so much land as could be encompassed by a bull's hide cut into strips. Modern philologists, struck with the obvious absurdity of supposing that Dido and her Phoenicians would resort to the Greek language for the name of their new city, have preferred to connect Byrsa with Bozra, a name well known to us from the Hebrew Scriptures as descriptive of the mountain fortress of the Edomites. Here, at any rate, appear to have been situated the chief buildings not only of Punic Carthage, but of its Roman successor: here was the Temple of Ashmon, or Aesculapius, and here in all probability the lordly *Praetorium*, once inhabited by the great Proconsul of Africa, but soon to receive the retinue of the Vandal king.

I have said that the Proconsul of Africa once dwelt in the Praetorium of Carthage, and this was certainly his abode in the first century of the Christian era, but at the time which we have now reached, he may have been thrust out of his palace, or if still dwelling there, he may have been reduced almost to insignificance by the overshadowing might of his military rival, the Count. The position of the Proconsul was a somewhat peculiar one. The whole diocese of Africa, including all its six provinces, bounded by Tingitana on the West, and Cyrenaica in the East, was, as we have already seen, part of the Prefecture of Italy. According to analogy it should have been all subject to its own Vicarius, who should have been responsible for the whole to the *Praefectus Praetorio Italiae*. In fact, however, at the time of the Diocletianic reorganization of the Empire, only five provinces (the two Mauretaniae, Numidia, Byzacena, and Tripolitana) were placed under the Vicarius Africae, while the Proconsul of Zeugitana (otherwise called the Proconsul of Africa, as his, though the smallest, was by far the richest and most important of all the Provinces) was retained under the immediate order of the Praetorian Prefect of Italy. If, as seems highly probable, the Vicarius as well as the Proconsul had his residence at Carthage, there was already some material provided for jealousies and heart-burnings between the civil governors of the Diocese. But, from what we know of the cause of affairs throughout the fourth and fifth centuries, and especially from the glimpses vouchsafed to us of the history of Roman Africa during that time, we may safely say that the Proconsul, venerable as was the name of his office and great as his theoretical authority, was ever losing more of the substance of power, and that his losses were the gains of the military ruler of the Diocese, the far-feared Count of Africa. This was the office which, in the middle of the reign of Honorius had been held by Heraclian, and which was now held by Bonifacius.

From this sketch of Roman Africa we return to trace the fortunes of its Vandal invaders. We have seen that in the month of May, and probably in the year 428, Gaiseric, with the whole body of his countrymen (the males alone of whom numbered 80,000 souls), set sail in the ships of Bonifacius for the coast of Africa. Of the details of their first conquests we know nothing. All that we can say is that in the early part of 430, only three cities remained which had not

been sacked by the barbarians, but these three were the strongly-fortified towns of Hippo, Cirta, and the capital of the province, Carthage. We know not when Cirta fell. A peculiar interest attaches to the Vandals' siege of Hippo, which was commenced about the end of the month of May, 430. This town, situated on the sea-coast about 180 miles west of Carthage, and represented by the modern French-Arabic city of Bona, was, as everyone knows, the abode of the great bishop and father, Augustine. There he was busily employed, adding a Confutation of Julian of Eclana, the Pelagian heretic, to the vast library of books which already owned him as author, when the news came of the Vandal invasion. He heard of the burnings, the massacres, the torn-up fruit-trees, the churches levelled to the ground, which everywhere marked the progress of the barbarian hosts through the orderly and quiet province, the beautiful land which from every side seemed smiling upon the stranger. Bishop after bishop asked his counsel whether they should stay in their sees or fly to one of the few remaining strongholds. His first advice was, 'Remain with your flocks and share their miseries'. 'What,' said one, 'is the use of our remaining, simply to see the men slain, the women ravished, the churches burned, and then to be put to the rack ourselves to make us disclose the hiding-place of treasures which we have not?'. They pleaded the words of Christ, 'When they persecute you in one city, flee into another,' and Augustine, reflecting on the examples of Cyprian and Athanasius, who had for a time quitted their bishoprics, with some hesitation, and with some limitations, admitted the plea. So it came to pass that Possidius, Bishop of Calama, to whose pen we are indebted for this account of the last days of his master, with many other bishops from all the country round, were shut up in Hippo, sitting at the feet of the great doctor of the African Church, and listening to that river of eloquence which had once flowed forth abundantly over all the meadows of the Church, but was now almost dried up with fear, to that fountain sweeter than honey which was being turned into the bitterness of wormwood. So the good bishops sat, often talking together over these calamities, and reflecting on the tremendous judgments of God daily exhibited before us, saying, 'Righteous art thou, O Lord, and thy judgment is just,' mingling our tears, our groans, and our sighs, and praying the Father of Mercies and the God of all Consolation that he would see meet to deliver us from this tribulation.'

But, shut up in the same town of Hippo, was one man more sad at heart and more weary of life than Augustine himself, the author of all this misery, and the betrayer of his trust, Bonifacius Count of Africa. It has been already told how, by the intervention of his friends, his character was cleared at Rome, and he returned to his old loyalty to Placidia. Too late, however, for the desolated province. 'When with the most earnest entreaties and a thousand promises he besought his late allies to depart from Africa, they would not listen to his words, but thought he was making fools of them.' A battle followed, in which he was defeated, and in consequence we find him now within the walls of the old capital of the Numidian kings (Hippo Regius) directing the defence of the beleaguered city, and listening to the tragic stories told by each fresh fugitive, of the ruin wrought in his province by his own invited guests. He had repented,

'Ay, as the libertine repents who cannot
Make done undone, when thro' his dying sense
Shrills "lost through thee". '

It is strange to reflect that this, the most miserable man in all Africa, whose treason had brought such innumerable woes upon his people, was the same man who had sighed after a monastic life, and had scarcely been persuaded to continue to discharge the duties of a husband and a general. A conscience, this, which was always above or below the average common-sense morality of ordinary men.

The generalship of Bonifacius, or the prayers of Augustine, or the natural unskillfulness of the northern barbarians in the siege of walled cities, enabled Hippo to make a successful defence. For fourteen months the Vandals blockaded the town, from May 430 till July 431. In the third month of the siege, the great Bishop of Hippo died, in the seventy-sixth year of his age and the fortieth of his episcopate. He had often uttered the maxim that even the aged and experienced Christian ought not to depart out of the world except in a state of profound penitence for all sins committed after baptism; and acting on his own principle, he had the penitential Psalms of David copied for him by his friends, and gazed constantly at the wall to which the sheets thus inscribed were affixed. For ten days before his death he ordered that, except when the doctor visited him, or his meals had to be brought to his bedside, no one should enter his chamber, in order that all his waking thoughts might be given to prayer. So, amid the sorrows of the siege, in silence and contrition, passed away the spirit which, more mightily than any other since the age of the Apostles ended, has moulded the thoughts of the European nations concerning the dealings of the Almighty with mankind.

In the fourteenth month of the siege the Vandals, pressed by famine, broke up from before the walls of Hippo. Soon after, Bonifacius, being joined by large reinforcements from Rome and Byzantium (the latter under the command of the veteran Aspar), tried conclusions once more with Gaiseric in the open field. The Romans were again defeated. Aspar returned to Byzantium and Bonifacius to Rome, where (as has been before related) he received his death-wound from Aetius.

Three years passed. It became clear to the Imperial Court that the Vandals would never be forced to relinquish their prize. It had also become clear to the mind of Gaiseric that it would be wise to consolidate his conquests, that Carthage would not easily be wrested in fair fighting from a watchful foe, and that it was time for his people to desist from mere marauding ravages and to settle down as lords of the soil in such part of Africa as the Emperor might be forced to surrender. Accordingly, on the 11th February, 435, peace was concluded between the Emperor and the Vandal, the chief conditions being apparently that the latter was to leave unmolested the city of Carthage, and that part of the Proconsular Province which lay immediately around it; was to pay a yearly tribute, and to send his son Huneric to Rome as a hostage for his fidelity. On the other hand, Gaiseric's rule over the part of Africa which he had already conquered, and which probably included the remainder of the Proconsular Province, Byzacena and Numidia, was recognized under the formula probably in frequent use on similar occasions that 'this portion of the Empire was given to the Vandals to dwell in'. The treaty was signed at Hippo, which city appears to have fallen into the hands of the Vandals, and to have been burned by them. Probably it may have been rebuilt, reoccupied by an Imperial garrison, and now handed over to Gaiseric, but as to these vicissitudes in its history we cannot speak with certainty.

Procopius greatly praises the forethought and moderation which Gaiseric showed in concluding this peace. He says that he had reflected on the possibility that Rome and Byzantium might again combine their forces against him, and that another time he might not be able to resist their united strength, that he was sobered rather than puffed up by the good fortune which he had already experienced, and remembered how often the gods delight to trip up human prosperity. No doubt this was the attitude which the Vandal wished to assume, but considering how easily the tribute might be left unpaid, the hostage enabled to escape, the promise broken, and on the other hand of what immense importance to the establishment of the Vandal rule was the recognition of its legitimacy even for a few years by the only source of legitimate authority in the Western Empire, we shall not find much difficulty in believing that the moderate and sober-minded barbarian got the best of the bargain.

In point of fact, the promise to desist from further attacks on the Proconsular Province held good for rather less than five years. We have already had occasion briefly to notice those

vain and futile battlings to and fro in Southern Gaul between the Romans at Narbonne and the Visigoths at Toulouse, which preceded by about twelve years the far wiser confederacy of both nations against the terrible Attila. While all the energies of Rome, and all the intellect of Aetius, who was the brain of Rome, were concentrated on the next move in this purposeless struggle, suddenly, without warning, Gaiseric, (says Prosper) 'of whose friendship no doubt was entertained, attacked Carthage, under cover of peace, and converted all its wealth to his own use, extorting it from the citizens by various kinds of torments'. This happened on the 19th October, 439. We may conjecture that the hostage Huneric had been before this upon some pretext or other recalled from Italy.

Now at length the great prize was won, and the Vandals were undoubted masters of Africa. Their chief, who for ten years or more had been leading them from victory to victory, seems now for the first time to have assumed the full title of king. His true statesmanlike instinct is shown by the fact that as soon as he touched the coast, or at least as soon as the docks and harbors of Hippo and Carthage were in his power, he, the leader of a tribe of inland barbarians, who had been indebted to the friendly offices of Bonifacius for the transport of his people across the Straits of Gibraltar, turned all his energies to shipbuilding, and soon possessed incomparably the most formidable naval power in the Mediterranean. The remaining thirty-seven years of his life, especially the later ones, were made merry by perpetual piratical expeditions against Italy, against Sicily, against Illyria, against the Peloponnesus, against the rich and defenseless islands of the Aegean. There was a joyous impartiality in these expeditions, an absence of any special malice against the victims of them, a frank renunciation of all attempts to find a pretext for making them, which is thoroughly characteristic of their author. Once when his armament was lying in the harbor of Carthage, all ready for sailing, and when the brigand-king had come limping down from the palace which had been dwelt in for centuries by the Proconsuls of Africa, as soon as he set his foot on board, the pilot asked for orders to what land he should steer. The object of the expedition was the only point which the king had not yet troubled himself to determine. 'For the dwellings of the men with whom God is angry', he said, and left the decision of that question to the winds and the waves. This was the true counterpart of the stories about 'the scourge of God,' with which Legend has falsely invested the history of Attila.

So it came to pass that again after nearly six centuries of quiet submission to the rule of Rome, the name of Carthage became terrible to the dwellers by the Tiber. The poets of the period described Gaiseric's invasions of Italy as a fourth Punic War and it was scarcely a license of poetry so to speak of them. We are reminded of the mediaeval superstitions about Vampire-spirits inhabiting the bodies of the dead and sucking the blood of the living, when we find this Teutonic people entering the long-buried corpse of the Punic nationality, and striking, from its heart, deadlier blows at Rome than ever were delivered by Hamilcar or Hannibal. We know not on what scale God writes his lessons for the nations, and we fear to push too far the paradox expressed in the old proverb, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'. But, remembering the ignoble jealousy, the cruelty born of fear, with which the Romans prepared for and consummated the 'deletion' of their fallen enemy, in the Third Punic War, we cannot but feel that there is something like a judgment of the Eternal Righteousness in the conspicuous part assigned to the city and harbor of Carthage in harassing and embittering the dying days of Rome.

During the years immediately following the fall of Carthage, Sicily appears to have been the main object of the Vandal expeditions. Gaiseric was, in the year 440, moving up and down through the island, cruelly wasting her fruitful valleys, when the tidings brought to him that Sebastian, a brave man and son-in-law to Bonifacius, had landed in Africa, caused him to return to Carthage. Sebastian, however, as we shall hereafter see, came not as an enemy but as

a suppliant, and Gaiseric, we may presume, returned to his career of spoliation. Next year an expedition fitted out by the Eastern Emperor under the command of Areobindus and two other generals, came to dispute the sovereignty of the Western seas with the Vandal king. But as was so often the case with these laboriously prepared Byzantine armaments, the generals wrangled and procrastinated; the favorable moment—if there were one—for striking was lost, and the expedition failed to accomplish anything for the reconquest of Africa, and did much to increase the miseries of the unhappy Sicilians.

In the next year (442) the army was recalled to defend the Eastern Empire from one of Attila's inroads, and Valentinian, feeling it hopeless to continue the contest single-handed, concluded another treaty with Gaiseric by which possibly Sicily or some portion of it was surrendered, and Africa was divided by certain fixed limits between the Emperor and the Vandal. Unfortunately these 'fixed limits' have not been mentioned by the historians, and it must remain doubtful how much of Mauretania on the west and Tripolitana on the east may still have owed a precarious allegiance to the Roman Empire.

But the fate of Sicily is less doubtful. It is clear that either at this time or some years later, it became a recognized part of the Vandal dominions, and so remained till there was no longer a Western Emperor to claim it. Then probably in the year 477, the greater part of it was ceded by Gaiseric to Odovacar, the barbarian ruler of Italy, on condition of his paying an annual tribute. But already, as we see, the great island is falling into that condition of partial detachment from the great peninsula, which generally marked its history under its Greek lords, and which was so frequently again to prevail in the Middle Ages, and even down to the days of our fathers.

As for Gaiseric, though peace was formally concluded between him and Valentinian, we need not suppose that the buccaneering exploits of the Vandal king were ended. Pretexts were doubtless still found for the visits paid with each returning spring to some 'nation with whom God was angry,' and if serious war was not being waged, life was still made exciting by light-hearted piracy.

The few details which are preserved as to the internal administration of Gaiseric, and his manner of parcelling out the conquered territory among his followers, are of great value, as affording one of the earliest illustrations of that great land-settlement of the victorious Teutons which was one day to form the basis of the Feudal System.

'He arranged,' says Procopius, 'the Vandals and Alans into regiments, over whom he set no fewer than eighty colonels, whom he called Chiliarchs (captains of thousands), so creating the belief that his forces amounted to 80,000 men. Nevertheless the number of the Vandals and Alans was said in the previous time (in the time before the invasion) not to amount to more than 50,000; but the natural increase of the population, together with their practice of admitting other barbarians into their confederation, had enormously added to their numbers. The names, however, of the Alans, and of every other barbarous tribe in the confederacy except the Moors, were all merged in the one designation of Vandals.'

'Among the provincials of Africa, if he saw any man flourishing in reputation and wealth, he gave him, with his lands and other possessions, to his sons Huneric and Genzo, as servile property. From the other Africans he took away the largest and best part of their lands, and distributed them among the nation of the Vandals; and from that time these lands are called the Vandal Allotments (*Sortes Vandalorum*) unto this day. The former possessors of these lands were for the most part left poor and free—at liberty, that is, to take themselves off whither they would. Now all these estates which Gaiseric had bestowed upon his sons and the other Vandals were, according to his orders, free from the payment of all taxes. But all the land which seemed to him to be of poorer quality, he left in the hands of the former owners, so burdened however with taxes and public charges that nothing beyond a bare subsistence could be reaped by the

nominal possessors. Many of these tried to flee, but were arrested and put to death; for sundry grievous crimes were laid to their charge, the greatest of all, according to his estimate, being the attempted concealment of treasure. Thus did the African provincials fall into every kind of misery.'

We are able to supplement the information as to the land settlement given by Procopius by an important sentence from Victor Vitensis. 'He [Gaiseric] thus disposed of the several provinces : reserving to himself the Byzacene and Abaritan provinces, Getulia and a part of Numidia, he portioned out the Zeugitana or Proconsular province to his army by the tie of inheritance'. The Proconsular province, as has been said, was that corner of the coast line in the middle of which Carthage was situated, the smallest of all the provinces, being only about a hundred miles wide by fifty long, but doubtless also by far the richest. Numidia bordered it on the west, the Byzacene province on the south. No such province as Abaritana was known to the Imperial geographers : but it was probably a small district in the Proconsular province.

The historical student who considers the account thus given by Procopius and Victor of the Vandal land-settlement will see that we have here the germs of the same state of society which prevailed in France under the Carolingian monarchs and out of the inevitable decay of which arose the Feudal System.

1. We have first a vast Royal Domain (*dominicum*) the land of 'Dominus noster, Gaisericus.' If we take the expression of Victor literally, this domain included nearly the whole of the two great provinces of Numidia and Byzacena, as well as some part of Proconsularis. Probably, however, we may interpret it by the light of Procopius' explanations, and infer that Gaiseric chose for himself and his sons all the valuable estates in these provinces leaving the poorer soils in the hands of the old cultivators. The immense domain so chosen was cultivated of course entirely by slaves, and Gaiseric chose especially those who have been the richest and most influential proprietors, appropriating them and their slaves to service on his domain land. The insolence of the barbarian was gratified by thus reducing the proudest, wealthiest, and most refined of the provincials to the condition of menials absolutely dependent on his will. But in course of time no doubt superior education and the old habits of command would assert themselves. These aristocratic slaves would become intendants, stewards, managers of their fellow-slaves. If the experiment had been continued for a sufficient length of time (which it was not in the case of the Vandals) these highly-educated slaves would have become supple courtiers, and would have perhaps proved a formidable counterpoise to the descendants of Vandal chiefs, who once looked upon Gaiseric himself as scarcely more than first among his peers. In fact, very soon after the settlement (in 442) there was an actual conspiracy among the nobility against what they considered the overgrown power and pride of their king : but the plot was detected and the conspirators atoned for their share in it by a death of torture. The suspicions and jealousies engendered by this conspiracy were very detrimental to the Vandal state.

2. The Vandal Allotments (*Sortes Vandalorum*) denote the next class of lands, those which are divided among the warriors of the conquering nation. Divided, surely, by lot, in a manner which suited well the ardent love of games of hazard inherent in these Teutonic nations, and in accordance with a custom widely diffused among them, as is testified by the occurrence of the same word, *sors*, among the Visigoths in Spain, among the Burgundians on the banks of the Lake of Geneva, and among the Riparian Franks of the Rhine. The estates were hereditary—this we learn from Victor's express testimony—but though hereditary they doubtless carried with them some obligation of service in that 'army' to which they were originally 'portioned out.' Except for this implied obligation of military service they were free from all taxes. These *Sortes Vandalorum* were, as before said, chiefly to be found in the rich Proconsular province, where they must have clustered thickly, perhaps overflowing a little into

the neighbouring Numidia. Here doubtless the power of the old Vandal nobility was greatest, and the spirit of Vandal nationality the strongest. Here, if it had been written in the book of Fate that an enduring German kingdom of North Africa should be founded, would the speech of the Vandals have struck the deepest root, and the songs of Vandal minstrels as to the by-gone ages spent in the forest of the Elbe and the Danube would have been the longest preserved.

3. There remain the poor, the unimproved, the outlying lands, abandoned half-contemptuously to the Roman provincials, who tilled, and crouched, and paid where their fathers fought, and ruled, and robbed. Would this kind of holding in the course of centuries have sunk down into the 'base-tenure' whence our copyholds sprang, or would it have slowly risen into what our ancestors called free-socage? In other words, would these down-trodden provincials have developed into villeins or freeholders? That is an interesting question, the answer to which is drowned by the trumpets of Belisarius. But, nevertheless, it is worthwhile noticing that we have here in Africa, half way through the fifth century after Christ, a division of the nation into two distinct classes, a burdened, tax-paying, toiling commonalty, and a lordly, untaxed, warrior class above them—that same division which in France lasted on to the days of our grandfathers, and was shattered by the oath of the Tiers Etat in the Tennis-Court of Versailles.

But it is not to be supposed that a majority of the subject population were left, even in this degraded state, to enjoy the blessings of freedom. The vast estates of the king, his sons, and the Vandal warriors, required vast tribes of slaves to cultivate them, and to slavery accordingly, as has before been said, the bulk of the provincial population were reduced. A story which is told us by Procopius and which has something in the ring of it that reminds one of the far-distant legendary moralities of Herodotus, brings this wholesale enslavement of the people clearly before us.

'The Byzantine general Aspar, as was before said, brought help to the Roman Provincials of Africa, but was defeated by the barbarians. After the battle, Gaiseric ordered all the captives to be mustered in the courtyard of his palace that he might allot them masters suitable to their several conditions. There then they were collected in the open air, and as the noonday sun—the fierce sun of Libya—beat hotly on their heads, most of them sat down. But one among them, who was named Marcian, carelessly composed himself to sleep; and while he lay there an eagle, so they say, with outspread wings, hovered over him, now rising, now falling, but always contriving to shelter him, and him only, from the sun by the shadow of her wings. From the window of an upper chamber Gaiseric watched this occurrence, and being a quick-witted man, at once perceived that there was in it something of the nature of an omen. So he sent for the man, and asked him who he was, and whence he came. He replied that he was a confidential servant, or *domesticus*, as the Romans call it, of Aspar. On hearing this, and reflecting what the bird had done—the typical Eagle of Rome—and comparing it with the influence which Aspar possessed at the court of Byzantium, Gaiseric saw clearly that the captive before him would attain to some high career. To kill him, however, did not appear to be at all the right thing to do : for that would only show that the omen had no significance, since certainly the bird would never have taken the trouble to overshadow, as future Emperor, a man who was just on the point of dying. And besides, he had no just cause for putting him to death. Nor could he do it if he was really destined to wear the purple, since what God has resolved upon, Man will never be able to hinder. He therefore bound him by an oath that if he was restored to freedom he would never bear arms against the Vandals. Thus was Marcian liberated, and came to Byzantium, where, not long afterwards, upon the death of Theodosius II, he was made Emperor.' He is the same Marcian with whom we have already made acquaintance as the husband of Pulcheria, the courageous defender of the Empire against

Attila, the prince who saw in his dreams the broken bow, on the night when the mighty Hun expired. ‘And, though (says Procopius) in all other respects he made an excellent ruler, he never seemed to take any thought for the province of Africa,’ mindful as he was of his vow not to bear arms against the Vandals.

The land-settlement, the outlines of which are thus preserved to us, was probably completed soon after the capture of Carthage in 439. We have seen that by the peace of 442 some fragments of African dominion, probably in Tripolitana and Mauretania were still left to the Empire, but after the death of Valentinian III (455) the Vandal dominion spread unchallenged over these as well as over all the islands of the Western Mediterranean.

As to the administration of government in this wide territory, there are not wanting indications that here, as in so many other portions of the Empire, much was still left in the hands of the trained Roman officials. Doubtless the lawless will of the Vandal king could make itself felt wherever it pleased. Doubtless, subject to that omnipotent will, the great nobles, each in his own circle, could exercise unchecked dominion. Still there remained an infinite number of details of daily government in a community which, though half ruined was still civilized, and these details the German conquerors had neither intellect nor patience to arrange. They remained therefore in the hands of the Roman bureaucracy, and hence it is that we still, even under the Vandal kings, meet with a Proconsul of Carthage, a *Primarius Provinciae*, and a *Praepositus Regni*, though to attempt now to settle the exact functions of these governors would be a hopeless task.

With all the barbarous violence and contempt of the rights of the subject population which characterized the Vandal conquest, it deserves one praise : it was not financially oppressive. While the Imperial government, with phrases of law and right for ever on its lips, was practically sucking the life-blood out of the people by its Indictions and its Superindictions, its Angaria and its Chrysargyron, Gaiseric, though helping himself and his soldiers to all the fairest lands in the province, did leave to the poor provincial liberty to live on the sterile soil which he contemptuously abandoned to him. Procopius expressly assures us that when the Emperor Justinian regained Africa it was no longer possible to discover in the public archives the amount of taxes which ought to be paid by each property, since Gaiseric, in the beginning of his reign, had thrown up the whole system and destroyed the registers.

At first sight this seems contradictory to the same author’s statement previously quoted, that the lands abandoned to the Romans were ‘so burdened with taxes and public charges that nothing beyond a bare subsistence could be reaped by the nominal possessors.’ On reflection, however, we may perhaps come to the conclusion that in that passage Procopius is speaking chiefly of the great Roman land-owners, whom it was evidently part of the Vandal policy to worry out of existence. The mass of cultivators and the little burgesses in the towns, who were known under the Empire as Curiales, were, it seems, practically untaxed. The grievous discontent which arose in the province when this operation was reversed by the Roman reconquest, and when the people found that in their liberator they had gained a relentless task-master, is a striking testimony to the general lightness of the financial yoke of the Vandal kings.

In all that has yet been said concerning the career of this people, little has appeared to justify that charge of senseless and brutal destructiveness with which the word ‘vandalism’ makes us familiar. We have heard of the pillage of towns—that, of course, is one of the commonplaces of barbaric conquest; of populations reduced to slavery—but the slave-dealer followed also in the track of the Roman armies; even of the fruit-trees being rooted up—but that was consistent with the cruel logic of war, being done in order to prevent the inhabitants from deserting the towns and prolonging a guerilla campaign in the country on such support as they could derive from the produce of the orchards.

We have yet, however, to see the Vandal in his most repulsive aspect, that of a religious persecutor; and when we have beheld him in this capacity, the kernel of truth and the large envelope of passionate exaggeration which both together make up the common idea of vandalism will be more clearly perceived and more easily separated from one another.

The Vandals, like almost every other Teutonic nation, had shared in that great process of religious change of which the bishop Ulfilas was the most conspicuous instrument. Little as their deeds savoured of Christianity, they were, by profession, Christians, holding, as a matter of course, the Arian creed of their great apostle.

They came then with all the rancor of the Arian-Catholic feud, which had now endured for more than a century, bitter in their hearts. And they came into a province which was, beyond all the other provinces of the Roman Empire, undermined by hot volcanic fires of theological passion and bigotry. There is much in the religious controversies of Africa in the fourth and fifth centuries which reminds us of the bloody disputes between Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Independent at the time of our own 'Great Rebellion.' Even the very names of men, not of one party only, have a Puritan sound about them : 'What-God-wills', 'Thanks-to-God,' 'Given-by-God', and so forth, recall the 'Praise-God Barebones' and his piously named confederates of those stormy days. In Africa, over and above the ordinary religious dissensions of the fourth and fifth centuries, there was a special strife, the Donatist, which had arisen out of the cowardly conduct of some bishops and presbyters during the persecution of the Church by Diocletian and his successors. A hundred and twenty years had elapsed since that time, and it might have been thought that purely personal questions, such as whether this bishop had under terror of death delivered up the sacred books to the Imperial officers, or whether that presbyter had with too great eagerness grasped the crown of martyrdom, might have been now allowed to slumber in oblivion. But sects and churches have long memories, and the Donatists, the Cameronians of Africa, were still as earnest in discussing the election of the so-called 'traditor' Caecilian to the see of Carthage, as if that event had happened yesterday instead of four generations ago. Round the Donatists, and in more or less close connection with them, were grouped the wild, fanatical Circumcelliones, savage boors, whose zeal, where it was not assumed as a cloak for rapine and lust, must have been hovering on the verge of insanity, who carried fire and sword through the villages of Africa, and whose war-cry, 'Praise be to God,' was heard in those villages with greater terror than the roar of the Numidian lion. The portrait of all these fanatics, being drawn only by their antagonists, must be received with much caution, but after making every conceivable allowance for exaggeration, we cannot avoid the conclusion that in this instance Christian common sense was represented by the party which successfully maintained its title to the envied designation, Catholic. But, Donatists and Catholics having both appealed to the state, and judgment having gone in favor of the latter, they, not unnaturally, according to the ideas of that age, but most unwisely according to our manner of thinking, brought down the iron hand of Imperial despotism with all its weight upon their foes.

It happens that the greater part of the laws against the Donatists which are preserved to us belong to the reign of Honorius and the first twenty years of the fifth century, and we are thus able to see clearly mirrored in the Roman statute-book the theological animosities and the petty persecutions which preceded the advent of the Vandals into Africa. The power of buying, selling, and bequeathing property was denied to the Donatists, 'whom the patience of our Clemency has preserved until now, but who ought to be branded with perpetual infamy, and shut out from all honorable assemblies, and from every place of public resort.' Their churches were to be taken from them and given to the Catholics. They were to pay fines, varying, according to their condition in life, from £25 to £8000 sterling (those wild boors, the Circumcelliones, were to pay £25 a head); and these fines were to be repeated as often as the

offender renewed his communion with the Donatist Church. The slaves and the semi-servile agricultural laborers were ‘to be prevented from audacious acts of this kind by the severest punishment’; ‘to be recalled from their evil religion by more frequent blows’—if blows still proved ineffectual, to lose the third part of their accumulated savings (*peculium*). We have here, it is true, not a ruthless or bloodthirsty persecution, but we have a great deal of injustice of a very galling kind, perpetrated under the name of religion, just the kind of quiet, crushing, monotonous intolerance by which the Hapsburgs extirpated the Protestantism of Styria, and the English Parliament strove to extirpate the Papistry of Ireland, There can be no doubt that the Catholics had thus earned a rich legacy of hatred and revenge, which was punctually paid to them when the Vandals, heretics like the Donatists, entered Africa.

We will now hear a little of what Victor Vitensis has to tell us of the Vandal persecutions in the reign of Gaiseric. His style is declamatory and he is full of prejudices, both national and ecclesiastical, but he is all but a contemporary—writing, as he does, in the sixtieth year after that cruel and savage nation reached the boundaries of our miserable Africa,—and he gives us that life and color which we ask for in vain from the meagre and cautious annalists.

‘The wicked rage of the Vandals was especially directed against the churches and basilicas, the cemeteries and the monasteries, and they made bigger bonfires of the houses of prayer than of whole cities and towns. If by chance they found the door of the holy house fast closed, it was who should soonest force an entrance by thumping it down with his right hand; so that one might truly say, “They break down the carved work thereof at once with axes and hammers. They have cast fire into Thy sanctuary; they have defiled by casting down the dwelling-place of Thy name to the ground.” Ah, how many illustrious bishops and noble priests were put to death by them with divers kinds of torments in the endeavor to compel them to reveal what treasures they had of gold or silver, belonging to themselves or to their churches. If, under the pressure of the torture, they easily revealed their possessions, the persecutors plied them with yet more cruel torments, declaring that part only had been surrendered, not the whole; and the more they gave up the more they were supposed to be keeping back. Some had their mouths forced open with stakes and crammed with noisome filth. Some were tortured by having strings tightly twisted round the forehead or leg-bone’. Some had bladders filled with sea-water, with vinegar, with the dregs of the olive-presses, with the garbage of fishes, and other foul and cruel things laid upon their lips. The weakness of womanhood, the dignity of noble birth, the reverence due to the priesthood—none of these considerations softened those cruel hearts; nay, rather, where they saw that any were held in high honor, there was their mad rage more grievously felt. I cannot describe how many priests and illustrious functionaries had heavy loads piled upon them, as if they were camels or other beasts of burden, nor how with iron goads they urged them on their way, till some fell down under their burdens and miserably gave up the ghost. Hoary hairs enwrapping the venerable head like whitest wool won for the bearer no pity from those savage guests. Innocent little children were snatched by the barbarian from the maternal embrace and dashed to the ground. Well might our captive Zion sing “The enemy said that he would burn my borders and slay my infants and dash my little ones to the earth.” In some large and stately buildings [probably churches], where the ministry of fire had proved insufficient to destroy them, the barbarians showed their contempt of the edifice by levelling its fair walls with the ground; so that now those beautiful old cities have quite lost their former appearance, and many whole towns are now occupied by a scanty remnant of their former inhabitants, or even left altogether desolate.

‘Yea, and even today, if any buildings remain, they are continually laying them waste, as, for instance, the Temple of Memory, that worthy appendage to the Theatre of Carthage, and the street called the Street of Heaven both of which they have destroyed from top to bottom. Then too, the large basilica, where the bones of the blessed martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas are laid,

the church of Celerina, and others which they have not destroyed, they have, with the license of tyrants, enslaved to their own religious rights. Did they see any strongholds which they were unable to carry by the rush of their barbarian fury, they collected vast multitudes around the walls and slew them with the bloody sword, leaving their carcasses to putrefy under the ramparts, that they might slay with the stench those whom their arms were powerless to assail.'

This last sentence may serve as an example of the style in which the indictment against the Vandals has been framed. It is evident that they committed all the excesses which might be expected from a horde of triumphant barbarians, greedy beyond measure of gold, and utterly reckless of human life, but it is also evident that the very blunders of their savage warfare have been made to appear as parts of a diabolical machinery of cruelty by the ecclesiastical pamphleteer.

When we come to the details of the Vandal persecution of the Catholics under Gaiseric (for we have no present concern with that which happened in the next generation), we find further reason to suppose that there has been some exaggeration in the passages already quoted. Two bishops, Papinianus and Mansuetus, seem to have been burnt, but there is something in the language of the historian here which leads us to conjecture that this was the work of cruel pillagers rather than a solemn state-sanctioned martyrdom. The Bishop of Carthage, 'What-God-wills', and a great multitude of his clergy, were put on board unsound ships and sent out to sea, but they were favored with a prosperous wind, and arrived in Campania, safe in body, though stripped of all their possessions. The churches of Carthage were claimed for the Arian worship, among them two stately and noble edifices outside the walls, which commemorated respectively the martyrdom and burial of St. Cyprian. 'But who,' says the good Victor, 'can bear to remember without tears that Gaiseric ordered us to bear the bodies of our dead, without the solemnity of hymns, in silence to the grave?.' When this silent-burial grievance of the African Catholics assumes so prominent a place in the catalogue of their woes, we may perhaps conclude that the religious persecution, considered apart from the mere rapine of the barbarians, was not extremely severe.

A deputation of bishops and leading men of the provinces which the Vandals had divided among themselves, waited upon the King, when he had gone down, as his custom was, to the coast of Numidia perhaps to inhale such freshness as might be found in the sea-breezes. They pleaded with him to restore to the Orthodox some places in which they might worship God. 'What! Are you here still', he bade his interpreter say to the bishops. 'I decreed the banishment of your whole name and race : and yet you dare to ask for such things.' And so great was his anger that he would fain have drowned them all at once in the Mediterranean at his feet, had not his counsellors after long entreaty persuaded him to abandon his purpose. They departed and continued their service of God in such lowly dwellings as they could obtain, not unlike probably to those in which Paul had discoursed till break of day, and the elders of Ephesus had fed the flock of God. For some years, we infer from the language of the historian, this unobtrusive worship of the Catholics was permitted, if not expressly sanctioned. Then came Victor Vit. denunciations and calumnies, especially against those' priests who officiated 'in the regions which paid tribute to the Palace.' If one of these, in his sermons to his flock, happened to mention the name of Pharaoh, or Nebuchadnezzar, or Holofernes, or any similar tyrant—and we may conjecture that these references were rather more frequent than were absolutely needful to explain the Lessons for the day—he was accused of speaking against the person of the King, and banishment was his immediate sentence. For this cause a whole batch of bishops (among whom we find 'He-has-God', Bishop of Teudala) was banished at once, and the Holofernes of their denunciation would not allow the consecration of any successors to their sees. At length, on the urgent entreaty of Valentinian, he permitted the Orthodox Church of Carthage to ordain for itself a bishop, the gentle and charitable 'Thanks-to-God', who for three

years governed the Metropolitan See with general approval. On his death there was another long interval of widowhood for the Churches, till at last, about the year 475, towards the very end of the reign of Gaiseric, on the intercession of Zeno, Emperor of the East, the surviving bishops were permitted to return from the widely-scattered seats of their long banishment.

Besides the exile, and in some cases the enslavement of the bishops, other oppressions were practised upon the Orthodox. The demand made in the time of Diocletian for the surrender of sacred books and vessels was repeated. The officer of the barbarians, a man with the Roman name of Proculus, who was sent to enforce this demand, finding his authority resisted, laid violent hands on all the treasures of the sacristies that he could find, and adding contumely to rapine, caused the beautiful altar-cloths which were already used in the Churches to be cut up into shirts and drawers for his followers. The sacrilege was remembered, and was deemed to have been divinely punished when, not long after, Proculus died of cancer in the tongue. In a town called Regia a battle took place between Catholics and Arians for the possession of the Church, which reminds us of the last fatal fray in St. Mark's Chapel at Florence at the time of the downfall of Savonarola. It was Easter-time : the Catholics were celebrating the festival, and the Arians finding the doors of the Church closed against them, under the guidance of a Presbyter named Andiot, got together a band of armed men and proceeded to hammer at the doors, to mount the roofs of the neighbouring houses, to shoot their arrows through the windows of the Church. The people within the Church loudly chanted the defiant Alleluia; especially one Lector, who was sitting in the pulpit, made his voice heard above the tumult. An arrow which was shot through the window transfixed his throat, still quivering with the holy hymn; the roll from which he was singing dropped at his feet, and the Lector fell down dead. In rushed the assailant Arians and slew around the altar nearly all the survivors from the previous fight, the older men being especially selected as victims of their wrath.

We have seen how it fared with churches and churchmen at the hands of the Vandals; let us now see how individual laymen were dealt with. Sebastian, the before-mentioned son-in-law of Bonifacius, a keen-witted counsellor and brave warrior, had shared the ill-fortune of his kinsman, and after the fatal conflict between him and Aetius, had been driven forth from Ravenna and wandered over the face of the earth.

First Constantinople and then the Visigothic court had been his asylum, and he had won Barcelona from the Empire for Theodoric. At last in 440 he quarrelled with the Visigoths also and sought refuge in Africa. Gaiseric, who had feared him as a foe, welcomed him as a suppliant, and would gladly have promoted him to great honors. But he was a Catholic, and for that reason formidable to the Arian king who could not reckon upon him with certainty while he belonged to the rival Church. One day, in the presence of his courtiers and Arian bishops, Gaiseric said to Sebastian, 'I know that your faith is firmly pledged to me and mine, but it would make our friendship more lasting, if here, in the presence of these holy men, you would profess yourself a follower of the same religion which is dear to me and to my people.' Sebastian answered, 'I beseech you, oh king, order that a loaf of the finest and whitest flour be now brought hither.' The king, wondering what could be his meaning, gave the order : the bread was brought, and Sebastian said, 'Oh king! to prepare this white bread and make it fit for the royal table, the wheat had to be separated from the chaff, the flour to be carefully bolted from the bran, the mill-stone, water, and fire had each to do their work upon it before it attained this spotless purity. Even so have I been from my youth up separated from all heretical contagion, the Church has made me hers by the water of baptism, and the fire of the Holy Spirit has purified me. Now if by crumbling up this bread into little pieces and baking it afresh you can increase its whiteness, then I will take up with another faith and become an Arian as you desire me. But if not I remain a Catholic.' The king saw that he had the worst of the

argument for that time, ‘but afterwards he tried a different sort of logic and put that brave man to death.’

The same command ‘to pass over to the sect of the Arians’ was given to four men of Spanish birth, Arcadius, Probus, Paschasius, and Euty chius, who had served Gaiseric with fidelity and stood high among his counsellors. Their persistent refusal was punished by exile, tortures, and eventually by martyrdom. A young lad named Paulillus, brother of Paschasius and Euty chius, whose beauty and talents had gained him a high place in the royal household, was for the same reason cruelly flogged and then sent into vile bondage. The crown of martyrdom was not awarded him, that the king might be spared the disgrace of being vanquished by a boy of such tender years.

Eventually the order was given that none but Arians should be tolerated about the Court and person of the king. A certain Armogast, who must have been a Teuton by his name, and who seems to have been a Count by office, refused to conform to the Courtly religion. The persecutors tried to change his resolution with the rack and the cord, but the cords, we are assured, broke like spider’s webs when the saint looked towards heaven. They hung him head downward by one foot from the ceiling, and he slept as sweetly as if he had been on a feather bed. His master, Theodoric, the king’s son, wished to slay him out of hand, but was wisely warned by his Arian chaplain, ‘If you kill him with the sword, the Romans will preach him up as a martyr.’ The former Count was therefore sent into the fields to dig ditches and to keep sheep. There he soon died, but not before he had disclosed to a faithful disciple the approaching day of his death, and the place destined for his burial, a place apparently obscure and sordid, but where the obedient disciple, when he came to dig, found a sarcophagus of the most splendid marble prepared for the reception of the saint’s body.

An example of firm adherence to the faith was found where it would scarcely have been looked for, among the comic actors who performed before the new barbaric Court. A certain ‘arch-mime,’ named Masculanus, had been long pressed by the king, with flatteries and promises, to join the religion of the dominant caste. As he ever stood firm, Gaiseric gave public orders for his execution, but, with his usual hard craftiness, being determined not to present the Catholic Church with a single martyr more for her veneration, he gave the following secret commands to the executioner. ‘If he flinches at the sight of the sword and denies his faith then kill him all the more, for then he cannot be considered a martyr. But if he remains firm, sheathe your sword again and let him go free.’ Perhaps the acting of the executioner, perplexed by such intricate orders, failed to deceive the practised eye of the arch-comedian. At any rate he stood ‘firm as a pillar on the solid rock of Christ,’ and saved both life and truth. ‘And thus,’ says the historian, ‘if that envious enemy refused to allow us a martyr, he could not prevent our having a confessor, and a glorious one.’

In a similar manner a certain Saturus, steward over the house of Huneric, the king’s son, who had made himself conspicuous in many discussions with the Arians, was ordered to change his religion. Riches and honors were promised him in the event of his compliance; tortures for himself, poverty for his children, another and apparently a hated husband for his wife, were to be the punishments of his refusal. That wife joined her entreaties to those of the persecutors, begging him not to subject her to the yoke of a base and unworthy husband, ‘while the husband Saturus, of whom I have so often boasted, still lives.’ ‘Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh,’ replied the African Job. ‘If thou truly lovedst thy husband, thou wouldst not seek to entice him to his second death, I am ready to give up wife and children, and house, and lands, and slaves that I may continue to be a disciple of Christ.’ The cruel and unjust sentence was executed. ‘Saturus was spoiled of all his substance, was worn down with punishment, was sent away into beggary. His wife was given to a camel-driver. He was forbidden to return to the Court; they took everything from him, but they could not take away

the white robe of his baptism.’

The reader has now before him the chief evidence against the Vandals as religious persecutors during the first generation after their conquest of Africa. He may reasonably ask why there should be set before him, with so much detail, facts which have no direct bearing on the History of Italy. The answer is that our information as to the social aspects of the struggle between Romans and Barbarians in Italy itself during the fifth century is so miserably meagre, we might almost say so absolutely non-existent, that we must be content to supply the deficiency to the best of our power from what we know of the mutual relations of conquerors and conquered, of Arians and Orthodox, in other provinces of the Empire, especially in Africa and Gaul. And this peculiar attitude of the Teutonic nations towards their Catholic subjects in the dawn of the Middle Ages, tending as it did to sever for a time the connection of the Orthodox Clergy with the State, and to throw them back into somewhat of their old position as men of the people, and sympathizers with the people, is so important with reference to the subsequent growth and development of the Spiritual Power, that it cannot be said we are wasting time in considering it a little more closely.

Reviewing then the indictment which has been framed by Victor Vitensis against the persecutor Gaiseric, we come to the following conclusions :—

1. It is clear that the Churches were as a rule either handed over to the Arians for their worship, or else destroyed. And it is this wanton demolition and desecration of ecclesiastical buildings which more than anything else has caused the name of Vandalism to be synonymous in later days with senseless destructiveness.

2. The bishops were for the most part banished, and their flocks were forbidden to elect successors to them. The Vandal king, himself surrounded by Arian bishops, knew, better probably than Decius or Diocletian, how sore a blow, according to the prevailing theories of ecclesiastical organization, he was thus dealing at the very existence of the Church. But under the influence of occasional solicitations from Rome and from Byzantium, he wavered more than once in the execution of this stern policy; and even had he been always constant to it, one cannot easily see how the mere mandate of the king could have permanently and universally prevented the consecration of at least some bishops, and the transmission of the episcopal prerogatives, throughout the whole province of Africa.

3. Individual Catholics were not as a rule persecuted on account of their faith. Occasionally the headstrong arrogance of the king or his sons was roused into fury by the discovery that the officers of their household, or the menials who ministered to their amusement, would not yield servile obedience to their nod in all things, but claimed a right in matters appertaining to God to act according to the dictates of their own consciences.

But even in these cases, from mere motives of expediency, Gaiseric was intensely anxious to avoid making new martyrs for the Catholic Church. And as to the great mass of the people, the down-trodden slaves who tilled the vast domain lands of the crown, or the hungry *coloni* who eked out a scanty subsistence on the edge of the desert, or even the traders and artisans of Hippo and of Carthage, Gaiseric was too much of a statesman to attempt to convert them wholesale, by persecution, to Arianism, and probably too little of a theologian to care greatly whether truth, or what he deemed to be error, was being supplied as food to the souls of all that base-born crew. In the heart of the Teuton invader there perhaps lurked the thought that the confession of Nicaea was good enough for slaves, and that it was well for the free-born warrior of the north to keep his own bolder speculations to himself. The willingness to persecute was clearly in the hearts of these Vandals. They did not in the slightest degree recognize the right of the individual conscience to decide for itself how best to express its loyalty to the Great Maker. But they had some dim perception what it was worthwhile for the ruler to attempt, and what he had better leave to itself, above all, their action in the Church, as

in the State, was rude, fitful, and ill-sustained. The quiet, grinding oppression which the Roman Caesars practised upon the Donatist and the Arian, bore to the spasmodic outbreaks of Vandal bigotry the same relation which the pressure of a hydraulic ram bears to the random strokes of a child's hammer.

Such then was the state of the Vandal kingdom, when, in the year 455, twenty-seven years after the passage of the Barbarians into Africa, and sixteen after their conquest of Carthage, the cry of the widowed Eudoxia for help reached the court of Gaiseric. Little stimulus did the great Buccaneer need to urge him to the spoil of the capital of the world. It was clear that 'the city with which God was angry' this time was Rome, and the pilot had not to ask his master twice for sailing orders. It was in the early days of June when the sentinels at Ostia saw the Vandal fleet in the offing. The helpless consternation which prevailed at Rome has been already described,—no attempt to man the walls, not even courage enough to parley with the enemy, only a blind universal *sauve qui peut* which the Emperor himself would fain have joined in, had he not been arrested by the indignant people, and torn limb from limb by the Imperial domestics, a sacrifice to the Manes of Valentinian.

On the third day after the death of Maximus, Gaiseric, with his yellow-haired Vandal giants, appeared before the gates of the defenseless city. Utterly defenseless, as far as the weapons of the flesh were concerned; but the majestic Bishop Leo, followed probably by a train of venerable ecclesiastics, met him outside the gates of the city, eager to discover whether the same spiritual weapons which he had wielded so well three years before against the mighty Hun by the banks of the Mincio would avail now by the banks of the Tiber against the yet more dreaded Vandal. The Pope's success was not complete, yet it was something. Gaiseric's sole object was booty, not power now, nor revenge, only that simple and intelligible motive which led Pizarro and his adventurers to the capital of the Incas, and which made their eyes gleam when they gazed upon Atahualpa's room of gold. This being Gaiseric's one desire, he could well afford to concede to the Pope that there should be no putting to death, no burning of public or private buildings, and he also granted, what it must have been harder for a Vandal to yield, that no torture should be applied to compel a discovery of hidden treasure. Having framed this secular Concordat with the occupant of the chair of St. Peter, the Vandal king passed in, and rode slowly through the unresisting city. For fourteen days—that interval at least was distinctly fixed on the memories of the Romans, and every chronicler reports it as the same, whatever their variations on other points—for fourteen days the city was subjected to 'a leisurely and unhindered examination and extraction of its wealth. The gold, the silver, and the copper were carried away from the Imperial Palace, and stored with business-like thoroughness in the Vandal galleys. The churches were probably despoiled of their ornaments and plate. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was pillaged, and half of its roof was stripped off, 'which was made of the finest copper, with a thick coating of gold over it, magnificent and wonderful.' Why only half should have been taken we know not; such moderation is surprising and almost painful to behold. Possibly the Barbarians commenced the laborious process in the belief that they were stripping off solid gold, and desisted from it when they found that their reward would be only copper gilt. Statues too, good store of them, were carried off and loaded upon one of Gaiseric's vessels. Most unhappily, this one ship, out of all the fleet, foundered on the return voyage. The marble limbs of many a Nymph and Faun, of many a dweller on Olympus, and many a deified dweller on the Palatine, must have been lying for these fourteen centuries, fathoms deep in the Sicilian or Carthaginian waters. If the engineers of the electric cable in spinning their marvellous web from continent to continent should come across the sunken cargo of that Vandal trireme, may it be in our own day, and may we see that harvest from the deep!

But on the whole it is clear from the accounts of all the chroniclers that Gaiseric's pillage

of Rome, though insulting and impoverishing to the last degree, was in no sense destructive to the Queen of cities. Whatever he may have done in Africa, in Rome he waged no war on architecture, being far too well employed in storing away gold and silver and precious stones, and all manner of costly merchandise in those insatiable hulks which were riding at anchor in the Tiber. Therefore, when you stand in the Forum of Rome or look upon the grass-grown hill which was once the glorious Palatine, blame if you like the Ostrogoth, the Byzantine, the Lombard, blame above all, the Norman, and the Roman Baron of the Middle Ages, for the heart-breaking ruin that you see there, but leave the Vandal uncensured, for, notwithstanding the stigma conveyed in the word 'vandalism,' he is not guilty here.

Among the spoils which were carried in safety from Rome to Carthage were, we are told, the sacred vessels of the Jewish Temple with the sculptured effigies of which, on the Arch of Titus, we are all familiar. No contemporary historian refers to them, and we might have been disposed to reject the story of their capture as a romance of later writers, but that in the next century we find Procopius, the friend and companion of Belisarius, distinctly asserting that on the fall of the Vandal monarchy, these vessels with countless other treasures, golden saddles, golden carriages for the ladies of the court, hundreds of thousands of talents of silver, and all kinds of ornaments inlaid with precious stones, were found in the palace of Gelimer, great grandson of Gaiseric. All the rest of the glittering spoil was taken to Byzantium, and having given lustre to the triumph of Belisarius, was there retained; but the vessels which had been consecrated to the service of Jehovah were carried back to Jerusalem, and placed in the Christian churches there, a Jew, who saw them among the spoil, having pointed out to a friend of the Emperor's that their presence (like that of the Ark in the towns of the Philistines) had brought capture and desolation first on Rome and then on Rome's Vandal conquerors.

But the fortunes of the sacred vessels of the Jewish worship have carried us eighty years away from our present moorings. We return to Gaiseric and his treasure-laden fleet. He took back with him to Carthage Eudoxia, the widow of two Emperors and the daughter of a third. It was probably a greater kindness to take her as a captive to Carthage than to leave her face to face with the exasperated people of Rome, upon whom her blind desire for revenge on Maximus had brought so much misery. In the captive train also were her two daughters, Eudocia and Placidia, and (strange companion of their adversity) the son of Aetius, Gaudentius, who had once aspired to the hand of one of them. But the match upon which Aetius had set his heart so earnestly was not to be brought about by their common captivity. Gaiseric gave the elder princess, Eudocia, in marriage to his son Huneric, being the second princess of the house of Theodosius who was wedded to a Teutonic prince. One would like to believe that the young Vandal, while a hostage in Rome, had won the heart of the daughter of the Emperor; but as he must certainly have returned before the surprise of Carthage (439) this cannot be. His future wife was but a babe in arms when he was loitering in the palace of her father. The other princess, Placidia, with her mother, after seven years detention at Carthage, where they were treated with all honor and courtesy, was sent to Constantinople, the earnest entreaty of the Emperor Leo. She married the Roman Senator Olybrius, whose name we shall meet with among the last Emperors of Rome.

Besides the Empress and her daughters, the Vandal host carried a great multitude of Roman citizens back with them into captivity. It was like one of the great transportations of unwilling multitudes which we read of in the Jewish Scriptures as practised by a Shalmaneser or a Nebuchadnezzar. The skillful craftsman, the strong laborers, the young and handsome cup-bearer, the experienced house-steward, were all swept away, all ruthlessly sundered from one another, husbands from wives, and parents from children, and distributed as bondslaves through Morocco, Algiers, and Tunis. It is a strange thought, how many drops of pure Roman blood may now be flowing through the veins of the half-civilized inhabitants of Northern

Africa. A Kabyle robber from Mount Atlas, with cotton burnous, such as I remember to have seen in captivity on the Isle St. Honorat, near Cannes, spreading his carpet, turning his face towards the setting sun, and jabbering out his long and rapid prayer from the Koran, may be a truer descendant of the Fabii and the Camilli than any living inhabitant of the Eternal City.

The sufferings of the unhappy captives from Rome were to some extent, but it could only be to a small extent, alleviated by the charity of the saintly Bishop of Carthage, 'Deo-Gratias.' He sold all the gold and silver vessels of his church in order to ransom such captives as he could, and as much as possible to prevent the disruption of the family ties of those whom he could not ransom. There were no proper warehouses for receiving all this vast human live-stock which the freebooters had brought back with them. He placed two large basilicas at their disposal; he fitted them up with beds and straw; he even took upon himself the heavy charge of the daily commissariat. Sea-sickness, pining for home, the sad and awful change from the luxury of the Roman villa to the miseries of a Vandal slave-ship, had prostrated many of the captives with disease. He turned his church into an infirmary: notwithstanding his advanced age and his tottering limbs, day and night he went the round of the beds of his patients, following the doctors like a careful nurse, making himself acquainted with the state of each, seeing that each received the food and medicine which was suited to his condition. Often, while he was thus moving through the wards of his basilica-hospital, intent on his work of mercy, must the words 'Deo Gratias' have risen to the feeble lips of the sufferers, who, perhaps, scarcely knew themselves whether they were expressing gratitude to Heaven or to Heaven's fitly-named representative on earth. Before his charitable work was complete, his life, which had been threatened more than once by the violence of the Arian party, who were jealous even of his goodness, came to a peaceful close and when they heard that he was taken from them, the captive citizens of Rome felt as if they were a second time delivered into the hands of the Barbarians. He was buried secretly in an unusual place, to guard his body from the pious irreverence of relic-hunters, who would have dismembered the venerable corpse in their eagerness to obtain wonder-working memorials of so great a saint.

And so we leave the many thousands of Roman captives to the unrecorded sorrows of their house of bondage.

CHAPTER III

THE LETTERS AND POEMS OF APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS.

EIGHT Emperors, and a space of twenty-one years, 455-476. separate the capture of Rome by Gaiseric from the familiar date of the fall of the Empire of the West. It is worthwhile to do more than enumerate the mere names of these shadowy Emperors, of whom only one, Majorian, has anything of the dignity of manhood, and who might all, with that one exception, share the title of the last of them, Augustulus, The Little Emperor. Is not Avitus as Severus, and Glycerius as Nepos? May we not take for granted all this history of monotonous feebleness, these sham elections and involuntary abdications, this burlesque of the awful tragedy of the earlier Caesars, and planting ourselves at once in the year 476, learn amid what accompaniments the twelve centuries of Roman dominion expired?

Such is naturally one's first thought, but it may well be modified on further reflection. If physiologists have found the study of the humblest forms of life useful, as illustrating the connection between the animal and vegetable worlds, and if some of them have descended into the lowest zones of organic existence in the hope of bringing up from thence some further light on the great problem of Life itself, it may well be, in like manner, that from the study of these, the lowest types of an Emperor which Rome has to set before us, we may learn something as to that inextinguishable idea of the Caesar which not all the storms of the Middle Ages were able utterly to destroy. We shall observe how, even in his deepest degradation, there was something which marked off the Roman Emperor from the Barbarian King. Above all, we shall see how reluctantly even the world of the Northern Invaders parted from the idea of Caesarian rule; how willingly they would have kept the pageant Augustus in his place, if he had been simply able to sit upright in his world-too-wide throne; how, notwithstanding all the rude blows of Goth, and Hun, and Vandal, the Roman Empire rather died of internal decline than was slain by the sword of an enemy.

Unfortunately the materials out of which we have to reconstruct the history of this quarter of a century are singularly meagre and unsatisfactory. Had the genius of a Tacitus, or even the clear, calm intellect of a Sallust, thrown its light over this troublous time, much more had it been possible for a De Tocqueville to have analyzed the causes, and a Carlyle to have painted the scenes of this revolution, we might have learned from it many a lesson, useful even in our own day to those who labor to preserve an aged empire from falling. But what can we do when the only really trustworthy authorities for the events of the time are the Annalists, that is to say, some six or seven men, who having the whole history of the world from Belus and Nimrod downwards to relate, can spare only a line or two, at the outside a paragraph of moderate length, for the occurrences of the most eventful years in their own lives. The history of modern Europe, if told by Annalists of this type, would run into some such mold as this —

'A.D. 1851. The Queen reigning in England, and Louis Bonaparte being President of the French Republic, there was opened in a certain park near to London, a great market-place for all the wares of the world. That was the Palace of Crystal. The Queen of England gave birth to a son, who was named Arthur. Bishops, in obedience to the see of the Holy Peter, had been sent to England. Whom the adherents of the other Church, which is called the Protestant Church, being unwilling to receive, passed a law for-bidding any man to say "God speed" unto them, or to salute them by the names of their dioceses. That was called the Ecclesiastical Titles

Act. In Paris, the President of the Republic bade many persons to be shot.

‘A.D. 1852. The Republic of France was changed into an Empire, Louis Buonaparte being declared Emperor. He was nephew of the Emperor Napoleon.

‘A.D. 1853. The Emperor of Russia sent a proud man, named Menschikoff, as an ambassador, to the Sultan of the Ottomans. There was much dissension between the Emperors of Russia and France touching a certain silver star in the sanctuary at Bethlehem.

‘A.D. 1854. It was fought most bloodily between the nation of the Russians on the one side, and those of France, England, and Turkey on the other, in the peninsula which is called the Chersonesus Taurica.

‘A.D. 1855. After much slaughter the August City (Sebastopolis) in the Chersonesus Taurica was taken by the armies of France and England, whom the island of Sardinia had also joined.

‘A.D. 1856. Peace was made in Paris between the nations which were at war. That was called the Peace of Paris. The treaty was signed by all the ambassadors, using a feather which had been plucked from the wings of a certain eagle. Now the eagle is the emblem of power in France and in Russia, but not in England, for in England the lion is the National emblem. That feather had a silver handle fastened to it, beautiful and costly, and it was given to the wife of the Emperor Napoleon. She was a very beautiful woman, and was named Eugenia.’

No one who has read the chronicles of Idatius, of Prosper, and of Marcellinus will consider this an unfair specimen of their mode of writing annals. After all, the most important events are there, and we are grateful meanness to the patient scribes who have preserved even so much for us from the sea of oblivion which was rising high around them, but from such scanty chronicles as these it is impossible to deduce with certainty the true proportions of those events or their exact relation to one another. We can excuse the brevity of the Annalists, but it is much harder to excuse their occasional prolixity. When we find one of the best of them (Marcellinus) devoting only four lines to the capture of Rome by Alaric, and fifty-four to an idle legend about the discovery at Emesa of the head of John the Baptist, it is difficult not to grumble at the want of appreciation of the relative importance of things which must have existed in the mind of the writer, though he was no monkish recluse but a layman and a governor of a Province.

It is perhaps not surprising that in Italy itself there should have been this utter absence of the instinct which leads men to record the events which are going on around them for the benefit of posterity. When History was making itself at such breathless speed and in such terrible fashion, the leisure, the inclination, the presence of mind, necessary for writing History, might well be wanting. He who would under happier auspices have filled up the interval between the bath and the tennis court by reclining on the couch in the winter portico of his villa, and there languidly dictating to his slave the true story of the abdication of Avitus or the death of Anthemius, was himself now a slave keeping sheep in the wilderness under the hot Numidian sun, or shrinking under the blows of one of the rough soldiers of Gaiseric.

We find it much more difficult to understand why the learned and leisurely Provincials of Greece, whose country for more than a century (396-517) escaped the horrors of hostile invasion, and who had the grandest literary traditions in the world to inspire them, should have left the story of the downfall of Rome unwritten. But so it was. Zosimus, seeing and foreseeing the inevitable decay, commenced the lamentable history, but none of his compatriots (if we except the slight references of Procopius) seems to have had the spirit or the inclination to finish it.

The fact seems to be that at this time all that was left of literary instinct and historiographic power in the world had concentrated itself on theological, we cannot call it religious, controversy. And what tons of worthless material the ecclesiastical historians and

controversialists of the time have left us! Blind, most of them, to the meaning of the mighty drama which was being enacted on the stage of the world, without faith enough in a living God to believe that he could evolve a fairer and better order out of all the chaos round them, anticipating perhaps, the best among them, the speedy return of Christ and the end of the world, they have left us scarcely a hint as to the inner history of the vast revolution which settled the Teuton in the lands of the Latin ; while they force upon us details, endless and wearisome, as to the squabbles of self-seeking monks and prelates over the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. They describe to us bow with stealthy step Timothy the Weasel crept into the Patriarchate of Alexandria; his brawls, his banishments, and his death.

They are anxious to inform us that Peter the Stammerer succeeded Timothy the Weasel in the Egyptian see, and that Peter the Fuller, his contemporary at Antioch, obtained his episcopate by bloodshed, and signalized it by adding four words to a hymn. Who really cares now for the vulgar bickerings which the ecclesiastical historians relate to us with such exasperating minuteness? The Weasels, the Fullers, and the Stammerers, are all deep in mummy-dust. To the non-Christian the subject of their controversies is imaginary; to the Christian the pretensions of these men of violence and blood to settle anything concerning the nature of the spotless Son of Man are a blasphemy.

To sum up then; from the Annalists we get some grains of fine gold, from the Literati of Greece we get nothing, from the Ecclesiastical Historians we get chiefly rubbish, concerning the history of these eventful years. One man alone, he whose name stands at the head of this chapter, gives us that more detailed information concerning the thoughts, characters, persons of the actors in the great drama which can make the dry bones of the chronologers live. This is Caius Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius, man of letters, Imperial functionary, country-gentleman and bishop, who, notwithstanding much manifest weakness of character, and a sort of epigrammatic dullness of style, is still the most interesting literary figure of the fifth century.

Sidonius was born at Lyons about the year 430. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had each held the high office of Praetorian Prefect in Gaul. Upon the whole they had been faithful to the line of Theodosius, though one of them, the grandfather, had derived his office from the usurper Constantine. Such high honors, enjoyed for three generations without any serious reverses, would alone have carried the family of Apollinaris high among the noble houses of Gaul at a time when the hierarchy of office, reaching from the Emperor to the Notary, was incomparably the most important factor in the social system of the provinces. But besides this official position, the wealth, the culture, and the respectable, if not heroic, character of most of the near ancestors of Sidonius placed him at the outset of life on a vantage-ground, from which, whatever he had of literary ability could soon make itself recognized. A man thus situated, born near the centre of the national affairs, and surrounded from his cradle with influential and hereditary friends, knows nothing of that difficulty of 'emerging' which is so forcibly described in the well-known lines of a Roman poet.

Sidonius received at Lyons as good an education probably as a young Roman noble of the fifth century could have met with anywhere in the Empire. It was an education however in words rather than things. Men had ceased to believe in the Olympian gods; so the schoolmasters taught their scholars the name of every Nymph and every Muse. All earnest thought about the nature of the world and the mind of man ran in Christian channels; so they taught elaborately the speculations of every Greek philosopher from Thales to Chrysippus. The sword of the barbarian was carrying everything before it in the world of politics; so they went on teaching all the arts of rhetoric by which brilliant orators had won honors for themselves or exile for their adversaries from the sovereign multitude in the cities of free Greece. But though it is easy for us to see how little the teaching of these schools can have done in helping the student to face any of the real difficulties of his after-life, we must, on the other hand, do

justice to the vast amount of intellectual activity which still remained in the Empire and which this teaching both denoted and fostered. Sometimes we think of the hundred years between Theodosius and Theodoric as wholly filled with rapine and bloodshed. Sometimes we carry back into the fifth century the thick darkness which hung over the intellectual life of Merovingian France or Lombard Italy. In both these estimates we are mistaken. A careful perusal of the three volumes of the Letters and Poems of Sidonius reveals to us the fact that in Gaul at any rate the air still teemed with intellectual life, that authors were still writing, amanuenses transcribing, friends complimenting or criticizing, and all the cares and pleasures of literature filling the minds of large classes of men just as though no Empires were sinking and no strange nationalities were suddenly rising around them. We need not believe, upon the authority of the highly-wrought panegyrics of Sidonius, that he had a score of friends all more eloquent than Cicero, more subtle than Plato, and diviner poets than Homer or Virgil; but the interesting fact for us is that such forgotten philosophers and poets did exist in that age, and that their works produced in lavish abundance, seem to have had no lack of eager students.

The impulse towards rhetoric, which was conspicuous in every part of the career of Sidonius, may very likely have been communicated by an oratorical display which he witnessed, in early adolescence, at Arles the Roman capita] of Gaul. There, at the commencement of the year 449, the general Asturius was to assume the office of Consul. A crowd of Roman dignitaries assembled to witness the ceremony. In the centre, on a curule chair, sat Apollinaris, Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, and by his side stood his son, the young Sidonius. As one after another of the great persons of the State, *consulares*, *praesides*, masters of horse, and masters of foot, tribunes, bishops, notaries, advanced to kiss the purple robe of the representative of the Emperor, each one doubtless spared a less formal salutation for the bright, highly-cultured lad who was watching the scene with eager interest, and with a mind keenly conscious, as it ever was, of the great difference between those who have rank and position and those who have them not. The new Consul was proclaimed, the slave, who was always forthcoming on these occasions, received the buffet from his hand which bestowed freedom, the largesse (*sportula*) and the ivory tablets, upon which the names of the two new magistrates had been inscribed, were distributed to the people. Then stood forth Flavius Nicetius, and in brilliant, well-chosen words, pronounced the customary panegyric on the virtues and capacities of Consul Asturius. The pompous periods, the applause which followed, the compliments paid and received by the smooth-tongued orator, produced a profound impression on the boyish imagination of Sidonius, and we may perhaps conjecture that he secretly resolved that he too would one day be a Prefect like his father, an orator like Nicetius, and a Consul like Asturius. The first two of his aspirations were realized.

‘The rest the gods dispersed in empty air’.

Sidonius was probably about twenty-one years of age when the blast of Attila’s invasion swept over Belgic Gaul. Sheltered behind the walls of Lyons he felt, in all likelihood, not even the outskirts of the storm. But he may have conversed with Lupus, Anianus, and others of the chief actors in the defence of Gaul, and no doubt his imagination was powerfully impressed by all that he saw and heard of that ‘horde of many-nationed spoilers’ who, according to the lines which have been already quoted from him, hewed down the trees of the Thuringer Wald to bridge with their rafts the bosom of the Rhine. There was even a possibility that Sidonius might have been the historian of that eventful campaign. His friend Prosper, successor of Anianus in the see of Orleans, urged him to undertake the task. He began to write, apparently in prose, and occupied himself with the origin of the barbarians who composed the host of Attila. But his genius was all for epigram or pompous panegyric. Plain historical narrative wearied him, and moreover the duties of his episcopate (for the work was commenced in the later period of his life) seemed to call him to other occupations. Even the fragment which he wrote has perished,

and we regret its loss, for though he was not well-fitted by nature or education to be the historian of such a war, he would assuredly have preserved for us some interesting details with reference to that year of terror.

About the time of the Hunnish invasion, or soon after, Sidonius married. His wife, Papianilla, was the daughter of the most powerful citizen of Auvergne, of that Avitus whom we have already met at the court of Theodoric, cementing the alliance between the Romans and the Visigoths against Attila, and whom we are shortly to meet again in a more exalted station. Sidonius was related by descent to the family of Avitus, and this new tie linked him very closely to the mountainous land of the Arverni (the modern Auvergne) with which henceforward his life became more nearly associated than with his own foggy city of Lyons. His marriage also brought him more decisively forward on the broad stage of Imperial politics, and during the years which intervene between 455 and 469 we shall have frequently to rely on his letters and poems for our sole information as to the events which occurred at the court of the Western Emperors.

In the year 469 he finally retired from public life and from the court of the Caesars, and took up his abode at the charming villa of Avitacum in Auvergne, part of his wife's dowry, a place of which he has given us, evidently in imitation of the younger Pliny, a description which, though prolix and too much laboured, is not devoid of interest. In this description, notwithstanding one or two minor discrepancies, which may be easily accounted for by the changes in the configuration of land and water wrought during the course of fourteen centuries, we can still recognize the characteristic features of the shores of the Lac d'Aydat. This little lake, which is about twelve miles to the south-west of Clermont-Ferrand, lies near the junction of the two great volcanic ranges of the *Monts Dôme* and the *Monts Dore*. From two summits of the former range (the *Puy de la Vache* and the *Puy de Lassolas*) descended, in that far distant age when the volcanoes of Auvergne were still glowing against the midnight sky, a great stream of molten lava, which has left a wilderness of rock five miles long and in some places a mile wide, sprawling over the once fruitful valley. This stony cataract, with its significant Celtic name, *La Cheyre*, though ugly and desolate itself, has been the cause of beauty to the landscape, for the little stream of *Pontava* coming down from some other mountains on the west, and finding its course impeded by this barrier of lava, has formed the lovely little lake of *Aydat*, at the south-western corner of which (if this identification be correct) once stood the villa of Sidonius. There is, of course, no trace of that stately dwelling now. A few humble cottages cluster round the little Romanesque Church, which dates from the twelfth century, and has three round buttress-towers on each side, built apparently only for strength not for ornament. Inside the church, high up on the north wall of the chancel, is a long flat stone coffer built into the wall, and bearing on its front the words

HIC ST [SUNT] DVO INOCENTES ET S. SIDONIYS.

There is a mystery about 'the two Innocents,' nor is it probable that this is the actual burying-place of the poet-bishop, but it may very probably contain some relic of the saint, to whom in fact the church appears to be dedicated. There is a deep well in an adjoining house said to be of Roman excavation, and a few strokes of the pickaxe in the soil of the little village street bring to light pieces of undoubtedly Roman cement, an evidence probably of a once existing pavement.

But leaving these faint archaeological traces of a past which almost eludes our research, it is pleasant to climb the most easterly of the two hills between which *Aydat* nestles, and there with the unchanged, or but slightly changed, face of Nature before us, to read the description of his villa given by the Gallo-Roman nobleman. He writes to his friend *Domitius*, and says:—

‘We are now at Avitacum : that is the name of this property, which having come to me in right of my wife, is even sweeter than a paternal inheritance. A mountain on the west, steep though not rocky, sends forth lower hills, as if from a double focus, which are about four acres apart. But while the ground broadens out sufficiently to afford a fitting vestibule for the house, the sides of the hills hold straight on their course through the valley up to the margin of the villa, which has two fronts, one to the north and the other to the south’. Sidonius then goes on to describe with much detail the bath-house, the fish-pond, the women’s apartment (*triclinium matronale*), the pillared portico overlooking the lake, the winter-parlour (*hiemale triclinium*), the little dining-room (*coenatiuncula*), and the summer-parlour (*diversorium aestivum*), looking towards the north. ‘This room,’ he says, ‘lets in the daylight, but not the sun, a narrow closet being interposed’ (apparently between it and the south face) ‘where the drowsy grooms of the chamber sit nodding, though they may not lie down to sleep. How pleasant it is here to let the chirp of the cicadas beat upon one’s ear at noon, the croak of the frogs in the twilight, the swans and geese calling upon their mates at night, the cocks crowing in the small hours of the morning, the crows with their augural voice, three times repeated, saluting the ruddy face of rising Aurora, and at daybreak Philomela trilling among the fruit-trees, or Progne (the swallow) twittering upon the palings. To this concert you may join the pastoral Muse, goddess of the seven-holed reed, for oftentimes in their nightly rivalry of song the sleepless Tityri of our mountains make their notes heard in the meadows above the tinkling bells of their flocks. And yet, believe me, all this strife of varied sounds only plunges one into the deeper slumber.

‘Below us lies the lake, winding down towards the east, and sometimes when the winds ruffle it, it moistens the stones of the villa, whose foundations are laid in its sandy shores. Its right bank is abrupt, winding and wooded, its left open, grassy, and level. By nautical measurement it is seventeen furlongs in length. A stream enters it which has foamed over the rugged rocks that seek to bar its passage, but which has a short period of tranquility before it mingles with the lake. Its exit is through hidden subterranean channels, which afford a passage to the water, but not to the fish, and these latter, forced back into the lake’s slothful tranquility, grow fat in their prison, and daily swell out a greater extent of pink flesh under their gleaming bellies. Sometimes from the villa we see the fisherman launching forth into the deep, spreading out his nets with their corks floating on the water, or arranging his hook-armed cords at certain well-marked intervals, in order that the greedy trout in their nightly prowlings through the waters may fall into the snares which are laid for their cannibal tastes. For surely it is a fitting stratagem that fish should be tempted by fish to rush upon their own destruction. Sometimes, when the winds have fallen, the surface of the fickle deep is cloven by a whole fleet of pleasure-boats. In the middle of the lake is a little island, where, upon a natural heap of stones, rises a goal often worn by the blades of the rowers’ oars in their nautical contests. For this is the point round which they must steer when they would imitate the Sicilian boat-races of our Trojan ancestors, and many a comic shipwreck takes place here as one boat dashes into another.’

Such, greatly abbreviated and freely translated (for it is hardly possible to translate Sidonius literally), is the description, the not unpleasing description, of the home of a great Gaulish noble under the Empire.

After a year or two of seclusion Sidonius re-entered public life in a new capacity. He was elected Bishop of the chief city of the Arverni (now called Clermont-Ferrand), and he continued in the same see for the remaining eighteen years of his life. This election seems to have been a voluntary tribute of respect on the part of his fellow-citizens to an unstained private character, and to the memory of an official career which, if not signalized by any brilliant services to the State, had at least not been abused to sordid and ignoble ends. His position in the literature of the age was both a recommendation and a stumbling-block. It was

an honor for a rural diocese in the mountains to have as its president a man who had recited amid the applause of the multitude the panegyrics of three Emperors, whose statue in brass stood between the Greek and the Latin Libraries in the Forum of Trajan, whose letters were humbly prayed for and treasured up as invaluable literary possessions by all the rhetoricians and philosophers of Gaul. Yet, on the other hand, his very panegyrics were crammed full of the conceits of Pagan mythology; his Epithalamia, though morally pure, turned, according to the fashion in such compositions, on the voluptuous splendors of the dwelling of Venus, on the charms of the bride, surpassing those of all the heroines of classical antiquity, and on the success of Cupid in piercing with his arrows the bridegroom's heart. This was not exactly the kind of composition which it was considered safe or decorous for a Christian Bishop to indulge in, so soon after the great struggle between the new and the old faiths, and while the religion of the Olympian gods, though prostrate and wounded to the death, still, by a few convulsive spasms, showed signs of a vitality not yet wholly extinct. Sidonius felt the incongruity as strongly as any one, and as, unlike the Cardinal de Retz, he was determined to bring his private life into conformity with the sacred character which he had assumed, he broke off abruptly and finally from the service of the Muses. He could not indeed bring himself to suppress poems which were in his view so charming as his Panegyrics and Epithalamia, but he wrote no more verses of this description. Invocations to the Holy Spirit take the place of invocations to Apollo, and the names of the Martyrs meet us instead of those of the Argonauts. The result is not a happy one, and to a taste formed by the Christian hymnology of subsequent ages, the later poems of Sidonius are rather less attractive than his earlier ones.

Sidonius appears to have made an excellent Bishop, according to the notions of his day, which scarcely expected every prelate to rise to the saintliness of a Polycarp, but would not have tolerated his sinking to the infamy of a Borgia. He applied himself with earnestness to the study of the Scriptures, in which he had probably not been well instructed as a child. He steered through the theological controversies of a difficult time with an unimpeached reputation for orthodoxy.

His experience as a Roman official helped him to govern his diocese with the right apportionment of firmness and suavity. His unflinching good-nature joined to a certain ingredient in his character, which can only be described as fussiness, made him the willing counsellor and confidant of his people even in their business difficulties, in the law-suit, and the family quarrel. Above all, his hearty sympathies with the Romanized population of Gaul, and his antipathies, national and religious, to their Arian and barbarian conquerors, made him willing to risk life and fortune, and even his dearly-loved social position, on behalf of the liberties of Auvergne. During the years while the struggle between the Arverni and the Visigoths was going on, the courtier and the rhetorician were lost in the patriot, and his life rose into real grandeur. At the close of the struggle (475) Sidonius had to feel the full weight of the displeasure of the Visigothic king, Euric, who was now undisputed master of Auvergne. He was banished from his diocese, and kept, probably for about a year, in captivity in the fortress of Livia, not far from Carcassonne. His confinement was not of the most rigorous description; he was allowed to employ himself, if he wished, in literary labor, and his quarters for the night seem to have been appointed him in a private dwelling-house. But his days were occupied with harassing duties, and both study and sleep were driven away from his evening hours by the clamors of two Gothic hags, whose window looked upon the court-yard of his lodging, and whose life was passed in one perpetual round of scolding, intoxication and gluttony. The fastidious Roman noble, forced into hourly companionship with these scenes of barbarian vulgarity, passed his nights in sighing for the seclusion of his mountainous Auvergne, for the baths, the lake, and the fish-ponds, the airy summer apartment, and the chorus of rural voices of his own beloved Avitacum.

At length, by the mediation of his friend Leo, a Roman, a lover of literature, and the chief minister at the court of Euric, he was restored to his home and diocese; and the remaining years of his life were passed in comparative tranquility, but probably with an impaired fortune, and certainly with an ever-present pang of humiliation at the enforced subjection of his high-spirited Arverni to the degrading yoke of the barbarians. He had probably not reached his sixtieth and death, year when (about 489) he was carried off by a fever. He died with Christian calmness and hope. When he felt his end approaching he desired his attendants to carry him to the church where he had been wont to officiate, and lay him before the altar. A multitude of men, women, and children crowded into the church after his bearers, and filled it with their passionate lamentations. 'Why art thou deserting us,' they cried, 'O good shepherd? Who will take care of us, thy orphans, when thou art gone? Who will feed us with the salt of the true wisdom? Who will guide us into the fear of the Lord as thou hast done.' He gently rebuked their want of faith, and said, 'Fear not, my people. My brother Aprunculus still lives, and he will be your Bishop'. Then with a prayer to his Creator he yielded up his life. His dying words were verified by the election of Aprunculus (a fugitive for the sake of the Catholic faith from the wrath of the Burgundian king) to fill the vacant see.

The end of Sidonius was in harmony with the dignified thoughtfulness which had marked his whole episcopal life. He played his part as a Christian Bishop well; and yet, without imputing to him any shade of conscious insincerity or hypocrisy, it is difficult when reading his letters and pre-eminently his letters to his brother Bishops, to resist the conviction that he was, in a certain sense, playing a part throughout; that he was essentially an author or a courtier, and only accidentally a divine. That strong bias of the mind towards the Invisible which impelled St. Augustine, through all his immoralities, through all his years of Manichaeism, to ponder continually on the relation of his soul to the God of the Universe; that keen intellectual interest in the Scriptures which drew St. Jerome into Palestine, and supported him through all the heroic toil of his translations and his commentaries; these are qualities which it would be absurd to mention in connection with the character of Sidonius. But though his taste probably preferred the mythology of Greece, his reason accepted the doctrines of Christianity. The career of secular office was closed to him by the hard circumstances of those stormy times. The Church offered him a safe and honorable retreat from war and revolution. The voices of his fellow-citizens called him to a post of dignity in that Church; and he therefore accepted the retreat and the dignity, and made his life harmonize fairly well with his new vocation. If some sprays of the poet's laurel were still seen under the mitre of the bishop, if his thoughts were sometimes running on Helicon and Parnassus when he was celebrating the Divine mysteries in the basilica of Arverni, at least he kept his secret well, and made his actions congruous to his character as a shepherd of the Christian flock.

He was by the general voice of his people recognized as a saint after his death, and the Church of Clermont still, upon the 21st of August, the day of his death, celebrates the festival of Saint Sidonius. The only reason for any hesitation about canonizing him would appear to be that he had never claimed any power of working miracles, that he was not, as a biographer says, 'one of those great thaumaturgic pontiffs whose glory was made common property, and whose virtues were immortalized by the generous instincts of Gaul'; but the entire absence of all pretensions of this kind will not be accounted a demerit by the present age.

In his attitude towards men of other faiths than his own, he showed a tolerance of spirit more like the eighteenth century than the fifth. He could not but deplore and condemn the fury of the Arian persecutors, but he speaks with some kindness of the Jews :

'Gozolas is the bearer of these letters of mine, a Jew by nation, and a man for whose person I should feel a cordial regard if he did not belong to a sect which I despise'.

And again :

‘This letter commends a Jew to your notice. Not that I am pleased with the error in which that nation is involved, and which leads them to perdition, but because it becomes us not to call any one of them sure of damnation while he yet lives, for there is still a hope that he may turn and be forgiven’.

This is the language of an orthodox Catholic, but certainly not of a man who is by nature a persecutor.

Of the literary style of Sidonius it is difficult to speak with fairness. His obscurity, his long and uncouth words, often clumsily coined from the Greek, his constantly-recurring epigrams, which, when examined, generally turn out to have as much point in them as the clever things which a man utters in his dreams, his preposterous and monotonous adulation of his correspondents, evidently dictated by the desire to receive their adulation in return, his frigid conceits, his childish display of classical learning, which after all was neither deep nor thorough,—all these qualities make much study of the works of this author emphatically a weariness to the flesh. But it is doubtful how far he is to be blamed individually, and how far his age is responsible for the faults of his style. Latin poetry had fallen during the fourth century into the hands of elegant triflers, of the composers of triple and quintuple acrostics, and the manufacturers of vapid centoës. Claudian had snatched the Latian lyre out of the hands of these feeble poetasters, and made it give forth some manlier harmonies; but even Claudian, with his courtier like exaggerations, and his creaking mythological machinery, was not a very safe guide to follow. Suffice it to say, without attempting further to apportion the blame of a most miserable style between the author and his age, that in his poems, Sidonius bears the same relation to Claudian that Claudian bears to Virgil, and that in his letters he is as far from attaining the purity of style of the younger Pliny as the latter is from rivalling the easy grace of Cicero. It remains to reproduce from the pages of Sidonius some of his most striking pictures of social life among the Romans and Barbarians.

1. Roman Life. The Church Festival, and the Game at Tennis.

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Eriphius.

You wish me to send you the verses which I made to please that most respectable man your father-in-law. I will do so; but as, in order to understand this trifle, you wish to know the scene and the cause of its composition, you must not complain if the preface is more long-winded than the work itself.

We had assembled at the Sepulchre of St. Justus [at Lyons]; there was a procession before dawn, to celebrate the yearly festival of the saint, and a great multitude had assembled, larger than the basilica could hold, though it was surrounded with spacious arcades. When the office of Vigils was ended (chanted by monks and clergy in alternate choruses) we parted from one another, but did not go far, that we might be in readiness for *Tierce*, when the priests should return to celebrate it. The crowd in the church, the many lights, and the closeness of the weather (for it was summer, though just passing into autumn) had made us feel as if we were being stewed, and we longed for the fresh air. So when the various ranks of citizens dispersed, we who belonged to the first families of Lyons, decided to make our rendezvous at the tomb of Syagrius, which was scarce a bowshot from the church. Here some reclined under the shade of a trellis-work covered with the leaves and clusters of a vine; others, of whom I was one, sat on the green sward, which was fragrant with flowers. The conversation was full of light fun and banter; and what was best of all, there was no talk about great people or the incidence of taxation, not a word to compromise anybody, not a person whom anybody else thought of compromising. Any one who could tell a good story, and adorn it with proper sentiments, was listened to most eagerly. But really there was such general merriment that it was not easy to hear any story distinctly to the end. At length we got tired of idleness, and discussed what we

should do. The young men voted for tennis, the elder ones for the tables [backgammon]. I was prime champion of the ball, of which, as you know, I am as fond as of my books. On the other side, my brother Domnicus, a man full of wit and courtesy, shook the counters about in the tables, and thus, as with a sound of a trumpet, summoned his party to the dice-box. I played for a long time with a troop of students till my limbs, which had grown numb, were made supple again by the healthful exercise. Then the illustrious Philimatius, as Virgil says,

‘He too adventuring to the task
That matches younger years,’

boldly joined the group of tennis-players. He had once played the game well, but that was when his years were fewer. Poor man! he was often forced from the place where he was stationed, by the mid-current of eager players; then, when he had to keep the middle of the ground, he could neither ward off nor dodge the quickly-flying ball. Moreover he often met with a catastrophe and fell flat on the ground, from which he raised himself slowly and laboriously. So that the upshot of the matter was that he was the first to retire from the rush of the game, which he did with deep sighs and a fearful stitch in his side. Very soon I left off too, out of kindness to him, that he might not be mortified at so soon showing signs of distress. So, when we were seated again, the sweat running down his face obliged him to ask for a basin of water. It was brought him, and with it a thick cloth which, cleaned from yesterday’s dirt, happened to be hanging on a pulley behind the door of the porter’s lodge. While he was slowly drying his cheeks he said, “How I should like you to dictate four lines of poetry on the cloth which does me this service.”

“It shall be done,” said I.

“But so as to bring in my name in the metre?”

“What you ask for is possible.”

“Dictate them, then.”

To which I answered, smiling, “You know the Muses will not like it if there are any bystanders when I commune with their holy band.”

He said, very politely, but with that jocosely passionate manner of his, “Take care, Mr. Sollius, that you don’t much more exasperate Apollo if you ask for secret interviews with his young ladies.”

Imagine the applause which greeted this sally, as sudden as it was happily conceived. Then, without more delay, I called to my side his amanuensis, who was standing near with his tablets in hand, and dictated the following epigram :

‘Oh Towel! in the early morn, when the bath has made him glow,
Or when with heated brow he comes at noontide from the chase,
Into thy thirsty reservoirs let the big sweat-drops flow,
When Philimatius shall wipe on thee his handsome face.’

Scarcely had our friend Epiphanius read over what had been written, when word was brought us that the time was come for the bishop to leave his private apartment, and we all rose up. Pray pardon the verses which you asked for. Farewell.’

2. The Country-house

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Donidius.

You ask me why, though I set out for Nimes some time ago, I have not yet returned home. I will tell you the agreeable cause of my delay, since I know that the things which please me please you too.

The fact is that I have been spending some days in a very pleasant country with two most

delightful men, my hereditary friend Tonantius Ferreolus, and my cousin Apollinaris. Their estates adjoin one another and their houses are not far apart, a long walk but a short ride. The hills which rise behind are covered with vineyards and oliveyards. The view from each house is equally charming; the one looks upon woods, and the other over a wide expanse of plain. So much for the dwellings; now for the hospitality shown to us there.

‘As soon as they found out that I was on my return journey, they stationed skillful scouts to watch not only the high-road but every little track and sheep-walk into which I could possibly turn aside, that I might not by any chance escape from their friendly snares. When I had fallen into their hands, not very reluctantly I must confess, they at once administered to me a solemn oath not to entertain one thought of continuing my journey till seven days were over. Then, every morning a friendly strife arose between my hosts whose kitchen should first have the honors of preparing my repast, a strife which I could not adjust by a precisely equal alternation of my visits, although I was bound to one house by friendship and to the other by relationship, because Ferreolus, as a man who had held the office of Prefect, derived from his age and dignity a claim beyond that of mere friendship to take precedence in entertaining me. So we were hurried from pleasure to pleasure. Scarce had we entered the vestibule of either house when lo! on one side the pairs of tennis-players stood up to oppose one another in the ring; on the other, amid the shouts of the dicers, was heard the frequent rattle of the boxes and the boards. Here too were books in plenty; you might fancy you were looking at the breast-high boo-shelves of the grammarians, or the wedge-shaped cases of the Athenaeum, or the well-filled cupboards of the book-sellers. I observed however that if one found a manuscript beside the chair of one of the ladies of the house, it was sure to be on a religious subject, while those which lay by the seats of the fathers of the family were full of the loftiest strains of Latin eloquence. In making this distinction, I do not forget that there are some writings of equal literary excellence in both branches, that Augustine may be paired off against Varro, and Prudentius against Horace. Among these books Origen, ‘the Adamantine,’ translated into Latin by Turranius Rufinus, was frequently perused by readers holding our faith. I cannot understand why some of our Arch-divines should stigmatize him as a dangerous and heterodox author.

While we were engaged, according to our various inclinations, in studies of this nature, punctually as the water-clock marked 5 [11 a.m.], there would come into the room a messenger from the chief cook to warn us that the time for refreshment had arrived. At dinner we made a full and rapid meal, after the manner of senators, whose custom it is to set forth a large banquet with few dishes, though variety is produced by sometimes cooking the meat dry and sometimes with gravy. While we were drinking we had merry stories told, which at once amused and instructed us. To be brief, the style of the repast was decorous, handsome, and abundant.

Then rising from table, if we were at Voroangus (the estate of Apollinaris) we walked back to the inn where was our baggage, and there took our *siesta*; if at Prusianum (the name of the other property) we had to turn Tonantius and his brothers—nobles as they were, and our equals in age—out of their couches, as we could not easily carry our sleeping-apparatus about with us.

When we had shaken off our noontide torpor, we rode on horseback for a little while to sharpen our appetites for supper. Both of my hosts had baths in their houses, but neither of them happened to be in working order. However, when my attendants and the crowd of their fellow-revellers, whose brains were too often under the influence of the hospitable wine-cup, had made a short pause in their potations, they would hurriedly dig a trench near to the fountain or the river. Into this they tossed a heap of burnt stones, and over it they would weave a hemisphere of hazel-twigs. Upon this framework were stretched sheets of coarse Cilician canvas, which at once shut out the light, and beat back the steam rising from the hot flints sprinkled with water. Here we often passed hours in pleasant and witty talk, while our limbs,

wrapped in the fizzing steam, gave forth a wholesome sweat. When we had spent as long as we chose in this rude *sudatorium*, we plunged into the heated waters to wash away the perspiration; and, having so worked off all tendency to indigestion, we then braced our bodies with the cold waters of the well, the fountain, or the river. For I should have mentioned that midway between the two houses flows the river Vuardo, red with its tawny gravel, except when the melting snow makes pale its waters, gliding tranquilly over its pebbly bed, and well-stocked with delicate fish.

I would also describe the luxurious suppers which we used to sit down to, if my talkative vein, which knows no check from modesty, were not summarily stopped by the end of my paper. And yet it would be pleasant to tell over again their delights if I did not blush to carry my scrawl over to the back of the sheet. But now, as we are really in act to depart, and as you, with Christ's help, are going to be good enough to pay us an immediate visit, it will be easier to talk over our friends' suppers when you and I are taking our own; only let the end of this week of feasting restore to me as soon as possible my vanished appetite, since no refinements of cookery can so effectually soothe an overcharged stomach as the remedy of abstinence. Farewell.'

3. *The new Basilica.*

The Bishop Patiens, an earnest and liberal-handed man, raised in his city of Lyons a magnificent church, which was dedicated to the popular Gallic saint, Justus. Sidonius and two other poets, the most eminent of their age and nation, were requested to write three inscriptions which were to be engraven on tablets at the west end of the building. The church itself, after witnessing some interesting passages of mediaeval history, was destroyed in the religious wars of the sixteenth century; and these lines written by Sidonius, and by him transcribed at the request of a youthful admirer, alone remain to testify of its departed glories. The chief reason for quoting them is the proof which they afford that the use of mosaics on the walls and of golden decorations on the ceiling was not confined, as we may have been inclined to suppose, to those places where Byzantine taste was predominant. Many touches in the following description would suit some of the still surviving churches of Ravenna. The Atrium or oblong porch in front of the church, the triple doorway from the Atrium into the nave, and from the outside of the building into the Atrium, the 'forest of columns' within, and the slabs of marble in the windows, are all also characteristic of the ecclesiastical architecture of Constantine and his successors.

Sidonius uses the metre called hendecasyllabic to which he was very partial, and which has been employed in the following translation:

'Stranger! come and admire this temple's beauty,
 Know, 'twas reared by the zeal of Bishop Patient.
 Here put up the request that earns an answer:
 Here shall all of thy heart's desires be granted.
 See how shines from afar the lofty building
 Which, square-set, nor to left nor right deflected,
 Looks straight on to the equinoctial sunrise.
 Inly gleams there a light: the golden ceiling
 Glows so fair that the sunbeams love to wander
 Slowly over the sun-like burnished metal.
 Marbles varied in hue, with slabs resplendent,
 Line the vault and the floor, and frame the windows.
 And, in glass on the walls, the green of spring-tide
 Bounds the blue of the lake with winding margent.

Here a portico, three-arched, fronts the gazer,
 Reared on pillars from Aquitanian quarries.
 There its counterpart stands, an inner portal,
 At the Atrium's end, three-arched and stately;
 While within, and around the floor of worship
 Rise the stems of a slender marble forest.
 Fair it rises, between the Road and River;
 Here it echoes the horseman's clanging footfall
 And the shout of the slave who guides the chariot.
 There, the chorus of bending, hauling bargemen,
 As they pace by the turgid Arar's waters
 Send to heaven the joyful Alleluia !
 Sing thus ! Wayfarers sing by land or water,
 Sing at sight of the house which all may enter,
 Where all learn of the road that leads to safety.'

4. *The family setting out for the country*

Evodius had asked Sidonius to furnish him with twelve verses to be engraved on the inside of a large shell-shaped silver basin which he was about to present to Ragnahild the Visigothic queen. Sidonius replies as follows :—

' Sidonius wishes health to his friend Evodius.

' When the messenger brought me your letter, informing me that you were about soon to visit Toulouse at the command of the king, we too were leaving the town for a place in the country some way off. From early morning I had been detained by one cause or another, and the arrival of your letter only just gave me an excuse to shake off the crowd of attendants and try to satisfy your request while I was either walking or riding. At the very break of day my family had gone forward, meaning to pitch the tent when they had accomplished eighteen miles of the journey. The spot which they would then reach was one which many reasons combined to make desirable for the purpose of a halt; a cool spring in a shady grove, a level lawn with plenty of grass, a river just before our eyes well stocked with fish, and a favorite haunt of water-birds; and besides all this, close to the river's bank stood the new house of an old friend, so immensely kind that neither by accepting nor by refusing can you ever get to the end of his civilities.

Hither then my people had gone before me and here I stopped for your sake, that I might send your slave back by the shortest way from the chief town in the district. By this time it was four hours and more after sunrise; already the sun which was now high in the heavens had sucked up the night-dews with his increasing rays; we were growing hot and thirsty, and in the deep serenity of the day a cloud of dust raised by our horses' feet was our only protection against the heat.

Then the length of the road stretching out before us over the green and sea-like plain made us groan when we thought how long it would be before we should get our dinner. All these things, my dear Sir, I have mentioned to you that you may understand how adverse the circumstances of my body, my mind, and my time were to the fulfillment of your commission.'

Sidonius then gives the verses, twelve in number, which were to be engraved in twelve grooves, reaching from the centre to the circumference of Queen Ragnahild's silver basin. The heat and the remoteness of the prospect of dinner must have been unfavorable to his courtship of the Muse, for the verses are vapid, and there is scarcely a thought in them which would survive translation.

5.. *The Fortune-hunter.*

In the early days of the Episcopate of Sidonius a certain Amantius asked him for letters of introduction to Marseilles. With his usual good-nature Sidonius gave him a letter to Graecus, Bishop of that city, describing him as a poor but honest man, who transacted what we should call a commission-business in the purchase of cargoes arriving at the seaports of Gaul. He had been lately appointed a Reader in the Church—a post which was not incompatible with his transactions in business—and this gave him an additional claim on the good offices of the two Bishops. The letter concluded with the expression of a hope that Amantius might meet with splendid success as a merchant, and might not regret exchanging the cold springs of Auvergne for the fountain of wealth flowing at Marseilles.

Not long after, Sidonius discovered that he had been imposed upon by a swindler, that the modest young man who desired an introduction to Marseilles was in fact too well known at Marseilles already, and that the honest broker was an impudent and mendacious fortune-hunter. Having occasion to write again to Graecus, who had asked him for ‘one of his long and amusing letters,’ he thought that he could not do better than send him the history of Amantius, though the Bishop of Marseilles must have been already in good part acquainted with it, and the Bishop of Arverni must have been conscious that the part which he had played did not reflect great credit on his shrewdness. After a complimentary preface, the letter proceeds thus :

‘His native country is Auvergne; his parents are persons in a somewhat humble position in life, but free and unencumbered with debt; their duties have been in connection with the service of the Church rather than of the State. The father is a man of extreme frugality, more intent on saving up money for his children than on pleasing them. This lad accordingly left his home and came to your city with a very slender equipment in all respects. Notwithstanding this hindrance to his ambitious projects he made a fairly successful start among you. Saint Eustachius, your predecessor, welcomed him with deeds and words of kindness, and put him in the way of quickly obtaining comfortable quarters. He at once began to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of his neighbors, and his civilities were well received. He adapted himself with great tact to their different ages, showing deference to the old, making himself useful to his coevals, and always exhibiting a modesty and sobriety in his moral conduct which are as praiseworthy as they are rare in young men. At length, by well-timed and frequent calls, he became known to and familiar with the leading personages of your city, and finally even with the Count himself. Thus the assiduous court which he paid to greatness was rewarded with ever-increasing success; worthy men vied in helping him with their advice and good wishes; he received presents from the wealthy, favors of one kind or another from all, and thus his fortune and his hopes advanced “by leaps and bounds.”

‘It happened by chance that near the inn where he was lodging there dwelt a lady of some fortune and high character, whose daughter had passed the years of childhood, yet had scarcely reached the marriageable age. He showed himself very kind to this girl, and made, as her youth allowed him to do, trifling presents to her of toys and trash that would divert a girl, and thus, at a very trifling expense, obtained a firm hold on her affections. Years passed on; she became old enough to be a bride. To make a long story short, you have on the one side a young man, alone, poorly off, a stranger, a son who had skulked away from home not only without the consent, but even without the knowledge of his father; on the other, a girl not inferior to him in birth, and superior to him in fortune; and this fellow, through the introduction of the Bishop because he was a Reader, by favor of the Count because he had danced attendance in his hall, without any investigation as to his circumstances by the mother-in-law because his person was not displeasing to her daughter, woos and wins and marries that young lady. The marriage articles are signed, and in them some beggarly little plot of ground which he happened to possess near our borough is set forth with truly comic pomposity.

When the solemn swindle was accomplished, the poor beloved one carried off his wealthy spouse, after diligently hunting up all the possessions of his late father-in-law, and converting them into money, besides adding to them a handsome gratuity drawn from the easy generosity of his credulous mother-in-law, and then, unrivalled humbug that he was, he beat a retreat to his own native place.

‘Some time after he had gone, the girl’s mother discovered the fraud, and had to mourn over the dwindling proportions of the estates comprised in her daughter’s settlement, at the very time when she should have been rejoicing over the augmented number of her grandchildren. She wanted to institute a suit for recovery of her money, on the ground that he had fraudulently overstated his property; and it was in fact in order to soothe her wrath that our new Hippolytus set forth Marseilles, when he first brought you my letter of introduction.

‘Now, then, you have the whole story of this excellent young man, a story, I think, worthy of the Milesian Fables or an Attic comedy. It remains for you to show yourself a worthy successor of Bishop Eustachius by discharging the duties of patronage to the dear youth whom he took under his protection. You asked me for a lengthy letter, and therefore if it is rather wordy than eloquent you must not take it amiss. Condescend to keep me in your remembrance, my lord Pope.’

What was the issue of the quarrel between the amatory Amantius and his mother-in-law we are not informed, but as he acted twice after this as letter-carrier between Sidonius and Graecus, we may conjecture that the affair of the settlement took some time to arrange.

6.. *The Master murdered by his Slaves.*

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Lupus.

I have just heard of the murder of the orator Lampridius, whose death, even if it had been in the course of nature, would have filled me with sorrow on account of our ancient friendship. Long ago he used, by way of joke, to call me Phoebus, and I gave him the name of the Odrysian bard [Orpheus]. Once, when I was going to visit him at Bordeaux, I sent forward to him with lurid fires. However false and deceptive the predictions of these mathematicians as a rule may be, in the case of our friend they were strictly correct both as to the time and manner of his death. For having been held down in his own house, and strangled by his own slaves, he died by the same death as Lentulus, Jugurtha, Sejanus, and even Scipio of Numantia. The least melancholy part of the business is that the parricidal deed was discovered as soon as morning dawned. For no one could be so dull as not to see the signs of foul play on first inspection of the corpse. The livid skin, the starting eyes, the yet lingering traces of anger and pain in the face told their own tale. The earth too was wet with his blood, because after the deed was done the villains had laid him face downwards on the pavement to make it seem as if he had died of hemorrhage. The chief agent in the crime was taken, tortured, and confessed his guilt. Would that I could say that our friend was altogether undeserving of his fate. But he who thus pries into forbidden mysteries, deviates from the safe rule of the Catholic faith, and while he is using unlawful arts must not complain if he is answered by some great calamity.’

7.. *The Oppressive Governor.*

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Pannychius.

If you have not already heard that Seronatus is returning from Toulouse, let this letter inform you of the fact. Already Evanthius is on his way to Clausetia, and is forcing people to clear away the rubbish from the works that have been let out on contract, and to remove the fallen leaves from his path. Poor man! if there is an uneven surface anywhere, he himself, with trembling hand, brings earth to fill up the trenches, going before the beast whom he is escorting from the valley of Tarmis, like the little mussels who pioneer the mighty body of the whale

through the shallow places and rocky channels of the sea.

‘Seronatus, however, as quick to wrath as he is unwieldy in bulk, like a dragon just rolled forth from his cave, comes towards us from the district of Gabala, whose inhabitants he leaves half dead with fright. This population, scattered into the country from their towns, he is now exhausting with unheard-of imposts; now entangling them in the winding meshes of false accusations, and scarcely permitting the laborers at length to return home, when they have paid him a year’s tribute in advance. The sure and certain sign of his approaching advent is the gangs of unhappy prisoners who are dragged in chains to meet him. Their anguish is his joy, their hunger is his food, and he seems to think it an especially fine thing to degrade before he punishes them, making the men grow their hair long, and the women cut theirs. If any here and there meet with a chance pardon, it will be due to a bribe, or to his flattered vanity, but never to compassion.

‘But to set forth all the proceedings of such a beast would exhaust the rhetoric of a Cicero and the poetry of a Virgil. Therefore, since it is said that this pest is approaching us, (whose ravages may God guard us from!) do you forestall the disease by the counsels of prudence; compromise your lawsuits if you have any; get security for your arrears of tribute; do not let the wicked man have any opportunity of hurting the good, or of laying them under an obligation. In fine, do you wish to hear what I think of Seronatus? Others fear his fines and his punishments : to me the so-called benefits of the robber seem even more to be dreaded.’

We do not know what was the subsequent history of this oppressive governor, nor how long the crushed provincials had to endure his yoke. In another letter Sidonius speaks of him as ‘the Catiline of our age, fawning on the barbarians, trampling on the Romans, joking in Church, preaching at the banquet, passing sentence in bed, sleeping on the judgment-seat; every day crowding the woods with fugitives, the villas with barbarians, the altars with criminals, the prisons with clergymen; insulting prefects, and conniving at the frauds of revenue-officers, treading under foot the laws of Theodosius, and exalting those of Theodoric’ [the Visigoth], ‘every day bringing forth old accusations and new exactions.’ And he states in conclusion that if Anthemius, the then reigning Emperor, affords them no assistance against the tyranny of Seronatus, ‘the nobility of Auvergne have resolved to sacrifice either their country or their hair,’ that is, to retire either into exile or into monasteries.

8. *The Country Magnate.*

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Industrius.

‘I have just been visiting the Eight Honorable Vectius, and have studied his actions at my leisure, and from close quarters. I think the result of my investigations is worth recording. In the first place I will mention what I consider the highest praise of all; the house and its master both exist in an atmosphere of unsullied purity. His slaves are useful; his rural laborers well-mannered, courteous, friendly, obedient, and contented with their patron. His table is as ready to welcome the guest as the retainer; his civility is great, and yet greater his sobriety.

‘Another and less important matter is that he of whom I speak is inferior to none in the arts of breaking horses, training dogs, and managing falcons. There is the utmost neatness in his raiment, elegance in his girdles, and splendor in his accoutrements. His walk is dignified, his disposition serious : the former well maintains his private dignity, the latter is set upon preserving public faith. He is equally removed from spoiling indulgence and from bloody punishments, and there is a certain austerity in his character, which is stern without being gloomy. Moreover he is a diligent reader of the sacred volumes, with which he often refreshes his mind while in the act of taking food for the body. He frequently peruses the Psalms, and yet more frequently chants them, and thus, in a novel fashion, acts the monk, not under the habit of a recluse, but under the uniform of a general. He abstains from game, though he consents to

hunt, and thus, with a delicate and unobtrusive religiousness, he uses the processes of the chase but denies himself it produce.

‘One only daughter was left to him on her mother’s death as the solace of his widowerhood, and her he cherishes with the tenderness of a grandfather, the assiduity of a mother, and the kindness of a father. As to his relations towards his household, when he is giving orders he “forbeareth threatening;” when he receives their advice he does not spurn it from him as valueless; when he discovers a fault he is not too persistent in tracing it; and thus he rules the state and condition of those who are subject to him, more as a judge than as a master; you would think that he rather administered his house as a trust than owned it as an absolute possession.

‘When I perceived all this industry and moderation in such a man, I thought it would be for the common good that the knowledge of it should be thoroughly and widely spread abroad. To follow such a life, and not merely to don a particular [monastic] habit, whereby the present age is often grievously imposed upon, would be a useful incitement for all the men of our profession [the clerical]. For—let me say it without offending my own order—when a private individual shows such excellent qualities as these, I admire a priest-like layman more than a priest himself. Farewell.’

9. *The Juvenile Sexagenarian.*

[This letter is addressed to the subject of the preceding one.]

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Vectius.

‘Lately, at the request of the Hon. Germanicus, I inspected the church of Cantilla.

He himself is certainly one of the most noteworthy men of the district, for although he has already put sixty years behind him, every day, in dress and manners, he becomes, I will not say more like a young man, but actually more boyish. His robe is closely girt around him, his buskin tight-laced, his hair is cut so as to make it look like a wheel, his beard is cropped close to the chin by pincers which pierce to the bottom of each fold of his skin. Moreover, by the blessing of Providence, his limbs are still strongly knit, his sight is perfect, he has a firm and rapid gait, in his gums there is an untouched array of milk-white teeth. With no weakness in his stomach, no tendency to inflammation in his veins, no perturbation of his heart, no distress in breathing, no stiffness in his loins, no congestion of his liver, no flabbiness in his hand, no bending of his spine, but endowed with all the health of youth, he claims nothing that belongs to age but reverence.

In consideration of all these peculiar benefits which he has received from God, I beg you, as his friend and neighbor, and one whose example justly exerts a great influence over him, to persuade him not to trust too much in these uncertain possessions, nor to cherish an overweening confidence in his own immunity from disease ; but rather to make a decided profession of religion, and so become strong in the might of renewed innocence. Let him thus, while old in years, be new in merit; and since there is scarcely any one who is devoid of hidden faults, let him openly show his penitence and give satisfaction for those wrong things which he has committed in secret. For a man in his position, the father of a priest and the son of a bishop, unless he lead a holy life himself, is like a briar, rough, prickly and unlovely in the midst of roses, from which it has sprung, and which it has itself produced.’

10. *Teachers and Pupils, Masters and Slaves*

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friends Simplicius and Apollinaris.

‘Good God! how do the emotions of our minds resemble a sea strewn with shipwrecks, the tempests which sweep over them being the evil tidings which messengers sometimes bring to us. A little while ago I was, together with your son, Simplicius, revelling in the delicate wit

of the Hecyra of Terence. I sat beside the young student forgetting my clerical profession in the delight which the human nature of the play afforded me. In order that I might help him to follow the flow of the comic verses more easily, I kept before me a story with a similar plot, the Epitrepontes of Menander. We read at the same pace, we praised our authors, we laughed over their jokes, and, according to our respective tastes, he was captivated by the reading, and I by his intelligence.

Suddenly there stood by my side a slave of my household, pulling a very long face. "What is the matter?" said I. "I have just seen," said he, "at the gate the reader Constans, returning from my lords Simplicius and Apollinaris; he says that he delivered your letters to them, but has lost the replies which were entrusted to his care." When I heard this the calm, bright sky of my gladness was overspread with a cloud of sorrow, and so much was my bile stirred by the untoward intelligence thus brought me, that for many days I inexorably forbade that most stupid Mercury to venture into my presence. For I should have been vexed if he had lost any ordinary letters entrusted to him by anybody, but how much more, yours, which, so long as my mind retains its vigor, will always be deemed least common and most desirable.

However, after my anger had gradually abated with the lapse of time, I enquired of him whether he had brought me any verbal message from you. Trembling and prostrate before me, stammering and half-blind with the consciousness of his offence, he answered that all those thoughts of yours, by which I had hoped to be charmed and instructed, were committed to those unlucky letters which had disappeared on the way.

'Go back therefore, dear friends, to your tablets, unfold your parchments and write over again what you wrote before. For I cannot bear with equanimity this unlucky failure of my hopes unless I know that you are assured that your written speech has never reached me. Fare you well.'

11. *Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children*

'Sidonius wishes health to his wife Papiantilla.

'The quaestor Licinianus, who has just arrived from Ravenna, as soon as he had crossed the Alps and touched the soil of Gaul, sent letters forward to announce his arrival, stating that he was the bearer of an imperial ordinance, bestowing the honor of the Patriciate on your brother and mine Ecdicius, whose titles will rejoice you as much as mine. This honors comes very early if you consider his age, though very late if you look to his merits. For he has long ago paid the price for his new dignity, not with gold but with steel, and though a private individual, has enriched the treasury, not with money, but with trophies of war.

'This debt, however, under which your brother, by his noble labors, laid the Emperor Anthemius, has now been honorably discharged by his successor Julius Nepos, a man whose character, no less than the success of his arms, entitles us to hail him as Supreme Augustus. The promptitude of the act makes it all the more praiseworthy, for one Emperor has at once done what the other a hundred times promised to do. Henceforward, therefore, our best men may with joyful certainty spend their strength in the service of the Commonwealth, knowing that even if the Emperor dies, the Imperial Dignity will faithfully perform every promise by which their devotion has been quickened.

'Meanwhile you, if I rightly read your affectionate heart, will derive, even in these gloomy times, great solace from these tidings, and will not be diverted from sharing in our common joy even by the terrors of the siege which is going on so near you. For I know right well that not even my honors, which you legally share, will bring you so much gladness as this intelligence; since though you are a good wife you are also the best of sisters. Wherefore I have made haste to inform you in this congratulatory letter, of the augmented dignity which, through the favor of Christ our God, has been bestowed upon your line, and thus I have at the same

time satisfied your anxiety and your brother's modesty, to which, and not to any want of affection on his part, you must attribute his silence respecting this promotion.

'For myself, great as is my rejoicing at the added honors of your family for which you have hitherto sighed impatiently, I rejoice even more at the harmony which reigns between Ecdicius and me. And I pray that this harmony may continue as the heritage of our children, for whom I put up this prayer in common, that even as we two have, by God's favor, added the Patrician dignity to the Praefectorial rank which we inherited from our fathers, so they may yet further enhance it by the office of Consul.

'Roscia, our common charge, salutes you. Favored above most other grand-children, she is fondled in the kindest embraces of her grandmother and aunts, while at the same time she is being strictly trained, and thereby her tender age is not rendered infirm while her mind is healthily informed. Farewell.'

12. Deltor and Creditor. The Courtier turned devout.

'Sidonius wishes health to his friend Turnus.

'Well indeed with your name, and with your present business, harmonizes that passage of the Mantuan poet—

'Turnus I what never god would dare
To promise to his suppliant's prayer,
Lo, here, the lapse of time has brought
E'en to your hands, unasked, unsought.'

Long ago, if you remember, your [late] father Turpio, a man of tribunician rank, obtained a loan of money from an officer of the palace named Maximus. He deposited no security either in plate or in mortgage on land; but as appears by the written instrument prepared at the time, he covenanted to pay twelve per cent, to the lender, by which interest, as the loan has lasted for ten years, the debt is more than doubled. But your father fell sick, and was at the point of death : in his feeble state of health the law came down upon him harshly to compel him to refund the debt: he could not bear the annoyance caused by the Collectors, and therefore, as I was about to travel to Toulouse, he, being now past hope of recovery, wrote asking me to obtain from the creditor, at least, some moderate delay. I gladly acceded to his request, as Maximus was not only an acquaintance of mine, but bound to me by old ties of hospitality. I therefore willingly went out of my way to my friend's villa, though it was situated several miles from the high-road. As soon as I arrived he himself came to meet me. When I had known him in times past he was erect in his bearing, quick in his gait, with cheery voice and open countenance. Now how greatly was he changed from his old self! His dress, his step, his bashfulness, his color, his speech, all had a religious cast: besides, his hair was short, his beard flowing: the furniture of his room consisted of three-legged stools, curtains of goat's hair canvas hung before his doors : his couch had no feathers, his table no ornament; even his hospitality, though kind, was frugal, and there was pulse rather than meat upon his board. Certainly, if any delicacies were admitted, they were not by way of indulgence to himself, but to his guests.

When he rose from table I privily enquired of his attendants what manner of life was this that he was leading, a monk's, a clergyman's, or a penitent's. They said that he was filling the office of priest which had been lately laid upon him by the goodwill of his fellow-citizens, notwithstanding his protests.

'When day returned, while our slaves and followers were occupied in catching our beasts of burden, I asked for an opportunity for a secret conversation without host. He afforded it: I gave him an unexpected embrace, and congratulated him on his new dignity: then with my congratulations I blended entreaties. I set forth the petition of my friend Turpio, I urged his necessitous condition, I deplored the extremities to which he was reduced, extremities which

seemed all the harder to his sorrowing friends because the chain of usury was tightening, while the hold of the body upon the soul was loosening. Then I begged him to remember his new profession and our old friendship, to moderate, at least, by a short respite the barbarous insistence of the bailiffs barking round the sick man's bed; if he died, to give his heirs one year in which to indulge their grief without molestation; but if, as I hoped, Turpio should recover his former health, to allow him to restore his exhausted energies by a period of repose.

'I was still pleading, when suddenly the kind-hearted man burst into a flood of tears, caused not by the delay in recovering his debt, but by the peril of his debtor. Then suppressing his sobs, "God forbid," said he, "that I as a clergyman should claim that from a sick man which I should scarcely have insisted upon as a soldier from a man in robust health. For his children's sake too, who are also objects of my pity, if anything should happen to our friend, I will not ask anything more from them than the character of my sacred calling allows. Write then to allay their anxiety, and that your letters may obtain the more credit, add a letter from me in which I will engage that whatever be the result of this illness (which we will still hope may turn out favorably for our brother) I will grant a year's delay for the payment of the money, and will forego all that moiety which has accrued by right of interest, being satisfied with the simple repayment of the principal.'

'Hereupon I poured out my chief thanks to God, but great thanks also to my host who showed such care for his own conscience and good name: and I assured my friend that whatsoever he relinquished to you he was sending on before him into heaven, and that by refraining from selling up your father's farms, he was buying for himself a kingdom above.

'Now, for what remains, do you bestir yourself to repay forthwith the principal at least of the loan, and thus take the best means of expressing the gratitude of those who, linked to you by the tie of brotherhood, haply by reason of their tender years, scarcely yet understand what a boon has been granted them. Do not begin to say, "I have joint-heirs in the estate : the division is not yet accomplished : all the world knows that I have been more shabbily treated than they : my brother and sister are still under age: she has not yet a husband, nor he a *curator*, nor is a surety found for the acts and defaults of that *curator*". All these pretexts are alleged to all creditors, and to unreasonable creditors they are not alleged amiss. But when you have to deal with a person of this kind who foregoes the half when he might press for the whole, if you practise any of these delays you give him a right to re-demand as an injured man the concessions which he made as a good-natured one. Farewell.'

From these glimpses of the social life of the Roman Provincials in the middle of the fifth century, we turn to consider what light of a similar kind the correspondence of Sidonius throws on the internal history of the Barbarians with whom he was brought in contact. His first description is kindly and appreciative : so much so, that it has been conjectured that it was meant to be shown to the gratified subject of the portrait. In his other character-sketches of the Barbarians, as we shall find, the shallow contempt of the heir of civilization for the untutored children of Nature is more distinctly visible.

13. Barbarian Life. *The Visigothic King.*

' Sidonius wishes health to [his brother-in-law] Agricola.

'You have many times asked me to write to you a letter describing the bodily appearance and manner of life of Theodoric, king of the Goths, whose love for our civilization is justly reported by common fame. I willingly accede to your request, so far as the limits of my paper will allow, and I praise the noble and delicate anxiety for information which you have thus exhibited.

' Theodoric is "a noticeable man," one who would at once attract attention even from those who casually beheld him, so richly have the will of God and the plan of nature endowed

his person with gifts corresponding to his completed prosperity. His character is such that not even the detraction which waits on kings can lessen the praises bestowed upon it. If you enquire as to his bodily shape, he has a well-knit frame, shorter than the very tallest, but rising above men of middle stature. His head is round and domelike, his curling hair retreats a little from the forehead towards the top. He is not bull-necked. A shaggy arch of eyebrows crowns his eyes; but if he droops his eye-lids the lashes seem to fall well-nigh to the middle of his cheeks. The lobes of his ears, after the fashion of his nation, are covered by wisps of over-lying hair.

His nose is most beautifully curved; his lips are thin, and are not enlarged when the angles of his mouth are dilated: if by chance they open and show a regular, blit rather prominent set of teeth, they at once remind you of the color of milk. He cuts every day the hairs which grow at the bottom of his nostrils. At his temples, which are somewhat hollowed out, begins a shaggy beard, which in the lower part of his face is plucked out by the roots by the assiduous care of his barber. His chin, his throat, his neck, all fleshy without obesity, are covered with a milk-white skin, which when more closely inspected, is covered with a youthful glow. For it is modesty, not anger, which so often brings this color into his face.

‘His shoulders are well-turned, his arms powerful, his fore-arms hard, his hands wide-spread: he is a well set-up man, with chest prominent and stomach drawn in. You can trace on the surface of his back the points where the ribs terminate in the deeply recessed spine. His sides are swollen out with prominent muscles. Strength reigns in his well-girded loins. His thigh is hard as horn : the leg joints have a very masculine appearance: his knee, which shows but few wrinkles, is especially comely. The legs rest upon full round calves, and two feet of very moderate size support these mighty limbs.

‘ You will ask, perhaps, what is the manner of his daily life in public. It is this. Before dawn he attends the celebration of divine service by his [Arian] priests, attended by a very small retinue. He shows great assiduity in this practice, though if you are admitted to his confidence you may perceive that it is with him rather a matter of habit than of religious feeling. The rest of the morning is devoted to the care of the administration of his kingdom. Armed nobles stand round his chair : the crowd of skin-clothed guards are admitted to the palace in order to ensure their being on duty; they are kept aloof from the royal presence that their noise may not disturb him, and so their growling talk goes on before the doors, shut out as they are by the curtain, though shut in by the railings.

Within the enclosure are admitted the ambassadors of foreign powers : he hears them at great length, he answers in few words. In negotiation his tendency is to delay, in action to promptitude.

‘It is now the second hour after sunrise: he rises from his throne and spends his leisure in inspecting his treasury or his stables. If a hunting day is announced, he rides forth, not carrying his bow by his side—that would be beneath his kingly dignity—but if in the chase, or on the road, you point out to him beast or bird within shooting distance, his hand is at once stretched out behind him and the slave puts into it the bow with its string floating in the air, for he deems it a womanish thing to have your bow strung for you by another, and a childish thing to carry it in a case.

When he has received it, sometimes he bends the two ends towards one another in his hand, sometimes he lets the unknotted end drop to his heel, and then with quickly moving finger tightens the loose knot of the wandering string. Then he takes the arrows, fits them in, sends them forth, first desiring you to tell him what mark you wish him to aim at. You choose what he has to hit, and he hits it. If there is a mistake made by either party, it is more often the sight of the chooser than the aim of the archer that is at fault.

If you are asked to join him in the banquet, which, however, on non-festal days, is like the

entertainment of a private person, you will not see there the panting servants laying on the groaning table- a tasteless heap of discolored silver. The weight then is to be found in the conversation rather than in the plate, since all the guests, if they talk of anything at all, talk of serious matters. The tapestry and curtains are sometimes of purple [cloth], sometimes of cotton. The meats on the table please you, not by their high price, but by the skill with which they are cooked, the silver by its brightness, not by its weight. The cups and goblets are so seldom replenished that you are more likely to complain of thirst than to be accused of drunkenness. In short, you may see there Greek elegance, Gallic abundance, Italian quickness, the pomp of a public personage, the assiduity of a private citizen, the discipline of a king's household. Of the luxury which is displayed on high-days and holidays I need not give you any account, because it cannot be unknown even to the most unknown persons. Let me return to my task.

'The noontide slumber, when the meal is ended, is never long, and is frequently omitted altogether. Often at this time he takes a fancy to play at backgammon: then he collects the counters quickly, views them anxiously, decides on his moves skillfully, makes them promptly, talks to the counters jocularly, waits his turn patiently. At a good throw he says nothing, at a bad one he laughs ; neither good nor bad makes him lose his temper or his philosophical equanimity. He does not like a speculative game either on the part of his adversary or himself, dislikes a lucky chance offered to himself, and will not reckon on its being offered to his opponent. You get your men out of his table without unnecessary trouble, he gets his out of yours without collusion. You would fancy that even in moving his counters he was planning a campaign. His sole anxiety is to conquer.

'When a game is on hand, he drops for a little time the severity of royal etiquette, and invites his companions in play, to free and social intercourse. To tell you what I think, he fears to be feared. At the end he is delighted to see the vexation of a conquered rival, and takes credit to himself for having really won the game, when his opponent's ill-temper shows that he has not yielded out of courtesy. And here notice a strange thing : often that very complacency of his, arising from such a trifling cause, ensures the successful carriage of serious business. Then petitions, which have well-nigh been shipwrecked by the injudiciousness of those who favored them, suddenly find a harbor of safety. In this way, I myself, when I have had somewhat to ask of him, have been fortunate enough to be beaten, and have seen my table ruined with a light heart, because I knew that my cause would triumph.

'About the ninth hour [3 o'clock] comes back again all that weary turmoil of kingship. The suitors return, the guards return whose business it is to remove them. Everywhere you hear the hum of claimants, and this is protracted till nightfall, and only ceases when it is cut short by the royal supper. Then the petitioners, following their various patrons, are dispersed throughout the palace, where they keep watch till bedtime arrives. At the supper sometimes, though rarely, comic actors are introduced who utter their satiric pleasantries: in such fashion, however, that none of the guests shall be wounded by their biting tongues. At these repasts no hydraulic organs blow, no band of vocalists under the guidance of a singing-master intone together their premeditated harmony. No harpist, no flute-player, no choir-master, no female player on the tambourine or the cithara, makes melody. The king is charmed only by those instruments under whose influence virtue soothes the soul as much as sweet sounds soothe the ear. When he rises from table the royal treasury receives its sentinels for the night, and armed men stand at all the entrances to the palace, by whom the hours of his first sleep will be watched over.

'But what has all this to do with my promise, which was to tell you a little about the king, not a great deal about his manner of reigning? I really must bid my pen to stop, for you did not ask to be made acquainted with anything more than the personal appearance and favorite pursuits of Theodoric: and I sat down to write a letter, not a history. Farewell.'

14. *Syagrius and his Germanic neighbors.*

‘Sidonius wishes health to his friend Syagrius.

‘As you are grandson of a Consul, and that on the paternal side, as you are sprung (which is more to our present purpose) from a poetic stock, descended from men who would have earned statues by their poems if they had not earned them by their services to the state, all which is shown by those verses of your ancestors which the present generation studies with unimpaired interest,—as these are your antecedents, I cannot describe my astonishment at the ease with which you have mastered the German tongue. I remember that in your boyhood you were well trained in liberal studies, and I am informed that you often declaimed before a professional orator with force and eloquence. But since this is the case, pray tell me whence your soul has suddenly imbibed the oratory of an alien race, so that you who had the phraseology of Virgil flogged into you at school, you who sweated over the long and stately sentences of Cicero, now swoop down upon us like a young falcon from the German language as though that were your old eyrie.

‘You cannot imagine how I and all your other friends laugh when we hear that even the barbarian is afraid to talk his own language before you lest he should make a slip in his grammar. When you are interpreting their letters, the old men of Germany, bent with age, stand in open-mouthed wonder, and in their transactions with one another they voluntarily choose you for arbitrator and judge. A new Solon when you have to discuss the laws of the Burgundians, a new Amphion when you have to evoke music from their three-stringed lyre, you are loved and courted, you please, you decree, you are obeyed. And though the barbarians are equally stiff and lumpish in body and mind, yet in you they learn and love the speech of their fathers, the disposition of a Roman.

‘It only now remains for you, oh most brilliant of wits, to bestow any spare time which may still be yours on reading [Latin], and so to retain that elegance of style which you now possess. Thus while you preserve your Latin that we may not laugh at you, you will practise your German that you may be able to laugh at us. Farewell.’

15. *Roman Intriguers at the Burgundian Court.*

A young kinsman of Sidonius, also named Apollinaris, had been brought into some danger through the calumnies of informers who represented to the Burgundian prince Chilperic that he was secretly plotting for the surrender of Vaison, a border fortress, to ‘the new Emperor,’ Julius Nepos.

Sidonius writes concerning these informers to Thaumastus, the brother of the calumniated man, with sympathetic indignation.

‘These are the men, as you have often heard me say, under whose villanies our country groans, longing for the more merciful barbarians. These are the men before whom even the great tremble. These are they whose peculiar province it appears to be to bring calumnious accusations, to carry off men from their homes, to frighten them with threats, to pillage their substance. These are the men who in idleness boast of their business, in peace of their plunder, in war of their clever escapes, in their cups of victories. These are they who procrastinate your lawsuit if you engage them, who get it postponed if you pass them by, who are annoyed if you remind them of their engagement, and forget it—after taking your fee—if you do not... These are the men who envy quiet citizens their tranquility, soldiers their pay, post-masters their tariffs, merchants their markets, ambassadors their functions, tax-farmers their tolls, the provincials their farms, the burgesses their guild-dinners, the cashiers their weights, the registrars their measures, the scribes their salaries, the accountants their fees, the guards their largesse, the cities their repose, the publicans their taxes, the clergy their reverence, the nobles

their birth, their betters their precedence, their equals their equality, the officials their power, the ex-officials their privileges, the learners their schools, the teachers their stipends, the taught their knowledge.

‘These are the men drunken with new wealth, who by the vulgar display of their possessions show how little they are accustomed to ownership, the men who go in full armor to a banquet, in white robes to a funeral, in hides to church, in black to a wedding, in beaver-skin to the litany. No set of men suits them, no time seems to hit their humour. In the market they are very Scythians, in the bed-chamber they are vipers, at the banquet buffoons, in confiscations harpies, in conversation statues, in argument brute-beasts, in business snails, in enforcing a contract usurers. They are stone if you want them to understand, fire if they have to judge, quick to wrath, slow to pardon, panthers in their friendship, bears in their fun, foxes in their deceit, bulls in their pride, Minotaurs in their rapacity.

‘Their firmest hopes are founded on the uncertainties of the times ; they love to fish in troubled waters ; yet fearful both from natural cowardice and from an uneasy conscience, while they are lions at court they are hares in the camp, and are afraid of a truce lest they should be made to disgorge, of war lest they should have to fight.’

The good bishop’s invective rolls on still through some sentences, which need not be inflicted on the reader. Though well-nigh out of breath with following Sidonius’ headlong rhetoric, he may still have gathered from it the important fact that the chief instruments of such oppression as was practised by the barbarian invaders upon the provincials were men who were themselves of Roman origin.

16. The physique of the Burgundians.

While our poet was residing at Lyons (apparently) he was asked by one of his friends, an ex-consul named Catulinus, to compose an epithalamium, perhaps for his daughter’s marriage.

In a short, humorous poem of apology Sidonius incidentally touches off some of the physical characteristics of the Burgundians, by whom he was surrounded, and who, it is important to observe, troubled him, not by their hostility, but by their too hearty and demonstrative friendship.

‘Ah me! my friend, why bid me, e’en if I had the power,
 To write the light Fescennine verse, fit for the nuptial bower?
 Do you forget that I am set among the long-haired hordes,
 That daily I am bound to bear the stream of German words,
 That I must hear, and then must praise with sorrowful grimace
 (Disgust and approbation both contending in my face),
 Whate’er the gormandising sons of Burgundy may sing,
 While they upon their yellow hair the rancid butter fling?
 Now let me tell you what it is that makes my lyre be dumb:
 It cannot sound when all around barbarian lyres do hum.
 The sight of all those patrons tall (each one is seven foot high),
 From my poor Muse makes every thought of six-foot metres fly.
 Oh! happy are thine eyes, my friend: thine ears, how happy those!
 And oh! thrice happy I would call thine undisgusted nose.
 ’Tis not round thee that every morn ten talkative machines
 Exhale the smell of onions, leeks, and all their vulgar greens.
 There do not seek thy house, as mine, before the dawn of day,
 So many giants and so tall, so fond of trencher-play
 That scarce Alcinous himself, that hospitable king,
 Would find his kitchen large enough for the desires they bring.

They do not, those effusive souls, declare they look on thee
 As father's friend or foster-sire—but, alas! they do on me.
 But stop, my Muse! pull up! be still! or else some fool will say
 "Sidonius writes lampoons again." Don't you believe them, pray!

The tenor of these verses reminds us of an epigram of unknown authorship, but composed probably in the fifth century.

'Round me the hails of the Goths, their *skapjam* and *matjam* and *drinkam*,
 Harshly resound: in such din who could fit verses indite?
 Calliopé, sweet Muse, from the wine-wet embraces of Bacchus
 Shrinks, lest her wavering feet bear her no longer aright.'

17. *The young Frankish chief and his retinue*

' Sidonius wishes health to his friend Domnitius.

You are fond of inspecting armour and armed men. What a pleasure it would be for you could you see the royal youth Sigismer, decked out like a suitor or a bridegroom, in all the bravery of his tribe, visiting the palace of his father-in-law, his own horse gorgeously caparisoned, other horses, laden with blazing gems, going before or following after him; and then, with a touch of modesty which was especially suitable to his circumstances, in the midst of his outriders and rearguard, he himself walked on foot, in crimson robe with burnished golden ornaments and white silken mantle, his ruddy cheeks, his golden hair, his milk-white skin repeating in his person those three colors of his dress. Of all the petty kings and confederates who accompanied him, the appearance was terrible even in their peaceful garb; they had the lower part of the foot down to the heel bound about with boots of bristly ox-leather, while their knees and their calves were without covering. Above, they had garments coming high up the neck, tight-girdled, woven of various colors, scarcely approaching their bare legs; their sleeves draped only the beginning of their arms, they had green cloaks adorned with purple fringes; their swords, depending from their shoulders by baldrics, pressed in to their sides the reindeer's skins, which were fastened by a round clasp. As for that part of their adornments which was also a defence, their right hands held hooked lances and battle-axes for throwing, their left sides were overshadowed by round shields whose lustre, silvery at the outer circumference and golden at the central boss, declared the wealth as well as the taste of the wearers. All was so ordered that this wedding procession suggested the thought of Mars not less emphatically than of Venus.

'But why spend so many words on the subject? All that was wanting to the show was your presence. For when I remembered that you were not looking upon a sight which it would have so delighted you to behold, I translated your feelings into my own, and longed for you as impatiently as you would have longed for the spectacle. Farewell.'

It is interesting, but somewhat perplexing, to observe that some of the details of the dress of these undoubtedly Teutonic warriors would fit equally well with the Celtic Highlanders of Scotland.

18. *The Saxon sea-rovers*

rovers.

At the end of a long letter, written by Sidonius to his friend Nammatius, after dull compliments and duller banter, we suddenly find flashed upon us this life-like picture, by a contemporary hand, of the brothers and cousins of the men, if not of the very men themselves who had fought at Aylesford under Hengest and Horsa, or who were slowly winning the

kingdom of the South Saxons.

‘Behold, when I was on the point of concluding this epistle in which I have already chattered on too long, a messenger suddenly arrived from Saintonge with whom I have spent some hours in conversing about you and your doings, and who constantly affirms that you have just sounded your trumpet on board the fleet, and that, combining the duties of a sailor and a soldier, you are roaming along the winding shores of the Ocean, looking out for the curved pinnacles of the Saxons. When you see the rowers of that nation you may at once make up your mind that every one of them is an arch-pirate; with such wonderful unanimity do all at once command, obey, teach, and learn their one chosen business of brigandage. For this reason I ought to warn you to be more than ever on your guard in this warfare. Your enemy is the most truculent of all enemies. Unexpectedly he attacks, when expected he escapes, he despises those who seek to block his path, he overthrows those who are off their guard, he always succeeds in cutting off the enemy whom he follows, while he never fails when he desires to effect his own escape. Moreover, to these men a shipwreck is capital practice rather than an object of terror.

The dangers of the deep are to them, not casual acquaintances, but intimate friends. For since a tempest throws the invaded off their guard, and prevents the invaders from being descried from afar, they hail with joy the crash of waves on the rocks, which gives them their best chance of escaping from other enemies than the elements.

‘Then again, before they raise the deep-biting anchor from the hostile soil, and set sail from the Continent for their own country, their custom is to collect the crowd of their prisoners together, by a mockery of equity to make them cast lots which of them shall undergo the iniquitous sentence of death, and then at the moment of departure to slay every tenth man so selected by crucifixion, a practice which is the more lamentable because it arises from a superstitious notion that they will thus ensure for themselves a safe return. Purifying themselves as they consider by such sacrifices, polluting themselves as we deem by such deeds of sacrilege, they think the foul murders which they thus commit are acts of worship to their gods, and they glory in extorting cries of agony instead of ransoms from these doomed victims.

‘Wherefore I am on your behalf distraught with many fears and various forebodings; though on the other hand I have immense incitements to hope, first, because you are fighting under the banner of a victorious nation; secondly, because I hold that the power of chance is limited over wise men, among whom you are rightly reckoned; thirdly, because it is often when our friends at a distance are the safest that our hearts are filled with the most sinister presentiments regarding them...

‘I send you the Libri Logistorici of Varro, and the Chronology of Eusebius, a kind of literary file with which, if you have any leisure amidst the cares of the camp, you may rub off some of the rust from your style after you have wiped the blood from your armor. Farewell.’

19 *The woman wrongfully enslaved.*

The following account of the captivity and bondage of a poor woman of Auvergne incidentally illustrates the troubled condition of Gaul, while it astonishes us by the legal doctrine contained in it. Apparently the maxim with which our own courts are familiar, that ‘a *bona-fide* purchaser of stolen property, without notice of the theft, may justify his holding,’ even applied to the most outrageous of all thefts, that of liberty; and a woman wrongfully enslaved, but in the hands of a *bona-fide* purchaser, could not claim her freedom,

‘Sidonius wishes health to “Pope” Lupus.

‘After that expression of homage which is endlessly due, though it be unceasingly paid, to your incomparably eminent Apostleship, I take advantage of our old friendship to set before you the new calamities of the humble bearers of this letter, who, after having undertaken a long journey, and at this time of the year, into the heart of Auvergne, have returned with no fruit of

their labour. A woman who was nearly related to them was by chance carried off by an inroad of the Vargi—a name borne by some local banditti—and was taken some years ago into your district and there sold. This they ascertained on indubitable evidence, and followed tardily but surely the indications which they had received. But in the meantime, before they arrived upon the scene, she, having been sold in market overt, was living as a household slave in the family of our friend the merchant. A certain Prudens who, they say, is now living at Troyes, appeared to vouch for the contract of her sale, which was effected by men unknown to me, and his subscription, as that of a fit and proper witness, is now shown attached to the deed of sale. You who are present on the spot will, from your exalted position, be easily able to test each link in this chain of wrongful acts.

The affair is all the more criminal because, as I am informed by the bearers of this letter, one of the woman's fellow-travellers was actually killed when she was carried off.

'But since the relations, who brood over this criminal affair, desire that your judgment should apply the remedy, I think it will be befitting both to your office and your character to devise some compromise whereby you may at the same time assist the grief of one party and the peril of the other. By some wise and well-considered sentence you may thus make the former less distressed, the latter less guilty, and both more secure; lest otherwise, such is the disturbed state of the times and the district, the affair go on to an end as fatal as was its beginning. Condescend to remember me, my lord Pope.'

20.. *The 'Levite' of Auvergne.*

Auvergne.

Another illustration of the sufferings of the poorer inhabitants from the storms of barbarian conquest, is afforded by the following letter of intercession on behalf of a man of 'the Levitical order.' By this term Sidonius probably means to indicate a person who, though married, and working for his livelihood, filled (like Amantius the fortune-hunter) the office of Lector (reader) in the church.

'Sidonius wishes health to Pope Censorius [Bishop of Auxerre].

'The bearer of this letter is dignified by an office which raises him into the Levitical order. He with his family in avoiding the whirlpool of Gothic depredation, was swept, so to say, by the very weight of the stream of fugitives, into your territory; and there, on the possessions of the church over which your holiness presides, the hungry stranger threw into the half-ploughed sods his scanty seeds, the produce of which he now begs that he may be allowed to reap without deductions. If you should be inclined to grant him as a servant of the faith this favor, namely, that he shall not be required to pay the quota which is due to the glebe, the poor man, whose notions are as bounded as his fortune, will think himself as well-off as if he was again tilling his native fields. If, therefore, you can let him off the lawful and customary rent, payable out of his very trifling harvest, he will return from your country as thankful as if he had been splendidly entertained. If you will also by his hands bestow upon me with your wonted courtesy a reply to this letter, I and my brethren living here will receive that written page as if it had come straight down from heaven. Condescend to remember me, my lord Pope.'

With this notice of the poor expatriated 'Levite' we finish our study of the social life of the falling Empire as portrayed from the works of Apollinaris Sidonius. But little effort is required to draw the necessary inferences from the condition of the Gallo-Romans to that of the Italians. From the shores of Como or Maggiore, as from the mountains of Auvergne, may many a needy tiller of the soil have been swept away by the tide of flight from the conquering Visigoths. Many a Neapolitan or Tarentine woman of Greek descent and Italian nationality may have been carried away like the poor Gaulish woman by wild marauders following in the

track of the invading armies, sold as a slave, and not even the place of her bondage discovered for years by her friends. The habits of the Saxon freebooters may help us to understand the life of bold piratical adventure led by the Vandals, though we must not attribute the harsher features of heathen savagery to the Arian followers of Gaiseric. And in the pictures of the court and retinue of Theodoric and Sigismer we have probably some strokes which will be equally applicable to every Teuton chief who led his men over the Alpine passes into Italy, from Alaric to Alboin.

It is impossible not to think with regret of the wasted opportunities of Apollinaris Sidonius. Here is a man who evidently hungered and thirsted for literary distinction even more than for consular dignity or saintly canonization. Yet he has achieved nothing beyond a fifth-rate position as a 'post-classical' author, and with difficulty do a few historical enquirers, like Gibbon, Guizot, Thierry, keep his name from being absolutely forgotten by the world. Had he faced the new and strange nationalities which were swarming forth from Germany, in the simple, enquiring, childlike attitude of the Father of History, he might have been the Herodotus of Mediaeval and Modern Europe. From him we might have learned the songs which were sung by the actual contemporaries of Attila and Gundahar, and which formed the kernel of the Niebelungen-Lied; from him we might have received a true and authentic picture of the laws and customs of the Goths, the Franks, and the Burgundians, a picture which would have in turn illustrated and been illustrated by the poetry of Tacitus' *Germania*, and the prose of the Black-letter commentators on English Common Law. He might have transmitted to us the full portraiture of the great Apostle of the Germanic races, Ulfilas, the secret causes of his and their devotion to the Arian form of Christianity, the Gothic equivalents of the mythological tales of the Scandinavian Edda, the story of the old Runes and their relation to the Moeso-Gothic Alphabet. All these details and a hundred more, full of interest to Science, to Art, to Literature, Sidonius might have preserved for us, had his mind been as open as was that of Herodotus to the manifold impressions made by picturesque and strange nationalities. But he turned away with disgust from the seven-foot high barbarians, smelling of leeks and onions, and by preference told over again for the hundredth time and worse than any of his predecessors, the vapid and worn-out stories of Greek mythology. Most truly has our own Wordsworth said,

'We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love,
And even as these are well and wisely fixed
In dignity of being we ascend.'

For want of the first two qualities and others which spring up around them, Sidonius has missed one of the grandest opportunities ever offered in literature.

CHAPTER IV

AVITUS, THE CLIENT OF THE VISIGOTHS.

WHEN Gaiseric and his Vandal horde withdrew from the scene of their depredations, silence and prostration seem to have fallen upon the city of Rome. There was no attempt to raise a new Emperor to the dignity which had been held by the murdered Valentinian and the murdered Maximus : possibly no one was found courageous enough to offer himself for so perilous a preeminence. So in the heart of the once arrogant Queen of the World reigned for two months the apathy of despair. At length on the fourteenth of August, some two months after the capture of the city, the news arrived that the Gaulish provinces had raised to the vacant throne a nobleman of Auvergne, named Avitus, who had assumed the purple at Arles on the tenth of July. The Imperial City bowed her head and accepted her new lord without remonstrance.

Avitus had already once played a conspicuous part in Imperial politics when it had devolved upon him to cement that alliance between Rome and the Visigoths by which the power of Attila was shattered on the Mauriac plains. We are in possession of some other details of his previous life, but they come to us from the pen of a great manufacturer of indiscriminate panegyric, and it is not easy to say what are the actual events to which they correspond. He was descended from a family, several members of which had held high commands in the army and the state, and which was, by the labours of antiquaries, connected with the old patrician families of Rome. He was born, in all probability, about the time of the death of Theodosius, 395, and would therefore be close upon his sixtieth year when he arrayed himself with the Imperial purple. It was told of him that in early boyhood he came one day upon a she-wolf, rabid with hunger, and snatching up a fragment of rock which lay close by, hurled it at the savage creature and broke her skull. To the studies of Cicero and Caesar which engaged his childhood, succeeded in youth the delights of boar-hunting and falconry. Yet his reading had perhaps not been wholly fruitless, for he had scarcely arrived at man's estate, when, being chosen by his neighbors to head a deputation to Constantius, he pleaded so eloquently for some remission of taxation that the admiring Governor granted all his requests.

In middle life he served with some credit under the captain of the age, Aetius, in the wars which he waged in Belgic Gaul, and in Noricum, on the Lower Rhine, and the Middle Danube. Once at least he exposed his person to some danger in a hand-to-hand encounter. The Roman generals were at this time (about the year 439) with marvelous impolicy bringing the Hunnish hordes into Gaul to fight their battles against less barbarous barbarians. Litorius, that rash and feather-headed general, was marching a troop of these squalid auxiliaries through Auvergne, on his way from Brittany, which he had conquered, to the Gothic capital Toulouse, which he hoped to conquer. The so-called auxiliaries of Rome carried fire and sword, insolence and robbery, through the province which was conspicuous above all others by its fidelity to Rome. One of these wild mercenaries happened to quarrel with a man engaged in the service of Avitus, and struck him a mortal blow. The man in dying breathed his master's name, and coupled with it a prayer for vengeance. Avitus, when informed of his servant's death, at once donned his armor and sought the Hunnish camp. We need not believe the strained language of the Panegyrist, who solemnly informs us that in his rage for his murdered servant he slew as many of the Huns as Achilles slew Trojans after the death of Patroclus: but we seem bound to accept his story of the future Emperor's single combat with the murderer, which ended, after

the third passage of arms, in Avitus breaking the Hun's breastplate, and transfixing his breast with his spear, which being thrust vigorously home, stood out behind the back of the caitiff. 'The blood and the life together ebbed away through the double wound.'

Shortly after this event, Avitus, who had already held three commands in the army, was raised to the high civil office of Praetorian Prefect in Gaul, an office which may perhaps have occupied six years of his life, from 439 to 445. From these duties he retired to his estate in the heart of Auvergne, to that very villa of Avitacum overlooking the lake, and overlooked by the mountains, of which we have already heard a description from the pen of its next possessor, Sidonius. For the family of Avitus consisted of two sons, Ecdicius and Agricola, and one daughter, Papianilla. This daughter is the lady whom Sidonius married about the year 452, and most of our information about the career, as well as the dwelling-place of the Arvernian Emperor, is derived from the verses or the letters of his fluent son-in-law.

The connection which most powerfully influenced the life of Avitus, and which alone gave him any chance, a small one at the best, of being remembered in history, was a friendship which, while still a boy, he formed with the Visigothic monarch at Toulouse, and which on the side of the barbarian was continued into a second generation. A brother of the young Arvernian, named Theodoras, had been sent as a hostage to the court of Theodoric I. Avitus went to Toulouse to visit Theodorus, and by some unexplained charm of manner, or beauty of character, so won upon the Gothic king that he offered him large sums of money if he would renounce his Gallo-Roman nationality, and take up his permanent residence at the court of Toulouse. This offer was rejected, scornfully rejected, says his panegyrist; but there is some reason to think that Avitus may have discharged for a time the duties of Governor to the young Visigothic princes. His powerful intercession is said to have saved Narbonne (436) when sorely blockaded by the barbarian arms, and at the last stage of famine. And on a more eventful day (in 451), as has been already described, Avitus was the chosen intermediary between Rome and Toulouse, the man who by his personal influence with Theodoric I, did more than any other single individual to mold the great Roman-Gothic alliance against Attila, which saved Europe from becoming Tartar.

That alliance had done its work, and apparently was dissolved, when the terror from the Hun was over. But the thought probably suggested itself both to the new Visigothic king, Theodoric II, and to his Gaulish friend, that it might be revived, and might serve a useful purpose for both of them in the troubled state of Roman politics after the murder of Valentinian III. Avitus had been drawn by the Emperor Maximus from his retirement, and invested with the office of *Magister utriusque Militiae* (Captain-General of horse and foot), which gave him complete control over all military matters in Gaul. The three-months' reign of Maximus had been well employed by the new general in checking the inroads of the tribes dwelling by the lower Rhine, and his credit with the soldiers and the provincials was at a high point, when tidings arrived in Gaul of the Vandal sack of Rome and the vacancy of the Empire. Possibly the young oratorical son-in-law, Sidonius, was employed to furbish up the old friendship with the Visigoth, and he may have gained a point or two for the aspirant to the purple by diplomatically losing a few games on the backgammon-board of Theodoric.

Four great Germanic nations were at this time supreme in Western Europe : the Vandals, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, and the Suevi. A fifth, that of the Franks, one day to be the mightiest of them all, was as yet scarcely peeping over the horizon. The Vandals, as we know, ruled Africa from Carthage, the Visigoths South-Western France from Toulouse, the Burgundians were settled in the valley of the Rhone, and their chief capital was Lyons; the Suevi held the greater part of Southern and Western Spain, and their capital was Astorga. The Vandals and Visigoths were sworn foes ever since the cruel outrage practised by Gaiseric on his Visigothic daughter-in-law. The Burgundians and Visigoths lived in a state of simmering

unfriendliness, not often passing into vindictive war. The Suevi, who were now by the departure of the Vandals the only barbarian power left in the Peninsula, carried on a desultory warfare with Roman Spain, but at this time were living at peace with their Visigothic neighbors from whom they were divided by the Pyrenees, and their king Rechiarius had married a sister of the reigning Theodoric.

Such being the position of affairs, the transaction which suggested itself, at some time in the summer of 455, to the minds of the most powerful men at Arles and Toulouse must have been something of this nature, 'Let us join forces and form a Triple Alliance. To you, Avitus, shall fall the Imperial Purple : we Visigoths will assert your claims against any other competitor, and if need be, protect you against the hated Vandal. In return for this you shall lend us the sanction of the name and the rights of the Empire for an enterprise which we are meditating against the Suevi. Though we have been settled for the last half century chiefly on the Northern side of the Pyrenees, we have never entirely renounced the hope of including Spain in our dominion. That was the vision of the great Ataulfus, brother-in-law of Alaric, that and the welding of Roman and Visigoth into one harmonious commonwealth; and if we can now make this compact with you, our nobler and firmer Attalus, his vision may yet become a reality. And lastly, if you, Burgundians, instead of harassing us by your aimless warfare, will join our great expedition, the territories in the valley of the Rhone, which you now hold by a friendly compact with the Empire, shall be enlarged—does not the new Augustus consent to this?—and it may be that you shall reach even to the Mediterranean Sea.'

Such was probably the honest prose of the transaction which raised the nobleman of Auvergne to the headship of the Empire; but in diplomacy and in poetry it of course assumes a very different aspect. The Visigothic king, no doubt in collusion with Avitus, threatened an invasion of Roman Gaul. The Master of the Soldiery assembled his troops, but consented to assume once more the office of ambassador to Toulouse, in order to avert the horrors of war from the provincials. He sent before him Messianus, a high functionary of Gaul. At the appearance of this messenger, many a sturdy Visigoth, intent on the rapture of coming war, foreboded that the magical influence of Avitus would again prevail, and that they would be balked of the hoped-for struggle. Soon their fears were confirmed. The Master himself appeared on the scene erect and stately. Theodoric came forth to greet him, attended by his brother Frithareiks (the king of peace). His welcome to the Roman was eager but confused; and the three, with joined hands, entered the gates of Toulouse. It was a fortunate coincidence (if it was a mere coincidence) that just as they entered the town the news arrived of the murder of the Emperor Maximus, and the capture of Rome by Gaiseric—news which considerably improved the prospects of the new partnership.

On the next day a grand council of the Visigothic warriors was held. From necessity rather than choice, the veteran chiefs who assembled there did not reflect the magnificence of the sovereign. Their robes were threadbare and greasy, their scanty skin-cloaks scarcely reached down to the knee, and their boots, made of horse's hide, were hitched up around the calf by a shabbily-tied knot. So were the men attired whose 'honored poverty' was welcomed into the councils of the nation.

The Gothic king questioned the Roman officer as to the terms of the peace which he was come to propose between the two nations. Avitus replied, dilating on the old friendship which had existed between him and the first Theodoric. 'He, I am sure, would not have denied my request. You were a child then, and cannot remember how he, in compliance with my advice, withdrew his blockading army from Narbonne, when that city was already pale with famine, and was forced to feed upon the most loathsome victuals' .

'E'en thou—as well these hoary chieftains know—

In those young days beheld'st in me no foe.

Oft have I pressed thee, weeping, to my heart,
 When thy nurse came, refusing to depart.
 Now once again I come thy faith to prove,
 And plead the rights of that ancestral love.
 If faith, affection, filial reverence die,
 Go! hard of heart, and peace to Rome deny.'

So far Avitus : a murmur of rough voices through the council testified their approbation of his pleadings for peace. The next lines in the play fell to Theodoric; and he spoke his part with great animation and correctness. He enlarged on his old friendship for Avitus, his reluctance to break off that friendship, his willingness to serve 'the venerable might of Rome and the race which, like his own, had sprung from Mars,' his desire even to wipe out the memory of the guilt of Alaric by the benefits which he would confer on the Eternal City. But there was one price which must be paid for his services. If Avitus would assume the diadem, the Empire should have in the Visigoth the most faithful of allies: if not, the war once proclaimed must rage on. If the General wished to save the world, he must govern it.

The Master of the Soldiery heard these words, which were ratified by the solemn oath of the royal brothers, with an appearance of profound sadness. He returned to Arles, whither the tidings preceded him, that the desired peace with the Goths could only be obtained by the elevation of Avitus to the Imperial dignity. The chief officials of Gaul were hastily summoned to the Castle of Ugernum (now Beaucaire, on the Rhone, a few miles above Arles); the proposal to declare Avitus emperor was carried by acclamation, vanity perhaps concurring with policy in the scheme of giving a Gaulish ruler to Rome. On the third day after the assembly at Ugernum Avitus appeared upon a high-heaped *agger* surrounded by the soldiery, who put upon his head a military collar, to represent the true Imperial diadem, which was probably in safe custody at Ravenna. The new Augustus wore still the same melancholy countenance with which he had first listened to the flattering proposal of Theodoric; and it is possible that by this time the sadness may have been not all feigned, some conviction of his own inability to cope with the weight of the falling Commonwealth having already entered his soul.

The story of Avitus' elevation to the throne has seemed worth telling, because it illustrates the manner in which the great barbarian monarchies influenced the fortunes of the dying Empire, the degrees in which Force and Art were still blended in order to secure obedience to its behests, and the nature of the tie which bound those later 'Shadow-Emperors' to their by no means shadowy Patrons. But of the reign of this Emperor, which lasted only sixteen months, we have but a few faint details from the Annalists, which leave us little more to say than that he reigned, and that he ceased to reign.

The autumn of 455 was probably employed in an expedition to the province of Pannonia, an expedition which, we are asked to believe, reunited to the Empire regions which had been lost to it for generations. It is possible that in the complete collapse of Attila's power, Rome may have successfully reclaimed some portions of her ancient dominion by the Danube; but it is difficult to conjecture the motives which could have sent the new Emperor forth on so distant an expedition, while the terrible and unsubdued Vandal was still crouching at his gates ready to repeat his spring.

On the first day of the year 456 Rome witnessed the Consulship usual splendid pageant which announced that the supreme Augustus condescended to assume the historic office of consul, and to mark the year with his name. Among the solemnities of the day, the young Sidonius recited, in the hearing of the Senate and the people, a panegyric 602 lines long, after the manner of Claudian, which he had composed in honors of his father-in-law. This panegyric is the source—the doubtful source, it must be admitted—from which have been drawn the facts previously related concerning the private life of the Avernian Senator and the manner of his

elevation to the throne. The attempt to emulate Claudian's panegyrics on Honorius and Stilicho is evident, but the failure to reach even Claudian's standard of excellence is equally evident. The old, worn-out mythological machinery is as freely used, and with even less of dramatic fitness and truth. Jupiter convokes an assembly of the gods; all the Olympians of the first and second rank attend it. Thither also come all the great river-gods of the world, the Rhine, the Po, the Danube, the Nile. And thither at last, with bent head and flagging steps, without a helmet, and scarce able to drag the weight of her heavy lance, comes unhappy Rome. She begins at first with some naturalness and spirit, longing for the happy days when she was still small, obscure, and safe, before greatness had brought its harassing penalty. She recurs with dread to the omen of the twelve vultures seen by the Etrurian augur on Mount Palatine at the foundation of the city.

If those twelve vultures did truly mean, as some supposed, that she should have twelve centuries of greatness, her day is done, for the allotted time expired eight years ago (in A.D. 447)-

Soon, however, the unhappy Queen of the World wanders off into mere Roman history. She repeats to great Jove a versified compendium of Livy, and condenses the lives of the first twelve Caesars into an equal number of lines, which might have been prepared as a *Memoria Technica* by a Roman schoolboy.

The father of gods and men takes up the tale, and shows that he is not to be outdone in knowledge of Livy and Tacitus. Then, having vindicated his scholarship, he tells her that he has prepared a man for her deliverance, born in Auvergne, a land fertile in heroes. This destined deliverer is Avitus, whose respectable life and fortunes Jupiter describes in 460 lines of unbroken monologue. We listen in weariness to the long, level narrative, and think what a change has come over the Court of Olympus since, in a few majestic words, the Thunderer granted the earnest prayer of silverfooted Thetis. Then Jupiter nodded, now his hearers.

To the taste of the Romans of the fifth century, however, the fluent hexameters of the young Gaulish poet probably appeared really meritorious. At any rate they were written by the son-in-law of Augustus, and consequently every good courtier was bound to admire them. The Senate decreed that 'an everlasting statue' of brass should be raised in honors of Apollinaris Sidonius, which should stand between the Greek and Latin libraries in the Forum of Trajan.

While the new Emperor was thus inaugurating his reign at Rome, his powerful patron at Toulouse was using the new alliance for his own purposes. Embassies passed to and fro between the king of the Visigoths and the king of the Suevi. The former, whose messengers were accompanied by the Gaulish Count Fronto, as representative of Rome, called upon his Suevic brother-in-law to cease from the attacks which he had been lately making on Roman Spain, the Empire and the Visigothic monarchy being now united in mutual league, and the invaders of the one being the enemies of the other. To this embassy Rechiarius returned a haughty answer: 'If thou complainest of what I am doing here, I will come to Tholosa where thou dwellest; there, if thou art strong enough, resist me.' This insolent defiance hastened the warlike preparations of Theodoric. Early in the year 456 (apparently) he invaded Spain with an enormous army, to which the two kings of the Burgundians, Gundiok and Chilperic, brought their promised contingent; and he was able to assert (probably thereby commanding some assistance from wavering provincials) that he came 'with the will and by the ordinance of Avitus the Emperor.'

This campaign destroyed the greatness of the Suevic kingdom. Rechiarius was defeated in a great battle at the river Urbicus, twelve miles from Astorga (5th, 456, October). Theodoric pushed on to Braga, took that place on the twenty-eighth of October, and though that day was a Sunday, and the victory had been a bloodless one as far as his host was concerned, he used his success in a manner which horrified his contemporaries; carried off vast numbers of men,

women, and children into captivity, stripped the clergy naked, filled the holy places with horrors of horses, cattle, and camels,' and in short repeated all the judgments which the wrath of God had suffered to fall on Jerusalem. The fugitive Rechiarius was taken prisoner next year at a place called Portucale' (Oporto), and after some months' captivity, was put to death by his vindictive brother-in-law, who could not forget his insulting message about the visit to Toulouse.

While Theodoric was thus engaged with the Suevi, news was brought to him of an important victory which his Imperial ally had gained over the Vandals. Sixty of their ships had set sail from the harbor of Carthage; they had reached Corsica and cast anchor there, seeming to threaten Italy and Gaul at once. The brave and capable Count Ricimer followed them thither, outmaneuvered and surrounded them with his fleet, and slew of them a great multitude.

So far all seemed going well with the Romano-Gothic confederation, and the moment when Hesychius, the Imperial ambassador, presented himself at the camp of Theodoric in Gallicia with these tidings, with presents from the Emperor, and with the further intelligence that his master had come to Arles, probably to meet his Visigothic ally,—this moment was probably the apogee of the new combination. But there was a worm at the root of this apparent prosperity. Ricimer was after his late victory the idol of the army and the most powerful man in the Empire, and Ricimer had determined to shatter the new alliance. Nor was such a determination wonderful, since this strange and perplexing character who, for the next sixteen years, played the part of King-maker at Rome, was himself the son of a Suevic father, though of a Visigothic mother, and was not likely to hear well-pleased the tidings of the sack of Braga and the countless horrors which had befallen his countrymen at the hand of the ally of Avitus.

He resolved that the Arvernian Senator must lay aside the purple, and he probably had the popular voice with him when he pronounced Avitus unfitted for the emergencies of the Empire. The Gaulish nobleman was a man of unspotted private character, and had once possessed some courage and capacity for war, but he was fond of ease, perhaps of luxury, and the almost childlike simplicity and openness of his nature, to say nothing of his sixty years, unfitted him to cope with the lawless intriguers, Roman and Barbarian, by whom he was surrounded. Famine broke out in Rome, and for this the people blamed Avitus (who had now returned into Italy) and the crowd of hungry dependents whom he had brought with him from Gaul. Under popular pressure he was compelled to dismiss his Visigothic body-guard. Having no funds in his treasury wherewith to pay them, he stripped the public buildings in Rome of their copper (completing perhaps the half-finished Vandal spoliation of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus), and turned the copper into gold for his Gothic friends. All this of course increased his unpopularity in Rome. The revolt, now openly headed by Ricimer and his young comrade Majorian, spread to Ravenna. On the 17th of September, Remistus, the Patrician (an official who is otherwise unknown to us), was killed in the palace at Classis. The Emperor fled from Rome, hoping to reach his native and friendly Gaul. But he was taken prisoner at Placentia by Ricimer, who now held the all-important office of Master of the Soldiery. On the 17th of October, the Patrician, Messianus, a Gaul, and probably the intimate friend of Avitus, the same who had acted as his avant-courier to the court of Theodoric the year before, was put to death. Avitus himself was spared. Even the stern Ricimer could not bring himself to take the life of the innocent old man. But he was stripped of the purple, and (strange fate for an Augustus) was consecrated Bishop at Placentia. Of the name of his See and of his subsequent fate we have no certain information. It seems probable that he died by a natural death, though possibly hastened by disappointment and alarm, within a twelvemonth after he had abdicated the Empire. A tradition, recorded by Gregory of Tours (who was himself a native of Auvergne), related that the forlorn Bishop-Emperor, fearful for his life, left Italy by stealth to repair to the tomb of Julian the martyr, an Arvernian saint, whose protection he hoped to purchase by rich presents,

the wreck it may be of his Imperial splendor; that he died on the road, but that his body was taken and buried at the feet of the martyr in the village of Brioude in Auvergne. Few things in the fitfully-illuminated history of the times are stranger than the fullness of information which is given us as to the rise of this unfortunate Emperor, and the barrenness of the history of his fall. And yet he was the keystone of a great and important political combination, a combination which, had it endured, would certainly have changed the face of Europe, and might have anticipated the Empire of Charles the Great in favor of a nobler nation than the Franks, and without the interposition of three centuries of barbarism.

CHAPTER V

SUPREMACY OF RICIMER. MAJORIAN.

THERE is danger in endeavoring to illustrate the history of a long-past age by the vivid light of modern politics; danger from the incompleteness of our knowledge of the present, and danger from the heat of controversy with which every topic debated by men struggling for place and power in the world of action around us, must necessarily be environed.

But the correspondence between the position of Old Rome at the point of her history which we have now reached, and that of 'New Rome,' or Constantinople, at the present day, is in some respects so close that we are almost compelled to notice it. The obvious differences between the conditions of the two Empires are many, but the resemblances are more, and more striking. The Roman, like the Turk, having been the terror of the world, had become its pity. He had lost, like the Turk, his once pre-eminent faculty of founding Empires; he had lost the faculty of generalship, and, unlike the Turk, he had lost the mere animal courage of the common soldier. A world of new and alien nationalities was seething round him, nationalities which had a prophetic instinct that to them and not to him belonged the Future of Europe; nationalities whose gentlest and most friendly touch meant ruin to the old order of things, yet nationalities which, strange to say, did not, with one exception, wish to destroy his Empire if by any means the breath of life could still be preserved in it. What 'the Frank' is to the Ottoman of today, the Barbarian was to the subjects of Honorius and Valentinian.

I have said that there was one exception. The Vandal, during the last quarter of a century of the independent life of Rome, was her one implacable enemy. He had had his hour of triumph in 455; intent on pillage rather than on conquest he had not then sought permanently to annex Italy to his Empire, but he remained watching her death-struggles, gloating over her feeble misery, and perhaps speculating on the day when she would fall without effort into his hands, and Rome be ruled as a dependency from Carthage.

We have seen some reasons for supposing that this result was dreaded by the other Teutonic nations in the West of Europe, and that political combinations, rude and well-nigh forgotten, were formed in order to keep Rome for the Romans, even as they have been formed in our own day to keep Stamboul for the Turks. But a more undoubted point of resemblance is the career of the many Teutonic adventurers who brought their knowledge of war, their energy, their courage, and sometimes their unscrupulousness to the service of the dying Empire. Merobaudes and Bauto, Arbogast and Gainas, were the prototypes of the German and English officers who in our own day have reorganized the armies or commanded the fleets of the Sultan, and led the expeditions of the Khedive. Not more strange to us probably is the affix of Pacha to an English surname than were, in the ears of the men of that generation, the titles of Consul or Patrician when borne by a full-blooded Barbarian. And these alien administrators of the State and Army of Rome resembled those 'Frankish' admirals and generals employed by the Ottoman Porte, in the knowledge that, however great the actual power which they might possess, the appearance of sovereignty would always be denied to them. As none but a lineal descendant of Othman can sit on the throne of Soliman, so, even in the most degenerate days of Rome, public opinion, if not positive law, forbade that anyone who was the son of a barbarian father and a barbarian mother should be robed in the Imperial purple.

Such a Romanised Teuton was Ricimer, the man who for sixteen years after the deposition of Avitus was virtually head of the Roman commonwealth. It is worthwhile to notice how intimately he was connected with two if not three of the ruling barbarian families. He was the son of a Suevic father, who probably enough was sprung from the royal family of his nation. His mother was daughter of Walia, king of the Visigoths, the successor and avenger of Ataulfus; and his sister was married to Gundiok, king of the Burgundians. A man thus connected, and concentrating in his hand whatever yet remained of the forces and the treasure of Rome, was well placed for repelling that storm of Vandal invasion which was the most pressing danger of the Empire.

Historians are unanimous in condemning the character of Ricimer, and, as we shall see, not without reason. He raised his unhappy puppets one after another to the Imperial throne, and one by one, as he grew tired of their subservience or was irritated by their opposition, was cast aside and broken by his hand. There is not a word in the Chroniclers, not a line in the venal panegyrics of Sidonius, to suggest that he had a heart accessible to any generous or tender emotion. A cold, self-seeking player with men as with counters he appears from first to last. But let us endeavor to understand what he was and why Rome bore with him. There can be little doubt that as a general he was the greatest whom the Empire could produce. That destruction of the Vandal fleet off Corsica, of which the Chroniclers give us such scanty details, was probably a great achievement, and one which liberated Italy and Gaul for years from the fear of another regular invasion. He thus succeeded, as it were of right, to that great position in the State which had been held before him by Stilicho and Aetius. But both these generals had served the Emperors only too well for their own safety. The feeble Honorius had compassed the death of Stilicho; the dissolute Valentinian had planned the assassination of Aetius. Ricimer resolved that his life should not be at the mercy of any similar palace intrigue, and as soon as any of the retainers, whom he permitted to use the name of Caesar, showed signs of acquiring an independent authority in the State which might be dangerous to his authority and life, he gave the word to some trusty barbarian henchman, and the purple robe was found to be enveloping a corpse. There is only one thing to be said in mitigation of our abhorrence for this man; and that is that he does seem to have been faithful to Rome. We do not find any trace of that disposition to make a separate bargain for himself, which so often comes out in the lives of the statesmen of a collapsing monarchy. Rome seems to have understood this, to have accepted him, with all his odious qualities, as 'the necessary man' for the situation, and she may have owed it to this acquiescence in his rule that the Vandal invasion, often threatened, never actually arrived during the sixteen years of his domination.

Ricimer was probably already a man in middle life when he thus came to the helm of the Roman State. He was simply Count Ricimer when he achieved his Corsican victory. That exploit it was, in all likelihood, which earned for him the office of Master General of the Soldiery. A pause ensued upon the deposition of Avitus, perhaps in order to allow time for communications with Byzantium, but during this interval there can be no doubt that the Master of the Forces wielded the whole powers of the State. In four months' time (on the 28th February, 457) Ricimer abandoned his office of Master of the Soldiery in favor of a young general named Majorian, while he himself assumed the proud title of Patrician. This title carried with it the right to be called the father of the Emperor (as soon as an Emperor should be declared) and practically a life-tenure of the office of Prime Minister.

The extraordinary development of the power of 'the Patrician' is one of the unexplained changes in the constitutional history of the last days of the Empire. The caste of Patricians had, as everyone knows, lost their exclusive civil privileges long before the close of the Republic. Under the Empire most of the still surviving Patrician families perished by slow decay, or fell victims to the terrible trade of the *delator* (informer). The Emperor Constantine revived the

name, not now as an hereditary order in the State, but as a personal dignity, conferring high honors on the wearer but probably no power. The words of Zosimus (the only historian apparently who describes this innovation) are these: 'The dignity of Patrician was first introduced by Constantine, who passed a law that those who were honored by it should take precedence of the Praetorian Prefects.' This enactment is lost. Only one law in the whole Theodosian Code, which decrees that 'even the splendor of the Patriciate' is to be considered subordinate in rank to the Consular office, mentions the name of the new dignity, which moreover does not occur from beginning to end of the 'Notitia Dignitatum.' Evidently 'the Patrician' of the fifth century, like 'the Premier' and 'the Cabinet' of our own day, was a term more familiar to the mouths of ordinary men than to the written documents of the constitution.

For the last twenty years of his life the great Aetius wore the name of Patrician; and we may perhaps conjecture that it was during that time that men, seeing him ever the foremost figure in the state, of which he was the real ruler, came to look upon the new designation as something more than a mere title of courtesy, and upon the holder of it as an irremovable depositary of power above the moving, changing throng of Consuls and Praetorian Prefects. The words of a contemporary chronicler, describing the deposition of Avitus, 'And his Patrician Messianus was killed', seem to imply an especial connection between the Patrician and the Emperor, just as we should say 'a Colonel and his Major', but not 'a Colonel and his Captain.' But howsoever and whensoever the peculiar pre-eminence of the Patrician began, there can be no doubt that it existed during the period which we are now considering, and that citizens of Rome must have spoken of the Patrician with at least as much awe as the citizens of Constantinople speak of the Grand Vizier, or the subjects of Louis XIII spoke of the Cardinal.

The official 'Father of the Emperor' was not long in providing himself with a son. His young comrade, Majorian, 'was raised to the Empire on the 1st of April, 457, in the camp at Columellae, at the sixth milestone' no doubt from Ravenna. The Emperor Leo, who, two months before, upon the death of the brave old Marcian, had been in a somewhat similar manner raised by his barbarian patron Aspar to the Eastern throne, approved the choice, and the two Emperors, between whose characters there was no little resemblance, reigned together with more harmony and more unity of purpose than had often marked the counsels of Ravenna and Constantinople.

The new Emperor, *Julius Valerius Majorianus*, came of an official stock. His maternal grandfather, Majorian, was Master General of the Soldiery in 379 when Theodosius was raised to the Empire. The elevation of that Emperor took place at Sirmium (not far from Belgrade), and Majorian's head-quarters were then at Acincus, well-known to us under its modern name of Buda as the western half of the capital of Hungary. The son-in-law of the elder, and father of the younger, Majorian was a faithful comrade of Aetius, and reached the 'respectable' office of Quaestor. The future Emperor served his apprenticeship to arms under his father's friend, and was rising high in the service when suddenly Aetius dismissed him from his military employments. No reason was assigned for this harsh step, but the young officer and his friends maintained that it was solely due to the envy of the Patrician's wife, who feared that the fame of her husband and son would suffer eclipse by Majorian's growing reputation. He retired for the time to his estate, and to the pursuits of agriculture, but when Aetius himself fell under the dagger of the assassin, his fortunes naturally revived, and Valentinian III. called him forth from his seclusion to bestow upon him one of the highest posts in the army. In this position he probably cooperated with Ricimer in the overthrow of Avitus. What is more certain is that, as already related, he was raised on the last day of February, 457, to the dignity of Master of the Soldiery, and on the 1st of April in the same year was saluted as Augustus.

At once a flash of something like the old defiant spirit of Rome showed her enemies that she had again a soldier for Emperor. In the short interval between February and April,

Majorian had sent an expedition which successfully repelled an inroad of 900 Alamanni, who had forced their way over the Rhaetian Alps to the northern shore of Lake Maggiore. He was next summoned to Campania, to whose rich plains Gaiseric had this year directed his piratical fleet. The lordly Vandal, fat with luxurious living, sat lazily in his galley while the Mauretanian peasant, himself a slave, ravaged the country, dragging off captives, cattle, spoil, everything that could be carried away, and swept them into the holds of the Vandal warships. Such was the picture of arrogant and indolent rapacity when the troops of Majorian appeared on the scene. In an instant all was changed; horses were landed, suits of mail were donned, poisoned arrows were fitted to the string, and fiery darts were brandished in the hand. On both sides the trumpets sounded, and the dragon ensigns floated sinuously to the breeze. Then came the clash of opposing squadrons, soon followed by the flight of the Vandals. Horses and men crowded into the water in an agony of fear, and only the strongest swimmers succeeded in reaching the ships. When the fight was over, Majorian roamed over the battle-field examining the bodies of the slain. Among them was a well-known corpse, that of the husband of Gaiseric's sister. All the wounds of the Roman soldiers were in front; all those of the Vandals in the back. Such is the account which Sidonius gives of the encounter. After making every deduction for rhetorical amplification, we are bound to believe that the Vandal was worsted in a skirmish, and retired from the shores of Campania.

A campaign in Pannonia apparently followed; the obscure details of which need not be given here. But it may be observed that among the subject nations who are represented as following the standards of Majorian are mentioned the Rugian and the Ostrogoth. So invariable was the course of barbarian movement into Italy. The tribes who were to be the next conquerors of Rome always first figured as her stipendiaries.

The second year of Majorian's reign was signalized by his accepting the office of Consul in conjunction with his Byzantine colleague, Leo. Scarcely since the palmy days of the Republic had two men so worthy of that famous dignity ridden behind the Lictors and Fasces and given their names to the year. The address of Majorian to the Senate, written at Ravenna and preserved among his laws, makes a show of moderation and deference for that ancient body, which though it was probably understood by all concerned to be only a piece of acting, was yet gracious and dignified acting. He says that having been elected by the free choice of the Senate, and by the will of his valiant army, he consents to assume a dignity for which he has himself no desire, in order that he may not be accused of ingratitude to the Commonwealth, nor seem to wish to live only to himself. He implores the favor of Heaven, and asks for their cooperation with the Emperor of their choice: 'Let them take heart as to their own fortunes. As a private man he always condemned the infamy of informers, and he is not going to encourage them now that he is Emperor. The military affairs of the State shall receive the ceaseless attention of himself and his father and Patrician Ricimer. They two together by hard service in the field have freed the State of the Roman world from foreign foes and civil broil, and with the help of Providence they will yet preserve it.'

'Fare ye well, Conscript Fathers of the most venerable order.'

The years 458 and 459 were probably spent in war with the Visigothic king, naturally indignant at the overthrow of his candidate for Empire. It would necessarily be waged in Gaul, but we know nothing concerning it but the result, a glorious one for Majorian. In the year 459 Ambassadors were sent to the Gallicians by Nepotian, Master of the Soldiery, and Sunieric the Count, announcing that Majorian the Augustus, and Theodoric the King, have ratified with one another the firmest bonds of peace, the Goths having been overcome in a certain conflict.

But though we know nothing else of these campaigns Majorian in Gaul, they have a certain interest for us as having been the means of bringing Majorian within the orbit of the universal panegyrist, Sidonius. That unfortunate courtier must have seen with deep chagrin all

his hopes of official advancement blasted by the dethronement of his father-in-law. Apparently he did not accept the triumph of the party of Ricimer without a struggle. Did he actually join himself to the Visigoths, and fight under their banners against Rome? Did he stir up revolt among the Gaulish provincials, and strive to maintain the cause of some other claimant to the purple? Did the city of Lyons join the revolt, and was she only reduced to obedience by the motley army of Majorian after a stubborn resistance? Such are some of the conclusions drawn by commentators from a few obscure passages in the works of Sidonius, who naturally describes the conversations of the Olympian deities with much greater minuteness than his own exertions on behalf of an unsuccessful cause. The provoking silence of the chroniclers prevents us from either affirming or denying these conclusions. One can only say that it is extraordinary that a civil war, and the reduction by force of so important a city of the empire as Lyons (if these events really occurred) should have been left altogether unnoticed by the historians.

However this may have been, there is no doubt that Sidonius was in disgrace, that the triumphant Emperor was at Lyons, and that a hint was given that a panegyric would be the price of the poet's restoration to favor. The broker in this transaction was the Emperor's secretary, Petrus, himself a man of letters and a distinguished diplomatist. The panegyric was accordingly composed and recited, no doubt in the Emperor's hearing, amidst the applause of the courtiers. It was a hard task for the son-in-law of Avitus to bring his flowing rhetoric to glorify the rival, perhaps the executioner of his relative. But the instinct of reverence for success carried Sidonius safely through his perilous undertaking. In 603 lines (one more than he had given to his father-in-law) he sang the joy of Rome in the triumphs of Majorian, and the very difficulty of the enterprise invigorated his Muse. The personifications are decidedly less tedious, the imagery more imaginative, the flow of declamation more animated, in this work than in the panegyric on Avitus.

This is the plan of the poem. Rome sits on her throne, and receives the homage and the appropriate presents of the nations from India to Spain. To her enters Africa, 'the third part of the world,' her black cheeks scarred, and the ears of corn which crowned her bending forehead all broken. She complains that she is made miserable by the insolent happiness of one man (Gaiseric), the robber, the maid-servant's son, who has insinuated himself into her home, and made himself master of her resources. She calls on Rome to deliver her from this hateful vassalage; on Rome, now able to strike by the strong arm of Majorian, whose parentage and past exploits she recounts at considerable length. That Rome may not think the exploit beyond her strength, she informs her that Gaiseric is now sodden and enervated by the life of vicious luxury which he has been leading. His pale cheeks and bilious habit show that his endless banquets have at last begun to tell upon his health. What Capua was to Hannibal, the cook-shops of Carthage have been to the Vandal.

Rome, in a few dignified words, assures Africa of coming succor. Gaul, which for nearly eighty years has been left unvisited by Emperors, has now been visited by Majorian, who has corrected the disorders caused by that long absence, and who is now coming 'through these wars to thy war. Why waste we our time in speaking? He will arrive : he will conquer.' Here ends the allegorical part of the poem. Then, in his own person, and with some poetic fire, Sidonius recounts the later exploits of the Emperor; the fight by Maggiore, the defeat of the Vandal pirates, the passage of the Alps by his motley armament.

'Twas Winter. Through the marble-shining Alps
 The rocks affronting Heaven, the cliffs whose brows
 Threaten incessantly the wayfarer
 With the dry deluge of the avalanche,
 Through these thy foot first passes: thou the first

Dost plant thy pole upon the slippery slopes.
 And now the host has reached the midmost pass:
 Their limbs begin to stiffen with the cold;
 Blocked in the narrow windings of the way,
 To walk, or e'en to creep incapable,
 So great the glassy smoothness of the ground.
 Then one, by chance, from out that stragglng file,
 Whose wheel the frozen Danube once had worn,
 Exclaims, "I choose instead the gory sword
 And the chill awfulness of quiet death.
 A rigid torpor binds my stiffening limbs,
 With fire of frost my parched frame consumes.
 We follow one who labours without end,
 Our stripling leader. Now the bravest brave,
 Monarch or people, safe are housed in camp,
 And, e'en in camp, lie under shaggy hides.
 But we—we change the order of the year.
 What he commands transcends e'en Nature's laws.
 He bends not ever from his ruthless schemes
 And grudges Victory to the angry sky.
 Oh, where and of what nation was he born
 Whom I, the Scythian, cannot cope with? Where,
 Under what rock Hyrcanian did he grow,
 Sucking the milk of tigers? To this pitch
 What drearier clime than mine has hardened him?
 Lo, where he stands upon that topmost peak,
 Urges his shivering ranks, and laughs at cold,
 Hot with his spirit's ardour. When I heard,
 Long since, the bugles of a Northern king,
 They told me the Imperial arms of Rome
 And Caesar's household dwelt in soft repose,
 Lapped in perennial luxury. For me
 Nought boots it to have changed my former lords
 If this be Roman kingship.'
 More he had said,
 But from thy cliff thou hurlest thy words of scorn,
 "Whoe'er thou art whom daunts the difficult way,
 Cut with thine axe the hanging water's hide,
 And make thee steps out of the frozen wave.
 Stop those unmanly murmurs. Sloth is cold,
 But work will warm you. Soldiers! look on me!
 Hath Nature given me the Centaur's limbs;
 The wings of Pegasus; the plumfed heels
 Of Zetes or of Calais? Yet I crunch
 E'en now the snowy summit of the Pass.
 You groan beneath a winter in the Alps.
 I promise you a soldier's recompense—
 A summer 'neath the sun of Africa."
 Thus with thy voice thou cheerest the fainting ranks;

Thus thine example stirs them. Every toil
 By thee ordained is first by thee endured.
 The crowd with eagerness obey thy laws,
 Seeing their author is their promptest slave.’

Passing on from the story of Majorian’s campaigns, the poet here interweaves a little skillful panegyric on his friend Petrus, and then comes to the practical part of his effusion. ‘Look upon the ruined estate of our city of Lyons, and lighten her load of taxation.’

And since to these o’erwearied hearts of ours,
 Our only Hope, thou comest, help our fall:
 And while thou passest turn a pitying eye
 On this thy city, Lyons’ Conqueror!
 Broken with toil, she looks to thee for rest.
 Peace hast thou given: give hope for days to come.
 The ox, after short respite from the plough,
 Better resumes his struggle with the soil.
 Our Lyons sees herself bereft of all,
 Oxen and corn, the serf, the citizen.
 While still she stood she felt not all her bliss:
 Captive, she knows her past prosperity.
 Oh Emperor! when Delight is ours once more,
 ’Tis sweet to muse on vanished Misery.
 Though sack, though fire have laid our glories low,
 Thy coming pays for all. Ruin herself Shall please us if she make thy triumph more.’

The word triumph suggests the thought of the Emperor’s car climbing the Capitoline slope, of the mural and civic crowns encircling his forehead, of all the spoils of the defeated Vandal borne proudly before him. ‘I will go before thee through the struggling crowds. I will make my feeble note heard through all their noisy shoutings. I will say that thou hast conquered seas and mountains, the Alps, the Syrtes, and the Libyan hordes; but I will say that before and beyond all these victories, thou hast conquered my heart by thy clemency.’

Who could resist such energy of praise? Not Majorian, whose frank and hearty nature accepted the flattery with all goodwill, and who appears to have not merely pardoned the poet, but received him into the circle of his friends. Emboldened by the success of his first petition, Sidonius essayed another of a more personal kind than that which he had already preferred on behalf of his fellow-citizens. He himself individually was groaning under the weight of a heavy assessment, perhaps imposed upon him as a penalty for some insurrectionary movements after the downfall of Avitus. We are not able to ascertain the precise mode of this assessment, but it is clear that it was denoted by heads (*capita*), and that a wealthy or an obnoxious citizen paid taxes upon so many more *capita* than his poorer or more loyal neighbors. Sidonius considered that he had at least three *capita* too many; that is, probably, that his taxes were fourfold what they ought to be. In a short epigrammatic poem he reminds the Emperor of a certain fortunate hunting excursion of his, in which he had killed three animals on one day—a stag, a boar, and a serpent, and hints that another day’s sport of the same kind would now be acceptable. Hercules killed the three-headed monster Geryon; let Majorian, the new Hercules, knock the three *capita* from the poet’s taxability, and give him a chance of unharassed life. The answer to this curious petition is not stated, but it was probably favorable, since the author included the epigram in the list of his published poems.

Maorian's war with the Visigoths detained him for more than a year in Gaul, which he afterwards revisited, and Sidonius had frequent access to the Imperial presence. To the end of his life but slight solicitation was needed to draw from him the story of the high doings which he witnessed 'in the times of Augustus Majorian.' One of these anecdotes, though trifling in itself, may serve to introduce us into the private life of a Roman Emperor of the last days. The scene is laid at Arles, the capital of Roman Gaul; the time is the year 461. There had suddenly appeared in the city a copy of anonymous verses, bitterly satirizing some of the chief persons in the Imperial Court, cleverly hitting off the favourite vices of each, and all but mentioning their names. The nobles were furious, and none more so than a certain Paeonius, a demagogue turned courtier, a man who had played a little with revolutionary intrigue and then sold himself for office, a slave to money-getting till the time came when he saw an opportunity of bartering money for position, and purchasing a highly-placed husband for his only daughter by a lavish and unusual dowry. This was the person who, born in obscurity though not in poverty, had clambered up, no one exactly knew how, during the troubles and anarchy at Rome, to the distinguished position of Prefect of the Gauls. This was he who, having been among the courtiers most severely lashed by the anonymous satirist, was the keenest in his endeavors to find out and punish the author. That author, there can be little doubt, was Sidonius himself. He affects to consider it a great injustice that the piece should have been fathered upon him; but in the letter (written several years later) in which he tells the story, he nowhere expressly repeats his denial, and the impression left on our minds is that though, as a nobleman and a bishop, he deemed it decorous to disavow the lampoon, as an author he was very proud of the excitement which it had occasioned.

At the time when the satire appeared, Sidonius was still at his country-house in Auvergne; but public opinion, guided by Paeonius, tried him for the authorship, and found him guilty, in his absence. When he appeared at Arles shortly afterwards, and, having paid his respects to the Emperor, descended into the Forum, what unaccountable change had come over his former friends? One came up to salute him, bowed profoundly, so as almost to touch his knees, and passed on; another, with gloomy face, stalked past him without uttering a word; the greater number skulked behind a column or a statue, so as to avoid the disagreeable necessity of either saluting or ignoring him. Sidonius professes to have been utterly bewildered by this strange conduct, till at length one of the number, deputed by the rest, approached and saluted him. 'Do you see those men?' said he. 'Yes, I see them, and view their odd conduct with wonder, but certainly not with admiration.' 'They know that you have written a lampoon, and all either detest or fear you in consequence.' 'Who? What? Where? When? Why?' Sidonius asked in well-simulated wrath. Then, with greater composure and with a smile on his face, 'Be good enough to ask those angry gentlemen whether the base informer who dares to accuse me of such an offence pretends to have seen the lampoon in my handwriting. If he does not, they will do well to retract their charge, and behave a little less offensively.' With this equivocal denial, the courtiers were, or professed themselves to be, satisfied, and they came forward promptly and in a body to clasp his hand and kiss him on the cheek.

The next day the Emperor gave a banquet in connection with the games of the amphitheatre. Among the invited guests were the consul of the year, two ex-consuls, two other men of high rank, and Paeonius and Sidonius, whose black looks at one another no doubt caused much secret amusement to their fellow-guests and to the Emperor himself. Host and guests, eight in all, reclined upon the *triclinium* (triple couch) with the table in the midst. It is interesting to observe the order of precedence. The most distinguished guest, Severinus (the consul for the year), reclined at the end (or 'horn,' as it was called) of the left-hand couch. Opposite to him, at the first seat of the right-hand couch, reclined the Imperial host. The other guests lay according to their order of precedence, counting from the seat of Severinus; and so it

came to pass that Paeonius, as ex-prefect of Gaul, reclined in the fourth place, at the middle couch, and that Sidonius, who as yet had no official rank, was the lowest placed among the guests, but by that very inferiority was brought into the closest contact with the Emperor.

When the banquet was nearly ended, Majorian began to talk. First, in few words, to the Consul Severinus. Then ensued a more lively dialogue on literary subjects with the consular who lay next him. Camillus came next, a consular, and nephew of a consul. ‘Brother Camillus,’ said the Emperor, ‘you had an uncle, for whose sake I think I may congratulate myself on having given you a consulship.’ ‘Do not say a consulship, Lord Augustus! Call it a first consulship.’ This clever hint, that further favors of the same kind would be welcome, was received with a tumult of applause, notwithstanding the Emperor’s presence. Then passing Paeonius by unnoticed, the Imperial host put some question to Athenius, the fifth in order of the guests. Paeonius rudely interposed a reply. The Emperor noticed the discourtesy, and the peculiar smile which played upon his face (for he greatly enjoyed a joke, and had a happy way of sharing in it without compromising his dignity) amply avenged Athenius. The latter, who was a wily old fellow, and who already had a grudge against Paeonius for taking precedence of him at the banquet, slyly said, ‘I don’t wonder, Emperor, that my neighbor has stolen my place, since he is not ashamed to take the words out of your mouth.’

‘A fine opening this for satirists!’ said the sixth guest, whose turn in the conversation was now come. Thereupon the Emperor turned his head round to his next-door neighbor and said, ‘I hear, Count Sidonius, that you are a writer of satires.’ ‘I hear it, too,’ he answered.

Majorian (laughing). ‘Spare ourselves at any rate.’

Sidonius. ‘In refraining from forbidden jests I spare myself.’

Majorian. ‘And what shall we do to those who molest you?’

Sidonius. ‘My lord Emperor! let my accuser accuse me in public. If he makes good his charge, I am ready to pay the penalty : but if, as is probable, I succeed in refuting it, let me have the leave of your Clemency to write what I like against him’.

The Emperor glanced at Paeonius, to see if he consented to the conditions; but the ex-prefect sat silent, with a blush of anger and shame upon his face. ‘I will grant your request’, said Majorian, ‘if you will this moment put it into verse.’ ‘Agreed,’ answered Sidonius. He turned round and looked at the servant as if asking for water to dip his fingers in. There was an instant’s pause while the nimble slave ran round the *triclinium*. Then said the Emperor, ‘The verses are to be improvised, remember :’

‘Who says I write Satires? Dread sovereign! I cry,
Let him prove his indictment, or pay for his lie;’

was the immediate repartee of Sidonius. There was again a tumult of applause, and the Emperor, in a tone perhaps of mock solemnity, called God and the Commonwealth to witness that the poet should henceforth write whatever he chose, adding that he considered it to be the duty of the wearer of the purple to repress this kind of vague and unproven accusation, brought by malice against innocent members of the nobility. Sidonius bowed his head and modestly uttered his thanks; Paeonius turned pale, dejection succeeded to rage, and he looked like a criminal on his way to execution. Soon after, the guests rose up. When they had donned their cloaks (*chlamydes*) and gone a few steps from the Imperial presence, the consul fell on the neck of the favored courtier, the two consulars kissed his hand, and Paeonius, with fawning and pitiable gestures, implored pardon. On the intercession of the other members of the party, Sidonius consented to grant it, and to promise that he would leave Paeonius unlashd by his satires if he would take warning by the miserable success of this attempt to blacken his character and cease to molest him for the future.

The story of this banquet at Arles is no doubt trivial enough, and may seem scarcely worth the telling, but it illustrates the immense social deference which was still paid to the

name of Augustus, and the glamour of the purple robe. When we are reading the history of far-distant times, we are sometimes disposed to marvel how men could be found willing to take prominent positions in the world, when the state of affairs was so hopeless that they must inevitably become either the pity or the laughing-stock of the universe. Perhaps the explanation is to be found in the fact that so long as Power commands the reverence of the few score of persons with whom it comes into daily contact, it will have irresistible attractions for mankind. Further than its own immediate environment it need not and will not look : least of all will it trouble itself about the sort of figure that it will make in History. Here was Julius Majorianus, struggling bravely it is true, but almost desperately, for the last tatters of the Roman inheritance that were left to him by the Rhone and the Ebro; yet his favor still gave life, a harsh word from his lips or a frown on his brow sent the unhappy object of his displeasure out of the Imperial presence, pale, trembling, half-choked with terror; the courtiers still contended for the smile of the 'Purple-wearer' as eagerly as when he was the master of sixty legions, and when none could escape his wrath or stay his hand, from Cheviot to Caucasus.

The short reign of Majorian was a time of considerable legislative activity. Especially was the year of his consulship (during which his head-quarters seem to have been at the palace in Ravenna) marked by his additions ('Novellae') to the Theodosian code. But the laws all tell one tale; all speak, in one relation or another, of the desperate misery which was engulfing the inhabitants of Italy. Population was decreasing so fast that the Emperor, notwithstanding the strong feeling of the Church in favor of virginity, and against second marriage, found himself compelled to forbid women to take the veil under forty years of age, and to command all childless widows to marry a second husband within five years of the death of the first, or else to forfeit half their property to their relatives or to the exchequer. The cost of maintaining a family was so great, the rivalry for the paternal inheritance so keen, that in many instances an unpopular son or brother was forced into the ranks of the clergy and actually ordained Priest against his will. Where such an offence was proved to have been committed, the unjust parents were condemned to forfeit a third of their property to the unwillingly consecrated son, who was permitted to return into the world, a forced ordination having no binding power. The Archdeacon who might have wittingly cooperated in the offence, was liable to a fine of ten pounds of gold (£400). A curious provision that if a Bishop had been consecrated without his consent the ordination could not be impugned, is perhaps a concession to the harmless comedy of the *Nolo Episcopari*, which was so commonly played in those days. Or possibly it may have proceeded from an uneasy consciousness of the Legislator's own share in the forced consecration of his predecessor at Placentia.

Majorian's laws are remarkably outspoken as to the rapacity of the tax-collectors, especially those who were clothed with military authority, whose extortions he denounces in the strongest terms. 'Raging against the rapacious bowels of the unhappy Provincials, they are safe from punishment, for none cares to accuse them before a provincial judge, too often supine and cowardly and ready to cringe and fawn at the mere sight of an officer's belt, while the expense and vexation of an appeal to the Imperial court is so great that most men will submit to any injustice rather than resort to it.' A change in administration, bringing fiscal questions under the more immediate notice of the Governor of the Province, was meant to remedy this evil, which may have been partly relieved by another short but emphatic edict concerning the election of the *Defensor*, that singular official whose of functions some account has been already given and who was perhaps the only functionary whom Power has ever avowedly created as a safeguard against its own exorbitances. The harassed citizens were daily leaving the towns, to pick up a precarious subsistence in the remote country districts, where they were at least safe from the hated presence of the *Apparitor* and the *Canonicarius*. In order to check this process of depletion, Majorian ordained that in accordance with ancient usage, the

magistracy and people of each considerable town should assemble and choose a *Defensor*, who, when confirmed in his office by the Emperor, might avail to keep the insolence of the revenue officers in check and tempt back the scattered citizens to their homes.

The exactions of the tax-gatherers, themselves very likely (as is the custom in decaying States) often defrauded of their lawful salaries, were sometimes so extravagant as to be almost amusing. Thus continual objection was made to taking the Imperial *Solidus* (twelve shilling piece), even though it was of full weight; and some strange tricks, the nature of which we can but faintly conjecture, were played upon the popular partiality for gold pieces with the head of Faustina, coins which, if they represented the pure undepreciated currency of the Antonine period before the terrible debasements of the coinage in the third century, were not undeserving of a high place in public favor. All this elaborate machinery of injustice was destroyed, as far as mere decrees could destroy it, by Majorian, and the officers of the Tribute were ordered to take all coins alike which were of full weight, except those minted of Gaulish gold, which was admitted to be of an inferior quality.

Some other unwarranted importunities of the official hierarchy were repressed by the same series of decrees. Servants of the Governors asking for New-Year's Gifts, Presents on the first day of the month, or Drink-money (literally Dust-money, an indemnification for the dust which the messenger had contracted on his journey), all these were punished by a fine of £40 for each offence. Governors of Provinces were not to be at liberty to half-ruin a city by taking up their quarters therein for an indefinite time, and calling upon the inhabitants to bring a constant supply of rare and costly delicacies to their table. Three days' provisions for himself and suite, on a scale of expense to be settled by the Prefect, were all that the Governor might require annually from each city.

These enactments, together with a remission of arrears of tribute of more than eleven years' standing, seemed to show a generous consideration for the poverty of the exhausted people. They were however to some extent counterbalanced by a little clause in the longest edict, which stated that now that the cultivator was relieved from so many presents to governors and other illegal exactions, he could not think it burdensome if his land-tax, which now stood at two per thousand on capital (equivalent perhaps to two per cent, on income), was increased by one quarter so as to stand thenceforward at two-and-a-half per thousand.

One more law must be noticed, since it shows the disintegrating influences which were already at work upon the buildings of old Rome, influences internal and domestic, which, far more than the transitory visits of Goth or Vandal, have brought about her present desolation.

'We, as Rulers of the Republic, are determined to remedy the detestable process which has long been going on, whereby the face of the venerable city [of Rome] is disfigured. For it is too plain that the public edifices, in which all the adornment of the city consists, are being everywhere pulled to pieces at the suggestion of the city officials, on the pretence that stones are wanted for the public works. Thus the stately piles of our old buildings are being frittered away, and great constructions are ruined in order to effect some trifling repair. Hence, too, it arises that private individuals engaged in house-building, who are in a position to curry favor with the city judges, do not hesitate to supply themselves with materials from the public buildings, although these which have so much to do with the splendor of the city ought to be regarded with civic affection, and repaired rather than destroyed.

'We therefore decree that no buildings or ancient monuments raised by our forefathers for use or beauty, shall be destroyed by any man; that the judge who orders their destruction shall pay a fine of fifty pounds of gold [£2000]; and that the clerks and other subordinates who have fulfilled his orders shall be beaten with clubs and have their hands struck off—those hands that have defiled the ancient monuments which they ought to have preserved.

'The buildings which are altogether past repair shall be transferred, to adorn some other

edifice of a not less public character’.

It is interesting to observe that this decree, so purely Roman and local in its character, was like the others issued from Ravenna (10th July, 458).

But it was not for legislation, nor for administrative reform, but for war that Julius Majorianus had been robed in the mantle of the Caesars. To him all the Roman world looked with hope, to exorcise the cruel and mocking fiend that had entered the corpse of Carthage. If the Vandals could be subdued, he was surely the man to do it. He had felled the forests of the Apennines, and filled the harbors of the Upper and Lower Sea with Roman triremes. His campaign in Gaul had been successful, and the haughty Visigoth was now his submissive ally. It might have been expected that he would repeat the exploit of Scipio Africanus, transport his troops to the Libyan shore, and fight another Zama within a week’s march of Carthage. For some reason not clearly explained to us, possibly because he knew of disaffection among the Mauretanian and Numidian allies of Gaiseric, he adopted a different course. He determined to make Spain his base of operations, and to assemble his navy, consisting of 300 ships, in that magnificent bay, one of the finest natural harbors in the Mediterranean, which we call Carthagera, and which then still bore the name of ‘the New Carthage’. It seemed as if history was about to repeat itself, and as if Spain might play the same part now, in the thirteenth century of Rome, which she had played in the sixth century, when the Hasdrubals and the Scipios fought there. But while all Europe was watching the movements of the Roman triremes in that spacious bay, suddenly the enterprise collapsed. Gaiseric first laid waste with fire and sword the provinces of Mauretania which Majorian meant to make his base of operations, and poisoned the wells along his expected line of march. Then by some stratagem, of which we know nothing, the Vandals, ‘warned by traitors,’ carried off the ships from out of the Bay of Carthagera. One chronicler places the scene of this mysterious event not at Carthagera itself, but at Elice (now Elche), a sea-side town about forty miles north of Carthagera, often visited by modern travellers who wish to see the forests of palm-trees which impart to it a thoroughly Oriental aspect, and have earned for it the name of ‘the Palmyra of Europe.’ ‘No Palm of Victory for me’, may have been the thought of Majorian as he sadly turned his face northwards—the preparations of three years wasted, and vengeance on the Vandal indefinitely postponed.

This happened in May, 460. On the second of August in the following year he was dethroned and put to death near the city of Tortona (in the south-east corner of the modern Duchy of Piedmont). No cause is assigned by any of the chroniclers for his fall, except ‘the jealousy of Ricimer, acted upon by the counsels of envious men’; nor is anything told us of the circumstances of his death. Probably enough, the early successes of Majorian were the real cause of his ruin, for which his final disaster furnished the pretext.

The high estimate usually formed by historians of the character of Majorian, and of what, under happier auspices, he might have accomplished for the restoration of the fortunes of Rome, is justified by nothing so much as by the impression which he produced on his most unwearied enemies, the Vandals. The Byzantine historian, Procopius, writing a century after these events, and describing the overthrow of the Vandal Empire by Justinian, gives us the following paragraph about Majorian, which must surely have been derived from Vandal sources, and may possibly have formed part of some song or Saga about Gaiseric. Scarcely a detail in the picture is historically true, and the chief event recorded—the visit to Carthage—is almost certainly fictitious, but the portrait, taken as a whole, and especially if drawn by enemies, is undoubtedly the likeness of a hero.

‘I ought also to make mention of Majorian, who some time before [Anthemius] occupied the Western Throne. For this Majorian, who surpassed all that had been emperors of Rome in every virtue, could not tamely endure the misery of Africa, but collected in Liguria a most

potent armament against the Vandals, and determined to head the expedition himself, being a man eager to take his full share in every hardship, and especially in every danger.

‘Now, thinking it would be expedient to ascertain previously the forces of the Vandals, the temper of Gaiseric, and the good or bad dispositions towards him of the Libyans and Moors, he took this duty upon himself. He therefore sent himself as his own ambassador, under a feigned name, to the court of Gaiseric; and, fearing lest he might be discovered, and so ruin both himself and his enterprise, he hit upon this plan. As all men knew that his hair was so yellow as to be likened to pure gold, he applied to it a wash invented expressly for the purpose, and was able within the appointed time to turn it into a bluish black.

‘Now, when he came into the presence of Gaiseric, among other devices of that king to strike terror into the soul of the supposed ambassador, he was led as a friend into the arsenal where all the weapons were collected, which were many and extremely wonderful. At his entrance, say they, all these arms stirred of their own accord, and made such a clash and uproar that Gaiseric thought an earthquake was happening. But when he came forth and enquired about the earthquake, and could meet with no one who knew anything about it, great fear fell upon him, though he was still far from conjecturing who had been the cause of this portent.

‘Majorian then, having accomplished all that he intended, departed to Liguria, and leading his army by land, marched to the Pillars of Hercules, intending to cross by those straits, and so conduct his troops from thence to Carthage. Now when Gaiseric heard this, and perceived that he had been imposed upon in the matter of the embassy, great fear fell upon him, and he set everything in readiness for war. The Romans, on the other hand, relying on the proved valor of Majorian, were in good hopes that they should win back Africa for the Empire. But all these hopes were foiled by the death of Majorian, who was attacked by dysentery. He was a man in all things gentle to his subjects, but terrible to his enemies’.

CHAPTER VI

SUPREMACY OF RICIMER (continued). SEVERUS II, THE LUCANIAN, A.D. 461-465. ANTHEMIUS, THE CLIENT BYZANTIUM, A.D. 467-472.

LIBIUS SEVERUS, 'a Lucanian by nation,' was the man whom Ricimer had selected to wear the diadem snatched from the head of the murdered Majorian. He was proclaimed Emperor at Ravenna, on the nineteenth of November, 461. He died at Rome on the fifteenth of August, 465. These two dates sum up in truth the whole of our knowledge respecting this faint shadow of an Emperor. It should, perhaps, be added that one authority states that he 'lived religiously'.

To one who is familiar with the name of the Lucanians, and who remembers the part which this stern Sabellian tribe, dwelling in the extreme south of Italy, played in three of Rome's greatest wars (the Pyrrhic, Second Punic, and Social), it seems strangely incongruous that the only contribution which Lucania furnished to the list of Roman Emperors should have been this meek inoffensive cipher-Augustus, who 'lived religiously,' and died quietly at Rome after four years of sovereignty, neither by his life nor by his death making a ripple on the downward stream of the Empire's fortunes.

The only question which can raise a momentary interest in connection with this Emperor is as to the manner of his death. Was it due to the ordinary course of nature or to the hand of Ricimer? Cassiodorus, who is a good authority, and who wrote about half a century after these events, says cautiously, 'as some aver, by the hand of Ricimer, Severus was taken off by poison in the palace at Rome.' On the other hand, all the other chroniclers, one or two of whom are yet nearer in date than Cassiodorus, tell us simply that 'Lord Severus died'; and Sidonius, in a poem recited in the presence of Ricimer and his next succeeding puppet, says,

*'August Severus now by Nature's Law
Hath mingled with the company of gods.'*

Though it is hazardous to determine what a poet bent on praising Power will *not say*, it seems probable that had the common voice of fame in the year 467 connected the death of Severus with the poison-cup in the hand of Ricimer, that subject would have been judiciously evaded by Sidonius.

The four years of the nominal reign of Severus seem to have been a time of desultory and exhausting strife. The rule of Ricimer, if accepted as a disagreeable necessity by the inhabitants of Italy, was regarded with aversion by their neighbors, and we may infer that the hatefulness of the man more than counterbalanced the undeniable capacity of the general and the statesman. To understand the course of events during this obscure time, we must look at the relations existing between the court of Ravenna and those of the four following cities, Constantinople, Carthage, Soissons, and Spalato.

1. Leo, 'the Emperor of the Eastern Romans,' beheld, evidently with deep displeasure, the downfall and murder of Majorian, a kindred spirit to his own, and the substitution of the puppet-Emperor Severus. The chronicler, who most faithfully represents the sympathies of the Byzantine Court, uses such expressions as these: 'Severus invaded the place of Majorian,' 'Severus, who snatched the sovereignty of the West,' and refuses to insert him in his proper year in the list of Consuls. When the 'Romans of the West' applied for ships to replace the three hundred destroyed at Carthage, the loss of which left them at the mercy of Gaiseric's invasions, Constantinople coldly replied that the existing treaties with the Vandals would not

allow of its rendering this assistance. It dispatched indeed during this interval one or two embassies to the court of Gaiseric, exhorting him to abstain from invading Sicily and the Italian provinces; but an embassy more or less was a matter of no concern to the Vandal monarch, and he continued his depredations unmoved by the Byzantine rhetoric.

2. Gaiseric himself had his reasons for viewing the course of events at Rome with displeasure, he had a candidate of his own for the Imperial Purple, and was deeply offended at that candidate's rejection. It will be remembered that after the sack of Rome he carried the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters as state-prisoners to Carthage. Incessant embassies from Byzantium had prayed for the surrender of these royal ladies whose captivity, like that of Placidia half a century before, was felt to be an especial insult to the majesty of an Augustus. At length, in the seventh year of their exile, Gaiseric sent the widowed Empress with one daughter to Constantinople, and this was no doubt the occasion of that treaty of alliance between Africa and the East which Leo refused to endanger when the Romans applied to him for help. The other daughter, Eudocia, Gaiseric had already given in marriage to his son Hunneric—an ill-assorted union, for the lady was a devout Catholic and her husband a most bitter Arian. Placidia, the sister who was allowed to retire to Constantinople, was the wife of a Roman Senator, named Olybrius, and it was this man, bound to him by a somewhat loose tie of affinity, as being his son's brother-in-law, whom Gaiseric desired to place, and as we shall see, eventually did place for a few months on the Western throne.

Here then was one grievance of the Vandal against Ricimer. Another was the refusal to comply with his claim to have all the property of Valentinian III and Aetius given up to him. The claim to the late Emperor's wealth of course rested on the alliance between his daughter and the Vandal prince. The more preposterous demand for the property of Aetius was probably in some way connected with the fact that his son Gaudentius had been also carried captive to Carthage. But, whatever the foundation for them, these two demands were urged by the Vandal king with insolent pertinacity, and were the occasion of countless embassies. As they were not complied with, and as the friendship now established between Carthage and Constantinople forbade him to molest the coasts of Greece, Gaiseric decided that 'the nation with whom God was angry' was the Italian. Every year, with the return of spring, he sailed his piratical fleet to the coasts of Campania, or Sicily, or Apulia. He avoided the large towns, fearing to find there sufficiently large bodies of troops to check his advance, and fell by preference on the villages and unwalled towns, carrying off all the moveable wealth, and making slaves of the inhabitants. This man's instincts were essentially those of the robber rather than the conqueror. He was, so to speak, the representative of that brood of pirates whom Pompey exterminated, the forerunner of those countless spoilers of the sea, Saracen, Moorish, Algerian, by whom the Mediterranean coasts have been wasted, almost down to our own day.

3. The romantic and mysterious career of Aegidius, comrade of Majorian, Master of the Roman Soldiery, voluntarily chosen king of the Franks during the exile of an unpopular chieftain, lies beyond our proper limits, and some of its chief events rest on too doubtful authorities to make it desirable here to describe it at length. But we are fully warranted in saying that he ruled as an independent governor, possibly with the title of king, at Soissons (in Belgic Gaul), that he bitterly resented the death of his old companion-in-arms, Majorian, and was preparing to avenge it upon Italy—that is, upon Ricimer—that, probably in order to further these purposes of revenge, he sent ambassadors 'across the Ocean to the Vandals,' and that Rome remained for a considerable time in the greatest terror and distress in anticipation of this new Gaulish invasion. Eventually however he was 'drawn off from war with the Italians by a difference with the Visigoths respecting frontiers, which led to a campaign, in which Aegidius performed acts of the greatest heroism.' In this war Frederic, brother of the Visigothic king, was killed, and apparently Aegidius himself died (or was treacherously slain) soon after.

The Visigoths annexed a large part of his territory, but the city of Soissons and his strange ill-defined power descended to his son Syagrius, whose acquaintance we have already made as a correspondent of Sidonius, and with whose overthrow by Clovis every student of French history is familiar, as one of the earliest incidents in the career of the young Merovingian.

Possibly the English reader is more familiar with the name of Aegidius than he is aware of. For some unaccountable reason the French have modified that name into Gilles. Saint Gilles, the hermit of Languedoc, who lived about a hundred years after Count Aegidius, attained great renown both in France and England. The parish of St. Giles' in London and the name Giles, once so common, especially in the rural districts of England, are thus linked certainly, if somewhat obscurely, with the memory of the 'Tyrannus' of Soissons and the friend of Majorian.

4. We pass from Soissons by the Aisne to the long arcades of Spalato, among the bays and islands of the Dalmatian coast. Here, in the vast palace of Diocletian, lived and reigned Marcellinus, 'Patrician of the East,' 'ruler of Dalmatia and of the Epirote Illyrians'. The pupil of Aetius and the counsellor of Majorian, he had in the deaths of those two men a double reason for withdrawing from the blood-stained circle of Roman politics. Yet he does not seem, like Aegidius, to have broken with Ricimer immediately upon the death of his friend. He fought in Sicily at the head of the Imperial troops, and achieved some considerable successes over the Vandals. Finding however that Ricimer was endeavoring, by bribes, to steal away the hearts of his soldiers, and knowing that he could not hope to vie in wealth with the Suevic Patrician, he retired to Dalmatia, and there founded an independent and hostile principality. 'A reasonable and noble man,' we are told, 'learned, courageous, and statesmanlike, keeping his government free, not serving the Roman Emperor, nor any prince or nation, but ruling his own subjects in righteousness.' Apparently one of the few men in high office who still clung to the old Pagan religion and worshipped Jupiter Capitolinus, while all the rest of the world was ranging itself for or against the Council of Chalcedon practising divination and holding long conversations with a certain philosopher Sallust, who shared his most secret counsels and dwelt in his palace; this relic of an earlier world, deposited by the vicissitudes of the times upon the shores of Dalmatia, is one of the most unique figures of the age, and we would gladly know more of his history. What concerns our present purpose however is the settled hostility which he displayed for some years to the domination of Ricimer, and the constant fear which pervaded Italy during that time of an invasion from the opposite coast of the Adriatic. At length (probably about 465) the good offices of Byzantium were asked and obtained; an ambassador was sent by the Eastern Emperor to entreat Marcellinus to lay aside his plans of revenge; he complied with the request, and, as we shall soon see, even cooperated once more with Rome against the Vandals.

Neither of these two men, Aegidius and Marcellinus, founded any enduring monarchy out of the fragments of the Empire; nor did any other Roman succeed in the attempt. All the political reconstruction was the work of barbarian hands. Yet on the dissolution of Alexander's Empire, states and monarchies innumerable were established throughout Asia and Africa by Greek adventurers. When the Caliphate fell, Saracen chiefs profited by the ruin. When the Mogul Empire of Delhi lost its vitality, Mohammedan as well as Hindoo Rajahs founded sovereignties which endured for many generations. In the early part of this century the Ali Pasha of Egypt entirely succeeded, and the Ali Pasha of Albania all but succeeded, in rendering themselves virtually independent of the Ottoman Porte. Reasons might probably be easily assigned why no such success was attainable by a Roman Prefect of the Praetorium, or Master of the Soldiery, but we cannot wonder that the experiment was made, nor should we have been surprised if it had been made more frequently.

Other enemies besides those whom we have enumerated were probably making Ricimer's

position at the helm of the Commonwealth a difficult one. In the year 464 Beorgor, king of the Alans, was routed and killed by the Patrician, 'at Bergamo, at the foot of the mountains.' We hear nothing more about this descent of the savage half-Tartar tribe into the plains of Lombardy. Possibly Beorgor was the successor of Sangiban, king of the Alans, who fought, with doubtful fidelity, under Aetius on the Mauriac Plains, and he may have forced his way over the Splugen from Coire to Chiavenna, and thence to Bergamo. For one invasion of this kind, leading to a pitched battle, which has claimed a place in the meagre pages of the chroniclers, there were probably many lesser inroads and skirmishes of which no record has been preserved.

It was in August, 465, as was before said, that the unnoticeable Severus died. For a year and eight months from that time no man was saluted as Augustus in the Western half of the Roman Empire. This absolute vacancy of the Imperial office tells a far more striking tale in a pure autocracy, such as the Roman Government had become, than in a constitutional state, where the powers of the sovereign may be, so to speak, 'put in commission.' During all those twenty months, the Patrician must have been avowedly the sole source of power, legislative, military, judicial, and the question must have forced itself on many minds, 'What is the use of wasting the dwindling income of the state on the household of an Emperor, when all the work of ruling is done by the Patrician?' Thus the interregnum of 465-467 prepared the way for the abolition of the dignity of Augustus in 476. It is doubtful, however, whether Ricimer at this period entertained any thoughts of dispensing with the 'fainéant' Emperors. It seems more probable that he was balancing in his mind the respective advantages to be derived from an alliance with Carthage or with Constantinople, the isolated position which Italy had occupied for the last six years being obviously no longer tenable. If this view be correct, there is perhaps a slightly greater probability of his innocence of the death of Severus. An inoffensive and almost useful tool would hardly have been removed by force, if his employer had not decided how he was to be replaced.

However this may be, the interregnum was terminated by a decision in favor of Constantinople. Not Olybrius, the brother-in-law of the son of Gaiseric, but Anthemius, the son-in-law of the deceased Emperor Marcian, was selected by Ricimer to be the wearer of the purple; and great was the Vandal's rage in consequence. The equivalent which the Eastern Empire was to pay for the still-coveted honors of giving an Augustus to Rome was hearty support against the African enemy, with whom it is probable that her own relations had for some months been growing less friendly. A great combined campaign of 468 against the Vandals—a campaign in which Leo, Marcellinus, and Ricimer all joined their forces—was the fruit of this alliance, and it will be well first to describe this campaign, postponing for the moment the merely complimentary proceedings connected with the new Emperor's accession to the Western throne.

The Court of Constantinople must have been at this time a curious study for any unprejudiced observer who could keep his head cool in the whirlpool of its contending factions. Passions and ambitions as old as humanity were there, striving side by side with special theological formulae whose very names are almost forgotten among men. While the mob of Constantinople were eagerly discussing Bishop Timothy the Weasel's revolt against the Council of Chalcedon, or Bishop Peter the Fuller's addition of four words to the Trisagion, wife, and Zeno, the husband of the Emperor's daughter, were playing their stealthy, remorseless, bloody game for the succession to the throne of the Emperor, Leo.

When Ricimer's proposals for an alliance reached Constantinople, power was slipping from the hands of the general who had for forty years been the most powerful man in the Eastern Court—Aspar, the son of Ardaburius. An Alan by extraction, he, with his father, had been sent as long ago as 424 on the expedition to Italy, which overthrew the usurper Joannes

and established the young Valentinian on the throne of his uncle Honorius. Since then he had been a consul (434), and the father of consuls (447, 459, 465). He was called 'First of the Patricians'; he stood on the very steps of the throne, and might have been Emperor himself, but he was an Arian. Being therefore by his theological tenets, which he had probably inherited from his barbarian ancestors, and was too proud to forego, disqualified from himself reigning over 'the orthodox Romans,' he made it his care that the purple should at least be always worn by men subservient to his interests. The brave young soldier who stretched himself to sleep in the courtyard of Gaiseric's palace, whom the hovering eagle overshadowed, and whom the Vandal dismissed with a true presage of his future greatness, was Marcian, 'domesticus' of Aspar. So long as he reigned (450-457) the influence of his patron appears to have remained unshaken. On his death there seems to have been some expectation that his son-in-law, Anthemius, would succeed him, but the predominant influence of Aspar and his son Ardaburius again secured the election of a dependant, their *curator*, Leo.

But, whatever might be the manner of a man's elevation to the supreme dignity of the state, even though, as in the cases of Marcian and Leo, something like domestic service might be the ladder of his promotion, when once he was hailed Augustus, the elaborate court-ceremonial of Byzantium enveloped him in the eyes of acclaiming crowds and literally adoring courtiers with all 'the divinity that doth hedge a king.' We have an apt illustration of this in one of those anecdotes with which the chroniclers so curiously diversify their otherwise meagre pages. A few years after Leo's accession, 462, as we are informed by Marcellinus, he fell sick of a fever. Jacobus, a man of Greek nationality and Pagan faith, and one in whom a great natural genius for the healing art had been enriched by a long course of study, was called in to prescribe for the Imperial patient. When he entered 'the sacred bed-chamber,' he presumed to take a seat by the Emperor's bedside without having received any sign that he was at liberty to do so, and then proceeded to make his diagnosis of the case. When he returned at noon to 'the sacred couch,' he found the possibility of such impertinence averted by the removal of the chair. He perceived the meaning of the hint, and at once, with awful 'intrepidity,' sat down upon the Imperial couch itself, explaining to the sick Emperor that he did so in conformity with the rules laid down by the old masters of his art, and not out of any disrespect to him.

To Leo the servility of the Byzantine Court was perhaps useful, as giving him courage to resist the too imperious mandates of his old master. It happened, apparently in the first year of his reign, that Aspar asked him to appoint one of his brother Arians to the post of Prefect of the City. Cowed by his long habit of deference Leo assented, but regretted his compliance the moment afterwards. That night he sent for an orthodox senator, and installed him, stealthily and with haste, in the vacant office. Great was Aspar's wrath when he heard of this act of disobedience on the part of his sovereign. He came black-browed into the purple presence-chamber, and grasping the Emperor's robe, said to him, 'Emperor! it is not fitting that he who is wrapped in this purple should tell lies!'. To which Leo replied, 'Yea, rather, it is not fitting that the Emperor should be bound to do the bidding of any of his subjects, especially when by his compliance he injures the state.'

For thirteen years the breach between the First of the Patricians and his late curator went on widening. Yet Aspar was still a great power in the State, and it seemed not improbable that one of his three sons, Ardaburius, Patricius, or Hermenric, would succeed the sonless Leo who was already passing the prime of life. To strengthen himself against the anger of his former friendship of some of the Isaurian adventurers who at that time abounded in Constantinople, wild, rugged, unpopular men from the highlands of Asia Minor, but men who were not likely to fail him 'when hard came to hard'. One of these men, who was known by the barbarous Zeno the appellation Tarasicodissa, son of Rusumbladeotus, changed his name to Zeno, and received the Emperor's daughter Ariadne in marriage. Thenceforward it was understood that

Zeno was the head of the party opposed to Aspar, and that he would, if possible, compass for himself, or at least for the younger Leo, his son by Ariadne, the succession to the Imperial throne.

On the other hand, a powerful counterpoise to the influence of Zeno was found in Basiliscus, the brother of the Emperor's wife Verina. This man's craving to wear one day the Imperial diadem was so passionate and so ill-concealed, that it made him almost the laughing-stock of the Court; but it was well-known that he was the confidant of the still influential Aspar, and that in the fierce resentment of himself and his party against the Council of Chalcedon, they were willing to accept help even from the Arians in order to annul its decrees. Basiliscus, the Monophysite, practically denied the true Manhood of Jesus Christ; Aspar, the Arian, denied his true Godhead; but they were ready to co-operate in order to drive out of Church and State the men who, in obedience to the Council of Chalcedon, maintained the combined Manhood and Godhead of the Saviour.

Such was the state of parties at Constantinople when in the spring of 468 Leo dispatched his long prepared armament against the Vandals. It was meant to deal a crushing blow. The Western Empire contributed probably some supplies both of men and money; Marcellinus left his Dalmatian palace and his independent principality to serve as a general under the orders of the Roman Emperors; but the chief weight of the preparations fell, as was natural, on the comparatively unexhausted Empire of the East. Leo, who was a man of courage and capacity, was determined to spare neither trouble nor expense on this great enterprise. A thousand ships, a hundred thousand men, a hundred and thirty thousand pounds' weight of gold (£5,850,000 sterling), had been collected at Constantinople. All seemed to promise well for the success of the armament, but all was ruined by the selection of its head. Basiliscus was appointed Generalissimo : and showed such miserable weakness in his command that later generations believed that Vandal gold, or the secret orders of Aspar, anxious that his Arian fellow-believers should not be too hardly pressed, caused his failure. Either hypothesis may be true, but historians are too apt to forget the infinite depths of simple human stupidity.

Marcellinus sailed to Sardinia, and expelled the Vandals from that island. Heraclius, another Byzantine general, made a successful descent on Tripoli's, took the cities of the Vandals in that region, and marched from thence westwards to the city of Carthage. The proceedings of Basiliscus and the main body of the host shall be told in the very words of the historian Procopius, who is here our only authority. Though he wrote more than half a century after the event, yet as he was an Eastern Roman, and served in that very campaign against Carthage, in which Belisarius did what Basiliscus failed to do, we may listen to his story with some confidence in its general correctness.

'Basiliscus meanwhile, with his whole force, sailed for a town about thirty-five miles from Carthage, called Mercurion, from an old temple of Hermes there; and if he had not with evil purpose lingered at that place, but had at once commenced his march to Carthage, he would have taken the city at the first shout, annihilated the strength of the Vandals, and reduced them to slavery; so thoroughly was Gaiseric now alarmed at the irresistible might of the Emperor Leo, who had taken from him Sardinia and Tripolis, and had sent against him such an armament under Basiliscus as all men said the Romans had never fitted out before. All this was now hindered by the general's procrastination, which was due either to cowardice or treachery. Profiting by the supineness of Basiliscus, Gaiseric armed all his subjects as well as he could, and put them on board troop-ships. Other ships, fast-sailors and carrying no soldiers, he held in reserve. Then sending ambassadors to Basiliscus he begged for a delay of five days, pretending that if this were granted him he would consider how he might best comply with the wishes of the Emperor. And some say that he sent a large sum of money to Basiliscus, unknown to his soldiers, in order to purchase this armistice. He devised this scheme in the

expectation, which was justified by the event, that in the meantime a wind would spring up which would be favorable to his purposes. Basiliscus then, either in obedience to the recommendation of Aspar, or as having been bribed to grant this truce, or because he really believed that it would be better for the army, stayed quietly in his camp waiting the convenience of the enemy. But the Vandals, as soon as ever the wind arose which they had been patiently expecting, unfurled their sails, and, taking the empty ships in tow, sailed against the enemy. As soon as they came near they set the empty ships on fire, and sent them with bellying sails full against the anchorage of the Romans. The ships of the latter, being tightly packed together in the quarter to which the fire-ships were directed, soon caught fire, and readily communicated it to one another.

‘When the fire was thus kindled, great terror naturally seized the Roman host. Soon, the whistling of the wind, the roar of the fire, the shouts of the soldiers to the sailors, and of the sailors to the soldiers, the strokes of the poles with which they strove to push off the fireships or their own burning companions, created a wild hubbub of discordant noises. And now were the Vandals upon them, hurling javelins, sinking ships, or stripping the fugitive soldiers of their armor. Even in this crisis there were some among the Romans who played the man, most of all Joannes, second in command to Basiliscus, and quite guiltless of all his treachery. For when a great multitude of the enemy surrounded his ship, he from the deck killed numbers of them with his furious blows right and left; and when he saw that the ship was taken, he sprang in full armor from the quarter-deck into the sea. Then did Genzo, the son of Gaiseric, earnestly importune him to surrender, offering him assistance and promising him safety, but he none the less committed his body to the sea, with this one cry, “Never will Joannes fall into the hands of dogs.”

‘With this the war was ended. Heraclius returned home. Basiliscus, when he arrived at Byzantium, seated himself as a suppliant in the temple which is dedicated to the great Christ and God, and which is called Sophia [Wisdom] because the Byzantines think that epithet the most appropriate to God. On the earnest entreaty of his sister, the Empress Verina, he escaped death, but his hopes of the throne, for the sake of which he had done all these things, were for the present dashed by the soon following fall of Aspar and Ardaburius.

Truly in reading Procopius’ account of all the valour and treasure wasted in this campaign, one can heartily echo the saying of a more recent Byzantine historian, ‘Better is an army of stags led by lions than an army of lions led by a stag.’

In some mysterious manner the close of this campaign was connected with the fall of the brilliant and courageous Marcellinus. We are told that he perished by the treachery of one of his colleagues, that he was killed in Sicily, that while bringing aid and succor to the Romans fighting against the Vandals near Carthage, he was guilefully struck down by the very men whom he was coming to help. We know that the Dalmatian palace was left empty, that there were no more talks by the shore of the plashing Adriatic between the general and his philosopher friend Sallust, concerning the nature of the gods and the causes of the ruin of this perplexing world. But why or by whom Marcellinus died remains a mystery.

The unsuccessful campaign against Carthage occurred, as has been said, in the spring and summer of 468. We return to the events of the preceding spring in Italy. On the 12th of April 467, the population of Rome poured forth to meet the new Emperor who was henceforth to rule over them in firm alliance with his brother Augustus of Constantinople. At the third milestone from the city Anthemius was solemnly proclaimed Emperor of Rome in the presence probably of a brilliant escort from Byzantium, including his wife Euphemia, daughter of an Emperor, and now Empress herself, of his three sons, Marcian, Romulus, and Procopius, and a daughter, Alypia, who was to play an important part in cementing the new alliance between East and West. The Patrician Ricimer was there doubtless, scanning the features of the new sovereign,

and endeavoring to find an answer to the question, 'To rule or to be ruled'. There too were the Senate, the copious German guards, the dwindled ranks of the legionaries, and the Roman populace, those jaded and dissipated sons of slaves who still called themselves Quirites, and talked of Father Mars and the She-Wolf's nurslings.

The new Emperor was not merely son-in-law of Marcian, but in his own right a great Byzantine noble. On his father's side he was descended from that Procopius, whose revolt against Valentinian and whose short-lived sovereignty were described at the beginning of this history. On his mother's side he traced his descent from Anthemius, Praetorian Prefect of the East, and virtual Regent during the early years of the minority of Theodosius II. Both this Anthemius (his maternal grandfather) and Procopius (his father) had been employed in important embassies to the Persian Court. He himself, aided no doubt by his fortunate marriage to Euphemia, had in early manhood attained the successive dignities of Count of Illyricum, Master of the Soldiery, Consul (455), and Patrician. The expectation of some of the courtiers had marked him out as a probable successor of Marcian, but when the all-powerful voice of Aspar decreed the diadem to Leo, Anthemius sensibly took the disappointment in good part, attached himself loyally to the fortunes of the new Emperor, and was soon entrusted by him with an important command on the Lower Danube. Walamir the Ostrogoth, and Hormidac the Hun, were apparently both threatening the Roman inhabitants of the country which we now call Bulgaria. The populous city of Sardica (now Sofia), upon the northern slope of the Balkans, was in especial danger. Anthemius distinguished himself by the strict discipline which he maintained among his troops—often in those degenerate days more terrible to friend than foe—and in a pitched battle with Hormidac, he obtained, we are told, a decisive victory, notwithstanding the treacherous conduct of a subordinate—probably a barbarian—officer, who in the very crisis of the battle drew off all his cavalry, and left the Imperial flank exposed. After the victory the Roman general imposed one indispensable condition of peace upon the conquered Huns—the surrender of his traitorous colleague, who was put to death in the sight of both armies.

Such was the past history of the richly-clothed Byzantine official who, in the spring of 467, rode proudly in through the gate of Rome, amidst the acclamations of soldiery and populace. Long live Anthemius Augustus! Long live Ricimer, the Patrician! Long live the Concord of the Emperors!

When the tidings of these Roman pageants reached the banks of the Rhone, one can imagine what envy they raised in the heart of Sidonius. 'An Emperor acclaimed, and I not there to weave his praises into panegyric, hexameters!', was a bitter reflection for the Gaulish poet. He had still some unused metaphors in his head; the necessary compliments to the Eastern Empire would give a motive entirely different from those of his two previous panegyrics; there was always the possibility of turning a few chapters of Livy into sonorous verse, and, in short, he resolved to resume the 'useful toil' of a Panegyrist. A deputation of citizens of Auvergne was appointed to congratulate Anthemius on his accession, perhaps to solicit the redress of grievances, or help against the Visigoths; but it is plain from Sidonius' letters that the message entrusted to the deputation was the last thing in his thoughts; the real business to him was the Panegyric.

His errand having received the sanction of 'the sacred autograph,' he was entitled to travel at the public charge, by that admirably-organized postal service (the *cursus*) which was probably about the last to perish of the Imperial institutions. In a letter to a friend, he describes his journey with a few life-like touches, though some sentences reveal the rhetorician. But the friendly aspect of the well-known villas by the Rhone, the short climb up the torrent-beds and over the snows of the Alps, the voyage from Ticinum (Pavia) down the Ticino and the Po, past cities which recalled the honored name of Virgil, and through woods of oak and maple alive

with the sweet song of birds, are all vividly brought before us. He admired the situation of Ravenna, so strong for defence, so convenient for commerce, and was in doubt whether to say that the city and the harbor (Classis) were connected or divided by the long 'Street of Caesar' which passed between them. But, though provisions of all kinds were to be had at Ravenna in abundance, he found, as other poets had found before him, that water fit for drinking was an unattainable luxury in that city, and he suffered the pangs of thirst though surrounded by streams. Across the historic Rubicon and Metaurus, through the plains of Picenum and the valleys of Umbria, the Gaulish poet journeyed, no doubt with the lines of the fateful Panegyric churning in his head. But either the Sirocco blowing over the plains, or (as was probably the case) the imperfect drainage of Ravenna, had by this time touched him with a fever. Alternately burning and shivering, he quaffed, but in vain, the waters of every stream and fountain near which his journey led him; and when the towers of Rome appeared upon the horizon, his feeling was that all the aqueducts of the City, and all the mimic seas of the amphitheatres, would be insufficient to quench his thirst.

However, before entering the city he visited the tombs of the Apostles, and after he had prostrated himself there, he felt that the languor of the fever departed from his limbs. He found the whole city in an uproar, on account of the wedding between the Patrician Ricimer and the daughter of the Ever-August Emperor; an union which, while it reversed the relations between 'the Father of the Emperor' and his new father-in-law, was avowedly based on state considerations, and was looked upon as affording a new guarantee for the public tranquility by cementing the alliance between Byzantine legitimacy and the rough strength of Ricimer's barbarians. Theatres, markets, temples, were all resounding with the Fescennine verses in which the populace, sometimes not too decorously, expressed their congratulations to the wedded pair.

The bridegroom, with a crown upon his head, and the flowered robe (*palmata*) of the Consular upon his shoulders, went to fetch the bride from the house of her father. In the universal hubbub, no one had any ears for the Gallic deputation, and the Transalpine poet, seeking the comparative quiet of his inn, drew, for the benefit of his correspondent at Lyons, an amusing picture of the 'earnest holiday' of the humming city.

When he next took up the pen he was able to announce a brilliant success. The great poem had been recited on New Year's Day (468), and had earned for its author applause and a high office in the state. As soon as the wedding turmoil was over, and the riches of two empires had been sufficiently displayed to public view, the affairs of the state resumed their ordinary course. The Gallic deputies met with entertainment and a courteous reception at the house of one Paulus, a venerable man and an ex-prefect. Sidonius describes with amusing naiveté how he then set to work to attach himself to a patron, Paulus being presumably too old to give him efficient assistance. The choice lay between two men, both of consular rank, and confessedly the most influential persons in the state after the Emperor, 'always excepting the predominant power of the military party'—a most significant exception, which probably included Ricimer and all his immediate followers.

These two possible patrons were Gennadius Avienus and Caecina Basilius. Avienus had obtained the consulship in 450, and had been congratulated by all his friends on his early promotion. Basilius had been made consul in 463, and all the City had said, 'Why was not so good a man raised to the office before?'. Either nobleman saw his gate thronged with suitors, and was followed through the forum by a crowd of obsequious clients; but the composition of the two bands of retainers was very different, and so was the nature of their hopes. Avienus was most successful in pushing the fortunes of his sons, his sons-in-law, and his brothers: when all this had been accomplished, there was not much court-influence left for more distant clients, whom he accordingly charmed with his affable demeanor, but who somehow found that they

were not drawing any nearer to the goal of their wishes, notwithstanding all the hours that they spent at their patron's vestibule. Basilius had far fewer of his own friends to provide for, and his manner with those whom he admitted into the circle of his dependents was much more reserved, almost haughty; but when he did accept the homage of a client, he was almost certain to obtain for him the fulfillment of his desires. Upon this estimate of their respective characters, Sidonius wisely decided to attach himself to the *clientèle* of Basilius, while not omitting to pay frequent visits of ceremony at the door of Avienus.

Favored by the efficient help of Basilius, the affairs of the Arvernian deputation were soon in good train for settlement. One day the Patron said to the Poet, 'Come, my Sollius! The Kalends of January are at hand, and the name of our Emperor is to be inscribed on the Fasti of this New Year. Though I know that you are weighed down with the responsibility of your deputation, can you not call upon your old Muse to inspire you with some lines in honors of the new consul? It is true that in so short a time they will have to be almost the result of improvisation, but I can promise you a hearing for your verses, and at least my hands for their applause.'

It needs not to be said that the suggestion of Basilius was eagerly accepted, and that upon the morning of the first day of 468 Sidonius was ready with an 'impromptu' of 547 lines in praise of Anthemius. There is no need to describe this poem with any fullness of detail, since the reader can easily imagine its character from the two similar performances by the same hand in praise of Avitus and Majorian. There is an eloquent passage in praise of Constantinople and a graphic account of the manners of the Huns, very closely corresponding with the pictures drawn by Jordanes and Ammianus. The lineage of Anthemius is described; the conventional prodigies which marked his birth and infancy; the events of his military and official career; and great stress is laid on his unwillingness—real or imaginary—to accept the Western Crown, till commanded to do so by Leo. The real interest of the poem for us lies in its hints as to the course of contemporary politics, in its portraiture of Gaiseric and Ricimer.

Each Emperor that on Western soil is born
 Fails from the helm and perishes forlorn.
 Here the stern Vandal spreads his thousand sails
 And yearly for our ruin courts the gales.
 Strange fate! Upon our shores swart Africa throws
 The nations reared amid Caucasian snows.
 Alone, till now, with Mars his only friend,
 He on whose arm the fates of Rome depend,
 Unconquered Ricimer has held at bay
 The Freebooter who makes our fields his prey.
 Who skulks from battle, yet can still contrive
 To reap the victor's spoils, a fugitive.
 Whose strength by such a foe would not be spent
 Who gives nor Peace nor War's arbitrament?
 "No peace with Ricimer," his watchword dire,
 And this the cause that fills his veins with fire.
 He knows himself the offspring of a slave.
 The sire he knows not who his being gave.
 Hence envy gnaws him, that his rival springs,
 Great Ricimer, on either side from kings.
 His sire a Sueve, a royal Gothic dame
 His mother, who of Walia's lineage came;

The noble Walla, whose redoubted sword
 Drove forth from Spain the motley, mongrel horde
 Of Vandals, Alans, worsted in the fray,
 And with their corpses covered Calpé's bay.

But Ricimer alone, says the poet, can no longer ward off the perils of the Empire. There is need of an Emperor of the old type, one who can not only order wars, but wage them. Such an Emperor the East can furnish, and, on the intercession of Rome, she does furnish, in the bronzed veteran Anthemius. He and his son-in-law have prepared fleets and armies which will surely reduce Africa to its ancient obedience. In some future year, when Anthemius shall be consul for a third, or Ricimer for a second time, Sidonius promises himself the delight of again appearing before them to chant the fall of Gaiseric.

The florid Panegyric was received, its author tells us, with rapturous applause. Shouts of 'Sophos! Sophos' (the Greek equivalent of 'bravo') resounded from the benches where sat the senators conspicuous by their purple *laticlaves*, and from the higher tiers of seats where swarmed the common people, the representatives of the once omnipotent Roman tribes. A more striking proof of approbation was given by the Emperor, who, on the recommendation of Basilius, named Sidonius Prefect of the City of Rome. Thus, as he himself piously expresses it, 'I have now, by the help of Christ and an opportune use of my pen, arrived at the Prefecture.' In modern states (China and the great American Republic alone excepted) it would be hard to find an instance of honors such as this conferred on the votaries of literature.

Sidonius was now in theory the third personage in the Empire, on a level with the Praetorian Prefects of Italy and Gaul, inferior only to the Emperor and the Patrician. In practice, however, it is probable that many a rude Herulian centurion or tribune counted for more than the versatile thin-minded poet. Besides his presidency over the Senate, the aqueducts, the marketplaces, the fore-shores, the harbor, the statues, were all under his care. But his chief business—an infinitely harassing one in those dying days of the Empire—was the care of the provisioning of the City, which rested upon him and his subordinate, the Commissary General (*Praefectus Annonae*), as the Earthly Providence of Rome. It is curious to read a letter from the new Prefect to a Gaulish friend, in which he expresses his fear lest, when he next visits the amphitheatre, he should hear a harsh cry of rage from the assembled multitude, imputing their hunger to his incapacity.

A gleam of hope shines upon him when he is informed that five ships, laden with corn and honey, have arrived at Ostia from Brindisi, and he dispatches his *Praefectus Annonae* with all speed, to receive and distribute the precious cargoes.

Sidonius retained his new dignity only for one year, but on laying it down he probably received the title of Patrician—a title which was in his case purely honorary, conferring no power and imposing no responsibility. The short tenure of his office does not exactly imply disgrace, but it may probably be asserted that if the Gaulish man of letters had shown any conspicuous ability in his Prefecture, his office would have been renewed to him at least for two or three years. He quitted Rome in the year 469, never to return to that scene of petty intrigues and worn-out—splendors pigmies masquerading in the armor of giants—a scene which must have filled a thoughtful man with sadness and a cynic with a rapture of scorn.

But before he went he witnessed the commencement of a process which attracted his deepest interest, and filled him with varied emotions—the trial and condemnation of Arvandus. This man, a fellow-countryman of Sidonius, had for five years held the office of Praetorian Prefect of Gaul. The popularity which marked his earlier years of office had utterly deserted him before its close. He had become involved in debt, from which he sought to free himself by the most unjust exactions from the provincials; he had grown moody, suspicious, implacable;

and finally, knowing the universal disfavor with which the Roman population regarded him, he had commenced a traitorous correspondence with the Visigothic king. Three Gaulish noblemen were sent as a deputation to Rome to impeach Arvandus before the Senate on charges of extortion and high treason.

The arrival of this deputation, and of the accused governor, placed Sidonius in an awkward position. The deputies were all of them acquaintances of his, and one (Tonantius Ferreolus) was his relative and intimate friend. On the other hand, Arvandus had been long known, though never liked by him, and he says that he would have thought it base and barbarous to desert him in the day of his calamity. This difficulty however was soon solved by the accused himself, who, when Sidonius and a fellow-noble ventured to give him some hints as to the necessity of tact and moderation in the conduct of his case, flamed out upon them with the words, 'Away with you, ye degenerate sons of Prefects! Who wants your fussy anxiety on my behalf? Arvandus' conscience suffices for Arvandus. I can scarcely bring myself even to hire an advocate to defend me from the charge of extortion.'

All the rest of his conduct was of a piece with this outburst of petulance. While the Gaulish deputies were walking about in sad-colored garments, with downcast faces, as men who had a painful duty to perform on behalf of the oppressed, Arvandus, in a white toga, with scented hair and pumice-stoned face, gaily promenaded the Forum, nodding to his friends as if his salutation were still of the highest value, frequenting the jewelers' shops, chaffering over the price of fashionable knick-knacks, and all the while keeping up a running fire of complaints against the Emperor, the Senate, and the laws, for allowing a person of his quality to be subjected to the indignity of a trial.

The eventful day arrived. The Senate-house was crowded. The defendant, fresh from the hair-dresser's hands, walked boldly up to the benches of the 'prefectorians,' and took his seat, as if of right, in the most honorable place among his judges. Ferreolus, on the contrary, equally entitled to a seat among the 'prefectorians,' placed himself, along with his fellow-deputies, on one of the lowest benches of the Senate-house. The deputation set forth their case, and read the mandate which they had received from their fellow-citizens.

Instead of lingering over the outworks of the indictment, the charges of peculation and extortion, they went rapidly to the heart of the matter, the accusation of treasonable intrigues with the Barbarians. A letter was produced, in the handwriting of the amanuensis of Arvandus, addressed to the Visigothic king. It tended to dissuade him from making peace with 'the Greek Emperor' (Anthemius), suggested that he should attack the Bretons, who were allies of the Empire, and recommended that 'the Visigoths and the Burgundians should divide Gaul between them, according to the law of nations.' There might have been some difficulty in tracing the composition of this letter to Arvandus, but the infatuated culprit aimed the weapon against himself by at once boldly proclaiming that he was the author. 'Then you are guilty of high-treason' (*laesa majestas*), said every voice in the assembly. He then tried to retract and to qualify his previous admissions, for with incredible folly he had hitherto supposed that nothing short of the actual assumption of the Imperial purple would have justified a condemnation for high-treason. But it was too late; his guilt was manifest. He was stripped of all his dignities, and the delicately-dressed and scented culprit was hurled, with every mark of disgrace, into a squalid dungeon on the Insula Tiberina, sentenced to be there killed by the executioner, to have his body dragged by an iron hook through the streets, and then to be cast into the Tiber.

By the wise and merciful legislation of Theodosius, due to the suggestion of Ambrose, an interval of thirty days necessarily elapsed between the utterance and the execution of a capital sentence. This interval Sidonius employed in pleading for a mitigation of the punishment of the fallen Prefect, though, as he contemptuously remarked, 'No greater calamity can befall him than that he should wish to live, after all the ignominy that has been heaped upon him.' An

entry in one of the Chroniclers seems to justify the inference that the intervention of Sidonius was successful, and that the capital sentence was commuted into one of perpetual exile.

It is not improbable that one cause of Sidonius' departure from Rome may have been that he saw the political horizon darkening with the impending rupture between Ricimer and Anthemius. The great enterprise against Carthage, which should have united them, had failed, as was before stated (468); and thus, both Rome and the Suevic chief had humbled themselves before Byzantium for nothing. Anthemius was hot-tempered, and probably felt himself by intellect as well as by birth fitted for something better than to be the mere puppet of a barbarian. We have no hint as to the part taken by his daughter, in soothing or in exciting the combatants, but we can imagine that she let the middle-aged Patrician, her husband, see too plainly how vast she considered her condescension in becoming the wife of a barbarian. In 470 another event added fuel to the fire. The Emperor, who found his health failing him, believed that he was the victim of magical arts, and arrested many persons upon the charge of thus compassing his death. A certain Romanus, an adherent of Ricimer, himself bearing the title of Patrician as well as that of Master of the Army, was among the persons put to death on this accusation. Thereat Ricimer, in a fury, flung out of Rome and called to his standards 6000 men who had served under him in the Vandal war.

In the spring of the year 471 Ricimer was at Milan, surrounded, no doubt, by the Teutonic auxiliaries, and leaning perhaps somewhat on the aid of his brother-in-law, the king of the Burgundians, who held all the northern passes of the Western Alps, since he ruled in Valais and Savoy, in Dauphiné and the Lower Valley of the Rhone. Anthemius was not at Ravenna, but in Rome, relying on the favour with which he was regarded by the populace of the City, on the sympathies of the official class, and on the patriotism of whatsoever purely Roman and Italian elements might be left in the legions. Between these two men, all Italy perceived with horror that war was inevitable.

Such being the state of things, the nobles of Liguria assembled at the palace of Ricimer, and adoring the Suevic Patrician with self-prostration, after the manner of the Orientals, besought him to consent to an accommodation with his father-in-law. Ricimer was, or professed to be, mollified by their arguments. 'But whom will ye send as mediator?' said he; 'Who can bring this hot-headed Galatian prince to reason? If you ask him for the smallest favor he bubbles over with fury, and there is not a man living who can remain in a passion so long as he.' 'There is a person in this province' said the nobles, 'to whom you may safely entrust this commission; a man to whom even wild beasts would bow their necks; a man whom a Catholic and a Roman must venerate, and whom even the little Greek Emperor cannot help loving if he is privileged to behold him'. And then they proceeded to sketch the life and recount the virtues of Epiphanius, the saintly young Bishop of Pavia, in somewhat similar words possibly to those in which they are now recorded for us by his admiring disciple Ennodius, from whom we derive our knowledge of this incident.

In the life of Epiphanius we meet of course with of many incidents and traits of character common to a saint of that period of the Church. A supernatural light shone round his cradle when he was still busy with the rattle and the baby's-bottle. On the strength of this omen he was at eight years old received into the Ministry of the Church as a Reader (*lector*), and before long distinguished himself by the rapidity and accuracy with which he practised the art of an ecclesiastical short-hand writer (*exceptor*). Ordained a Deacon at twenty, Priest at twenty-eight, and almost immediately afterwards elected Bishop of Pavia, he was already in his early manhood marked out for the veneration of his contemporaries. 'He knew not that he was a man,' says his biographer, 'except by his power of enduring toil; he forgot that he was in the flesh except when he meditated on his mortality.' No great miracles are recorded of his earlier years, but the saintly patience and dignity with which he, a young Ligurian of noble blood,

endured the cudgelling administered to him by a rustic boor named Burco, who had a dispute with the Church of Pavia about boundaries, endeared him to his fellow-citizens, and enabled him to plead successfully for the life of his antagonist when the indignant populace clamored for his execution. Altogether, though the robes of these ecclesiastical personages are beginning to fall stiffly, and though the fifth-century type of holiness lacks, to our thinking, the freshness of a true humanity, we cannot but feel that Epiphanius was one of those men to whom mere goodness gives a wonderful magnetic power over all who come in contact with them. His sweet and pure figure is a refreshing contrast to the wild passions and base treacheries with which his age is filled.

Such was the man who, on the invitation of the Ligurians, with the assent of Ricimer, while greatly doubting his own sufficiency for the task, undertook the mission to Anthemius. When he reached Rome, the officers of the household went forth to meet him without the gates. They brought him into the Imperial hall of audience, where the flash of gems and the sombre magnificence of the purple still, as in the mightiest days of the Empire, attested the presence of Augustus. But all eyes were fixed, not on the Emperor, but on the tall ecclesiastic, with brow of marble whiteness and delicately formed limbs, who, sparing of words in his ordinary conversation, was about to speak on behalf of Italy and Peace.

‘Dread sovereign!’ he began, ‘we recognize the hand of God in calling to the highest place in this commonwealth you who have shown yourself a faithful adherent to the teaching of the Catholic faith, in permitting you to eclipse the triumphs of war by the arts of peace, and to restore the interrupted harmony of the Roman world. Be this still your glory, oh Emperor! Still blend gentleness with force, and thereby make your rule a copy of the heavenly kingdom. Remember how David, by sparing King Saul when he was in his power, earned more glory than would have accrued from the most righteous vengeance. This is the request of Italy, this the message which Ricimer has entrusted to the mouth of my Littleness. Earn for yourself a bloodless victory, overcome even this proud Goth by your benefits. Or, if you are still in doubt, consider all the chances of war, war in which you may be defeated, and in which even victory must lessen the resources of your Empire, while by a peaceful compact with Ricimer you might have enjoyed them undiminished.’

He ended, and Anthemius, raising his eyes, saw that the hearts of all the by-standers were won by the words of peace. With a deep sigh he said, ‘Holy Bishop! The causes of my anger against Ricimer are such as cannot be fully set forth in words. I have loaded him with benefits; I have not even spared my own flesh and blood, but have given my daughter to this skin-clothed Goth, an alliance which I cannot think upon without shame for myself, my family, and my kingship. But the more I have distinguished him with my gifts, the more bitterly has he become mine enemy. He has stirred up foreign nations to war against the Commonwealth; where he could not himself hurt, he has suggested to others schemes for hurting me. I myself believe that it is better to treat such a man as an open foe. To feel your enemy is the first step towards overcoming him, and anything is better than the machinations of secret hatred. But since you interpose your venerable office and your holy character as a pledge for his sincere desire for peace, be it so. I cannot resist anything which such a man as you pleads for. If your perceptions have been deceived, and if he still have war in his heart, on him shall rest the guilt of renewing the combat. I commit and commend myself and the commonwealth, whose pilot I am, entirely into your hands, and I grant to you the pardon which Ricimer himself should not have obtained, no, not if he had been grovelling in the dust before my feet.’

The Bishop thanked God for having put these peaceful counsels into the heart of him whom he had chosen as the Vicar of his supreme power among men; he then took a solemn oath from Anthemius to hold fast the newly recemented alliance, and departed in all haste for Liguria. He travelled so rapidly, although his strength was reduced by a rigorous Lenten fast,

that he returned to Pavia on the sixth day after he had quitted it, and the joyful shouts of the people surrounding his house, and learning from his own mouth the news of the ratified treaty of peace, were the first intimation to Ricimer that his messenger had quitted Rome.

However, the peace between the two rival Powers in the State was of short duration. Some expressions in the narrative would lead us to suppose that the position of Anthemius, at the time of the embassy, was slightly the stronger of the two, and that Ricimer showed his usual cunning in accepting the good offices of the Bishop. Within fourteen months (possibly within two months) after the negotiations at Milan, we find the two parties again in arms against one another. Ricimer proclaimed Olybrius Emperor, thereby conciliating the support of the Vandal king, and perhaps neutralizing the opposition of the friends of Anthemius at Constantinople, for Olybrius was also a Byzantine, and also allied to the Imperial family. He marched to the outskirts of Rome and pitched his camp near a bridge over the Anio, probably the Ponte Salaro. Within the walls opinion was divided, some even of the citizens ranging themselves on the side of Ricimer, though the majority no doubt adhered to Anthemius. For five months the siege lasted, Ricimer keeping a strict watch upon the upper and lower waters of the Tiber, and suffering no provisions to enter the city. The pressure of the famine was so great that (as Theophanes tells us) the soldiers were reduced to feed upon leather and other unusual articles of food. Then an unexpected auxiliary appeared upon the scene. 'Bilimer, ruler of the Gauls' (we have no clue to the true character of this mysterious personage), 'hearing of the conspiracy against Anthemius, came to Rome earnestly desiring to give him assistance. He joined battle with Ricimer by the bridge of Hadrian (the bridge leading to the castle of S. Angelo) and was immediately overcome and slain. On his death Ricimer entered the city as conqueror, and slew Anthemius with the sword. Another authority (Joannes Antiochenus) tells us that 'the followers of Anthemius opened the gates to the barbarians, leaving their master defenseless, that he mixed with the crowd of mendicants, and sought refuge at the tomb of the martyr Chrysogonus, and being there discovered was instantly beheaded by Gundobad, the nephew of Ricimer. He received a royal burial at the hands of his enemies.' Anthemius perished on the 11th July, 472; and only five weeks afterwards his turbulent son-in-law followed him to the grave. On the 18th August, Ricimer, the Patrician, who had held supreme power in Italy for sixteen years, died of a sudden hemorrhage, and thus the stage was left clear for new actors. What they will make of the defence or extension of the Roman Empire we shall see in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VII

OLYBRIUS, THE CLIENT OF THE VANDAL, A.D. 472. GLYCERIUS, THE CLIENT OF THE BURGUNDIAN A.D. 473-474. JULIUS NEPOS, THE CLIENT OF BYZANTIUM, A.D. 474-475. ROMULUS AUGUSTULUS, SON OF ORESTES, A.D. 475-476.

The new Emperor, Anicius Olybrius, might possibly have procured some breathing-space for the exhausted commonwealth, if he had worn the purple for any considerable length of time.

Of the great Anician family, and probably descended from one of those brother consuls, Olybrius and Probinus, whose accession to office in the year 395 Claudian celebrated with such courtly enthusiasm; the husband of the great grand-daughter of Theodosius, and the representative, as far as there could be a representative, of the claims of that Imperial house; on good terms with the Eastern Augustus, perhaps openly supported by him; above all, the brother-in-law of the heir-apparent to the Vandal crown, the long proposed and at last successful candidate of Gaiseric; Olybrius, as to whose personal qualities the page of history is a blank, possessed in these external circumstances exceptional advantages for a Roman Emperor in the year 472. But whether the care of ruling a troubled court, which had made Petronius Maximus sigh for the happier lot of Damocles, or the air of Rome, so often fatal to alien rulers, overpowered him, we know not. So it was that on the 23rd October 472, little more than three months after the death of his rival, Olybrius died at Rome of dropsy. Had Ricimer been still living, this death would of course have figured in his catalogue of crimes, but the rough-handed Sueve had gone before Olybrius, as has been already stated, on the 18th of August.

During his short reign Olybrius conferred the dignity of Patrician on the young Burgundian prince Gundobad, whose mother was sister to Ricimer, and who apparently had come to Italy to push his fortunes by the help of his all-powerful uncle. It is conjectured with much probability that the barbarian element in the Roman army, which knew something of its strength, and was suspicious of any but a barbarian leader, transferred its fealty, or its attachment, or its obedience (it is difficult to find a word to express the nature of the tie which bound these troops to their leader) from Ricimer to his nephew, and that this transference brought with it, almost as a matter of course, his elevation to the rank of Patrician and 'Father of the Emperor.'

For five months Gundobad allowed himself the luxury of an interregnum; then, on the fifth of March, 473, he raised a certain Glycerius to the throne, at Ravenna. This election of Glycerius, though he had held the high office of *Comes Domesticorum* (Commander of the Household Troops) was not approved of, nor apparently recognized, at Byzantium. Our chief Eastern chronicler (Marcellinus) tells us that Glycerius was made Caesar at Ravenna 'more by presumption than by election'; and steps were soon taken to furnish a successor to Olybrius whom the Easterns could recognize as legitimate.

Some changes had taken place at the Court of Constantinople since the councils preceding the elevation of Anthemius, and the expedition against Carthage. In the year 471, Aspar and his sons were murdered in the palace by the swords of the eunuchs of the Emperor's household. 'An Arian father with his Arian offspring,' is the pious comment of Marcellinus; but all the inhabitants of Constantinople were not disposed to consider the heterodoxy of Aspar

sufficient justification for the deed. They remembered that it was by Aspar's hand that Leo himself had been lifted to the throne; that something had been whispered of a secret compact, according to which one of the sons of Aspar was to succeed in the Imperial dignity, and that, in fact, his son Patricius, who appeared susceptible of conversion to the Catholic faith, had been formally recognized as Caesar, and thereby designated as next in succession to the throne. It might be convenient to cancel all these liabilities by the swords of the eunuchs of the household; it was, no doubt, a relief to know that that terrible Patrician would never again shake his sovereign's purple robe and remind him of obligations which Orthodoxy would not suffer him to discharge; but, upon the whole, the popular instinct condemned the transaction, and branded the Emperor Leo with the epithet *Macellus* (the butcher), a term derived from the meat-markets of Rome.

When the news of the 'presumptuous' elevation of Glycerius to the throne reached Constantinople, in the summer of 473, the Emperor Leo was probably in failing health. (He died in January of the following year.) The rivalry for the succession between Basiliscus, with his firm persuasion that he should one day be Emperor, and Tarasicodissa, the Isaurian, always addressed by his flatterers as *Zeno*, was, no doubt, becoming more intense than ever. But the threads of this and of every intrigue about the Court of Byzantium were in the hands of her who was sister of one candidate and mother-in-law of the other, *Verina*, the wife of the dying Augustus. Influenced, no doubt, by her, the choice of a Western Emperor fell upon *Julius Nepos*, by birth nephew of the brave *Marcellinus* of Dalmatia, and by marriage nephew of the Empress *Verina*.

The new Emperor was proclaimed in Constantinople in August, 473, but, delayed apparently by the complications connected with the illness and death of his patron, did not land in Italy till the spring of the following year. Meanwhile Leo died; his grandson, the younger Leo, succeeded him, and being but a boy, associated his father, the Isaurian *Zeno*, with him in the Empire. The son-in-law had won, for the present at least, in the race for the Eastern throne.

Before we start with *Nepos* on his quest of the Western sovereignty, let us see how matters have fared with the occupant whom he means to displace—with *Glycerius*. In 473, the year of his accession, a new enemy to Rome appeared upon the northern horizon. The Ostrogothic brother-kings, who served under *Attila* at the battle in Champagne, on the overthrow of the Hunnish Empire obtained for themselves a goodly settlement in Pannonia, on the western bank of the Danube. For nearly twenty years they had been engaged in desultory hostilities with their barbarian neighbors, with *Suevi* and *Rugians* on the north and west, with *Huns* and *Sarmatians* on the south and east. Now, as their countryman, *Jordanes*, tells us with admirable frankness, 'the spoils of these neighbouring nations were dwindling, and food and clothing began to fail the Goths. Therefore to these men, who had long found their sustenance in war, peace began to be hateful. They clustered round their kings, and clamored to be led forth to war—whither they cared not, but war there must be. *Theudemir*, the elder king, took counsel with his brother *Widemir*, and they resolved to commence a campaign against the Roman Empire. *Theudemir*, as the more powerful chieftain, was to attack the stronger Empire of the East; *Widemir*, with his weaker forces, was to enter Italy. He did so, but, like so many of the northern conquerors, he soon found a grave in the beautiful but deathly land. His son, the younger *Widemir*, succeeded to his designs of conquest, but *Glycerius* approached him with presents and smooth words and was not ashamed to suggest that he should transfer his arms to Gaul, which was still in theory, and partially in fact, a province of the Empire. The sturdy bands of *Widemir's* Ostrogoths descended accordingly into the valleys of the *Rhone* and the *Loire*; they speedily renewed the ancient alliance with the Visigothic members of their scattered nationality, and helped to ruin yet more utterly the already desperate cause of Gallo-Roman freedom.

It may be that this ignominious mode of dealing with an invader served to sink the insignificant Glycerius yet lower in the eyes of his people. He seems to have been keeping close under the skirts of Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, that he might not be too far removed from the Burgundian countrymen of his patron, Gundobad. In Pavia, we are told, his mother was so insultingly treated by the populace—perhaps in order to mark their contempt for her son—that he would have inflicted severe punishment upon them if he had not been dissuaded by the saintly peace-maker Epiphanius.

Such was the state of things when Nepos, the Byzantine candidate for empire, landed in Italy, in one of the spring months of 474. Did the barbarian auxiliaries, headed by the young Burgundian Gundobad, the heir of the power of Ricimer, go forth to meet him, and did battle follow? The silence of the chroniclers rather seems to indicate that the affair was settled without a resort to arms. And as we find Gundobad, shortly after this time, peaceably reigning with his brothers over their paternal kingdom on the banks of the Rhone, the inference drawn by some of the most careful inquirers into the history of the period is that, the death of his father Gundiok having occurred shortly after that of his uncle Ricimer, he had weighed the solid advantages of his Burgundian inheritance against the prestige of a Roman king-maker, and found the former preponderate. Therefore, and as he also well knew the hostile designs of the Byzantine Court, he quietly marched back across the Alps with the young warriors of his *comitatus*, leaving the luckless Glycerius to fight and lose his own battles alone. This may be accepted as the most probable explanation of Gundobad's disappearance from the scene; but it must be pointed out that it is not the only one. He may have stood by his client, have fought and lost some unrecorded battle, and only then have made his way over the unmelted April snows of the St. Bernard or the Mont Genevre to his Burgundian kingdom.

Let the causes of the non-resistance, or unsuccessful resistance of the barbarian Auxiliaries have been what they may, the result is undoubted. The efforts of the Eastern candidate were crowned with complete success, but his triumph was not stained with cruelty. The fortified harbor-town at the mouth of the Tiber, opposite to the modern Ostia, which under the name of *Portus Augusti et Trajani* commemorated the names of two of Rome's most famous Emperors, witnessed in the summer of 474 two very different spectacles. There, on the 24th of June, Julius Nepos was solemnly raised to the dignity of Emperor, the Senate and the People of Rome being no doubt duly represented on the ground, and acclaiming the new Augustus. There also, a few days earlier or later, Glycerius, Ex-Count of the Domestics and Ex-Emperor, received the oil of consecration as a Bishop. The merciful conqueror, who had spared his life, vouchsafed to him also a sphere for the exercise of his new functions. The Church of Salona, the capital of the dominions of Marcellinus, was at this juncture in need of a head. Thither Glycerius was sent, and he who had lately held power nominally supreme in the Western world, subsided, apparently without a murmur, into the condition of Bishop of a Dalmatian town. Even so, after a long and costly contest for the heirship to a dukedom, the successful litigant might solace his beaten rival by assigning to him one of the family livings. With this consecration at Portus, Glycerius but for one doubtful allusion disappears from history. There have been many worse Emperors, doubtless, than the 'not disreputable' person whom Gundobad advised to become Augustus, and whom Nepos advised to become a Bishop.

The only memorable events in the fourteen months' reign of Julius Nepos are those which relate to the affairs of Gaul, that country which gave her first province to the Republic, and whose allegiance was the last jewel hacked from the fingers of the dying Empire.

The Visigothic throne at Toulouse was now no longer filled by the jovial and tolerant Theodoric II, to whom Sidonius lost so many games at 'the tables.' Eight years before the period which we have now reached, that prince was slain and replaced by his equally able, but narrower and harsher, brother Euric. Though it is true that he employed as his chief minister of

state the polished and learned Gallo-Roman Leo, we can trace in Euric a bitterer Arianism and a more acrid and anti-Roman barbarianism than was shown by Theodoric, the inattentive listener to the ministrations of his heretical clergy, the staunch upholder of the alliance with Avitus.

Of the religious intolerance of Euric, Sidonius, who now looked at these questions with the eyes of a Churchman (having been elected Bishop of Clermont in the year 472), draws a repulsive picture. 'I fear,' he says, 'that this Gothic king, though he is truly formidable by the resources which he wields, is plotting not so much against the walls of Roman cities as against the laws of Christian Churches. So sour, they say, to his lips, so hateful to his heart, is the very mention of the Catholic name, that you can hardly tell whether to consider him primarily as king of the Visigothic nation or as leader of the Arian sect. Moreover, he is a strenuous warrior, in the vigor of his intellect, in the prime of life; the only mistake which he makes is to attribute to the Divine blessing on his misguided zeal, those successes which are really due to his own skill and good fortune.' Sidonius then goes on to describe the melancholy condition of the Catholic Churches of Aquitaine, Bordeaux, Limoges, Perigueux, and many more, whose Bishops had died, were forbidden to elect their successors; the churchway paths were stopped up with thorns and briars, the gates wrenched from their hinges, the roofs left open to the sky, and cattle fed on the grass-grown steps of the altar.

Some of these touches recall similar passages in the Vandal persecutions—though those upon the whole were far more bloody and severe—and it is therefore not surprising to find that there was at this time a considerable drawing together of the courts of Carthage and Toulouse. There had been time for the old cruel outrage upon the daughter of Theodoric I to be forgotten, and accordingly, when Gaiseric found East and West Rome uniting to invade his pirate kingdom, he appealed, and not altogether in vain, to the Visigothic monarch to join hands with him in defence of their common interests as Teutons and as Arians.

The weight of Euric's invasion, which apparently took place in the spring of 474, fell upon the two provinces which we now know as Berri and Auvergne, all that was still left to the Romans of the country south of the Conquest Loire. Of Berri they appear to have made an easy conquest; Auvergne, the mountain-land, defended by the stout hearts of the still undegenerated nation of the Arverni, made a much more stubborn resistance. There, in the midst of his diocese, was Bishop Sidonius, animating the people by his rhetoric and, yet more, encouraging them to hope in the miraculous efficacy of 'the Rogations,' a kind of litany or special series of prayers for times of calamity, which he adopted from the Church of Vienne. There, too, was his brother-in-law, Ecdicius, the son of the Emperor Avitus, a brave and noble-hearted man, though Sidonius trumpets forth his praises with so much bombastic exaggeration that we are in danger of not allowing to him the credit which he really deserves.

'How did we all gaze upon you,' he says, 'from the walls of Arverni [Clermont]. All ranks and ages, and both sexes, looked at you with wonder from our half ruined walls, and saw you in the open plain, in the middle of the day, pierce with scarce eighteen horsemen through a troop of some thousand Goths. At the sound of your name, at the rumor of your presence, a kind of stupor fell upon that highly-disciplined host, so that the generals themselves in their blind wonderment perceived not how many followed their standards, how few yours. They withdrew up the brow of a hill and left all the plain to you, though you had scarcely as many men to post in the plain as one seats guests at a banquet.

'You came back at leisure to the city. How we all poured forth to meet you, with greetings, with plaudits, with laughter, and with tears! The courts of your vast house were filled with your welcomers. They kissed the very dust of your feet, they handled your heavy curb-chain, clotted with blood and foam, they lifted the saddles, steeped in sweat, from the horses of your warriors, they unclasped the fastenings of your hollow helmet, they vied with

one another in loosening the foldings of your greaves, they counted and measured with trembling fingers the terrible dints in your coat of mail.

‘Need I say how, after this, you, with your own private resources, collected a public army and chastised the enemy for their incursions; how in several encounters you slaughtered whole squadrons of the barbarians, and when you came to number your own troops after each battle, found but two or three missing. So heavy was the blow struck at the enemy in these unexpected conflicts, that they concealed the number of their slain by an artifice more ghastly than the very battlefield. All whom the approach of night prevented them from burying they beheaded, that the mutilated trunk might not by its flaxen locks reveal the nationality of the slain warrior. When day dawned they perceived that even this brutal outrage had not availed to hide their losses; so then they set about their funeral rites in haste—haste which was as useless to conceal their trick as their trick had been to conceal the slaughter. The bodies were unwashed, uncremated; no mound of earth was heaped above them. They lay here and there about the field, carried to their respective heaps on the gory wagons, till you, pressing down afresh and unceasingly on your beaten foe, compelled them to give up the thought of burial, and to light their funeral pyres with the fragments of the wagons which had been their moving homes.’

History and romance are no doubt blended in this singular extract, in what proportions it is now impossible to determine. So much, however, seems clear, that by the brave defence of the Arverni, with Ecdicius at their head, the tide of Visigothic invasion was for that season (474) rolled back from their country. But the walls of the city were half in ruins, and the harvests, not only of Auvergne, but of a large part of Provence, had been swept away by the enemy. Under this imminence of famine, Patiens, the Bishop of Lyons, (the builder of the basilica commemorated in the verses of Sidonius), with wise and noble munificence, collected vast stores of grain in the northern district of Gaul, transported them down the rivers Saone and Loire, and across the mountains of Auvergne, presented them as a free gift to the famishing provincials, and thus, out of his own episcopal revenues, (helped probably by the contributions of the wealthy city in which he dwelt,) like another Triptolemus or another Joseph saved a nation from famine.

In the following year (475) there seems to have been a change in the Gothic strategy. As determined as ever to add Auvergne to his dominions, Euric saw that the fight for its possession could best be waged in Provence, or even if need were, in the valley of the Po. He again crossed the line which had become the frontier of the Empire, again occupied or laid waste the ‘Provincia’ at the mouth of the Rhone, and threatened apparently to cross the Alps, or to march by what we now call the Riviera, into Italy. For these aggressions the rapid changes in the person of the Roman Emperor suggested the occasion, and seem in some mysterious way to have served as a justification. Perhaps a pretence was set up of vindicating against Nepos the claims of the Burgundian protégé Glycerius, whom he had dethroned. In these circumstances the ‘Council of Liguria,’ an assembly of whose precise nature and constitution we are ignorant, but which was probably composed of the chief civil and ecclesiastical officials of the province, again assembled, as they had assembled four years before when civil strife seemed to be impending between Anthemius and Ricimer, to devise means for averting the storm of war from their country.

Again, as before, all eyes were turned upon the saintly Epiphanius, Bishop of Pavia, the ideal peace-maker of his age. He again undertook the office, relying on heavenly assistance. The journey was one of about 600 (Roman) miles, by way of Turin, Briançon, Nimes, and involved a climb over the steep pass of the Mont Genevre. But the saint was determined to make it yet more arduous by his austerities. For the mules’ sake they tarried long at the different posting-houses (*mansiones*), and all these long halts were occupied with vigorous psalmody or with industrious reading; and when engaged in the latter employment he always

stood. Then at night he would choose the chilliest nook of the forest, whither the noonday sun never penetrated, and there, instead of in the comfortable *mansio*, would he spread his couch, watering the ground with the tears which accompanied his nightlong prayers, and so making fertile in spiritual blessings the soil which could never bring forth fruits of its own.

There is no need to transcribe from his admiring and prolix biographer the exhortation to meekness and charity which Epiphanius delivered to King Euric in his Court at Toulouse. The Visigothic king's reply, delivered by the mouth of an interpreter, contains some characteristic expressions. 'Though the coat of mail never leaves my breast, though my hand is ever at the brazen hilt of my sword, and the iron guards my side, I have found a man who, for all my armor, can vanquish me with his words. They err who say that the Roman's tongue is not worth a good sword and shield, for they can turn hack the words which we send against them, while their words pierce to our very vitals. I will do therefore, holy father, all that you desire, though more from esteem for the messenger than from respect for the power of him who sends him. Promise me, therefore, that Nepos will keep unbroken concord with me—since a promise from you is equivalent to an oath—and my warlike designs shall be laid aside.' After giving the required pledge, the Bishop, refusing an earnest invitation to meet the king at a banquet, ('which would have been,' says his biographer, 'polluted by the presence of his priests') started at once on his homeward journey, 'attended by so great a crowd that Toulouse seemed to be almost deserted of her inhabitants.'

When we read the terms of peace as they were finally arranged between Euric and the four Bishops of Provence, we doubt whether the eloquence of Epiphanius had really been so triumphant as his biographer describes it. For it is evident that Auvergne and Berri were ceded to the Goths, and the Romans seem practically to have retained of all their magnificent Gaulish possessions only the strip of territory between the Mediterranean and the River Durance, which, still under its well-known name of *Provence*, perpetuates the remembrance of the *Providentia* of the Roman Republic.

Bitterly does Sidonius lament this desertion by Rome of her brave Arvernian subjects. In the letter which he addressed to Bishop Graecus, after the negotiation of the treaty, his usual tone of bland deference towards a brother-prelate is replaced by something like a snort of defiance and indignation.

'Alas!' he says, 'for this unhappy corner of the land, whose lot, if fame speak truly, is to be made yet worse by peace than ever it was by war. Our slavery is to be the price paid for other people's freedom. Yes, the slavery of us the Arvemi who, if the story of the past is to be retold, once dared to claim Trojan blood in our veins, and to call ourselves brothers of Latium. If you look at more recent days, we are the men who by our own private efforts have held in check the public enemy, who did not use our walls as a defence against the Goth but made him tremble in his camp, who, when our neighbors moved their army into the field, could show as many generals as we had soldiers. . . . Are these the wages that are due to those who have endured hunger, fire, and pestilence, to the swords that are fat with slaughter, to the warriors who are lean with fasting? It was in prospect of this glorious peace of yours, of course, that we lived upon the herbs that grew in the chinks of our walls, and that some died, unable to distinguish the poisonous from the harmless. For all these daring experiments of our devotion our reward, as I hear, is that we are to be thrown overboard by the Empire. Oh! blush, I pray you, for this peace which is neither expedient nor honorable. Through you the embassies come and go. The beginnings and the endings of the negotiations, in the Emperor's absence, are in your hands. Pardon the roughness of these words of truth; the pang with which they are uttered should take away their sting.'

'You, in the Provincial Council, are not really deliberating for the benefit of the Commonwealth. You are each of you thinking how you can mend your private fortunes, and it

is by this policy that the first Province of Rome has become her last. The ancestors whom we used to talk of so proudly will soon, at this rate, have no descendants. Break off then, break off by whatever device you can think of, the treaty for this shameful peace. We, if needs be, shall be delighted still to suffer siege, still to do battle on the wall, still to famish in our homes. But if not, if while other regions are content with slavery, Auvergne may not have the martyrdom for which she sighs, then I can only say, keep our seed still alive on the earth, be ready with your ransoms for us as slaves, open your gates to us as pilgrims. If our cities must be open to the Goth, you must in charity open yours to the guest. Condescend to remember me, my lord Pope!

If we compare this passionate outburst with the similar utterances of the inhabitants of Nisibis, a little more than a century before, when they were abandoned by Rome to the King of Persia, we shall be forced to conclude that notwithstanding the frightful misery brought upon the world by the rapacity and incompetence of Roman governors, the Eternal City laid a spell, not of power only, but of love, upon the vast and various populations under her sway, such as some other races, ruling far more righteously than she ever did, have been unable to exercise.

Fourteen months after Julius Nepos ascended the throne, he was pushed down from it by a Roman officer named Orestes. This revolution is one of the most obscure passages in all the obscure history of this time. Jordanes tells us that Ecdicius (whom he calls 'Decius') was obliged 'to leave his country, and especially the city of Arverna, to the enemy and betake himself to safer quarters. Which, when the Emperor Nepos heard, he ordered Decius to leave the Gauls and come to him.' Possibly it may have been on the elevation of Ecdicius to the Patriciate that the next change occurred. 'In his room Orestes was ordained Master of the Soldiery, which Orestes, having taken the command of the army, and marching forth against the enemy, arrived at Ravenna from Rome, and there remaining made Augustulus his son Emperor. Which being ascertained Nepos fled into Dalmatia, and there, as a private man, lived devoid of royalty [this is not quite accurate], where already Glycerius the former Emperor exercised the Bishopric of Salona. But Augustulus was ordained Emperor by his father Orestes at Ravenna.'

Other chroniclers supply us with the dates of two of these transactions. The flight of Nepos took place on the 28th of August 475, and the proclamation of Augustulus as Emperor on the 31st of October in the same year. But what is the meaning of the transactions recorded, why we should hear of this mysterious appearance and disappearance of Ecdicius in Italy, against what enemies Orestes was leading the army (not Euric, for peace had been only just concluded with him; possibly the Burgundians or the Ostrogoths), and what was the pretext or the motive for the sudden rebellion against the authority of Nepos?—these are questions which can be but conjecturally answered, and unless further documentary evidence should be discovered, never settled.

A German historian suggests that the barbarian auxiliaries in the army saw in the order to march 'against the enemy' a covert design to remove them from Italy, and therefore revolted. This seems a not improbable conjecture, but we must remember that nothing is said here expressly about barbarian auxiliaries or about 'leading them beyond the frontiers of Italy.' As Orestes himself was not of barbarian origin, but would be called at that time a Roman, it is open to us to suggest that dislike of a second 'Graeculus Imperator,' and indignation at the surrender of Auvergne to the Visigoths, may have had some share in the result. But the history can here be only guessed at, not related.

Of Orestes, the chief actor in the new revolution, we have, thanks to those invaluable fragments of Priscus, a little more certain knowledge. In the great diplomatic campaign of 448, between Byzantium and Hunland, he figured in a somewhat inferior position among the envoys of Attila. Himself of Roman origin, that is to say, being an Illyrian provincial, he had taken

service under Attila, and considered himself the equal of his fellow-envoy, Edecon, and other nobles of his Court. But Vigilas, who knew the social code of the barbarians well, judged differently, and pronounced that Orestes as 'a secretary, a mere squire of Attila, was greatly inferior to Edecon, a mighty man of war and a Hun by extraction.' However, in the twenty-seven years which had elapsed since he was sitting with the Byzantine ambassadors among the ruins of Sardica, Orestes (who was by marriage, if not by birth, connected with the official hierarchy of the Empire) had succeeded in somewhat improving his position, and he now, without any hint of what may have been his intervening fortune, emerges in the full splendor of Master of the Soldiery, and, after his successful insurrection, virtual lord of the Western Empire.

There can have been no reason in the nature of things why Orestes should not have placed himself on the vacant throne. Unlike Stilicho and Ricimer he was a full-blooded Roman provincial, at least as eligible for the Imperial dignity as Trajan or Diocletian. It must therefore be taken as an indication how much the majesty of the title of Emperor had suffered by twenty years of revolution that he bestowed that title on his son, reserving for himself the rank only of Patrician, nominally inferior in dignity, but more associated in men's minds with the idea of power, perhaps also somewhat less likely to injure his popularity with the army. It is possible moreover that the remembrance of the almost menial office which he had held in the court of Attila, and the apparently higher position of his son's maternal ancestors, may have conducted to the same result.

The name, and the face, and the age of the last Emperor of the West are all that is memorable in his history. Everyone knows the strange turn of fate (as we call it) which gave to the last puny Emperor of Rome the same name that was borne by her first and mightiest king, the she-wolf's nursling. It is interesting to observe that the poor lad's fateful name came to him in the most natural manner possible from his maternal grandfather in his home beside the Danube. What may have been the precise origin of his epithet Augustulus cannot be stated; whether given by his loyal soldiers as a term of endearment to the fair boy clothed in the purple, or by his barbarian conquerors as a term of contempt for the new kind of Imperator whom the Romans had raised over them. The latter suggestion however seems the most probable. Augustulus was a mere lad, probably about fourteen years of age, and possessed great personal beauty. The duration of his nominal reign was about ten months. Of course his father was the real ruler of the Empire.

In this capacity Orestes concluded a treaty with Gaiseric the terms of which are not disclosed to us, but it seems probable that one of the chief conditions imposed on the Roman Emperor was the cession of Sicily. In the same year probably in which this event occurred (475), peace, a peace which lasted for two generations, was concluded between the Vandal kingdom and the Eastern Empire. The ambassador chosen by the worn and harassed Emperor, Zeno, who had only just donned his painful diadem, was a senator named Severus, a man whose justice and moderation had won him the respect of all his fellow-citizens, and whom, to give greater honors to his embassy, Zeno raised to the dignity of Patrician. A hostile raid which Gaiseric made on the Epirote city of Nicopolis seemed at first sight to promise ill for the success of the negotiations, but Gaiseric in reply to the complaints of Severus explained that such an attack was only a way of emphatically stating that he was still at war with the Empire. Now that an ambassador had actually reached his court he was quite willing to discuss with him the conditions of peace. And in fact the pure and simple character of Severus, his frugal manner of living, and his absolute inaccessibility to the lavishly offered bribes of the Vandal, so impressed Gaiseric that he not only concluded, as has been said, a firm and durable peace with Constantinople but consented to liberate all the Roman captives who were in bondage to him or his sons, having heard from the lips of Severus that such a concession would be more

gratifying to him than any present of money or jewels. The captives who had been allotted to the warriors of the Vandal host Gaiseric declared that he could not liberate without the consent of their new lords, but he would throw no obstacle in the way of their redemption. The generous-hearted Severus not only restored to freedom without price the captives whom Gaiseric presented to him, but sold by public auction the costly vessels and magnificent robes by which he had set forth the majesty of Byzantium, and with the proceeds purchased the liberty of as many as he could of the slaves of the soldiers. Even the bitter Arianism of the old king was softened by the conversation of the friendly ambassador and a breathing-space, though as it proved only a short breathing-space, between the persecutions of Gaiseric and of his son, was secured by the good offices of Severus.

The treaty with Gaiseric is almost the only public act that we hear of in the short reign of Augustulus.

Before witnessing the downfall of the boy-Emperor, the last act in this long series of successful rebellions, let us follow the dethroned Nepos across the Adriatic to his Dalmatian capital Salona. No doubt he there possessed, *de facto*, the same petty sovereignty which his uncle Marcellinus had held before him. It seems probable also that he still claimed to be *de jure* Emperor of the Western world, still wore the diadem, the purple mantle, the jewelled sandals. Strange turn of fortune, which thus brought two dethroned Emperors of Rome (Nepos and Glycerius) to end their lives in the same Dalmatian city, one as its civil, the other as its religious ruler! In the modern town of Spalato, the temple which Diocletian erected to Jupiter has been converted, with as little change as the Pantheon at Rome, from a heathen fane into a Christian cathedral. If we may assume that this change took place before the end of the fifth century, we have here a subject which might be worthy of an artist's embodiment—the classic edifice reared by the great persecutor, crowded with priests and worshippers on the day of some high 'function'; two successors of Diocletian within its walls; two heads which had worn the wreath of the Emperor bowing in prayer to the Nazarene; two men who had once been engaged in what was like to have been the death-grapple for a throne, imparting and receiving 'the kiss of peace' at the celebration of the Supper of the Lord.

Notwithstanding a report of a different kind which once obtained general credence, it is probable that the two rivals ended their days in mutual charity. Nepos outlived the Western Empire four years, and perished by the hands of assassins on the 15th of May, 480. Two of his Counts, Viator and Ovida, killed him at his villa (probably a part of Diocletian's palace) not far from Salona. As we find Odiva (or Ovida) next year in Dalmatia, waging war with, and conquered by the ruler of Italy, it is reasonable to suppose that he murdered Nepos in order to succeed to his power.

There is, however, an obscure sentence in the notebook of Photius the Patriarch, which seems to throw the burden of the crime upon Glycerius. He describes his reading of the 'Byzantine History' of the Sophist Malchus, who lived at the time of the fall of the Western Empire. 'Malchus finishes the last book,' says Photius, 'with the death of Nepos, who, driving Glycerius from the kingdom, assumed to himself the Roman power, and having cut his hair like a cleric's, made him high-priest instead of Emperor, by whom also, being conspired against, he was slain'. The accusation seems distinct enough : but (1) Malchus may have erred. (2) The erudite Patriarch who records in this note-book (the Bibliotheca) his remembrances of 280 books—all read during his embassy to Assyria—may have misunderstood or forgotten his author's meaning. (3) The amanuensis, in his intensely concise telegraphic style, may have given a wrong idea of what his master dictated to him. Any one of these suppositions seems more likely than that the other chroniclers should have omitted to notice so flagrant an instance of ingratitude as the murder of Nepos by the rival whose life he had spared; that a Bishop, in that age of the Church, should have perpetrated so great a crime without calling forth a shout of

execration from every chronicler of the period; and that Theophanes (a late writer, but not quite so late as Photius) having the proof of this terrible accusation before him, should still call Glycerius 'a not disreputable person'.

CHAPTER VIII

ODOVACAR, THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

‘While Epiphanius, with this severe self-discipline, was approving himself a workman of Jesus Christ that needed not to be ashamed, the old Enemy of our race, that restless Schemer of Evil, was busy adding affliction to affliction, and devising new sufferings wherewith to torment the soul of the saint. With this view he stirred up the army against the Patrician Orestes, and sowed the seeds of discord and suspicion between him and them. He excited the minds of abandoned men with the wild hope of revolution; he breathed the desire for sovereign power into the soul of Odovacer. And then, in order that the calamity might fall upon the city of Ticinum [Pavia], he allured Orestes thither to take shelter under its strong fortifications.’

So writes the episcopal biographer of the Bishop of Pavia. We may not share his intimate acquaintance with the counsels of the Prince of Darkness, but we are bound to express our gratitude for the information which he, all but a contemporary, has given us in this paragraph concerning the immediate cause of the final catastrophe of the Western Empire. Fortified by this authority, we can unhesitatingly assert that Rome fell at last, not by an invasion of the Herulians or any other Transalpine nation, but by a mutiny of the troops who were serving under her own eagles, and were paid out of her own military chest. We are thus carried back to the remembrance of the time, a century before that which we have now reached, when the Goths on a large scale entered the Roman armies as *foederati*, and at the risk of a little repetition we may again consider the same subject.

Few things in the upward career of Rome are more Roman wonderful than the skill with which she made her last-vanquished enemies the instruments of achieving yet another conquest. By the help of the Latins she subdues the Samnites; with Italian soldiers she conquers Spain; the dwellers around the Mediterranean shore carry her standards through Gaul; the Romanized Gaul beats off the German. In our own country, on the desolate moorlands between the Solway and the Tyne, were encamped Batavians from Holland, Asturians from Spain, Tungrians from the Rhine, and many another representative of far-distant lands, from which, even in these days of quickened intercourse between nations, not one in a century now sets foot beside ‘the Barrier of the Lower Isthmus.’ From the point of view of the subjugated and tamed provincial, this constant interchange of military service throughout that enormous Empire had much to recommend it, as bringing many widely-scattered nationalities face to face with one another, as breaking down the barriers of race and creed, and as enabling one thought to vibrate unchecked from the Euphrates to the Atlantic. But viewed from the stand-point of a nationality not yet subdued, and still fighting hard for liberty, the use which Rome made of the arms of her conquered foes may well have seemed the device of some malign deity, bent on darkening the whole heaven and on destroying the happiness of the human race. Especially must this thought have forced itself on the mind of the barbarian patriot when he heard that the people of Rome itself, the men who preeminently styled themselves Quirites, and who shouted for wars and triumphs, no longer served in the legions themselves, but passed their useless lives between the Bath and the Amphitheatre, leaving all the toil of the ceaseless campaigns with which Rome vexed the universe, to men who knew the seven hills of Rome but as some cloud-built city in a dream.

Amplly would such a barbarian patriot—an Arminius, a Caractacus, or a Decebalus—have been avenged, could he have foreseen the part which these same auxiliaries were to play in

completing the ruin of Rome. We have seen the young Alaric learning his first lessons in the invasion of Italy as an Irregular in the army of Theodosius. We have seen the Hunnish forerunners of the host of Attila introduced as auxiliaries into the heart of Gaul by Aetius—the same Aetius who was afterwards to behold them in their myriads arrayed against him on the Catalaunian plains. We are now to see the death-blow dealt at the dotting Empire by men of Teutonic speech and origin, who had taken the *sacramentum*, the military oath of allegiance, and had been enlisted as defenders of Rome.

The meagre annals of the fifth century do not enable us to state what were the relative proportions of native Italians and of barbarians in the armies of Valentinian III and his successors. We may conjecture however that the former had become a very slight ingredient in the mass, and that the Germans no longer served merely as ‘auxiliaries’ in the wings of the army, but were now the backbone of the Legion itself. We have a few slight indications of the progress of this change. The reader may remember that one of the vexations which made the short-lived Emperor Maximus sigh for the fate of the happier Damocles was ‘the turbulence of the *foederati*.’ When war broke out between Anthemius and Ricimer, the men in authority and the mob of Rome clave to the former, but ‘the multitude of naturalized barbarians’ (evidently soldiers) to the latter. And now, in the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter, we find ‘the army’ spoken of as rising collectively against Orestes, though, as we shall soon see, the ground of quarrel was that they as Barbarians made a demand which he as a Roman could not grant. As before said, therefore, it may be conjectured, if it cannot be absolutely proved, that in the year 476 a very small number of true Roman citizens was serving in the dwindled armies of the Western Empire.

The chief recruiting ground for auxiliaries during the quarter of a century after the death of Attila, seems to have been the lands on the further side of the middle Danube, including parts of Bohemia, Moravia, the archduchy of Austria, and the kingdom of Hungary. Here dwelt four nations with the uncouth and harsh-sounding names of the Rugii, the Scyri, the Turcilingi, and the Heruli. The antecedent history of these tribes, even during the second and third centuries of the Christian era, is not clearly ascertained. According to some ethnologists the island of Rugen in the Baltic still preserves the name of the first. A more certain memorial of the second tribe is furnished by an inscription found at Olbia (in the South of Russia, near Odessa), which shows that as early as the second century before the Christian era, the inroads of the Scyri were formidable to the Hellenic settlers round the shores of the Black Sea. Though a comparatively unimportant tribe, they are thus brought into contact with the world of classical antiquity considerably earlier than the Goths themselves. Of the Turcilingi we really know nothing. The Heruli were the most widely extended of the four nations. In the latter part of the third century, we are told, they sailed with 500 ships forth from the Sea of Azof to the shore of Pontus, and thence through Bosphorus and the Dardanelles to the coasts of Attica, when Athens itself suffered conflagration at their hands. At the time of the Fall of the Western Empire they appear to have been settled on the southern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains, the most easterly in position, and the most powerful of the four tribes.

Whatever may have been the previous fortunes of these races, they were probably for a time subject to the loosely-jointed dominion of the Huns; and in fact, we met with the names of some of them among the invaders of Gaul under the banner of Attila. After his death they may very likely have taken part in the great War of Independence which culminated in the battle of Nedao; at any rate, they shared in its reward, the breaking of the Hunnish yoke from off their necks. The Gepidae, whose king Ardaric had been the leader in the work of liberation, occupied the wide expanse of Dacia; the Ostrogoths took Pannonia; to the north and north-west of these two great nations stretched the domains which, as has been already said, were occupied by the four tribes with whose fortunes we are now concerned. On their southern

frontier their strong Teutonic neighbors interposed an invincible obstacle to the wandering and predatory impulses which were partly instinctive, partly the result of contact with and subjection to the Huns. But on the south-western horizon no such barrier presented itself. There, at a distance of perhaps a week's march, lay Venetian Italy; the fortress of Aquileia which had once been its defence, was still the ruined heap to which Attila had reduced it; and thither stretched the still undestroyed Roman roads over the passes of the Wipbach-thal, the Predil, Pontebba, and the Sexten Thai. To reach this Land of Promise the Rugian or Herulian mercenary had but to cross the Province of Noricum (Styria, Salzburg, Carinthia); and that unhappy Province, not wholly cast off by the Empire nor regularly appropriated by the barbarians, was in the same relation to them which unpartitioned Poland occupied towards Russia in the days of the Empress Catharine, 'My door-mat upon which I tread whenever I wish to visit Europe.'

We may therefore imagine, during all the sixteen years of Ricimer's ascendancy, bands of the strongest and most restless-spirited of the warriors of the four tribes, streaming south-westwards through Noricum, under the shadow of the high rock of Juvavum or over the fair plain of Virunum, and so on out of the last defiles of the Julian Alps into the broad valley of the Po, their final goal being Ravenna, Rome, or Milan; any place where the great Patrician had set up his standard, and where the Tribune or the Centurion—himself perhaps a barbarian kinsman—would be in readiness to receive the young Teuton's '*Sacramentum*.'

It seems pretty clear that whatever differences of costume or of arms may have separated these four tribes from one another, they all bore a general resemblance to the great Gothic nation, and spoke the Gothic language, for which reason some of the Byzantine historians call their leader a Goth, and confuse the heterogeneous kingdom which they established, with the purely and truly Gothic monarchy which succeeded it.

It was not then an invasion in the strict sense of the word, this slow infiltration of the Heruli and their neighbors into the Italian peninsula. They came ostensibly to succor and to serve Rome. But so did the Swedes and the French come to help Germany in the two last decades of the Thirty Years' War; and we may well imagine that, unwelcome as the troopers of Turenne and Wrangel were in Germany in the year 1648, even more unwelcome to the Italian citizen (when he could speak his mind freely without fear of being overheard by the myrmidons of Ricimer) was the continuous advent of these many-nationed deliverers from beyond the Danube. It was not an invasion in form, but in substance perhaps it was not greatly different.

We return for an instant to the half-ruined Province Noricum of Noricum, through which these swarms of Rugian and other adventurers were yearly pouring. The long-continued suffering of the inhabitants during thirty years of anarchy (from about 453 to 482) was somewhat soothed by the beneficent activity of Saint Severinus, a holy man who suddenly appeared amongst them, none knew from whence, and who, by his gentle wisdom and by the ascendancy which the simple earnestness of his nature obtained for him over the minds of the barbarians, was often able to interpose for the help of the plundered provincials. In his little cell on the banks of the Danube, round which, in the course of time, other hermits, his disciples and imitators, built their lowly dwellings, he practised all the regular austerities of a monk of the fifth century, fasting till he had reached the utmost limits of emaciation, and walking barefoot when even the Danube was a mass of ice. Here, in his lonely meditations, the Saint was believed to be sometimes filled with

'The spirit of the fervent days of old
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flashed o'er the future, bidding men behold

Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of things that were to be.'

Byron, *The Vision of Dante*.

and amid the visible wreck and ruin of the kingdoms of the world, Severinus, it was thought, could foretell something of the form and fashion of those which were to succeed them.

A band of young soldiers of fortune from across the Danube, on their way to Italy, came one day to the cell of this holy man to receive his blessing. They were Christians, though of the Arian type, and the candidates for enlistment in the Imperial army evidently did not fear the Saint's condemnation of their enterprise.

Among them was a young man, with thick yellow moustache, in sordid garb, but of commanding height, and, it may be, with something in his mien which marked him out as a born leader of men. As soon as this young man stepped inside the cell, (the lowly roof of which obliged him to bow his head in the presence of the Saint) Severinus, it is said, perceived by an inward intimation that the youth was destined to achieve high renown. The blessing was given and the young Teuton said 'Farewell.' 'Fare forward' answered the Saint, 'fare forward into Italy; thou who art now covered with a mean raiment of skins, but who shalt soon bestow on many men the costliest gifts.'

The name of the tall recruit who received and fulfilled this benediction was Odovacar, commonly called Odoacer, the son of Edecon. The name has a Teutonic ring about it, and is thought by the great German philologist Grimm to signify 'rich in watchfulness,' or 'a good watcher.' He suggests that it may have been a favorite name for a watch-dog, and thence transferred to a man-child in whom vigilance in war was looked for by his barbarian parents. It seems better to retain, as the German historians generally do, the Odovacar of the contemporary authorities in all its primeval ruggedness, instead of softening it down with later historians (chiefly the Byzantine annalists) into the smooth and slippery Odoacer.

The origin and ancestry of the young soldier, who stalked into the cave of Severinus, are among the unsolved riddles of history. He is called by the Annalists and by Jordanes a Goth, a Rugian, and a Scyrian, and his name is also sometimes coupled both with the Turcilingi and the Heruli, as if he were their especial leader. The conclusion which it seems best to draw from all these conflicting testimonies is that he was a Teuton (and that fact alone, according to Byzantine usage, would entitle him to be called a Goth); that he was not of royal descent (and here the story of the mean appearance which he presented in the cave of Severinus comes in as an additional confirmation), and that, for this reason, after he had by an unexpected stroke of fortune attained to one of the foremost positions in the world, each of the four tribes which formed his motley host claimed him as of its own especial kindred.

This view does not absolutely preclude the commonly received opinion that Odovacar was the son of the same Edecon who was associated with Orestes in the embassy to Constantinople, and who listened, or seemed to listen, with too favorable an ear to the scheme for the assassination of Attila. It is true that in the wrangle about precedence between the two ambassadors, the interpreter Vigilas said that the secretary Orestes was not to be compared in social position with Edecon, a mighty man of war and a Sun by birth. But these last words need not, perhaps, be interpreted with ethnological precision. Priscus himself speaks of the discontented Roman who had turned Hun, and in the same way probably any of the Teutonic warriors—Gepidae, Ostrogoths, Rugians, Herulians—whose fathers or grandfathers had accepted the rule of that 'Anarch old,' the Hunnish King and Generalissimo, would, by comparison with a Roman provincial, be spoken of as 'a Hun by birth.' And if this be the true account of Odovacar's parentage, the breaking-up of the Hunnish power after Attila's death might easily cause such a change in the position of the courtier, Edecon, as to account for the

humble garb in which his son presented himself before the Saint of Noricum. It must be confessed that there is a touch of dramatic completeness in the working out of the squabble for precedence between Edecon and Orestes in the persons of their sons, the first barbarian King and the last Roman Emperor in Italy, which, until the theory can be actually proved to be untrue, will always commend it to the artistic instincts of the Historian.

Odoacar was born in the year 433, but we are not able to fix the precise date of his first appearance in Italy and entrance into the Imperial service. It was probably, however, between 460 and 470, since by the year 472 he had risen so high that his adherence to the party of Ricimer against Anthemius is considered worthy of special mention by the historian Joannes Antiochenus. For four years from that time we hear no more of him, but his name evidently became a word of power with his countrymen in the Imperial army.

Soon—we know not precisely how soon—after Orestes had placed the handsome boy, his son Romulus, upon the throne of the exiled Nepos, his own troubles began with the army, whose discontent he had so skillfully fomented. The *foederati* presented themselves before the Patrician at Ravenna, with a startling demand. ‘Assign to us,’ said they, ‘one third of the land of Italy for our inheritance.’ The proportion claimed was, no doubt, suggested by the Imperial system of billeting, according to which the citizen upon whom a soldier was quartered was bound to divide his house into three compartments, of which he kept one himself, his unbidden guest was then entitled to select another, and the third portion as well as the first remained in the occupation of the owner. It may be said also that the four tribes were more reasonable in their demands than some of their Teutonic kinsfolk, since the Visigoths had claimed two-thirds of the lands of Gaul; the Vandals had not limited themselves even to that portion, and even the Burgundians, although the mildest and most civilized of the invaders of the Empire, had taken half of the moorland, orchards, and forests, and two-thirds of the arable land.

But whatever arguments may be urged to give a certain plausibility to the demand of the *foederati*, it was none the less a demand which no Roman statesman with a shadow of self-respect could possibly grant. Analogies drawn from the conduct of the Visigoths in Gaul and the Vandals in Africa, only proved what every Emperor since Honorius had tried to turn away his eyes from seeing, that the so-called Roman army was in fact a collection of aliens and enemies to Rome, trained, it might be, with some of the old legionary discipline, and armed from the Italian arsenals, but only so much the more dangerous to the country which it professed to defend.

Orestes, who ended his career with more dignity than he had displayed in any previous portion of it, utterly refused to despoil the subjects of his son in order to enrich the mercenaries. Possibly he placed some dependence on old habits of military obedience in the army and on the mutual jealousies of the foremost officers, the result of which might be that the mutineers would remain without a head. But in this calculation he was mistaken. Odoacar came forward and offered, if he were made leader, to obtain for the soldiers the land for which they hungered. The bargain was at once struck. On the 23rd of August, 476, Odoacar was raised upon the shield, as Alaric had been raised eighty-one years before, and from that day the allegiance to Augustulus of the barbarians, the backbone of the Roman army, was at an end.

Events marched rapidly. In twelve days the whole campaign—if campaign it could be called—was over. Orestes took refuge within the strongly-fortified city of Pavia (or, as it was then called, Ticinum), the city of which the saintly Epiphanius was Bishop. The defence must have been an extremely short one, but the biographer of Epiphanius (our sole authority here) gives us no details concerning it. Everything, however, seems to indicate that the army, when the barbarian adherents of Odoacar were subtracted from it, was a miserably feeble remnant, utterly unable to cope with the revolters. The barbarians burst into the city, plundering, ravishing, burning. Both churches and many houses of Pavia were consumed in the

conflagration. The sister of Epiphanius, a nun, whose reputation for holiness was almost equal to his own, was dragged off by the soldiers into captivity. The chiefs of many noble families shared the same fate. At first there seems to have been some disposition to treat Epiphanius himself with harshness, on account of the insufficiency of the sum which he offered for his ransom. The soldiery could not understand that a Bishop of Ticinum could be so poor as his continual almsgiving had made him.

‘Oh, wickedness! that crude barbarity sought the treasures upon earth which he had sent forward to the recesses of heaven.’ Soon, however, the transparent holiness of his character exerted its wonted influence even upon these infuriated plunderers. He rescued his venerable sister before the fatal light of that day glided into evening; and he also procured by his earnest intercessions the liberation of many of the citizens, exerting himself especially to lessen the horrors of that terrible time for the women who were about to become mothers.

An interval of just two generations had elapsed since Pavia saw a somewhat similar scene of mutinous riot, robbery, and murder. That was in the year 408, when the intrigues of the party of Olympius against Stilicho burst forth into a flame. Then the cry was ‘Down with the barbarians! Down with the Vandal, Stilicho! Slay the foederati!’ And so the best bulwark of the Empire was sacrificed to the unworthy jealousy of the Roman party who were utterly unable to replace him by any tolerable substitute. In a certain sense it might be said that the evil deed of 408 brought about the punishment of 476, and that Odovacar avenged the blood of Stilicho.

For part of two days, apparently, the work of devastation went on in Pavia, and all the time the perpetual enquiry of the enraged soldiery was, ‘Where is Orestes?’ At length news was brought that the Patrician, who had escaped from the city, had been discovered at Placentia, and with that the tumult subsided, and something like peace was restored to the plundered city.

It was upon the 28th August, 476, only five days and his after the elevation of Odovacar, that Orestes was taken at Placentia, and being taken was at once beheaded with a sword. His brother Paulus for a few days longer defended the lost cause at Ravenna, but apparently had too few men under his command to hold even that almost impregnable fortress. On the 4th of September, Paulus, who was perhaps trying to make his escape by sea, was slain by order of Odovacar, ‘at the Pineta outside Classis by Ravenna.’ Within the walls of that city Odovacar found his helpless boy-rival Augustulus. Pitying his tender years, and touched with admiration of the beautiful face of the purple-clad suppliant, the successful Teuton, who was now strong enough to be merciful, spared the little Augustus, and assigned to him a palace and a revenue for the remainder of his life. The splendid villa which, at a lavish cost, Lucius Lucullus, the conqueror of Mithridates, had erected for himself near the city of Naples, was allotted as the residence of Romulus, with the members of his family whom the war had spared; and an annual pension of 6,000 solidi (equal to £3,600 sterling, and perhaps corresponding to about twice that amount in our own day) was granted for his maintenance. How long this pension was drawn, how many years the son of Orestes lived among the woods and the fish-ponds of the Lucullanum, whether he saw the downfall of his conqueror, or even, as he may very possibly have done, survived that conqueror’s conqueror, Theodoric, on all these points History is silent, and her silence is an eloquent testimony to the utter insignificance of the deposed Emperor.

The details, few and imperfect as they are, which we possess respecting the seventeen years’ reign of Odovacar in Italy will be best given in connection with the history of that Ostrogothic invasion which brought it to a premature and bloody close. But a few words remain to be said as to transactions which happened at Carthage and Constantinople at the time or soon after the time when these events were occurring in Italy.

Early in the year 477, only half a year after the dethronement of Augustulus, died the king of the Vandals, Gaiseric. For more than fifty years had he been warring against Rome, and as if the energy of his hate had sustained him under the infirmities of age, now that the Western Empire was dead he died also. It was soon seen how largely the might of the Vandal name had been due to his destructive genius and tenacity of purpose. The strength of the kingdom rapidly declined under his son and grandson, and little more than half a century after his death it fell an easy prey to the arms of the Emperor Justinian. Gaiseric had destroyed the fortifications of all the cities in his dominions, in order to prevent their giving harbourage to rebellious Africans or invading Byzantines; 'a measure,' says Procopius, 'which was greatly praised at the time, and which seemed in the safest way possible to have promoted the tranquillity of the Vandals. Afterwards, however, when the absence of walled towns so greatly facilitated the invasion of Belisarius, Gaiseric was the subject of much ridicule, and his vaunted prudence was accounted foolishness. For men are perpetually changing their minds as to the wisdom of any given course, according to the light which Fortune throws upon it.' These words of Procopius would have been fittingly spoken of some of the fluctuations of European opinion in our own century, veering wildly round from the extravagance of glorification to the extravagance of contempt.

The years which witnessed the elevation and the fall of Augustulus in the West saw also the climax of the long struggle between Zeno and Basiliscus in the East. Aided by the stratagems of the ever-intriguing Empress Verina, his sister, Basiliscus succeeded (475) in dethroning his rival who fled to his native Isauria, among the mountains of Asia Minor. Two years after, by the treachery of the general Harmatius, who was sent to destroy him, Zeno succeeded in turning the tables on his antagonist, and found himself again reigning, as undisputed Augustus, in the palace by the Bosphorus. The promise which he had given to save the life of the deposed Basiliscus was fulfilled by sending him, his wife, and children, in the depth of winter, to banishment in Cappadocia, where, deprived of every comfort and almost of necessary sustenance, they soon perished miserably of cold and hunger.

Soon after the return of Zeno to his palace two embassies waited upon him to express their congratulations on his restoration to the throne. First of all appeared the deputies of the Roman Senate, sent by the command of Augustulus, which evidently was in truth the command of Odovacar, to say 'that they did not need a separate royalty, but that Zeno himself as sole Emperor would suffice for both ends of the earth. That Odovacar, however, a prudent statesman and brave warrior, had been chosen by them to defend their interests, and they therefore requested Zeno to bestow on him the dignity of Patrician, and entrust to his care the diocese of Italy.' In confirmation of their message and as a visible proof that the sovereignty was to be henceforth lodged at Constantinople, these Western deputies brought with them the Ensigns of Imperial dignity.

A few days after arrived from Salona the ambassadors of the titular Emperor Nepos (these events happened two years before his assassination), and they, while also congratulating Zeno on his restoration, besought him to sympathize with their master, like him expelled from his lawful sovereignty, and to grant him supplies of men and money to enable him to reconquer the Empire of the West.

It would seem that each embassy touched a responsive chord in the soul of the Eastern Potentate. The thought that the world needed no other Emperor but him gratified his vanity, but the fugitive's appeal to his brother fugitive excited his sympathy. He therefore, in true diplomatic style, gave an answer which was no answer, lecturing the weak, flattering the strong, and leaving the whole question in the same uncertainty in which he found it.

To the messengers from the Senate he replied, 'You have received two Emperors from the East, Anthemius and Nepos, one of whom you have killed and the other you have driven into banishment. What your duty prescribes you know very well. While Nepos lives there

cannot be two opinions about the matter; you ought to welcome his return.'

The precise nature of the reply to Nepos is not stated, but a message was sent to Odovacar, praising him for his judicious subservience to the wish of the Roman Emperor, exhorting him to seek the much-desired title of Patrician from Nepos, and to work for the return of that sovereign, but expressing, at the same time, the willingness of Zeno to grant him the title if Nepos should persist in withholding it. And, after giving all this admirable advice, he sent by the ambassadors a private letter with the superscription, 'To the Patrician Odovacar.' An extraordinary mystification truly, and a piece either of great vacillation or of great duplicity, but which is perhaps susceptible of explanation when we remember that Ariadne the wife, and Verina the mother-in-law of Zeno, were related to the wife of Nepos and zealous on his behalf. The admirable legitimist sentiments, and the exhortations to everybody to cooperate for the return of the Dalmatian, were probably uttered aloud in presence of those Imperial ladies. The private note with the all-important superscription, which was meant to mitigate the hostility of the terrible barbarian, was no doubt delivered to his ambassadors at some secret interview in the final moments before their departure.

It would be a mistake to see in this curious scene at the Court of Byzantium only a solemn farce enacted by Odovacar and Zeno, to amuse the people of Italy, and soothe them with the thought that they still remained under Roman dominion. The minds of men were really unable to grasp the fact that so vast and perdurable a Structure as the Roman Empire could utterly perish. If it seemed to have suffered ruin in the West it still lived in the East, and might, as in fact it did under Justinian, one day send forth its armies from the Bosphorus to reclaim the provinces which the City by the Tiber had lost. This belief in the practical indestructibility of the Empire, and the consequences which flowed from it, three centuries after the deposition of Augustulus, in the elevation of Charles the Great, have been re-established in their proper place, one might almost say, have been rediscovered, by the historical students of our own times, and the whole history of the Middle Ages has been made marvelously clearer by this one central fact.

But we must not allow ourselves to consider Odovacar, even after this Byzantine embassy, as the mere lieutenant of Zeno, ruling with an authority delegated from Byzantium. It was well pointed out by Guizot that in Mediaeval Europe we scarcely ever find one theory of life or of government worked out to its logical end, and allowed to dominate uncontrolled, like the eighteenth century theories of the Rights of Man, or the nineteenth century theories of the Rights of Nationalities. In the Middle Ages, upon which, after the year 476, we may consider ourselves to be entering, fragments of political theories, which are opposed to one another, and which should be mutually destructive, subsist side by side, neither subduing nor subdued, and often in apparent unconsciousness of their irreconcilable discord. So it was with the position of Odovacar, so, in part at least, with his far greater successor, Theodoric. Among the barbarians, the warrior who had conquered Orestes and deposed his son would be known as Thiudans, 'the King,' simply. If any further definition were asked for he would perhaps be called the king of the Rugians, or the king of the Herulians, the king of the Turcilingi, or the king of the Scyri, according to the nationality which happened to be most largely represented in the camp of the mercenaries when the discussion was going forward. But it is more likely that all would contentedly acquiesce in an appellation which would be understood by all, though it might not be consistent with strict ethnological accuracy, Thiudans Gut-thiudos, 'The King of the Gothic people.' It is not certain that the title 'King of Italy' was ever assumed by him. On the other hand, among the Latin speaking inhabitants of Italy, the vast majority of his new subjects, Odovacar probably preferred to be known as 'the Patrician,' and it would be in this capacity that he would control the organization and wield the powers of the still undestroyed bureaucracy of Imperial Rome.

Looking back, as we now do, over an interval of fourteen centuries at Odovacar's position in history, we find it impossible to assign him a place exclusively in the old order of things, or exclusively in the new; to say whether he was in truth the successor of Aetius and Ricimer, or the forerunner of the Kings of Italy, Pepin, Boso, and Victor Emmanuel. And if this be our doubt now, we may be sure that at least an equal doubt existed in the minds of his contemporaries, not lessened by the fact that there was always, for the space of at least one generation, a chance that the old order of things might after all be restored, and that the rule of the Teuton king might turn out to have been only an interregnum between two Emperors, such as had occurred more than once under the ascendancy of Ricimer. At the time of the embassy to Zeno there were still in the world three men who had worn the Imperial purple, and coined money as Emperors of Rome. We have reason to believe that one at least of these deposed Emperors lived through the whole reign of Odovacar, perhaps to a much later period. Let us transfer now to the subjects of the new Teutonic king some of the same feelings of unsettlement and of halfacquiescence in change, with which a large part of the English nation regarded 'the Protestant Succession' during the reigns of Anne and the First George, or the feelings with which we ourselves have witnessed the establishment of a new French Republic with three hostile dynasties sitting as angry watchers by its cradle; and we shall a little understand the mental attitude, partly of perplexity, partly of listless unconcern, which contemporary statesmen assumed towards an event which seems to us so momentous as the Fall of the Western Empire.

For, in truth, the facts of the final struggle had little in them to attract the attention of bystanders. The sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 sent a shudder through the whole civilized world, and the echo of her dirge was heard even from the caves of Bethlehem. The nations held their breath with affright when in 452 Attila wreaked his terrible revenge upon Aquileia. In comparison with these events, what was the short flurry of the citizens of Pavia, or the death of Paulus in the pine-wood by Ravenna? Indisputably we ourselves have witnessed catastrophes of far greater dramatic completeness than this, far better calculated, according to the old definition of Tragedy, 'to purify the emotions by means of Pity and Terror.' It is not a storm, or an earthquake, or a fire, this end of the Roman rule over Italy : it is more like the gentle fluttering down to earth of the last leaf from a withered tree.

And yet the event of 476 was, in its indirect consequences, a Revolution, which affected most powerfully the life of every inhabitant of Mediaeval and even of Modern Europe. For by it the political centre of gravity was changed from the Palatine to the Lateran, and the Bishop of Rome, now beyond comparison the most important personage of Roman descent left in Italy, was irresistibly invited to ascend the throne, and to wrap himself in the purple, of the vanished Augustus.

CHAPTER IX

CAUSES OF THE FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

WE have now followed the fortunes of Italy from the days when it was the stronghold of an apparently resistless Empire to the time when there was no longer an Emperor in Italy, and when the highest representative of law and government was the leader of the Herulian mercenaries, Odovacar.

Why did the Roman Empire fall? An adequate answer to that question would fill many volumes, and would need to spring from a deep and minute knowledge of the Roman mind, the Roman laws, and the Roman armaments, to which no pretension is here made. The answer suggested in the following pages will be confessedly imperfect and inadequate, but even the fragments of a reply to such a question can hardly be quite devoid of interest.

The Roman Empire of the West fell because it had completed its work, and the time had come for it to be cut down, and to cumber the ground no longer. Its rise, its extension over nearly the whole civilized world, had been a vast blessing to humanity; its prolonged existence, even had it been governed by an endless succession of Emperors like Trajan and Marcus, would have been a bane as great as the blessing. To all the nations around the Mediterranean sea it had brought peace, discipline, the reign of law, the preparation for Christianity; but it had robbed them of liberty, and as century was added to century, the virtues of the free man were being more and more effaced by the habit of blind submission to authority. It was time for the Teutonic nations to rejuvenate the world, to bring their noisy energy into those silent and melancholy countries, peopled only by slaves and despots. It was time to exhibit on the arena of the world the ruder virtues and the more vigorous vices of a people who, even in their vices, showed that they were still young and strong; it was time that the sickly odour of incense offered to imbecile Emperors and lying Prefects should be scattered before the fresh moorland-air of liberty. In short, both as to the building up, and as to the pulling down of the world-Empire of Rome, we have a right to say, 'It was, because the Lord God willed it so.'

Of course, this manner of stating the problem cannot hope for acceptance from an influential school of thinkers at the present day. 'What!' they will at once exclaim, 'would you bring back into historical science those theological terms and those teleological arguments from which we have just successfully purified it? Are you not aware that history, like astronomy, like physics, like every other science, spends its infancy in the religious stage, its adolescence in the metaphysical, and when it has reached its full maturity and become thoroughly conscious of its powers and of its aims, passes into the positive, or materialistic stage—that stage from which the Will of God, the Freewill of Man, Final Causes, and every other metaphysical or theological conception is excluded, and in which Law, fixed and immutable, however hard to discover, must reign supreme?'

Such, it may be admitted, is the utterance of the '*Zeit-Geist*,' of that convergence of many minds towards a single thought, which we call by the less forcible English equivalent, 'the Spirit of the Age.' But, looking back over many past ages, and seeing the utter death and decay of many a '*Zeit-Geist*,' once deemed omnipotent and everlasting, the *Zeit-Geist* of Egyptian Hierophants, of Spanish Inquisitors, of the Schoolman, of the Alchemist, of the Jacobin, one is disposed to look the present Time-Spirit boldly in the face and ask why it, any more than its predecessors, must be infallible and eternal.

There was a time when Final Causes were the bane of all the sciences, when men attempted to deduce from their crude notions of what God ought to have done, a statement of what He has done, and thus easily evaded the toil of true scientific enquiry. Our great master, Bacon, recalled the mind of Man from these fruitless wanderings, and vindicated, for the collection of facts and the observation of law, their true place in all philosophy. But he did not share that spirit of Agnosticism, that serene indifference to the existence of an ordering mind in the Universe, which is professed by many of his followers in the present day. It could not have been said of him, as it may, perhaps, hereafter be said of some of his greatest disciples, 'Blindness in part has fallen upon the Physical Philosopher. While groping eagerly after the How of this visible universe, he has missed the clue to the vaster and more momentous questions of its Why and its By Whom.'

The present writer belongs to the old-fashioned school, which still dares and delights to speak of God in Nature and of God in History. To declare, as we venture to do, with all reverence and confession of our dim-sightedness, that we believe we can trace the finger of the Creator and Lord of the world in events like the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire, is by no means to assert that we can explain the ways of Providence in all the occurrences either of the present or of the past; it by no means commits us to the proposition that 'all things have happened for the best in the best of all possible worlds.' For one who believes in the God of whom the Christian Revelation speaks, or even in the God whom Socrates felt after and found, neither optimism nor pessimism would seem to be the rational frame of mind. We look back over our own lives; we see faults and blunders in them past counting. Assuredly it would have been better for us and for our little fragment of the world that these should not have been committed—so much the pessimist truly urges.

But then, we can also see, as we think—but here each individual of the race must speak for himself—traces of a higher Power contending with us in our blindness, sometimes bringing good out of our follies and mistakes, always seeking to educate us and to raise us

'On stepping-stones
Of our dead selves to higher things'.

In all this we do but ratify the statement of one who had meditated on human nature at least as deeply as any modern sociologist:

'There's a divinity that shapes our ends
Rough-hew them as we will.'

So much the optimist may claim. Why the divinity has not shaped the whole world's career to nought but a good end is confessedly inexplicable, and will perhaps be forever unintelligible to us. Meantime, therefore, we hold the two unreconciled beliefs, in the Almightyness of God and in the existence of evil which is his enemy. To discard either of these beliefs, or to harmonize them, we find equally impossible, and therefore we desist from the attempt, and let both grow together till the harvest. If this be true in the Universal, of the whole 'scheme and constitution of things,' we may reasonably expect to find in the Particular—for instance, in the course of European history—some events of which we may confidently say, 'God brought them to pass in order to promote the welfare of Humanity,' and others of which we can only say, 'Why this irretrievable ruin, in which apparently there lurked no germ of benefit to the Human Race, was permitted, is a mystery.' To apply these general principles to the case before us, we assert with confidence that both the arising and the fall of the Roman Empire were blessings to the human race, and that we are justified in regarding them as the handiwork of an Unseen Power, the Maker and the Friend of Man. But that every step in the upward career of Rome was beneficial to man, or was accomplished with the smallest possible amount of human suffering, we do not believe. Nor, conversely, would we assert that the foundation of the new Teutonic kingdoms might not conceivably have come to pass at a time

and in a way which would have been more beneficial to humanity. It is impossible to read the history of the Early Middle Ages without feeling that, for the first six centuries after the fall of the Western Empire, there is little or no progress. The night grows darker and darker, and we seem to get ever deeper into the mire. Not till we are quite clear of the wrecks of the Carolingian fabric, not till the days of William the Norman and Hildebrand, do we seem to be making any satisfactory progress out of Chaos into Cosmos. It is possible to imagine many circumstances which might have prevented the waste of these six centuries, and perhaps have started Europe on her new career with the faith of the thirteenth century joined to the culture of the age of the Renaissance. Had the sons of Theodosius possessed half the vigor of their father; had Stilicho and Aetius not been stabbed in the back by the monarchs whom they were laboring to defend; had the Arian controversy not made its ineffaceable rift between conquerors and conquered; had the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy and the Visigothic kingdom of Aquitaine not been overthrown by Justinian and by Clovis; had a very slight change in the obscure politics of the Arabian tribes cut short the preaching of Mohammed son of Abdallah; it is possible that centuries of human suffering might have been mitigated, and that the freshness of heart which so many of the European nations seem to have lost in the ages since the Renaissance might still be theirs.

But our business is with the events that were, not with those that might have been. Let us, therefore, proceed to consider some of the secondary causes which in the ordering of the Providence of God, brought about the transfer of the sceptre of Rome into the hands of the Barbarians.

1. The Foundation of Constantinople.

There is perhaps no more striking illustration of a nation's powerlessness to discern the dangers that are really most menacing to its future, than the *Persophobia* (if we may coin a word for history from politics), which, down to the very days of the Visigothic invasion, and even beyond them, seems to have haunted the minds of Roman statesmen. True, the Parthian or Persian Monarchy was the only other civilized or semi-civilized state which rose above the horizon of Roman consciousness. The defeats of Crassus and Valerian, the ignominious peace concluded by the successor of Julian in the plains beyond the Tigris, no doubt alarmed as well as humbled every Roman. Still, after making full allowance for the impressions produced by these events, it is difficult to understand why, when Hun and Vandal and Visigoth were actually streaming into the very heart of the Empire, the Persian should still have been the favorite bugbear of poets and orators. But Claudian, for example, continually speaks of 'the Mede' as Rome's most terrible foe; and when he rises into his highest heaven of prophetic rapture over the glories of Honorius, he always predicts the conquest of Babylon or Ecbatana.

Thus, at the end of his poem on the third Consulship of Honorius, he says to the Imperial brothers,

' E'en now great Babylon despoiled I see,
In fear unfeigned the Parthian horsemen flee;
The Bactrian cons the Roman legist's lore,
Ganges grows pale between each subject shore,
And Persia spreads her gems your feet before.'

And so, in many similar passages, involuntary homage is rendered to the Sassanian monarchs of Persia, by representing them as the most formidable of the antagonists of Rome.

It was this fear of the Persian monarchy which doubtless partly induced Constantine to plant his new capital at the meeting-point of Europe and Asia. In a certain sense it may be said that the measure was justified by its consequences. Except for the disastrous retreat of Julian's army—and even his expedition was a triumph, only converted into a defeat by the over

eagerness of the General—Persia won no considerable victories over Eastern Rome, and in the seventh century she was utterly overthrown by the Emperor Heraclius. Moreover, the wonderful political prescience of the founder of Constantinople was clearly shown by the tenacity with which, through the greater part of eleven stormy centuries, the Empire, which had that city for its brain, clung to life. Avars, Bulgarians, Saracens, Russians, Seljouk Turks, Latin Crusaders, foamed over the surrounding provinces and dashed themselves to pieces against its walls, but none except the Crusaders effected an entrance, and none effected a durable conquest till the terrible day when the dynasty of Palaeologus succumbed to the dynasty of Othman. And the fact that Stamboul is to this day a spell of such portentous power in the incantations of modern diplomatists, is the most powerful of all testimonies to the genius of the young prince who was hailed Emperor by the legionaries at York.

But if the question be asked, What was the effect of the building of Constantinople on Italy and Old Rome? if it be considered that the true object of a statesman of the Lower Empire should have been, not to protract the existence of a semi-Greek, semi-Asiatic dominion, a kind of bastard Rome, but to keep the true Rome, the City of the seven hills, in her high place at the forefront of humanity, or, if she must needs fall, to make her fall as honorable and her transformed spirit as mighty as possible,—then our answer will be widely different, and we shall have to rank the founder of Constantinople foremost among the destroyers of the Empire.

We have seen in the course of this history the infinite mischief wrought by the rivalry between the Ministers of the Eastern and Western Empires. At the critical moment of Alaric's preparations for his invasion Stilicho alone might probably have crushed him; but the subtle Goth

Sold his alternate oaths to either throne.

Each Empire trusted that the blow was about to fall on the other—a blow which the sister-realm would have witnessed with Christian resignation—and thus the time for anticipating it and for destroying the destroyer passed away.

the sort of jealousy which had sprung up between the two capitals is well illustrated by the following lines of Claudian. The passage also gives us a picture of the populace of the New Rome, which, though no doubt charged with hostile feeling, connects itself sufficiently with the Athens of Alcibiades, and the Nika rioters of the days of Justinian, to justify us in accepting its main features as correct.

In consequence of Tribigild's revolt, Eutropius, then 399 chief minister of Arcadius, convenes a sort of Council of War.

Pert youths came there and grey beards lecherous,
 Whose glory was in trencher-combats won.
 A *menu* subtly changed from yesterday's
 Is a most noble exploit in their eyes.
 By costly fare they tickle appetite
 And give to those insatiate maws of theirs
 The starry birds that drew great Juno's car,
 And India's emerald prattlers of the woods.
 Far realms supply their dainties: their deep greed
 The Aegean sea and blue Propontis' lake
 And Azof's straits with all their denizens
 Soothe for an hour, but fail to satisfy.
 Then with what art they wear their scented robes
 Silken, but heavy for those delicate limbs!
 The highest praise is his whose vapid jokes

Move loudest laughter. See their ornaments,
 Fitter for girls than men, their shaven cheeks,
 And mark them on the days of spectacle.
 The Hun, the Goth may thunder at the gates,
 The dancers will not have one gazer less.
Rome's name they ever scorn, and can admire
Only the mansions which the Bosphorus laves.
 Yet there are arts in which e'en these excel:
 Deftly they dance and drive a chariot well.

Of course there is spite in this description, but the fact that such a picture of the Byzantine Court was acceptable to the dwellers by the Tiber shows the estrangement which had sprung up between the Old Rome and the New.

Had the Mistress of the World, when she found herself on all sides begirt by the 'bark of savage nations,' deliberately withdrawn to her own ancient citadel, put her fleets in order at Classis and Misenum, so as to command the upper and the lower seas, and sent her hardiest troops to garrison the difficult passes of the Alps, she might have lost many fair provinces, but the heart of the Empire could hardly have been pierced. It was the diffusion of her vital force over several nerve-centres, Carthage, Alexandria, Antioch, but above all, Constantinople, that ruined her. Some of the suckers lived on, but the old tree perished.

2. Christianity.

It was not by an accidental coincidence that the Roman great historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman necessary Empire was also one of the ablest opponents of the Christian Revelation to whom the last century gave birth. The sound of the vesper-song of barefooted friars in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, which seemed to call him to his great enterprise, suggested to him, not untruly, that an irreconcilable antagonism between the Genius of the Emperors and the Genius of Christianity had caused the ruins which were piled around him. And what seems to call for particular notice here is the fact that both the good and the evil in Christianity contributed to this result; both those great spiritual truths which made the essence of the new Religion when it came forth from the hands of its Divine Founder, and those foreign elements which it borrowed from philosophies and idolatries in the act of battling with them,—all fought against the Rome of the Caesars.

First, as to the essential opposition between the original uncorrupted spirit of Christianity and the continuance of the Roman State. The religious ideas of the Latin and Sabine tribes among whom the great Republic was born, were poor and homely enough, without the Hellenic grace, or the Jewish sublimity, or the Teutonic tenderness; but, such as they were, they absolutely moulded the character and institutions of the Roman people. The Church did not encroach upon the province of the State, it simply was the State. No order of priests contended for power or privilege with the officers of the Republic; those officers themselves, as they reached certain stages in their upward progress, became ministers of the gods, and, without any question as to spiritual fitness, only with so much pretension to morality as an originally moral people naturally required in its chief magistrates, they were clothed, *ex officio*, with a certain sacred character. The word *Religio* itself, whatever be its precise etymological significance, was understood to express the binding, cementing force which a constant reference to unseen supernatural Powers exerts upon a commonwealth. Hence the same myth-making faculty which in the brain of

The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,
 Rivers, and fertile plains, and sounding shores.

created Nymphs and Naiads and Oreads, was employed by the more prosaic Roman to invent fresh gods for every fresh development of the social, the political, even the financial life of Man the Citizen. Thus, according to the curious catalogue of St. Augustine, 'they commended children in the act of birth to the goddess Ops, children crying to the god Vaticanus, lying in their cradles to Cunina, sucking to Rumina, standing to Statilinus, arriving to Adeona, departing to Abeona. They commended them to goddess Mens that they might have a good mind, to Volumnus and Volumna, god and goddess, that they might have a good volition, to the nuptial gods that they might marry well, to the rurals, and especially to goddess Fructesca, that they might receive plenteous fruits, to Mars and Bellona that they might wage war well, to Victoria that they might conquer, to the god Honor that they might be honored, to the goddess Pecunia that they might have plenty of money, to the god Aesculanus and his son Argentinus that that money might be both of bronze and silver. For Aesculanus was made the father because bronze money was coined before silver; and, in truth, I cannot understand why Argentinus did not beget Aurinus, since the silver coinage has been followed by one of gold.'

Such a religious system as this subjects itself easily to ridicule, as easily as the faith of a modern Italian peasant in his own particular Madonna or Bambino, in the San Cristoforo of one village, or the San Lorenzo of another. Like this latter development, too, it probably glanced lightly over the minds of the upper classes of society, and was tenaciously held in all its grotesque minuteness only by the lower. Still this was substantially the religious system under which the Great Republic had grown from youth to manhood; by its Pontiffs had been declared the days for the assembly of the people in the forum, by its augurs had the omens been taken in every one of its battle-fields. The deification of Julius and Augustus was the national expression of the feeling that the greatness of Rome was the peculiar care of the Eternal Gods, and that the spirits which had wrought conspicuously at this grand task during their earthly career, must still survive in the society of the Immortals, to watch over the work of their own hands. It was with this faith—for faith we must surely call it—in their hearts that the legions of Rome had marched on from victory to victory. Their anticipations of reward or punishment in a future life might be vague and varying, but at least they felt that the Great City with which they had linked their fortunes was eternal, and the confidence that she would survive all shocks of adverse fortune, and would treasure the names of her defenders with undying reverence, gave strength, doubtless, not only to a Decius or a Curtius, but also to many a simple Roman legionary at the moment of facing death for her sake.

The whole of this fabric of national faith, with whatsoever in it was noble, and whatsoever in it was puerile, had to fall before the Apostolic proclamation, 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.' If there was any hint in the Christian Scriptures of one nation favored above all others, that nation was the Jewish, if any notion of a city chosen by the Eternal 'to put his name there,' that city was Jerusalem. But the latest and prevailing utterance of the new religion was, 'All nationalities are on the same level before God. He has made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth. Your citizenship, the true *civitas*, which is the highest condition that man can attain to, is in heaven. This *civitas* is within reach of all men, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, and makes brothers of us all.'

There was an incurable opposition between teaching such as this, and the root-idea of the Roman Commonwealth. The rulers of the State felt it, and were forced into persecution, almost against their will. Gladly would they have consigned Christianity to the peaceful Pantheon of the tolerated religions (*religiones licitae*), in which already the worship of Astarte and Mithras, of Isis and the Dea Syria, flourished happily, side by side. But they perceived—the wisest Emperors the most clearly—that this was a religion which would have all or nothing, and they hunted it into the catacombs to bar it from the throne.

The persecutions failed: they enlisted pity, generosity, love of justice, all the nobler feelings of our nature, on the side of the votaries of the new religion, and to these latter they gave a drill, a discipline, we must also in truth add a bitterness of temper, which they had not possessed before. A time came when the Christians found that they were the majority in the Empire, a time when the young Emperor Constantine, with his foot upon the ladder of fortune, was half-convinced of the truth of Christianity, and wholly convinced of the policy of embracing it. For three generations the Emperors, with the exception of the short reign of Julian, were the Christian masters of a household whose traditions were still Pagan. Some of the anomalies which resulted from this position of theirs have been glanced at in previous pages. We have seen that no Emperor till the accession of Gratian dared to refuse the title of Pontifex Maximus, which marked him as head of the State-Church of Heathenism. We have also noticed the incongruity between the acts of Theodosius as Defender of the Catholic Faith and the conventional language of the court poet, who makes him the favorite of Mars and Jupiter during his life, and turns him into a star after his death.

That this strange medley of contending faiths had no effect in enfeebling the resolution of Rome, and making her stroke uncertain, that the regiment which had fought so long under one flag would fight just as well when that flag was replaced by another, as hostile to it as the Lilies to the Tricolour, is what no one would conjecture beforehand. And that the substitution of Christianity for the worship of the deities of the Capitol had something to do with the crumbling away of the Empire in the fifth century, is a conviction which forces itself on our minds, and never so irresistibly as when we are listening to the most eloquent and the most subtle apologist for Christianity, Augustine, endeavoring to prove to us in his book on the City of God that the thing was not so. One turns over page after page of that immortal treatise—that Encyclopedia of the whole religious thought of the age; one feels the absurdity of the Pagan theory, the grandeur of the Christian conception of the vast unseen City of God, but, through it all, the antagonism between the true Roman ideas and the ideas of Christianity rises more and more definitely before the mind, and when we are called upon finally to adjudicate on the question ‘Would the Rome of the Fabii and the Scipios, the Rome which heartily believed in and worshipped Jupiter and Quirinus, Mavors, Ops, and Saturnus, have fallen as the Christian Rome fell before the hordes of Alaric?’ we are bound in our historical conscience to answer, No.

Secondly. In the course of its three hundred years’ struggle for existence the new religion had assimilated some elements, foreign as I venture to think, to its original essence; and by these also it made war on Rome. The spirit of intolerance was one of these extraneous elements, at any rate in so far as it relied on the sword of the civil magistrate to carry its sentences into effect. The words of St. Paul about heretics, ‘With such an one, no, not to eat,’ and of St. John, ‘Receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed,’ were aimed apparently at men whose immorality was bringing the new society into reproach, and contemplated exclusion from that society as the heaviest punishment to be inflicted. The general attitude towards the heathen or the unbelieving Jew was ‘What have I to do with them that are without?’; and the proposal to arrange the worldly affairs, even of Christians, authoritatively, was met by ‘Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?’ ‘Whiles it remained was it not thine own, and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?’. In practice, the relation of the professors of the new faith to ‘them that were without’ during the second century seems to have been reasonable and friendly. Justin Martyr and Quadratus still wore the philosopher’s cloak after their conversion to Christianity, and endeavored to persuade their fellow- countrymen by an appeal to the voice of the soul, who is herself naturally Christian, that the glad tidings which they had to proclaim, though marvelous, were not incredible, and were in harmony with the truest presentiments of man’s own moral nature.

Would that the new religion had always thus calmly addressed herself to the consciences of mankind, that she had never shouted nor shrieked, nor tortured, in order to enforce the acceptance of her message! Earth would be by many degrees more like Heaven at this day, if she had thus remained true to her first gentle instincts.

But the persecutions came and went, and they changed, though they should not have changed, the temper of the Christian champions. So was rendered possible that utterance of Tertullian's (destined to an evil immortality), in which he consoled his brethren for their conscientious abstinence from the pleasures of the Hippodrome by promising them far greater spectacular pleasures in the life to come, when from the safe security of Heaven they should behold so many proud prefects, so many jeering philosophers, writhing in agony under the tortures of the never-dying fires of hell. It may be admitted that the stem, almost morose, temperament of Tertullian is answerable for some of this bitterness, but it would not be difficult to quote passages of a similar tendency from Lactantius and other fathers of the Ante-Nicene Church. In truth, it was not in human nature (though it should have been in the divine that was intermingled with it) to see parents, brothers, sisters, dragged off to an insulting and cruel death, for refusing to sacrifice to the Genius of the Emperor, without some scowl of hatred becoming fixed above the eyes which witnessed these things. And so persecution did not, as was once alleged, always and entirely fail of its end. 'The blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church'; but it was a Church of different habit of growth, and producing more acrid fruit than that which it replaced.

For seventy years, however, after Constantine's edicts in favor of Christianity, the new religion showed herself but little as a persecutor, at least of heathens. The tolerant spirit of Constantine had something to do with this; the internal divisions of the Christian Church, especially the long and fierce Arian debate, still more. The Caesars of Rome, with the exception of Julian, settled down comfortably into their anomalous position, each being at once Pontifex Maximus of the old religion, and Moderator in the doctrinal controversies of the new. It was as if the Ottoman Sultan, still retaining his claim to the Caliphate, were to become a member of the Greek Church, and to throw himself earnestly into the discussions about the Procession of the Holy Spirit.

We have heard Theodosius, at the Council of Constantinople in the year 381, pronouncing the final triumph of the Trinitarian party within the Church, and we have seen something of the increased stringency of his determination to secure for that Church, by the power of the State, the victory over her external foes, whether Heathens or Heretics. True, these persecutions lacked the ferocity of those which were set on foot by Decius and by Galerius; still they were; and for some generations, with quiet, earnest deliberateness, the whole power of the Emperors was employed in making all Christians think alike, and in preventing non-Christians from thinking at all.

Constantius had said, 'We will that all men should abstain from sacrifices, and if any shall hereafter offend against this law, let him be punished by the avenging sword'. But the decree seems to have remained a dead letter, and the heathen sacrifices went on nearly as before. Theodosius enacted new laws against heathen worship, and by such acts as the demolition of the temple of Serapis at Alexandria gave them practical effect. At the same time appeared upon the statute book a cloud of edicts (some of which have been already quoted) against 'the noxious Manicheans and their execrable meetings,' against 'the heretics of the Donatist superstition,' against 'the teachers and leaders of the crime of the Eunomians, especially their clergy whose madness has brought about this great aberration,' against 'all who are tormented by the error of divers heresies, viz., the Eunomians, the Arians, the Macedonian deniers of the Holy Ghost, the Manicheans, the Encratites, the Apotactites, the Saccofori, the Hydroparaatae.' Fine, imprisonment, loss of office, prohibition to assemble in the town or to

give to their places of meeting the appearance of churches, restriction of their testamentary power—these are the penalties thundered forth in many an edict against men who had committed no crime against the State, but whose theology was different from the Emperor's.

The ferocity and the terror of Diocletian's persecutions have passed away, but we find ourselves breathing the same atmosphere of petty ecclesiastical tyranny which produced the Five Mile Act and Conventicle Act of Charles II, the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics of William III and Anne. If there were nothing more to be said against it, this attempt to harass men into uniformity of religious opinion was an enormous waste of power, at a time when the energies of the State were scarcely sufficient for its own proper work of administration. But what made the matter worse, from the point of view of a Roman statesman, was that the religion which was being maintained in domination at the cost of all this legislative combat, was itself in no way essential to, nay, rather as has been before said, was of necessity antagonistic to, the root-idea of the Roman Commonwealth. A Mohammedan Sultan pressing heavily on the Giaour, an Israelitish monarch slaying the priests of Baal, a Most Catholic king of Spain burning Jews or expelling Moriscoes, were all acting more or less in accordance with the spirit of which their royalty was the expression. But a Roman Emperor harassing the Encratites or the Apotactites because the building in which they assembled for divine worship too closely resembled a church of the orthodox, was an utterly un-Roman Roman, an anomaly not only vexatious but ridiculous.

Yet it is probable that to the somewhat narrow, martinet mind of Theodosius, and still more to the dazed intellects of his sons, these measures of religious persecution appeared solemn duties; nay more, that they regarded them as peace-offerings, which would ensure the secular safety of the Empire. The increasing calamities which befell the State were taken as manifestations of the wrath of God; and no more obvious means of conjuring away that wrath suggested themselves than the enactment of a new and sharper law against the Manichean pravity or the Arian madness.

In the mist and darkness which have gathered over the history of the fifth century, a mist and a darkness through which only the bare forms of events are discernible, while thoughts and feelings are utterly hidden, we know little indeed of the mood of mind in which these successive Acts of Uniformity were received by the objects of them. Heathenism and Heresy, like wounded creatures, crept back to their caves and died there, but after what conflicts or with what struggles we know not. The name 'Paganus' (villager), for the worshipper of the old gods, is one among many indications that Christianity conquered first the great cities, the centres of intellectual and commercial activity, and then gradually, and we can hardly say how slowly, pushed her way into lonely glens or wide unfrequented pasture-lands, and made the dwellers there bow before the cross. Yet even in the cities and at the Imperial Courts the victory was not fully won in the reign of Theodosius. It is a noteworthy fact how many of the small band of literary men, who flourished in the latter days of the Empire, remained faithful to the old superstitions. Ammianus Marcellinus, Zosimus, Priscus, the chief historians of this period, are all Pagans, one at least of them a bitter Pagan. Nor is it by any means certain that Procopius, the great historian of the reign of Justinian, ought not to be added to the list.

Two other elements of the Christianity of the third and fourth centuries cooperated in a subordinate degree towards the decay of the Empire. These were the Priestly Hierarchy and the Monastic Self-seclusion.

The fires of Roman persecution had, doubtless, much to do with hardening and shaping, as into a point of tempered steel, that marvellous episcopal organization which was one day to penetrate the world. As the soldiers who survive on a well-fought battle-field look towards the officers who have been with them in the thickest of the fray, so we may imagine the hearts of the believers to have glowed with fresh loyalty towards the rulers of the Church, when the rage

of the Decian or the Galerian persecution was at length abated, and they had leisure to count their losses. Thus, here also to the repressive measures of the Emperors must be attributed some involuntary share in the change which came over the spirit of the Church between the first century and the fourth, and which separates the simple and scarcely differentiated Overseers and Elders of the Acts of the Apostles from the full-grown Bishops and Priests of the time of Constantine. It is not likely that such a well-disciplined and compact organization as the Christian hierarchy can have grown up within and yet outside of the Empire without impairing somewhat of its strength. And such victories as were won by Athanasius over Constantius, or by Ambrose over Theodosius, though they command our fullest sympathy as noble triumphs of the moral over the material, had probably some effect in lessening the reverence which men felt for the Augustus as a kind of 'present divinity,' and so in loosening the fabric of the Empire. Yet possibly we ought not to attribute large results to this cause. The great strifes between Bishop and Sovereign belong to a later age, to the barbarian monarchies or to the Eastern Empire. Except indirectly, in so far as it may have favored the persecution of heathens and heretics, the Christian hierarchy need not be held responsible for a large share in the pulling down of Imperial Rome.

Probably we may come to a similar conclusion with reference to that other great phenomenon of the religious life of the fourth and fifth centuries, the rise and progress of the monastic system. It is interesting to see how this was viewed by an educated, though certainly not unbiassed Pagan. Zosimus, speaking of the riots at Constantinople in connection with the exile of Chrysostom (401), says, 'The city was filled with uproar, and the Christian church was occupied by the men who are called Monks. Now these men renounce lawful wedlock, and fill large colleges in the cities and villages with unmarried persons, profitless for war and for any other of the State's necessities. Yet have they, in the interval between that time and the present' [perhaps half a century], 'made great advances, so that they have now appropriated a large part of the land, and under pretence of distributing all their substance to the poor, have, in a manner, made all poor alike.'

The withdrawal of so many men in the prime of life from the pursuits of industry and the defence of the state, must undoubtedly have lessened the resources of the Empire, especially as these monks were not, like their successors in the Middle Ages, the restorers of the waste places, the doctors, engineers, and journalists of the community. At a time when the manliest virtue was required to stem the torrent of corruption within and barbarism without, men of noble soul and cultured intellect, like St. Jerome, retired into the caves of Bethlehem, leaving the world a prey to hypocrites and rogues, such as Olympius and Eutropius. As the latter class of men, despairing of the Roman state, sought to build up their own fortunes on the general ruin, so the former class, with the same despair of the republic in their hearts, determined at least to secure their own soul's salvation, and to live for this alone. The selfishness was of a higher kind, but it would be hard to deny that it was selfishness, and that the true Christian impulse would have been to struggle on undaunted, and persist in the endeavour to leave the world better than they found it.

But, having admitted this negative charge against monkery, we cannot assign to it, in the Western Empire at least, any great active influence for ruin. In the East, during the fifth century, the power of the monks was no doubt far more hurtful to the State. 'Armies of mad monks rushing through the streets of Alexandria,' and their brethren in Constantinople stirring up the people to shout for the deposition of the 'Manichean tyrant,' whenever an Emperor swerved by a hair's breadth from the razor-bridge of orthodoxy as defined in the Council of Chalcedon—these were undoubtedly disintegrating and dangerous forces; and when they were predominant, the government of the Empire might truly be styled a government by lunatics. In the West we see no such spectacles at the time which we are now discussing, and it would be a

scandalous injustice to class the calm Paulinus of Nola and the learned Claudianus Mamertus of Vienne with the turbulent Eutyches, or the blood-stained Barsumas of Constantinople.

3. *Slavery.*

‘It was no accidental catastrophe which patriotism and genius might have warded off: it was old social evils—at the bottom of all, the ruin of the middle class by the slave proletariat — that brought destruction on the Roman commonwealth’ (Mommsen, *History of Rome*, book 4. chap. 2).

The men of our generation, who have read the story of General Sherman’s march through Georgia, are in a better position than their ancestors for estimating the part played by slavery in bringing about the ruin of Rome. The short-lived Southern Confederacy in America had many points of resemblance to the Roman republic. It was administered by wealthy cultivators of the soil, born warriors, born orators, a proud and courageous people. All that mere fighting could do to preserve its existence was ably and, at first, successfully done; but Slavery, that rock of offence which the Planters had made the corner-stone of their new edifice, proved its ruin. The truth had been suspected for some little time before, but was fully proved when Sherman’s scarcely-resisted march through three hundred miles of the enemy’s country showed the hollowness of a political organization which had been massing its armies, by hundreds of thousands at a time, on the banks of the Potomac, but which could not reckon on its own inhabitants to resist or seriously to harass an invader who had once broken through the wall of steel on the frontier. It could not reckon upon them, because the majority of them were themselves a hostile nation, made so by the institution of slavery. True, in America as in Italy, the oppressed class waited long before they dared to show on which side their sympathies lay. This is, for a time, that which turns the scale in favor of the slave-holder, that his chattels are too debased to be capable of self-organization, too ignorant to understand the great movements in the world of politics and war, too servile-hearted to dare to embrace what may not prove the winning side. But if there comes at length such a time as came in Georgia lately, and in Etruria long ago, when the slave sees with his own eyes a man, mightier than his master, come to overthrow all that existing order which has weighed on him so heavily, and saying, ‘Help me, and I will give you freedom,’ then is seen the strange magic which lies in that word freedom for even the heaviest clods of humanity; then the comfortable persuasion of the self-deceived slaver owner, that his chattel will fight for the luxury of continuing to be a chattel, vanishes; like snow in summer.

We have had to record one instance—many more have probably been left unrecorded—of the readiness of the Roman slaves to turn against their masters. In the interval between the first and second sieges of Rome by Alaric, the slaves, to the number of 40,000, fled to the barbarian camp. In his usual tantalizing way Zosimus forgets to tell us the denouement of the story, but it may be conjectured that the greater part of these slaves, if they ever returned to Rome, returned with the army of Alaric through the blazing Salarian Gate to guide their new friends to the plunder of their old oppressors.

It would have been interesting to know what was the total number of slaves in existence at any particular period of the Empire, but a complete census of the whole population of the Roman world, free and servile, if it ever existed, has not survived to our day. Gibbon guesses the number of the slaves all over the Empire at the time of Claudius at sixty millions; and it seems to be impossible either to prove or disprove his conjecture. We are told, in round numbers, that some citizens possessed 10,000 or 20,000 slaves apiece, and with more apparent accuracy that a certain freedman under Augustus, although he had been impoverished by the civil wars, left at his death 4,116 slaves. From other sources we learn that in the days of Augustus, 200 slaves were not considered at all an exorbitantly large establishment, and that he

who had only five or ten was looked upon as either very poor or very mean. In view of these facts, 40,000 seems a very small number for even the mere house-slaves in Rome at the time of its siege by Alaric. Possibly the removal of the Court to Ravenna, and the troublous character of the times, had led to the withdrawal of most of the wealthy slave-owners from Rome; or the crowds of freedmen and paupers supported by the public distribution of wheat may, in Rome itself, have thinned, by a kind of competition, the number of actual bondsmen. Or, which is perhaps the most likely supposition of all, Zosimus, the writer from whom the story of the fugitive slaves is extracted, is speaking in his usual somewhat inaccurate style when he says, that 'nearly all' the slaves in Rome deserted to the camp of Alaric.

As mention has been made of slavery as it existed down to our own days in the United States of North America, and as this is that type of the peculiar American institution which most readily suggests itself to our minds, it may be well to remind the reader of a few obvious points of dissimilarity between the two forms of servitude, the Roman and the American.

I. It seems probable that the condition of a slave under a Roman master was harder than that of the negro in the Southern States of America. Cruel men of course abused their dangerous power in both countries, while, under men of exceptional gentleness, the lot of the slave may have lost almost all that made it to differ from that of a hired laborer. But the great mass of masters, the men of average character, had in the United States a conception of duty towards their fellow-men which was, at least in some degree, influenced by the spirit of Christianity, while the Roman derived his notions of duty from such teachers as Cato the Censor, who, in a well-known passage, uttered his opinion that whenever a slave was not asleep he ought to be at work, and that a master should always sell off his aged slaves as well as his broken-down horses. Certainly this cannot have been either the theory or the practice in Virginia or Tennessee, hardly even, one would hope, in Mississippi or Alabama. It is true that the tendency of legislation under the Emperors had been towards greater mildness in the treatment of slaves. The master's absolute power of life and death was taken away; in cases where he had practiced extreme cruelty he might be compelled to sell the victim of it; and the huge gloomy *ergastula*, the prisons in which the slaves had been locked up at night after their labor in the fields (which, if not subterranean, were always lighted by windows high up in the walls, from which there was no chance of escape), were legally abolished, and perhaps practically disused. Still, the life of the Roman's slave, especially of him who was engaged in agriculture, seems to have been hard and dismal beyond even the hardness and dismalness of ordinary negro slavery.

II. Yet in two aspects, more important perhaps than all beside, the condition of the Italian bondsman was better than that of the American. Love and hope were left to him. The breeding of slaves for sale was an unusual though not unknown practice; and consequently though families must sometimes have been separated, even as they are now by the ordinary economic laws of supply and demand, that great blot on the American system, the systematic tearing away of the wife from her husband and the mother from her child, did not disgrace the Roman slave-owners. Manumission also must have been a far more frequent incident of servile life among the ancients, and when it came it opened up a far happier and more unhindered career.

This difference between the two systems is chiefly due to the obvious and fundamental distinction, that in Rome there did not, as in America, yawn the wide chasm of absolute diversity of race between bond and free. All nations, even the noblest of antiquity, were represented in the slave market at Rome. The Greek doctor, or pedagogue, or scribe, the lusty Cappadocian who bore the litter, the Hebrew of whose nation Titus sold 97,000 into bondage, the Syrian, the Celt, the Dacian, the German, were all in their various ways ministering to the luxury or providing for the wants of the Roman master. From such a motley throng combination was little to be dreaded, and on the other hand there was in them no great

inferiority of race to prevent the slave, once liberated, from standing side by side with his old master. Hence, and from motives of pride and profit which made the freedman often a more desirable appendage to the family of the Roman noble than the slave himself, arose the great frequency of manumission, which was indeed slightly checked in the time of Augustus, on account of the number of debased citizens with whom it was flooding the Commonwealth, but which remained a sufficiently common practice sensibly to ameliorate the condition of the Roman slave by introducing into it the vast medicament of Hope.

We turn to American slavery, and we see at once a mighty contrast. There every member of the servile caste belonged to one race, and that race one separated by wide ethnological interspaces from the dominant one, and far below it in intellectual energy. It is said that a proposition once made in the Roman Senate, to order all the slaves to wear a distinctive dress, was rejected, on the ground that it would be dangerous thus to reveal to them their superiority in numbers. What the Senate had denied in that case, Nature had done ineffaceably in the case of 'persons held to bondage' under the American laws, by clothing them all with one sable livery. Hence arose, on the one hand, the pride of race which placed the meanest of 'the mean whites' above the most honest and capable man of African descent, and which denied to the latter, however large his share of European blood, *ex parte paterna*, any share in the duties and rewards of civil life. Hence, on the other hand, arose the fear of race, causing the State to throw the whole weight of its influence into the scale against manumission, and imposing upon every man, whose skin bore witness to the servile condition of his ancestors, the burden of proof that he was not himself a slave. This state of the law and of public feeling was of course utterly absent in old Rome.

III. And, yet again, there was a difference which probably made the position of the negro, when he began to reason and to reflect, more intolerable than that of the Dacian or the Syrian in a Roman villa or on an Italian farm. In the fifth century the conscience of the whole civilized world acquiesced in the fact of slavery; in the nineteenth it protested against it. The Roman legislator said that this abrogation of the natural rights of man was an institution of the universal law of nations, and his saying was confirmed by the fact that there was in all probability not one nation then existing, civilized or barbarian, wherein Slavery, in one form or another, did not exist. And so the bondsman of those days submitted to his servile condition, as men now submit to poverty or disease, grumbling indeed that they have drawn a bad number in the lottery of life, but without any intolerable feeling of injustice, without any indignant questioning, 'Why was this horrible fate ever placed for me or for any one among the possible conditions of existence?'

In America we all know what far different thoughts rankled in the breast of a high-spirited and intelligent slave. Great nations were living and flourishing without this institution which made his life hateful to him. Wide sections of the Christian Church condemned it as a crime against God and man. A week perhaps, or two weeks of nightly journeying towards the North Star, would take him to a land where no slaves toiled; a few weeks more would set him beyond the possibility of recapture. Assuredly this ever present thought that Liberty was in the world, was near, but was not for him, must have made the chains of many an American slave more galling, must have raised, sometimes almost to madness, his exasperation against the social system which was his foe.

IV. Upon a review therefore of the main points of likeness and unlikeness between these two conditions of society, it seems reasonable to conjecture that the men who were owned by Roman masters were less dissatisfied with their lot than those who belonged to the American planters, and that Slavery as a disruptive force was more fatal to the Southern Confederacy than to the Western Empire.

But in Rome it had been working through twelve centuries, in the United States for less

than three, and therefore its evil effects were less lasting, one may venture to hope, in the latter instance than in the former. Slavery had aided in the massing together of those 'wide farms' which were the ruin of Italy. Slavery had emptied the fields and villages of the hardy rustics who had once been the backbone of Roman power. Slavery had filled the cities with idle and profligate babblers. Slavery had indoctrinated these men, themselves often freedmen or the sons of freed-men, with the pestilent notion that manual labor was beneath the dignity of a citizen. And lastly, Slavery had surrounded the thrones of the Emperors with men like Eutropius and Chrysaphius, who, by the favor of a fatuous master, crept from the position of a menial to that of a Prime Minister, and who, when their turn came, bitterly revenged upon Society the wrongs which they had suffered at its hands.

A new and happier world was to arise out of the ruins of the old. Slavery was to be softened into Serfdom, and Serfdom was slowly to disappear, both changes being largely attributable to the benign influence of the Christian Church. The fine old mediaeval motto,

'By hammer and hand
All arts do stand,'

was to drive out, at any rate from the cities, the old, irrational, scorn of handicraft; and the *ergastulum* and the scourge were to vanish like an evil dream. And so if Slavery was a cause, the Abolition of Slavery was to be a result, though by no means an immediate result, of the Fall of the Empire.

4. 'Panem et Circenses,' or the Pauperisation of the Roman Proletariat.

The Roman State at the beginning and the end of its career pursued towards its poorer classes two opposite lines of policy, both unjust, one of which might reasonably have been expected to strangle the rising nationality in its childhood, while the other certainly hastened the ruin of its old age.

In the first ages of the Republic the plebeian soldier was expected to leave his farm or his business to serve for a short campaign against the Aequians or Volscians, and to return to a home which had in many instances suffered from the depredations of the enemy, enriched only by a precarious portion of the booty, which, by the fortune of war or the unfairness of the dividing general, might turn out to be worth little or nothing. The real gain of the most successful wars, the public land, was farmed out often at little more than a nominal rent to the senators or a few wealthy plebeians. Thus the whole tendency of the incessant wars of the Republic was to make the rich richer and the poor poorer, a tendency aggravated by the high rates charged for interest and by the stern attitude of the Roman law towards the defaulting debtor. The well-known picture drawn in the Second Book of Livy of the brave old centurion, whose farm had been plundered during his absence with the army, and who, under the crushing load of debt and taxation, had been obliged first to part with the inheritance of his ancestors and then to surrender his person into the hands of his cruel creditor, and who at length escaped from his place of torment into the Forum, where his squalid garb, his long unkempt hair, his old and honorable scars received in battle with the enemy, and the new and shameful scourge-marks upon his back inflicted by the slave of a Roman senator, stirred the people to fury :— this picture may not be precisely and historically true of the 259th year of the city, yet doubtless it is a type of many a similar occurrence in those early days of the tyranny of wealth.

The characteristic of Roman Legislation at this period is its contempt for the rights of the individual, its frightfully unfair notion of the partnership between him and the State—a partnership in which he gave his time, his blood, his heroism, to promote the glory of Rome, and received in return nothing, not even permission to live on the land of his fathers.

In the later phases of the Roman Commonwealth the opposite error was committed. After the Second Punic War the State really asked nothing of the poor citizen of Rome, and gave him

everything that was necessary for life, and, in so giving, deprived him of

‘ Man’s first, noblest, birthright, Toil.’

The pauperizing legislation of Rome first wore the insidious form of a gentle intervention to lower the price of corn. When Spain, Sicily, and Africa were pouring in their tributes of corn or money to the exchequer of the Republic, it was not an unnatural suggestion that the wealth thus acquired might fairly be expended in easing the material condition of the Roman citizens, of the men on whom had fallen the heaviest weight of all the blows from Regillus to Cannae, by which the Roman State had been fashioned into greatness. Not an unnatural thought; and yet if the remembrance of the scourged veteran in the Forum, and of all the cruel wrongs of the early Plebeians, had anything to do with ripening it into action, we have here an instance of that strange Nemesis of Unrighteousness, which sometimes leads statesmen in the very excess of their penitence for an injustice in the past to prepare a new and greater injustice for the future. It had been a cruel wrong to send forth the Roman Plebeian to fight the Volscian or Aequian, and not even to keep his homestead free from the exactions of the creditor, who would not have been a creditor but for the military service of the breadwinner. It was not less a wrong to make the Spaniard or the Sicilian toil, in order to enable the descendants of that same Plebeian to prolong a life of idleness and dissipation in the Roman Forum.

And, indirectly, this interference with true economic laws injured Italy no less than the Provinces. How was the Etrurian or Sabine farmer to grow his corn to a profit, when the whole machinery of the administration of the Republic was being employed to sell corn from beyond the seas at far less than cost price in the Roman capital? This was not Free Trade; it was, if we may use the expression, Protection turned inside out; it was a systematic exclusion of the Italian corn-grower from his own natural market. Of course the Italian farmer, already sorely harassed by the necessity of competition with slave-labour, succumbed, and virtually disappeared from the scene. The *latifundia*, the vast domains worked by celibate slaves, took the place of the small yeomen’s holdings; the horrible *ergastulum* replaced the free and happy homestead; sheep-walks, vine-yards, and olive-yards occupied the ground once employed in the growth of corn, and, more important by far than even the disappearance of her waving corn-fields, Italy ceased to produce men as she had once done, just when the need of men to bear the world-wide burden of her Empire was the greatest.

There were great fluctuations in the market price of corn under the Republic. In the Second Punic War it rose as high as 51 shillings the quarter; in the wars between Marius and Sulla as high as 102 shillings, during a great famine under Augustus to 115 shillings. But these were simply famine prices. On the other hand, during a year of great plenty near the close of the Second Punic War, the price was as low as two shillings and eight pence a quarter. A little later, according to Polybius, it was frequently sold in the valley of the Po for two shillings and eleven pence a quarter. As between these wide fluctuations it appears to be admitted that about 21 shillings a quarter was the ordinary market price. Now, by the legislation of price fixed Caius Gracchus, each citizen had the right to claim every month a bushel and a quarter of corn from the public stores for seventeen pence, that is to say at the rate of nine shillings a quarter, or less than half the average market price. The rest of the legislation of the younger Gracchus died with him, but this, its worse feature, remained. When supreme power passed from the Senate and the Assembly of the People to the Caesars, these latter rulers, though in many respects the champions of the Provincials against Rome, did not dare to withdraw the supplies of cheap corn from the citizens, though they did limit—eventually to 200,000—the number of persons who were entitled thus to purchase it. Gradually the form of sale and purchase was done away with, and the distribution became simply gratuitous. By the middle of the second century of our era, the monthly supplies of corn had been changed for the far more convenient and even more pauperizing distribution of wheaten loaves, baked perhaps two or three times a

week.

When Aurelian ascended the throne, the loaf which the Roman citizen was thus entitled to receive (we know not for how many days' consumption), weighed the largess one *uncia* (that is 1'1/2) less than two pounds. As he went forth from the gates of the city on his expedition against the Queen of Palmyra, he announced to the people that if he should return victorious he would present each one of them with a crown of two pounds' weight. The citizens expected that these crowns would be of gold, a donative which was beyond the power and the inclination of Aurelian. Yet were they not altogether disappointed, for when he had been drawn in triumph up the Sacred Hill, preceded by the weeping Zenobia, he commanded that wheaten loaves, shaped like crowns and weighing each two pounds, should be distributed to the people. Through the remainder of his life and apparently during the reigns of his successors, these larger loaves were given to those who possessed the needful *tessera* or out-door relief ticket, and this *uncia* added to the civic rations seems to have been seriously regarded by the patriotic but ill-advised Emperor as one of his chief titles to greatness. In writing to Arabianus the Public Commissary-General (*Praefectus Annonae*), he says, 'Of all the good deeds which by the favor of the Immortal Gods I have wrought for the Commonwealth none is more splendid than this, that I have increased the distribution of corn to every citizen by one *uncia*. To ensure the perpetuity of this benefit I have appointed more ship-masters for the Nile and for the river-traffic of Rome. I have raised the banks of the Tiber and deepened the channel of its headstrong current. I have paid my vows to Perennity and the other Gods, I have consecrated a statue of the gracious Ceres. Now be it thy task, my dearest Arabianus, to see that these arrangements of mine be not unfruitful. For there is nothing in the world more cheerful than the Roman people when they have well eaten'. This same Emperor, though fond of repressing what he considered inordinate luxury (forbidding his wife to wear a silken dress because silk was then worth its weight in gold, and proscribing the use of gold threads and gilded ceilings, whereby he considered that a metal which ought to be as plentiful as silver was unnecessarily wasted), nevertheless added to the rations of the Roman people, articles which can hardly be considered as of prime necessity. He gave them pork and oil and wine; at least as to the last gift he had taken measures for planting extensive vineyards in Etruria, and cultivating them with slave-labor for the sake of a gratuitous distribution of wine to the citizens, but according to one story the scheme was frustrated by the intervention of the Praetorian Prefect who told the generous Emperor that if he gave them wine he would have to supplement his gifts with roast ducks and chickens. He also gave them white tunics with long sleeves imported from various provinces of the Empire, and linen garments from Africa and Egypt. A generous and popular Emperor doubtless, but Communism thus robed in the purple is an excellent destroyer of Commonwealths.

Legislation Let us now traverse an interval of a hundred years, and see what shape this system of out-door relief had assumed under the dynasty of the Valentinians. A long Title of the Theodosian code is devoted to the subject. It contains fifteen laws, chiefly the handiwork of the Emperors Valentinian and Valens, partly of Theodosius I and his sons. The first point which strikes us is, that Rome no longer enjoys a monopoly of the often lauded 'Imperial Munificence.' Constantine in founding his new capital by the Bosphorus has conferred upon it also the doubtful boon of the *Annona* or free largess of corn; and in order to meet the requirements of this largess, the corn-ships of Alexandria—as was remarked on a previous occasion—are now diverted from Rome to Byzantium. The City by the Tiber has now practically only the corn-fields of that province of which her ancient rival, Carthage, is the capital, to look to for her supplies. Antioch and Alexandria seem also to have shared in the public distributions, but the edicts relating to these cities do not appear in the code, possibly because their largesses were left to be regulated by the local authorities.

In Rome and Constantinople the Theodosian code presents us with a lively but strange picture of this organization of pauperism. Three great classes are the recipients of that which is called by a courtly fiction 'the bounty of the Emperors.' These classes are the *Palatini*, the *Militares*, and the *Populares*, that is to say, the servants of the palace, the soldiers, and the mass of the people. The last class receive their rations strictly as householders. The law is very decided on this point, the rations must follow the houses; that is to say, if a citizen who has been receiving the ration alienates his house, he loses the right to his daily loaf. At Constantinople special stress is laid on the great Founder's desire to encourage house-building in his new city, and an attempt is made (apparently not a successful one) to limit even the soldiers' share in the *annona* to those who possess houses in the capital.

The three classes seem to have received their rations seated on some of the great public staircases in which the City of the Seven Hills abounded, and yet abounds. Some have thought that they were all collected for this purpose in the Colosseum, but it seems more probable that each of the fourteen Regions of the City had its own flight of steps on which the applicants seated themselves, as well as its own bakery, from which they were supplied. Each class of recipients is mustered apart; the *Palatini*, the *Militares*, the *Populares*, have each their own tiers of seats. The bread which is distributed to them is called 'the Step-Bread' (*Panis Gradilis*), and the separate classes are known as 'Steps.' Stringent laws forbid the transference of the *Panis Gradilis* from one 'Step' to another, and the Public Commissary-General (*Praefectus Annonae*) is warned that the severest penalties hang over him, if he suffers this regulation to be infringed. The prohibition can hardly relate to the mere physical transportation of a loaf of bread from one stone stair to another. It probably means that each class of recipients was to be considered as complete in itself, and that in case of death or removal, the lapsed ration of a *Palatinus* was to be transferred only to another *Palatinus*, that of a *Popular* is to another *Popularis*.

But from such an inversion of the great industrial the laws upon which Society is founded, abuse was inseparable. The holders of the *Tessera*, or relief-ticket, eager to accept the alms of the State, but anxious to escape from the ignominy of asking for them, used to present themselves at the great public bakeries, and there, probably by bribery, obtain the loaves to which they were entitled. This practice was forbidden, and it was ordained 'that all men should receive their step-bread from the steps, and that none should be handed out by the shop-keepers, lest thereby any fraud should arise concerning the *Panis Gradilis*.'

A brazen tablet was to be affixed to the wall, near to the steps of distribution, and on it the name of the receiver and the measure of bread due to him were to be engraved. 'And if any one's impertinence should carry him so far that he shall usurp for himself or his family the right of that bread, and get his name wrongfully inserted in the brazen tablet, he shall receive chastisement according to his condition.'

The meaning of these last words is made more clear by a savage decree of the Emperor Valentinian (370). It seems that some of the Senators and great men of Rome were guilty of the meanness of sending members of their households to receive this public bread, which was of course intended only for the poorer class of free citizens. Thereupon the edict runs: 'Should the steward or slave of any Senator wrongfully obtain the *Panis Gradilis* by direct purchase from the clerk of distribution, or by bribery, or even by his mere connivance, let such steward or slave be subjected to the torture of the *equuleus*. If it appears that he was prompted to this illegality by his own impudence, without the knowledge of his master, let him serve in chains in that bakery which he has been defrauding. Should, however, complicity in the offence be traced to his master, let the house of that Senator be confiscated for the use of the treasury.'

'In other ranks of life, if any one who is possessed of private resources shall confess the aforesaid crime, let him and all that he has be bound over to the service of the bakery.'

‘If he shall be of the very poorest classes’—a provision which shows that this demoralizing largess did not even answer the purpose of a Poor-law since ‘the very poorest’ were not all entitled to it—‘he shall be forced to labor as if he were a slave.

‘As for the clerks of distribution who shall be proved to have perpetrated this forbidden wickedness, the sword which is the vindicator of the laws shall be drawn against them.’

It would weary the reader were we to trace in further detail the intricacies of the legislation concerning the *annonae*. There are arrangements for changing stale loaves (*sordidi panes*) for new, edicts granting a certain supply of oil to persons designated by the Prefect of the City ‘for the refreshment of their frames,’ edicts forbidding the soldiers of the Imperial Guard to transmit their right to the ration as a hereditary claim to their children, and again, other edicts repealing these.

It is a labyrinth of Imperial legislation, and all leading to what end? To the maintenance in idleness of the worthless population of four great cities, a population which every wise legislator would have sought by every means in his power to divert from the cities, to lead back into the country, to marry to the land, to raise to something of the dignity of manhood by that wrestling with Nature for her blessings, which makes up the daily life of Agriculture. But no : the old legal fiction of the sovereignty of the Roman people still survived, and therefore the so-called citizen of Rome—the descendant in all probability of a Syrian or Cappadocian slave—must be allowed to spend his days in lordly idleness, seeing the charioteers drive, and the gladiators die, and then presenting himself at the appointed time at the steps of his ‘regio’ to receive his Panis Gradilis from the bounty of the Emperor. And, to accomplish this desirable end, the administrative energies of the declining Empire must be weighted with the duties of a vast and complicated commissariat alike in peace and in war.

5. Destruction of the Middle Class by the fiscal Oppression of the Curiales.

We have seen how the social and political system of Rome tended to destroy the free laborers in the country, and to degrade them in the great cities. We have now to consider that system of fiscal oppression by which the Empire crushed out the life of the middle classes in the provincial towns. A great French statesman, who has treated of this subject with a fullness of knowledge drawn both from books and from practical politics, considers that this cause was more powerful than all others in bringing about the ruin of Rome.

The civilization of the great Republic was essentially a municipal civilization. An urban community herself, she naturally associated herself with other urban communities, and wherever her influence has profoundly and permanently modified the life of any modern people, it will be found that that people is, by choice and not from the mere force of economic laws, urban in its tastes and its habits. The towns of Italy and of the provinces possessed, during the ages of the Republic, very various privileges, and stood in very various relations to the sovereign City. Some were *coloniae*, own children of Rome, some were *municipia*, stranger towns, gathered within the circle of ‘the Roman friendship or subjection.’ But as the power of the Emperors grew, and as the forms of popular government by assemblies of the citizens at Rome faded into insignificance, the diversities of privilege between the various cities of the Empire faded also. Political power was now all gathered up into one centre, and lodged in the hands of one single man, the Augustus at Rome, who might delegate it to prefect or vicar, as he chose. But municipal freedom still existed—that is to say, during the first three centuries after the Christian era—and municipal power was lodged in the hands of magistrates, freely chosen by the persons who owned as much as fifteen acres (twenty-five *jugera*) in the borough or district round it. The affairs of the little republic were managed by an assembly modelled upon the Senate of Rome itself. It was called sometimes the Senate, sometimes the Curia, and its

members, who obtained a seat as the Roman Senators did, by filling some office in the State, were called *Decuriones*, possibly because there were originally ten minor Curiae of ten members each, thus furnishing a total of one hundred members to the Senate. In the large towns, however, this number was often exceeded. Marquardt points out that at Antioch the number of *Decuriones* varied from 1200 at its best estate to sixty at its worst. The sepulchral inscriptions, which we now see in such numbers in the Italian museums, recording that the dead man was a *Decurio* of his native town, show that the title was, for several centuries, one which conferred a certain amount of social distinction on the holder, and we may perhaps say that the D E C of these Latin epigraphs corresponds to the ESQ. of an English churchyard.

Thus, during these early centuries of the Empire, the local government of the towns was both in name and in fact republican. We need only recur to some familiar examples in the Acts of the Apostles, to understand how these municipal liberties existed side by side with the great machine of the Imperial administration, independent in their own sphere, yet trembling lest by any unauthorized proceeding they should be brought within its far-reaching and heavy stroke. The Praetors of Philippi are afraid when their *lictors* bring them word that the men whom they have scourged and thrust into prison are Roman citizens. The seven *politarchs* of Thessalonica are troubled when the mob of lewd fellows of the baser sort come surging round them, accusing the inmates of Jason's house of acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, and teaching that there is another king, one Jesus. The Recorder of Ephesus is anxious that the dispute between Paul and the silversmiths should be determined in a legal manner before the tribunal of the Proconsul of Asia, and that the authorities of the city should not have to answer difficult interrogatories as to the cause of the tumultuary assembly in the theatre. Continually we find ourselves in presence of real and living, though somewhat precarious, forms of local self-government.

The first two centuries and a half of the Empire may be perhaps considered as the golden age of the municipalities, and the large amount of prosperity and happiness thus secured to the middle classes of society was probably the chief cause of the admitted success of the Imperial administration during the greater part of that period. Numerous laws were passed in favor of the municipalities. They were permitted to receive, and probably did receive, large gifts and bequests of property from their members. Fraud practised upon them by one of their officials was made equivalent, not to simple theft, but to the heavier offence of peculation.

The Decurions were exempted from capital punishment for every crime but that of parricide. Finally, the municipal treasury, devoted to the construction and maintenance of great public works, roads, bridges, temples and theatres, and to the celebration of the solemn public sacrifices, was easily kept full, and had not as yet attracted the avaricious regards of the Emperors, who 'found the treasures of Rome and the ordinary contributions of the provinces suffice for the needs, and even for the follies, of the central power.'

From the brightness of this picture some abatement must doubtless be made, as regards the seventy years of anarchy and confusion which intervened between the death of Caracalla and the accession of Diocletian (217—284). It is not possible that when mutiny, rebellion, and civil war were the chronic condition of the Empire, the municipalities can have enjoyed the full measure of their former prosperity. But whatever they may have suffered in this way was probably irregular and exceptional. It could scarcely yet be said, as far as the curiales were concerned, that the throne of the Emperors was 'a throne of iniquity framing mischief by a law.'

This last and fatal phase in the history of the municipalities was probably, in great measure, the result of the remodelling of the Empire by Diocletian. That great statesman saw that some change was needed if the Empire was not to be rent asunder by the hands of its own children. The changes which he accordingly introduced have been already briefly described.

These changes answered their immediate purpose. The Roman Empire was held together for another century and a half, but it gained life at the cost of the means of living. According to the old fable, Phaethon, when entrusted with the chariot of the Sun-god, drove it too near to the earth and began rapidly to dry up all the pools and fountains of waters. Even so now, the Imperial Majesty, of which flatterers had made a kind of god upon earth, appearing in all the vigor of its new administrative powers close to every portion of the Empire, began at once to dry up many a reservoir of wealth which had escaped the rapacity of former Emperors. Especially was this true of the funds hitherto devoted to the purposes of local self-government. These, which the *Curiae* had hitherto not only raised, but administered, were now diverted to the Imperial Exchequer to provide for the pomp of the palace, the salaries of the swarms of new officials, and the donatives to the legions, while the strictly useful and reproductive expenditure on roads and bridges, and other local needs, fell day by day into abeyance.

In the happier days of the municipalities, plenty of citizens had generally been found ready and anxious to discharge, even at some cost to themselves, the civic functions of their little republics. The example of England, and still more that of America, proves that where there exists a large and flourishing middle class, endowed with local self-government, money is for the most part freely forthcoming for the wants of the community. When the State is at peace, that healthy emulation which exists between citizens, and that desire to emerge from the ranks, which is natural to men, leads one to build a bridge, another to establish a library, a third to endow a school, a fourth to spend lavishly on the duties of his mayoralty, and so on. The same disposition had, no doubt, existed in the *Curiae* throughout the Roman Empire. But now a new competitor for the generosity of the citizens appeared in the shape of the Christian Church, perpetually increasing the sumptuousness of her worship, perpetually widening the sphere of her duties as public almoner, and, for both objects, claiming and receiving large oblations from the wealthy. The parish now competed with the *Curia*, and the benevolent citizen who would have built an aqueduct in the second century, founded a church in the third.

And simultaneously with this new diversion of the funds of the charitable, the great Imperial mendicant drew nigh to the impoverished *Curia*, but speaking now with an altered tone, and saying no longer 'If you like', but 'You must.' We see the results of the pressure which now began to be put upon the municipalities, but the exact manner of its working does not seem to be disclosed to us. An impost called the 'Aurum Coronarium,' which had once been purely a free-will offering occasionally given by the cities to the Roman generals, was now a regular tax paid by the *Decurions* as such, and by them only. The other taxes, which were assessed afresh every fifteen years throughout the whole Empire, were levied upon the *Curia* in its collective capacity, and if any member made default, his fellow-*decurions* must make good the deficiency.

Under the pressure of this continually-increasing taxation, some lands, went out of cultivation altogether, since there was no profit left for the proprietor after the claims of the State were satisfied. So much the more taxes must the surrounding proprietors pay, to make up for the loss to the treasury from those unsown acres. It is evident that when once this process had reached a certain stage, the load of taxation on the proprietors who still endeavored to bear it would increase, not in arithmetical, but in geometrical proportion, and life would become nothing but a cruel race between the tax-collector and his victim.

The inevitable result followed. The *Curiae*, which had once been honored and envied communities, easily bearing the weight of their public duties, and dispensing comfort and happiness to the district round them, were now mere gaols in which the middle classes were shut up from birth till death, to toil for the Imperial Treasury. The dignity of *Decurion*, or *curialis* as he was now often called, was no longer bestowed on the most worthy by the suffrages of his fellow-citizens. It was a charge descending from the father to the son, which

the son, however anxious to be freed from it, could not renounce. The longest 'titl' (as it is called) in the Theodosian Code, is that which contains the 188 laws, passed during 150 years, concerning the rights and duties of the Decurions. Of their rights perhaps eight laws speak, of their duties the remaining 180, and that in tones of inflexible severity. The perpetually recurring expression, 'the son of a Curial must be bound to the Curia,' formulated as it is with the word *mancipetur*, which we know so well by its opposite, emancipation, shows sufficiently how grievous a burden the service of the municipalities was considered. It is true that more than once we meet with a proviso that no one is to be condemned to enter the ranks of the Decurions as a punishment. 'The splendor of the Curiae' is said to be dear to the Imperial heart, and 'a criminal should be visited with punishment, not with an accession of dignity'; but this hypocritical pretence can deceive no one who reads the laws by which this enactment is preceded and followed, and who sees therein the perpetual struggle of the middle classes to escape from their connection with the Curiae, and the ruthless determination with which Emperors and Prefects force them back into that hateful prison-house.

No provincial governor on his own authority might excuse a Decurion from his municipal obligations on the score of poverty. The Emperor reserved to himself alone the exercise of this prerogative. Small, certainly, was the probability that a citizen, too poor to pay his curial dues, would be able to defray the expense of a journey to Rome in order to obtain this exemption. And yet their chronic misery may have urged many to undertake this painful pilgrimage, for we find another edict whereby they were forbidden to visit the Emperor on public or private business without the leave of the Governor of the Province in which they dwelt. The prohibition went further : they were forbidden to take any kind of journey, lest they should defraud the Curia of their services, and for the same reason they were forbidden to leave the cities and take up their residence in the country. That free circulation of the citizens, which makes the life of modern states, was a crime in the eyes of the Imperial legislator, because it interfered with his machinery of fiscal extortion.

Nothing gives us a more convincing proof of the utterly unbearable condition of the *Curiales* than the continual efforts which they made to divest themselves of their status, and the storm of Imperial edicts by which they were constantly met and driven back into their Curiae. In truth, the whole series of this legislation seems like an attempt to compress an incompressible fluid, or in some similar way to violate the fundamental laws of physics.

The Decurion was not to be allowed to rise into the profession of an advocate, lest he should thereby obtain exemption from his curial obligations; for the same reason he was not to be allowed to descend into the guild of the rag-collectors; nor should he be permitted to farm the taxes of the province, lest in case of his default, the Emperor and the Curia might find themselves opposing creditors of a bankrupt estate. If a Decurion married a female slave, as the offspring of such a marriage would be incapable of representing him in the Curia, he himself was to be banished to a distant island, his slave-wife to be sent to work in the mines, and his property to pass to his next of kin, upon whom would devolve his obligations to the Curia.

It might have been thought that when every Teutonic and Scythian nationality from the Caspian to the Scheldt was pouring down upon the Empire, when the Romans were

'Ringed around with barking dogs of war,'

the mustering of men for the battlefield would have been an object of primary importance with their rulers, and that if an oppressive conscription were not resorted to, at least every volunteer would be eagerly welcomed. By no means : the maintenance of the Curia, as a taxing-machine in a state of efficiency, was the first consideration, for upon this depended the splendor of the Imperial household, and the rapid fortunes of Prefects and Counts.

To escape from the misery of their lot as bondslaves of a bankrupt municipality, the Decurions, who were legally bound to serve in a kind of local force, the *militia cohortalis*,

thronged in multitudes into the regular army, the *militia armata*. Law after law was passed with tedious reiteration, forbidding the officers to enlist any man who is under curial obligations, prescribing the form in which each recruit is to declare his freedom from such liability, and insisting on the dragging back into the Curia of such Decurions as might after all have crept through all this mesh-work of opposing edicts into the army. True, if any had already served for fifteen years in the army, he was to be safe from further pursuit but then, on the other hand, look at this provision, 'If any man of military descent shall enlist in the *militia cohortalis*, and if, with strength yet unbroken, he shall put forward the plea of advanced age, or by reason of weakness shall be judged unfit for the work of war, he shall be drawn forth from the lurking-place of his cowardice, and bound over to the duties of the Curiae.' The bondage of the Curia—that was the Chelsea Hospital which Rome provided for her broken-down soldiers in the year 380 under the auspices of Theodosius.

The Church as well as the Army offered a door of or even the escape from Curial obligations. We are not surprised at finding the Pagan Emperor Julian closing this door and decreeing that 'Decurions, who as Christians' [whereby clergymen are probably intended] 'decline the offices of their township, are to be recalled.' But if any different strain of legislation was hoped for from a pious Emperor like Theodosius, the Convener of the Second Council, the glory and defence of the Catholic Church, such hopes were doomed to disappointment.

'Those Curiales,' says he, 'who prefer to serve the Churches rather than their Curiae, if they wish to be that which they simulate, let them scorn to withdraw their property from the service of their country. For we will certainly not liberate them on any other condition than this, that they renounce their patrimonies. Since it is not becoming that souls which are devoted to the contemplation of God should feel any regret at the loss of their ancestral property' (383).

It is true that some years later (390) an exemption is made on behalf of those who have already entered the ranks of the clergy. 'He who before the second Consulship of my Mildness' [the mildness of him who in that very year ordered the massacre at Thessalonica] 'has reached the eminence of Presbyter, or undertaken the ministry of Deacon, or the office of Exorcist, may keep all his patrimony safe and free from curial bonds. But he who, under whatever name, shall have betaken himself to the religious ministrations of divine worship after the date of my aforesaid Consulship, let him know that he must give up the whole of his patrimony'. Other laws, of an earlier as well as a later date than those which have been quoted, enacted that the curial Cleric should be withdrawn from his sacred profession and restored to the civic duties from which he had absconded. Such a provision, which shows that the ecclesiastical hierarchy, however powerful, was still far from occupying the position which she held in the days of Hildebrand, must surely have clashed against even the then existing Canons of the Church. No instances however seem to be forthcoming, to show in what way this conflict of laws was settled.

The monks, if Curiales, were handled by the State even more roughly than the clergy. It should be stated however that the decree which is next to follow was issued by the Emperor Valens, who, as an Arian, had special reasons for hating the enthusiastically Athanasian monks of Egypt at whom it is principally aimed (365).

'Certain lovers of idleness, deserting their civic duties, affect solitary and secret places, and under the guise of religion are collected together with the assemblies of the Lonely-Livers (*Monazontes*). We have therefore, on deliberation, commanded that all these, and men like them, if taken in Egypt, shall be drawn forth from their hiding-places by the Count of the East, and shall be recalled to undergo the charges of their native districts, or else, by virtue of this law, shall be deprived of the delights of their possessions, which, it is our pleasure, shall be claimed by those who have to undertake the charge of the public functions.'

Besides the Church and the Army another career, if he only could succeed in entering it, seemed to promise to the aspiring Curial an exemption from the crushing load of municipal liability. This was service in the vast Imperial households, for the *Palatinus* of whatever rank was not only entitled, as has been already seen, to share in the corn-largesses; he was also, as the servant of the Emperor, 'free from mancipation' to any other master. And in this way, no doubt, many thousands of Decurions managed to evade the onerous obligations of local self-government. There is a long series of vacillating decrees bearing on the case of these men. According to one edict thirty years' prescription was necessary, according to others, five years sufficed, to prevent the dreaded sentence, 'Let him be dragged back to his Curia.' The general impression left on the mind by these decrees is that they soon became waste parchment, the theory of government requiring that the rights of the Curia should be insisted upon, while in practice the favor of the Sovereign was powerful enough to shield from curial pursuit the members of his household. Theodosius (or Valentinian II), however, once breaks forth into a strain of sublime indignation against those who trusted to this means of deliverance (386). 'Let the Curiales who have supposed that they could be defended by the privilege of our Household be dragged back to their Curia, so that they may be "mancipated" to their proper functions and may repair the public losses. *Nevertheless if any of these shall be proved to owe anything to our Divine household, let him pay it*'. This noble sacrifice by the Emperor of everybody else to the necessities of the country, coupled with the sharpest attention to the interests of his own 'divine household,' is characteristic of the legislation of that period.

From this general survey of the laws relating to the Decurions it will be seen that we have here a state of things not altogether unlike that which existed in France before the Revolution. A court and a noblesse above, exempt from, the heaviest part of the national taxation, and with their hands for ever in the national exchequer: below, a people robbed and spoiled, *taillable et corvéable à merci*, that is, without mercy and without foresight, and consequently some of the most fertile countries in the world brought by the tax-gatherer to the verge of starvation. The difference between the two cases is that in France *taille* and *corvée* reached down to the very lowest of the people: in the Roman Empire, the slaves and the 'plebeians' (as the class of freemen who lacked the curial qualification were called) were not shut up in the taxing-pen of the Curia. It was essentially an oppression of the middle classes that was thus carried on; but a century and a half of this steady, persevering tyranny had so ground down the once prosperous and thriving Decurions, that it may be doubted whether they were not, when the Western Empire fell, practically lower than the lowest of the proletariat.

M. Guizot mentions two privileges which were left to the Curiales, and which, he thinks, may have been some slight compensation for their many miseries.

1. Freedom from Corporal Punishment. We find certainly several laws which appear to concede this privilege to the Decurions. Especially is it forbidden to chastise them with the *Plumbatae*, the scourge with lumps of metal knotted into its thongs, which was ordinarily used for the chastisement of slaves. One remarkable law, passed in the year 381, says, 'Let all Judges and Governors of Provinces abstain from usurping a power which does not belong to them, and let them know that absolutely no *Principalis* nor Decurion, whatever fault or error he may have committed, to be submitted to the torments of the *Plumbatae*. Should perchance any judge hereafter break forth into such pertinacity of forbidden madness as to dare to subject a *Principalis* and a Decurion, a man who is, so to speak, *the Senator of his Curia*, to the strokes of the *Plumbatae*, let him be condemned to pay a fine of twenty pounds of gold (800), and branded with perpetual infamy so that not even a special rescript of our own shall suffice to remove the stigma. The officer who has administered the chastisement shall be forced to pay a fine of fifty pounds of gold inasmuch as, the command of the judge being unlawful, we give him full liberty to disobey it'. This lawgiver seems to be in earnest, and the provision for

inflicting a heavier fine on the actual wielder of the lash than on his master seems cleverly contrived to prevent the perpetration of the outrage. But one may doubt, from the frequent reappearance of similar provisions in the Code, whether the immunity from stripes—which was, after all, theoretically the privilege of every Roman citizen—was practically enjoyed by ‘the Decurion, the Senator of his Curia.’ For by later edicts (387 and 392) Theodosius expressly enacts that Decurions, who have been guilty of malversation in respect of the public monies, or ‘who owe anything’—a category which would of course include those whose taxes were in arrear— may be punished with the *Plumbatae*. As in Egypt at the present day the bastinado, applied to the elders of the village, extracts the intolerable tax from the unfortunate *fellah*, so doubtless, many a time, in the last century of the Empire, did the cruel blows of the *Plumbatae* wring the last denarius out of the coffers of the Decurion.

2 A more substantial privilege doubtless, though from its nature attainable by few, was the prospect of entering the Senate, and so passing from the class of the oppressed into that of the oppressors. An inhabitant of one of the more important municipalities, who was possessed of large means, and had steadily climbed the ladder of official dignities in his native town, having finally attained the rank of presiding Duumvir, was to be considered free from all further curial obligations, to hold the rank of an Ex-Count, and with the title of *clarissimus*, had the right of a seat in the innermost circle at the public games, and the Governor of the Province was bound to salute him with a kiss. Last and most important, an entrance was permitted him into the Roman Senate, ‘the noblest Curia of all,’ but apparently on condition of his leaving a son, or some other substitute, to represent him in the Curia from which he emerged.

Often it would occur that a wealthy and popular Curial, by official favor or by bribing his fellow-townsmen, would succeed in missing some steps of the slow ascent, and would present himself in the Senate-house at Rome before he was duly qualified. In such a case, said the Emperor Constantius (361)—‘The Decurions who shirk their own duties and betake themselves to the fellowship of our Senate shall be struck off the roll of that body, and “mancipated” to their own cities. Those, however, who have served ‘the office of Praetor’ [which involved heavy expenses in connection with the Praetorian games exhibited to the people] ‘may remain in the Senate, but must restore any monies which they may have abstracted from our Imperial Exchequer, or from the bowels of the municipalities’. Many similar laws follow, some of which ingeniously fasten on such premature Senators a double pecuniary obligation, first as Curial, and, second, as Senator. A yet harsher tone is observable in the following law, passed in the year 398 by Arcadius, Emperor of the East.

‘All the Curiales are to abide in their original Curies, their duties to which are of perpetual obligation. Those who by fraud or popular canvassing have clambered up into the place of high Administrators and Rulers of Provinces, are to be at once deprived of the honors which they have obtained, and not only with swift and strong hand drawn back to their own Curia, and made to serve all its offices from the very beginning, but shall also be mulcted in half their patrimony.’ But, by an edict which was published shortly after, these stringent provisions were somewhat modified in the case of a Curial who had obtained senatorial rank ‘before the Ides of November, in the fourth Consulship of Lord Honorius Augustus, *Brother of my Eternity*, and his colleague Eutychianus.’

‘Brother of my Eternity’, such was the pompous style in which the imbecile Arcadius spoke of the imbecile Honorius. It was time for our Teutonic kinsman, Alaric, to tear down the purple hangings of Empire, and let in the fresh air of reality upon those chambers reeking with flattery and falsehood.

One last exemption must be noticed, which points to the dwindling state of the population of the Provinces, but which rests on a basis of humanity and good sense. It was enacted by the Emperor Julian (363), ‘He who is the father of thirteen children not only shall not be

summoned to the Curia, but even though he be a Decurion, shall be left in an honored rest' [undisturbed by the summons to undertake any curial duty].

From the sketch, necessarily brief and imperfect, which has been here given of the decline and fall of the Municipalities of the Empire, the reader can in some degree estimate for himself the share which their altered condition had in bringing about the ruin of the Empire itself. In Gaul, in Spain, in Italy, the exhaustion and impoverishment of the middle classes was, in the fifth century, so great that it had become a matter almost of indifference who ruled over them, a grandson of Theodosius, the Suevic Count Ricimer, the Herulian Odovacar, or Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Their condition could not be worse under the barbarian than under the crushing, organized, relentless tyranny of the Roman bureaucracy. It might be, and as far as Odovacar and Theodoric were concerned it probably was, better.

In the East no doubt the same process of exhaustion went on, but the fortunate push from without was wanting. In Egypt and in Syria the Arabs, fresh from the desert, easily overturned, amid shouts of *Lo Ellah il Allah!* the pallid resemblances of Graeco-Roman municipalities. In the other provinces of the Byzantine Empire they still cumbered the ground with the spectacle of their decay until the close of the ninth century, when Leo VI, surnamed the Philosopher, removed from the theory of the constitution both the Senate of the Empire and the Curiae of the towns. Of the latter he said, 'The ancient laws passed as to the Curiae and Decurions impose on the Decurions intolerable burdens, and confer on the Curiae the right to nominate certain magistrates, and to govern the cities by their own authority. Now that civil affairs have taken another form, and that all things depend entirely on the care and government of the Imperial Majesty, these laws wander, so to speak, vainly and without object, around the soil of legality. We therefore abolish them by the present decree'.

In the West, the agony of the Municipia had been shorter, and the remembrance of the days of their prosperity and usefulness was therefore less easily effaced. It would be an interesting task, but one outside of our present field, to show how, under the barbarian kings, aided in many cases by the influence of the Church, the Curiae rose again, as it were, from the tomb, until, in the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, local self-government, as set forth in the Italian Commune, reached, perhaps, the noblest elevation at which the world has seen, or is likely to see it. An almost equally noteworthy tribute to the memory of the old municipal organization is paid from a different quarter. To this day the mightiest ecclesiastical organization in the world, that which gives birth to Popes, and defies or bargains with Emperors, calls itself the Roman *Curia*.

6. *Barbarous Finance.*

The Local Taxation of the Empire has been dwelt upon at considerable length, because its history can be easily traced from the Statute Book, and because in tracing that history we can clearly see a powerful degrading influence at work upon an important class of the community.

The history of the Imperial Taxation is in some respects more obscure, and to give a detailed description of it would require more space than can here be afforded. But, tried by its results, it may without hesitation be condemned as wasteful, oppressive, and, in one word, barbarous. The more one examines into the subject the more one is convinced that great as the Romans were in legislation, and great in war, in finance their genius was below mediocrity. To violently wrest the whole or a large part of the lands of a conquered people from their former owners and appropriate them to the Roman State, to destroy great seats of industry and commerce like Corinth or Carthage, and bring their gold and silver and works of art home to figure in a Roman triumph, this easy system of momentary self-enrichment the Senate and its officers were able to put in practice. But to develop, as some of the Ptolemies and some of the Tudors developed, the commercial wealth of their people, to plant wisely and water diligently

the tree of manufacturing or agricultural prosperity, from which the State itself might in the time of fruit-bearing pluck a golden reward, this was a kind of enterprise for which the genius of the Roman nation was little suited, and though it cannot be said to have been never attempted, it certainly seldom succeeded in Roman hands.

It is unfortunately quite impossible to determine with any approach to accuracy the amount of the revenue of the Empire, but the conjectures of scholars who have examined carefully into the subject point to a sum of between £20,000,000 and £30,000,000 sterling as the probable total under the Emperors. It is true that we cannot say what amount of local taxation may have existed side by side with this. But in itself the amount does not seem a crushing weight for a population of perhaps 90,000,000, inhabiting such countries as France, Spain, and Italy are now, as Turkey in Europe, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and the northern shore of Africa were before the domination of the Mussulman had blasted them. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that a modern scientific financier, keeping a wise equipoise between direct and indirect taxation, and carefully arranging his duties so as to take only a reasonable toll from the vast commerce of the Mediterranean countries, could have easily provided for the State a revenue twice as large as she seems to have actually received, without crushing out the happiness of her subjects.

But the Roman financiers seem to have relied most on the worst kind of taxation, and to have levied it in the most wasteful and oppressive manner. Unfortunately we have no specimen of the budget of a Count of the Sacred Largesses' which we can submit to a modern Chancellor of the Exchequer for his criticisms. But it is almost certain that the *portoria* or customs duties, varying from 2 to 5 per cent., and ultimately reaching as high as 12 per cent., did not contribute an important part of the revenues of the Empire. The *Vicesima Hereditatum*, a succession duty of 5 per cent., seems to have been enforced with some hesitation, and to have been finally abandoned in the sixth century on account of its unpopularity. Yet as the duty was not paid when the property devolved upon very near relations, few taxes, one would think, could have been more easily justified, or should have been more inflexibly demanded. The *Vicesima Libertatis*, a tax of 5 per cent, on the value of every liberated slave, was probably, in the existing state of Roman society, a wise impost, as tending to prevent the dilution of the ranks of Roman citizens by too large an accession of freedmen, and it brought in a considerable revenue to the State. It was, moreover, essentially a tax on luxuries, for to be surrounded by a troop of obsequious freedmen was one of the most common forms of ostentation among the Roman nobility. But when we read in the pages of Juvenal, Athenaeus, and Tacitus, of the portentous and childish expenditure of that nobility on other luxuries, we see that here was a field from which a modern financier would have reaped an abundant harvest. He would not have issued sumptuary edicts nor attempted by legislation to check the torrent of extravagance, but he would have said in fact to these men, the owners of half a province and the lords of an army of slaves, 'Since it pleases you to spend such vast sums on all sorts of ridiculous fantasies, spend them by all means, but give the State a share of your superfluity.' The Licenses and Assessed Taxes which an English minister of Finance would have imposed upon the Roman Senators would have fed many Legions.

But the sheet-anchor of the Imperial Financier was evidently the share, the oppressive share, of produce which they wrested from the cultivator of the soil. In some countries this had been originally looked upon as Land-Tax properly so called, in others it had been treated as Rent for land appropriated by the Roman people but suffered to remain in the possession of the former owners as their tenants. In some it had been originally a Tithe (*Decumae*), in others it had been spoken of as Tribute (*Tributum Soli*). But it will probably be safe to say that these differences had now, in the fourth and fifth centuries, become mere matters of antiquarian interest. The various populations of the Empire, Italian and Provincial, Greek and Sicilian,

Asiatic and African, were all now theoretically free and practically miserable. Every fifteen years, that great revision of taxable value, called the Indiction, took place throughout the Empire. Then the few who had prospered found themselves assessed on the higher value which their lands had acquired, while the many who were sinking down into poverty, obtained, it is to be feared, but little relief from taxation on account of the higher rate which was charged to all. They might be assessed on fewer *capita*, but each *caput* was larger on account of the increasing needs of the Imperial Exchequer. This periodical re-assessment was evidently one of the most important features of the inner life of the Empire, and was aptly expressed by the habit of dating each year from its place in the Indiction.

In the breathless race between the tax-payer and the tax-gatherer which financial administration became during the decay of the Empire, the inherent vices of the Roman system of collecting the revenue grew more and more apparent. Whether because the Republic despaired of finding absolutely honest collectors among her own citizens, because she deemed it impossible for anything but the keen self-interest of a contractor to cope with the self-interest of the cultivator of the land, or because the simplicity of an auction of the taxes commended itself to the rude fiscal notions of her statesmen—whatever may have been the cause, certain it is that the Tithes and all other forms of Land-Tax seem to have been, from the beginning to the end of the Roman domination, farmed out to men who bore the well-known and hated name of *publicani*. Many familiar passages in the New Testament show the aversion with which the subordinate ranks of this great corporation were regarded by the provincials. An often-quoted passage in Livy shows that the Senate itself, at a comparatively early period, had perceived that the vast powers for extortion wielded by the Publicans were quite incompatible with the existence of real liberty among the subject-allies of Rome. Finlay, the historian of Greece, has traced in many pages of his history the disastrous effect of the system of tithes and tithe-farming upon both Greece and Turkey, and speaks of this system as an undoubted legacy, and a fatal one, from the Roman Empire. If we had the materials in our possession for a complete picture of the financial administration of Constantine or Theodosius, we should no doubt find that the wasteful oppression of the *publicanus* was the main cause why so large an amount of suffering among the peasantry produced, comparatively, so small a revenue to the State.

The phenomena of commercial life in classical antiquity are not easy to understand. We are told that pressure of banking business had reached a high development both in Greece and Italy; that bills of exchange were constantly drawn and remitted from one part of the Empire to another; that the bankers (*argentarii*) were in the habit of receiving money on deposit, and relending it on overdrawn account. And yet, on the other hand, we hear constantly of exorbitant sums being paid for interest. Twelve-and-a-half per cent, is mentioned as a frequent rate in Rome, and twenty-four per cent, as charged in Sicily. The latter rate, it is true, was exacted by the tyrannical Verres, but it is far surpassed by the righteous Brutus, who exacted forty-eight per cent, from the provincials of Cyprus. At all times of the Republic and Empire *aes alienum* (borrowed money) is spoken of as a fruitful source of danger to the State, and the debtor never seems to have a fair chance of emancipating himself from the yoke of the creditor. These are all indications of a state of things in which the usurer rather than the banker is the chief loan-monger, and they almost entitle us to say (whatever indications to the contrary may be afforded by scattered passages in the classics) that the true business of a banker—the acting as a broker between those classes of the community which desire to lend and those classes which desire to borrow—cannot have been understood, or if understood, cannot have been widely practised in the Roman Empire.

It would be an interesting speculation to enquire what would have been the effect of a National Debt—that distinguishing feature of modern political finance—in retarding or accelerating the ruin of the Empire. The First and Second Punic Wars seem to have been

fought out to a successful issue by the Senate chiefly by means of a loan, disguised under a gigantic debasement of the currency. The *As*, which was then the unit of monetary value, and which was coined out of a pound of copper when the quarrel with Carthage commenced, consisted of only one *uncia*, (the twelfth part of a pound,) when the dispute was settled, sixty-three years later, on the field of Zama. The disastrous effect of such a sweeping alteration in the standard of value was perhaps mitigated by the partial substitution of a silver currency for one of copper. But though the State had thus made a disguised loan from its subjects, and though at times it may have borrowed inconsiderable sums of money for short periods from the *publicani*, no such institution as a permanent National Debt ever existed, or perhaps ever suggested itself as possible to the State Financiers. On some great emergencies, such as the reception of the Visigothic refugees within the limits of the Empire in 376, a loan on a large scale might have been a prudent and statesmanlike measure. The secure investment thus offered to those provincials who were shut out from the great money markets of Rome and Alexandria, might have stimulated thrift. And it is almost certain that the rulers of the Empire, had they periodically appeared before their subjects as borrowers, would have been more amenable to the legitimate influence of public opinion. Flatterers might persuade a frantic debauchee that he was pious, and unconquered, and fortunate, up to the very moment when he was ripe for assassination; but a decline in the Imperial Funds of ten per cent, would have been an unmistakable proof that he was losing the confidence of his subjects.

Arguments like these might be advanced to show that the existence of the Empire would have been prolonged by the device of national indebtedness. On the other hand, we see, by abundant evidence in the history of our own times, that the creation of Bonds and Stock-certificates is like dram-drinking to imperfectly organized States. The brief military usurpers of the third century would probably have raised loans on the national credit as furiously and as foolishly as the Presidents of any South American Republic. And even as to the great and stable States of modern times whose acknowledgments of debt command, and rightly command, for the present, as high a price as the land itself, the substratum of all national wealth, we must remember that we have as yet traced their orbit through a very small part of the World's History. We and our immediate forefathers have seen the beginning of England's borrowing, but we know not in what spirit our remote descendants may look upon its end.

7. Causes, or Symptoms, of Decay.

It is time to bring to a conclusion this examination of the causes of the Fall of the Roman Empire, which might range over the whole field of private and public life during the first four Christian centuries.

Some readers may be surprised at not finding a prominent place among those causes given to the autocratic power of the Caesars. Many instances have been noticed, even in the course of this history, in which a fatuous or vicious Emperor accelerated the ruin of Rome. But, upon a survey of the whole history of the Commonwealth before and after the consolidation of the supreme power in the hands of an Emperor, it does not seem possible to look upon that measure as anything else than preservative of the life of the State. We have to compare the Imperial System, not with some ideal Republic of Plato or More, not even with a modern European monarchy of average excellence, but with the Roman Republic during the last century and a half of its existence, at a time when the government of the fairest portion of the earth was in the hands of a combination of aristocrats the most selfish, and of democrats the most senseless, that the world has perhaps ever seen, and was being jobbed and plundered for their apparent benefit with such blind rapacity that, had Caesar not arrested the process of destruction, the provincial population must have perished in the grasp of its oppressors.

But though, upon the whole, the power of the Emperors was exerted beneficially for the

Empire, the same cannot be said of the frequent and disastrous imperial interference of the Imperial household in State affairs. While, on the one hand, there were long intervals, notably the reigns of the Adoptive Emperors, perhaps also those of Diocletian and Constantine, during which a wise and well-organized bureaucracy (to use a modern term) gave effect to the mandates of the Supreme Power, there were other periods, especially the reigns of Claudius, of Constantius, of the sons and grandsons of Theodosius, during which the personal attendants of the Monarch, his freedmen, or even his eunuchs, succeeded in grasping the helm of the State, and their steering was uniformly disastrous. The confusion between the menial servants of the Monarch and the ministers of the Empire, though obvious in a constitutionally-governed country, generally tends to efface itself under a despotism, where the Sovereign, daily fed upon such flatteries as those which Claudian offered to Honorius, comes in time to believe that the trivialities of his daily life are matters of profound interest to his subjects, and as important to the world as the welfare of provinces. Thus it was, by playing upon the weakness of a master whom in their hearts they despised, that such men as Eutropius became the chief depositaries of power under such sovereigns as Arcadius; thus it was that they could sell the highest offices in the Empire, and bitterly revenge the wrongs which they themselves had suffered in their former bondage. Whatever may be the drawbacks of a constitutional system, and they are many, it at least nullifies, if it does not destroy, the baneful influence of the Household in politics. A vigorous and hard-working Bureaucrat, who finds himself eclipsed or thwarted by a showy and pretentious speaker in a popular assembly, may reflect that even this is less humiliating than the necessity of courting the favor of an uneducated domestic, who has risen into power by the performance of menial offices in the bedchamber of the Sovereign.

The rapid and terrible decline in the efficiency of the Army was without doubt another potent cause of the dissolution of the Empire. When we hear the military essayist, Vegetius, lamenting the effeminate habits of the soldiers in his day, who were no longer able to bear the weight of helmet and coat of mail, and petitioned the Emperor, with success, that they might be allowed to lay aside these wearisome defenses, we feel how vast a change has come over the spirit of the legionary since the hardy Sabine and Marsian followed Caesar to victory. This demoralization may be partly due, as Zosimus says it was, to the truckling policy of Constantine, who withdrew many of the legions from the arduous and unpopular duty of defending the frontiers and quartered them in the large cities of the Empire, where they spent their days at the Amphitheatre, and their nights in debauchery, a burden on the peaceful provincials, but no longer a terror to the enemies of Rome.

But the true causes of the ruin of that wonderful machine of conquest, the Roman Army, lay deeper doubtless than in any such special mistake of military administration as this of Constantine's. Its mainspring for centuries had been the patient strength and courage, the capacity for enduring hardness, the instinctive submission to military discipline, of the populations which lined the ranges of the Apennines. Taught by their example, other races in the Empire, especially the Gauls and the friendly Germans, could do good service as *foederati* or even as actual legionaries. But after all, when the old Italian population itself was gone—and we have seen some of the economic changes which led to its disappearance before the slave-gangs of the great proprietors of Italy—there was no more reason left why the Roman army should continue to conquer.

The wolves of Romulus were changed into the timid sheep of Honorius and the younger Theodosius. What had been the hammer of the nations became now their anvil.

Simple depopulation is often assigned as a cause of the fall of the Empire. And with great truth, especially so far as the terrible plagues and earthquakes of the second and third centuries contributed to that depopulation. It is abundantly clear, and must have been, observed by the attentive reader of this history, that there were vast solitary spaces within the border of the

Empire when the barbarians streamed across it, and that their movement was one of colonization almost as much as of conquest. Still, when one looks at the whole course of affairs after the Romans had made themselves masters of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, depopulation seems to present itself to the mind as a symptom rather than a cause of the malady which was in time to prove fatal, and one is inclined to fix upon some of the vices of the Roman polity mentioned above, the slave-system, the *latifundia*, the extortion of the tax-gatherer, as the reasons for that terrible failure of ‘the human harvest.’

The ruin of such a mighty fabric as the world-empire of Rome can hardly be contemplated by the citizen of any State such as our own, which has extended its dominion over alien peoples and far distant lands, without stirring some foreboding fears that of our country too it may one day be said, ‘How art thou fallen from Heaven, oh Lucifer, Son of the Morning!’. Even so, according to the well-known story, the younger Africanus, in the very midst of the ruined city of Carthage, which he had himself destroyed, shed prophetic tears over the fate of his own country, and repeated those verses of the Iliad—

‘ Surely a day shall come for the fall of Ilion the holy,
Priam, the stout-speared king, and all the people of Priam.’

But an Englishman, though his presumption may rightly be chastened by the thought of the mortality of Rome, may derive some comfort from the reflection that she was tempted, as his country is not, by absolutely unbounded success. It was not till after the destruction of Carthage that the worst qualities of the Roman conqueror, his rapacity, his cruelty, his contempt for the rights of others began to develop themselves. The other powerful nations, both in the Old and the New World, which act as a counterpoise to our own, and sometimes administer a severe rebuke to our national pride, are in truth our best friends, preserving us from that overweening arrogance which is unendurable by God and Man.

Of the causes enumerated above, which conspired for the ruin of the Empire, some clearly affect us not. The Christian religion is with us no explosive force threatening the disruption of our most cherished institutions. On the contrary it has been said, not as a mere figure of speech, that ‘ Christianity is part of the common law of England.’ And even the bitterest enemies of our religion will scarcely deny that, upon the whole, a nation imbued with the teaching of the New Testament is more easy to govern than one which derived its notions of divine morality from the stories of the dwellers on Olympus.

The partition of the Empire, the erection of a coequal seat of authority in its Asiatic dependencies, can hardly be considered a danger for us in practical politics.

Slavery is not eating as a canker into the heart of the English State. Yet perhaps there may be something analogous to slavery in the condition of ‘the dangerous classes’ in our great cities, men leading a sunless and squalid existence from the cradle to the grave, serfs *adscripti* to the gaol and the workhouse. And this thought may quicken the zeal, already so earnest, of statesmen and philanthropists to remove from us this reproach.

To the eye of an inexperienced observer there appear to be symptoms in the British administration of India, especially in the preponderating importance of land-tax as a source of revenue, and in our manner of employing the native *foederati*, which suggest some anxious comparisons with the Roman imperial system. May it prove that the resemblance is only in appearance, not in reality!

The pulverization of the burgher-class by the fiscal oppressions practised upon the Decurions may possibly contain some warnings for benevolent administrators who, in their very zeal for the improvement of the condition of the people, may allow local taxation to attain proportions which, were any pause to occur in the onward march of the country, might be found well-nigh intolerable.

But of all the forces which were at work for the destruction of the prosperity of the

Roman world none is more deserving of the careful study of an English statesman than the grain-largesses to the populace of Rome. Whatever occasional ebbings there may be in the current, there can be little doubt that the tide of affairs, in England and in all the countries of Western Europe, as well as in the United States of America, sets permanently towards Democracy. Will the great Democracies of the Twentieth Century resist the temptation to use political power as a means of material self-enrichment? With a higher ideal of public duty than has been shown by some of the governing classes which preceded them, will they refrain from jobbing the Commonwealth? Warned by the experience of Rome, will they shrink from reproducing directly, or indirectly, the political heresy of Caius Gracchus, that he who votes in the Forum must be fed by the State? If they do, perhaps the world may see Democracies as long-lived as the Dynasties of Egypt or of China. If they do not, assuredly now as in the days of our Saxon forefathers, it will be found that he who is giver of bread is also lord. The old weary round will recommence, democracy leading to anarchy, and anarchy to despotism, and the National Workshops of some future Gracchus will build the palaces in which British or American despots, as incapable to rule as Arcadius or Honorius, will guide mighty empires to ruin, amidst the acclamations of flatterers as eloquent and as hollow as the courtly Claudian.

BOOK IV.

THE OSTROGOTHIC INVASION

After an interval of five years I offer to the public two more volumes of my history of Italy and her Invaders. I still propose to myself in the main the same objects which were described in the Preface to the previous volumes. Only, in deference to the opinion of some of my most esteemed reviewers, I have devoted considerably more attention to the affairs of the Church and the Eastern Empire than I ventured to do in the former portion of my work. Artistically the book probably suffers by the breaks thus caused in the main course of the narrative; but I hope that its scientific value may be increased by this attempt to deal with two factors so important in their influence on the age as the Pope of Rome and the Caesar of Byzantium.

It will perhaps alarm my readers to find that in two bulky volumes I only traverse a period of seventy-six years, and especially that in the second of these an interval of only eighteen years is accounted for. But when it is remembered that in this volume I have to describe a contest not much shorter or less important than the Peloponnesian or the Second Punic War, and that this contest is described for us by an eye-witness, not altogether unworthy to be called by the same name of historian which we accord to Thucydides and Polybius, I trust I may be acquitted of the charge of unnecessary diffuseness. At any rate, from the scanty supply of historical material, I may safely promise my readers and myself a much more rapid progress through the two centuries that lie next before me.

The same fact must also be my apology for the extremely warlike character of my fourth volume. Few persons could be less fitted than I by inclination or previous training to write a military history: and I heartily accept the condemnation passed on 'drum and trumpet histories' by some of our later critics. But after all I am obliged to tell the tale as it is told to me. The compiling historian sits in the last and lowest room of the workshop of Time, weaving his web of such materials as are furnished him by others: and if the thread reaches his hands all crimson with the stain of war, the fabric which leaves his loom must be dyed with the same terrible colour.

There are two names to which I feel bound to express an obligation which is more than can be discharged by the few slight notices at the head of my chapters. Professor Felix Dahn of Königsberg, by his admirable book on 'The Kings of the Germans' has earned a great debt of gratitude from all students of the history of the migration of the Barbarian Peoples. His careful analysis of every passage bearing on his great subject saves us who come after him an infinity of labour; and the essentially juristic character of his training and his pursuits entitles him to speak with authority on all questions of law and government. Occasionally the reader will discover in a foot-note a hinted doubt as to the correctness of some small point on which Dahn

has expressed an opinion. Wherever this occurs, he may safely conjecture that the main propositions in the text come from Dahn's work, and are affirmed with confidence on his authority.

My other obligation is of a more personal kind. My friend and valued counsellor Mr. Bryce has been for some time preparing to write the history of Justinian, and in this preparation has of course traversed much of the same ground which I survey in these volumes. Especially the wonderful defence of Borne by Belisarius and the site of the battle between Narses and Totila have been with him favourite subjects for investigation; and he has in the most generous way shared with me the results of his labours. I regret that he has not yet published any memoir on either of these subjects to which I can refer; but this general expression of my obligation will, I trust, be sufficient to show the true relation between his book and mine, whensoever his Parliamentary labours shall allow him to pluck the fruit which has long been ripening. It is probable that when that time comes it will be seen that Mr. Bryce takes a more favourable view of the characters both of Justinian and Theodora than I have done. I have not wished to assume the attitude of an advocate, but it is possible that I may unintentionally have done something less than justice to Justinian the persistent enemy of the Ostrogothic people, and to Theodora the oppressor of Belisarius. If this be so, I hope the balance will be redressed by the judicial impartiality of Justinian's biographer.

Many other friends have helped me in various ways, whose names, though not mentioned here, are gratefully remembered by me. I am bound, however, to express my obligation to Mr. C. F. Keary of the British Museum for his assistance in preparing the plate of Ostrogothic coins; to the executors of the late Mr. J. H. Parker for allowing me to copy some of his very valuable Roman photographs; and to Professor Beloch and his publishers for permission to use the beautiful map of Neapolis which accompanies his monograph on Campania.

Traversing so wide a field and with far less help from Dictionaries and Commentaries than is afforded to the student of the better known portions of Ancient History, I cannot expect to have avoided many errors. I heartily thank beforehand, and recognise as my best friends, those reviewers who shall out of the fulness of their own knowledge correct the mistakes into which I have fallen, and enable me in future volumes or a future edition to attain more nearly to my own ideal of historical accuracy.

THOMAS HODGKIN.
BEXWELLDENE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE :
March 11, 1885.

CHAPTER I.

A CENTURY OF OSTROGOTHIC HISTORY.

I have now to record the establishment of a Teutonic kingdom in Italy, which, more than any other of the new states arising on the ruins of the Roman Empire, promised to promote the happiness of the human race, which seemed likely to draw forth all that was noblest in the manhood of the barbarian, all that was most refined in the culture of the Italian, and to weld them both into one harmonious whole; a kingdom the Arian ruler of which so wisely deferred to the feelings of his Catholic subjects, and held with so even a hand the balance between contending creeds that he all but solved the difficult problem how to construct 'a free Church in a free State'; a kingdom the preservation of which would (as I have already hinted) have helped forward the civilisation of Europe by five centuries, and would perhaps have contributed something towards the softening and ennobling of human life even at the present day. I have then to describe through what faults and flaws in its own structure, by what craft of foreign foes, by what treachery of ungrateful subjects, by what marvels of strategic skill this fair kingdom was shattered and brought to nought. Two names, which will ever defy oblivion, connect themselves with the two acts of this mighty drama: Theodoric with the establishment of the Ostrogothic monarchy, Justinian with its fall. But while Theodoric is all ours, no part of his career being outside the limits of our subject, there are vast spaces in the life and acts of the Byzantine Emperor which are foreign to our present purpose, and upon which we must not allow ourselves to enter.

I proceed to sketch in brief outline the history of the Ostrogothic people until the story of the nation begins to narrow into the biography of a man, their young king Theodoric.

The Ostrogoths were that member of the great Position of

The Ostrogoths were that member of the great East-German family of nations which first attained to widely extended dominion. Through the greater part of the third century after Christ theirs was the chief controlling influence in the vast plains between the Baltic and the Euxine which form the Lithuania and Southern Russia of modern history. Like the other German nations at that time, they were probably passing or had recently passed from the nomadic to the settled form of society, from dependence on flocks and herds to dependence on the tillage of the ground as their chief means of support. The head of this powerful but loosely compacted state was Hermanric the Amal, sprung from the seed of gods, still true to the martial religion of Odin and Thor; a Goth of Goths, and a Teuton of Teutons. Under his orders moved to battle the hosts of the Visigoths who dwelt between him and the Danube, of the Gepidae who perhaps occupied the plains of Central Russia in his rear. The forecast of European history which then seemed probable would have been that a great Teutonic Empire stretching from the Danube to the Don would take the place which the colossal Slav Empire now holds in the map of Europe, and would be ready, as a civilised and Christianised power, to step into the place of Eastern Rome when in the fulness of centuries the sceptre should drop from the nerveless hands of the Caesars of Byzantium.

All these possible speculations as to the future were upset and the whole course of human history to the latest generations was modified by the rush of the swarthy dwarfish Huns over the shallows of the Sea of Azof and the impetuous charge of their light cavalry upon the unwieldy masses of the army of Hermanric. The defeat of the Ostrogothic army is

acknowledged by the national historian. The death of the Ostrogothic king, who was in very advanced age, is not quite so honestly related. It is attributed to a wound received from rebellious subjects, but seems to have been in truth the death of a suicide, in despair at the sudden overthrow of his power.

The collapse of the power of Hermanric did not bring with it so disastrous rum to his people as would have been the case with a more highly organized state. The Hunnish monarch needed soldiers, and the Ostrogoths could supply them. He cared little about law and government, and therefore the Ostrogoths might keep such political institutions as they had. They were pushed somewhat westward, probably over the Carpathian mountains, and they no longer possessed the suzerainty over the vast and loose confederacy of nations who roamed over the plains of Sarmatia. Otherwise there was little change, only their king escorted the chariot of the conqueror instead of filling it. There are even indications that the Hun, regarded at first by his Gothic antagonist with blended feelings of fear and disgust, became somewhat less hateful as he was better known. Balamber, the monarch of the Huns at the time of their great migration, married Vadamerca, an Ostrogothic princess; and the bold attempt of *Winithar*, and, after his death, of the guardians of his infant son *Wideric*, to shake off the Hunnish yoke, seems to have met with but a faint and partial response among their countrymen. *Hunimund* the son of Hermanric, who, as vassal of the conquerors, ruled over the great mass of the Ostrogothic people, is described as an active warrior, conspicuous for his manly beauty, and as having fought successfully against the Suevic nation, probably situated on his northern or north-western border.

The reign of Hunimund, which seems to have been a time of comparative prosperity for the Ostrogothic people, probably occupied the years between 375 and 415. Important events were then going forward in the West of Europe, events in which their Visigothic kinsmen and their old Vandal neighbours were distinguished as chief movers, but in which they had no share. About the year 415 Thorismund, son of Hunimund, succeeded his father. He is said to have been still 'in the flower of his youth,' which we should hardly have expected from a grandson of the aged and long since deceased Hermanric, nor from a son of Hunimund, who had just died after a reign of forty years. In the second year of his reign he marched with an army against the Gepidae, won a mighty victory over them, but, apparently in the moment of victory, was killed by a fall from his horse.

On the death of Thorismund some strange turn of fortune or popular caprice, the workings of which are evidently veiled in the narrative of Jordanes, obscured for a time the Amal kingship. We are told that, so great was the grief of the Ostrogoths for the loss of their young hero, that for forty years they would not allow any one to succeed in his place. His son Berismund, loathing the foreign dominion of the Huns and despising his nation for submitting to it, wandered off to the West and joined his fortunes to those of the Visigothic conquerors of Gaul, in which country he left descendants, one of whom was eventually to receive in marriage the daughter of the great Theodoric. At the end of the forty years' interregnum the Ostrogoths, who considered that by this time Thorismund had been sufficiently lamented, reverted to the Amal stock, and raised Walamir, grandson of the patriotic but unfortunate Winithar, to the vacant throne.

There can be no doubt that this story of the forty years' mourning for the brave young Thorismund is mere Saga. Nations do not suspend the working of an institution so essential to their safety and well-being as was the barbaric royalty for an interval longer than a whole generation out of mere sentimental considerations. What was the real nature of the revolution which is thus poetically veiled from us we can only conjecture. A German author has with some plausibility interwoven into this part of the history a detached notice preserved for us in the official letters of Cassiodorus concerning a certain Gensemund. The writer is praising the

quality of loyalty, when exhibited towards the boyish heirs of a great chief by leaders who have been adopted into his family:

“Of this fidelity there is a distinguished example in the Gothic race. That Gensemund, whose fame is spread abroad throughout the whole world, though only adopted as a son-in-arms [by the deceased king], joined himself with such devotion to the Amial race that he rendered service of anxious fidelity to its heirs, although he himself was besought to wear the crown. He made his own merits available for others [his wards], and with unwonted moderation reserved for children the dignity which might have been bestowed on himself. Therefore his fame lives eternally in the songs of the Gothic race : he despised transitory greatness and earned deathless renown”.

It is possible that the interpolated reign of this loyal hero may be the true explanation of the fabled forty years' mourning for Thorismund. But on the other hand it is to be remarked, (1) that no word from Cassiodorus himself assigns these events to this particular period; (2) that if Cassiodorus had told the story here it would have excluded the Saga which Jordanes has without doubt copied from him; (3) that the point of the story of Gensemund is that he *refused* the crown which, in order to make the hypothesis fully fit the facts which are to be accounted for, he must have worn for forty years; and (4) that as the new Amal kings were evidently men in middle life at the end of the so-called interregnum, a loyalty which exhibited itself by keeping the heirs of the deceased monarch so long from the throne would hardly have been recommended for imitation under the circumstances of Athalaric's minority.

A more probable explanation of this curious story seems to be that the Ostrogoths may really for a short time have hesitated about filling up the place left vacant by the death of their beloved young hero-king, that this hesitation may have caused them to split up into factions (since then, as so often since, Teutonic royalty and national unity were convertible terms), that this time of confusion may have been purposely prolonged by their Hunnish over-lords, in order to keep them in an enfeebled and depressed condition, but that at length, and not till after the kinsmen of Thorismund had reached and almost passed the prime of life, they succeeded in re-establishing the Amal royalty on something like its old basis.

The change which strikes us in the revived kingship of the Ostrogoths, and which makes these last qualifying words necessary, is that now for the first time we find the kingly power *divided*. That splitting up of the kingdom between a whole family of brothers which we so often meet with in the case of the Franks, and which was also apparently usual with the Huns, had not till now been practised in either branch of the great Gothic nation. Now, however, we find three kings—brothers—standing at the head of their people, and it is natural to suppose that this division of power was encouraged if not commanded by their Hunnish over-lord in order to keep the nation in a state of weakness and dependence. The three brothers are *Walamir*, *Theudemir*, and *Widemir*, the eldest of whom, Walamir, had some sort of supremacy over his younger brothers, which is rather hinted at than explained in the flowery language of Jordanes : “Of which three brothers, Walamir, by succession to his relatives, ascended the throne, the Huns still keeping a general supremacy over them, as over all the surrounding nations. And a fair sight was it then to see the union of these brothers when the admirable Theudemir fought under the orders of his brother Walamir, while Walamir helped each of the other two by the honours with which he adorned them [?], and Widemir, though serving, remembered that he served his brother”.

Whatever may have been their mutual relations of supremacy and obedience, the three brothers served their Hunnish over-lord faithfully, followed his banners across the rivers and plains of Central Germany, and stood amid the ‘crowd of kings’ who waited for his nod on the Catalaunian fields. It was a hard thing for them to fight against their Visigothic kindred, but they dared not to refuse the orders of Attila, ‘for the compulsion of the master’, thinks

Jordanes, 'must be obeyed, even though he should order parricide'. And on that great day, as we have before seen, Walamir the Ostrogoth, trusty, good-tempered, open-hearted, shared with the Gepid Ardaric the honour of being admitted to the inmost counsels of the moody barbarian.

Then came, close upon Attila's death, the glorious day of Netad, when the German tribes which had deemed themselves compelled to do his bidding, even though the deed were parricide, faced his sons in fight, and broke the Hunnish yoke from off their necks. Thus were the Ostrogoths once more free after eighty years of subjection, and pressing, as we may suppose, westwards and southwards, to fill up the vacuum caused by the extrusion of the Huns, they came into possession of the once flourishing but now, no doubt, grievously wasted province of Pannonia. There must have been some recognition, however faint, of the Roman right to this province, some relation of covenanted service (*foederatio*) to Empire, be rendered to Valentinian III in return for its occupation, for Jordanes distinctly says that 'they preferred to seek lands from the Roman realm, rather than at their peril to invade the lands of others, and thus they accented Pannonia... a country adorned with a great number of cities, from Sirmium at one end to Vindobona (Vienna) at the other.' At this time the relation of the Ostrogoths to the Empire was probably almost the same as that of their Visigothic brethren forty years earlier, when Walia obtained possession by treaty of the district of Septimania in Aquitaine.

As to the precise distribution of the Pannonian territory between the three brothers, Jordanes does not give a very clear account. He says that 'Walamir dwelt between the rivers Scarniunga and the Black Water. Theudemir next to Lake Pelso, and Widemir between the other two.' Unfortunately, it seems hopeless to attempt to identify the two rivers; and even as to the lake, there is a certain degree of hesitation between Neusiedler See in the north-west corner of Hungary, and Platten See, more than a hundred miles to the south-east of it. But till local antiquaries shall have produced some decided arguments in favour of another hypothesis, we may perhaps safely assert that Walamir occupied the provinces of Sclavonia and Northern Croatia which lie between the rivers Drave and Save, that Theudemir ruled a broad belt of country between the Danube and the Platten See, and that the triangle between the Platten See, the Save and the Danube was allotted to the youngest brother Widemir.

Their old lords the Huns would not accept the verdict of the day of Netad as final, but still considered the Ostrogoths as absconding slaves. The sons of Attila came with a great host against Walamir, before his brothers were apprised of his danger. He met them, we are told, with an army greatly inferior in numbers, but so bravely withstood their onset that only a comparatively small part of the invading army was able to escape to their new abodes near the mouth of the mighty stream which the Huns called in their own language Var, but which was just then beginning to be known in Europe by its modern name, the Dnieper. The news of this successful engagement came to the palace of Theudemir on the very day on which 'the boy of good omen,' THEODORIC, was born to him by his concubine, Erelieva. Notwithstanding the word which implies the inferior position of the mother of Theodoric, he was always treated as lawful heir to his father, and the widowed Erelieva seems to have maintained the position which would belong to Queen-mother in a half-civilised people. It is probable, therefore, that, though she was of inferior birth to her husband, the union between them was one sanctioned by the Church, somewhat resembling the morganatic marriages of modern Germany, but unlike those as conveying full right of inheritance to the offspring, at any rate where there was not a subsequent marriage to a woman of higher rank.

Something must be said as to the name of the infant over whose arrival the household of Theudemir were rejoicing when the messenger of Walamir dashed into the court-yard of the palace and shouted 'Victory!'. Like the two Visigoths, father and son, who reigned at Toulouse and fought with Attila, his name is indelibly written in the pages of history as Theodoric. This form of the name became current so early (we meet with it in the letters of Sidonius and the

annals of Prosper), and obtained so wide a circulation, that it is useless now to seek to change it. But it is right to notice that the true form of the name, which is very fairly represented by the *Theuderichus* of the Byzantine historians, is THIUDA-REIKS, and signifies 'the people-ruler'. It is a curious coincidence that the name is nearly equivalent in meaning to that of the Athenian orator Demosthenes. One might have expected that the courtly and scholarly Cassiodorus, who so faithfully served Theodoric as secretary, would have availed himself of this resemblance in some one of the many harangues which he prepared for his master to deliver to the Roman Senate or to the envoys of foreign courts.

But this is an anticipation. We return to the young Teuton, with the yellow locks falling to his shoulders, playing with his toy broad-sword in his father's palace. There came a day, bitter without doubt and memorable to the childish heart, but fraught with future good, when he had to leave his mother and his brother, the Danube and the fresh air of the Pannonian highlands, his folk and the old warriors songs at night-fall about the great deeds of his Amal forefathers, and had to spend ten years of heart-ache, but also of keen interest and thought-stimulating wonder, in the purple presence-chamber of the Caesar at Constantinople. The change came to pass on this wise. When Theodoric was seven years old the Gothic Ostrogothic brothers found that the tribute, which under the delicate euphemism of *Strenae* (New Year's presents) they had been taught to look for from the Emperor Leo, was falling into arrear. They sent envoys to Constantinople to enquire into the cause of the delay, and the report which these messengers brought back made the grievance greater.

There was a certain Gothic chieftain, the son of Triarius, (of whom there will be more to say hereafter,) at the Byzantine court. This man was a kinsman of the great Aspar, had perhaps been on friendly terms with Leo, when the future Emperor was only a sort of upper steward of their common patron, and therefore he, coming from some quite inferior stock, with no claim to Amal ancestry, was honoured with the friendship of the Romans and was punctually receiving his yearly honorarium, while the Amals were left to poverty and contempt. The insult was too exasperating; they rushed to arms, and ravaged Moesia far and wide. Then the Emperor repented of his previous inattention to their demands. Peace was arranged; the arrears of *strenae* were at once handed over, and their punctual payment in future was guaranteed. On their part the Ostrogoths must have undertaken to confine their roving to the northern shores of the Danube; and in pledge of their future fidelity the eldest Amal heir, Theodoric, was to be sent as a hostage to Constantinople. Theudemir demurred to this proposal, that he should send his boy to live among unsympathising strangers; but when Walamir, who might have commanded as his lord, besought him as a brother, and urged the importance of ratifying a firm peace between Goths and Romans, he consented. So was the young prince brought to Constantinople, where, being a handsome noble-spirited boy, he soon endeared himself greatly to the Emperor Leo.

After the conclusion of the treaty with the Empire, which the Goths appear to have observed faithfully during the ten years of Theodoric's tarrance at Constantinople, there followed some obscure and uninteresting struggles with the barbarous nations on their northern and eastern borders. The Ostrogoths moved against the Sadages, an Alan or Hunnish tribe whose geographical position we need not trouble ourselves to discuss. Seeing them thus occupied, Dinzio, one of the sons of Attila who dwelt on their southern border, crossed the Danube with the warriors of four barbarous clans which still followed his standard and besieged Bassiana, once a Roman city of some importance, and containing a gynaeceum, or manufactory, in which a century before female slaves wove the purple robe of the Emperor and the linen tunics of his soldiery. Now, the Hunnish chieftain, finding it inaccessible to his storming parties, drew a line of circumvallation round it and proceeded to plunder the surrounding country. While he was thus engaged, the Ostrogoths, who had turned back from

their expedition against the Sadages, attacked the Huns and drove them forth from Pannonia, so utterly defeated, says Jordanes, that the men of that nation ever after trembled before the Gothic name.

The next encounters of the Goths were with the Suevi or Suavi, a portion of that wide-spread confederacy of peoples which presents to us some of the most difficult problems of German ethnology. Caesar tells us of his encounters with the Suevic Ariovistus on the Rhine. Tacitus makes them stretch across Germany from the sources of the Danube to the Vistula, and paints for us the splendid but short-lived empire erected by the Suevic Maroboduus in that which we now call Bohemia. In a previous part of this history we have seen the Suevi pressing, with the Vandals, across the Rhine into Gaul, across the Pyrenees into Spain, and founding a kingdom in the latter country, which, though eventually destroyed by the Visigoths, is thought by some to have contributed a trace of separate Suevic nationality to the modern Portuguese : and we have also seen the Suevic chieftain Ricimer arrayed as a Roman patrician, disposing of the destinies of Rome at his pleasure, setting up and dethroning emperors, marrying the daughter of Anthemius, and bidding Avitus assume the tonsure of a priest. The Suevi with whom we are now concerned dwelt in the south-west corner of Germany, in the region which is now known as the Black Forest, and away eastwards along the Upper Danube, perhaps as far as the river Lech. They were already mingled with the Alamanni of the mountains, a process which was no doubt carried yet further when, some thirty years after the time now reached by us, Clovis overthrew the monarchy of the Alamanni, whom he drove remorselessly forth from all the lands north of the Neckar. The result of these migrations and alliances was the formation of the two great Duchies with which we are so familiar in the mediaeval history of Germany, Suabia, and Franconia. Suabia, which is a convertible term with Alamannia, represents the land left to the mingled Suevi and Alamanni; Franconia that occupied east of the Rhine by the intrusive Franks. The reason for calling attention to this geographical detail here is that in the passage of Jordanes which we have now before us we see most clearly the transition from the Suevi of Caesar and Tacitus to the Swabia from which the great Hohenstaufen Emperors took their ducal title.

The war between Ostrogoths and Suevi arose in this wise. Hunimund king of the Suevi made a raid on some portion of the Roman territory, and in order to reach it had to cross the lands of the Ostrogoths, whose wandering cattle his people appropriated. Cattle, it need hardly be said, were emphatically the wealth of these early Teutonic communities; and, just as the Fosters and Armstrongs of Northumberland resented and requited a cattle-lifting foray of the Kerrs or Scotts from the Scottish side of the Border, so did Walamir and his brothers watch their opportunity to repay the Sueves for their depredations. In the dead of night they came upon them encamped by the lake Pelso, slew many with the sword, made a prisoner of King Hunimund, and reduced the bulk of his army to slavery. After a time, however, and apparently after the death of King Hunimund, Walamir effected some sort of reconciliation with his son, and sent him back with his followers to their native Suavia. The generous forgiveness, which Jordanes praises, was probably due to the difficulty of obtaining subsistence for the added multitude and the danger of enslaving so large a people, as martial probably as their conquerors.

After a further lapse of time (we have now probably reached the year 470) the son of Hunimund, remembering the shame of the defeat rather than the boasted clemency of the conqueror, made a sudden assault upon the Ostrogoths, having leagued himself with their northern neighbours the Scyri. In the battle which ensued King Walamir was thrown from his horse and at once perished, pierced through and through with Suevic lances. Jordanes obscures the real issue of the contest by saying that in their rage for the loss of their king the Ostrogoths

blotted out the name of the Scyri from under heaven : but it is evident that the true result of these operations was not only the death of Walamir but a severe defeat of his people.

Theudemir, the next oldest brother, assumed the chief kingship and fought a bloody battle with the Suevi and Scyri, who had also confederated with themselves the Gepidae, the Rugians, and a race designated by the conveniently vague term of Sarmatians. This great confederacy was defeated by the Ostrogoths, now prepared and united, upon the banks of the Bollia (perhaps the modern Ipoly). After the battle the field presented the usual spectacle of carnage on which Jordanes delights to dwell,—the wide waters of the marsh turned into a red sea, a lake of blood, and the plain for ten miles round covered with artificial hillocks formed from the unburied corpses of the slain. “The Goths saw this and rejoiced with unspeakable exultation, feeling that now at length their king Walamir was avenged”.

Another campaign followed, a winter campaign in which Theudemir, crossing the frozen Danube, and marching perhaps through Moravia and Bohemia, took the Suevi and their confederate Alamanni in the rear, and, falling upon them thus unexpectedly, “conquered, wasted, and almost subdued them”. Returning home the father’s heart was gladdened by the sight of his son Theodoric, now a youth of about seventeen years of age, versed doubtless in Roman and courtly ways, if not imbued with Roman literature. The Emperor Leo had sent him back from the Bosphorus to his home with rich presents and high good-will. Scarcely had the young lion-cub reached the lair of his fathers, when he set forth again for his first taste of blood. Gathering to himself some of his father’s guards and men of his nation who loved him, to the number of 10,000 men (a precise reproduction of the old Germanic *Comitatus* as described to us by Tacitus), he stole away unknown to his father, crossed the Danube where it formed the south-eastern frontier of Pannonia, and attacked Babai king of the Sarmatians, who was just then swelling with the pride of victory, having recently defeated Camundus, the Roman Duke of Upper Moesia, and taken from the Empire the important city of Singidunum (Belgrade). The young Ostrogoth conquered, wrested Singidunum from the Sarmatian, did not restore it to his Roman patrons, but kept it under his own sway, and returned with his joyous *Comitatus* to his father, having furnished another subject for song to the Gothic minstrels. Either at this time, or else on his return from Constantinople, he seems to have been hailed by his nation as king, of course in subordination to his father and uncle. Thirty years later (500), when he was lord of Italy, Dalmatia and Rhaetia, he rode through the streets of Rome celebrating the *tricennalia* of this, his accession to the Gothic throne.

If the Emperor Leo had thought to attach the Ostrogoths firmly to the Empire by his friendly treatment of the young Theodoric, he was disappointed. A foretaste of that which was to come had been afforded by the retention of the Roman city of Singidunum in Gothic hands. Next year (not many months before the death of Leo) the Ostrogoths, who had for some time been coming to the conclusion that Pannonia was too strait for them, and who were hindered, perhaps by the increasing strength and solidity of the Rugian monarchy, from enriching themselves as they wished at the expense of their barbarian neighbours, clamoured to be led forth to war; whither they heeded not, but it was evidently understood that it must be war against some part of the Empire. Theudemir called his brother into council. It was decided that Widemir, as the weaker of the two, should invade Italy, then recently bereft of the stout heart of the unscrupulous Ricimer, and, under the rule of the feeble Glycerius, apparently sinking into a mere appanage of Burgundy. The issue of this invasion has been already told. Widemir died in Italy, and his son and namesake led his army into Gaul, where, waiving apparently his royal dignity, he united his forces with those of Euric, king of the Visigoths.

To Theudemir, as the stronger of the two brothers, was assigned the task of attacking the Eastern Empire. He crossed the Save with a formidable host, which imposed neutrality on the Sarmatian borderers. Making his son’s new conquest, Belgrade, his base of operations, he

marched a hundred miles up the valley of the Morava to Naissus, now the Servian city of Nisch, where he took up his headquarters. The young Theodoric, with two Gothic counts, probably old and wary officers, Astat and Invidia, as his counsellors, was sent on a rapid southward march. He pushed up the Morava valley for another hundred miles to the source of that river, crossed the western ridge of the Balkans, and descended by the valley of the Axios (*Vardar*), having apparently, in order to circumvent the foe, deviated somewhat from the beaten track and traversed some passes previously deemed inaccessible. Stobi and Heraclea (*Monastir*) in Macedonia, possibly even Larissa in Thessaly, fell before him, and yielded a rich booty to his followers. Theudemir, apprised of these brilliant successes of his son, quitted his camp at Naissus and moved forward with the main body of his troops to Thessalonica. That terrible push from Vienna to Salonica, which the diplomacy of our days is so busy with, alternately affirming and denying that Austria contemplates its accomplishment, was actually made, with brisk efficiency, by Theudemir and his son in the spring of 473.

The Patrician Hilarianus who commanded in Thessalonica, seeing the siege of that city commenced by the barbarians, a wall of circumvallation built, and every sign that they were likely to succeed, opened negotiations with Theudemir. Handsome presents were given to the barbarian chiefs, the old figment of a covenant (*foedus*) between the Empire and her brave Gothic allies was refurbished up again; the latter promised to abstain from further ravage, and received in return fertile lands and a group of cities at the head of the Aegean, among which figure the well-known names of Pella, Methone, Pydna, and Berea, for their possession.

Shortly after these events Theudemir, the last of the three Amal brethren, died, and his eldest son Theodoric, now twenty years of age, whom he had designated as his heir in the presence of a general assembly of the Goths, succeeded to the sole kingship. By some change, the cause and the date of which are entirely hidden from us, the settlements of the nation were transferred from the head of the Aegean to the western shore of the Black Sea, where in the region now called the Dobrudscha, then known as the Roman province of Scythia, the native land of Alaric and Aetius, we find them settled in the year 478, when we next cross the path of Theodoric.

CHAPTER II.

THE REIGN OF ZENO.

We have now followed the fortunes of the young Ostrogoth down to the time when he settled as a Gothic *foederatus* in the home provinces of the Eastern Empire. In order to understand his subsequent career, and even in order rightly to appreciate the scanty notices of his future rival, Odovacar, as ruler of Italy, we must grasp the connection of events in that city which was now virtually the capital of the world, the New Rome beside the Thracian Bosphorus; we must, at the cost of some little repetition, trace the outline of the reign of the Emperor Zeno.

This Emperor, as the reader may remember, bore at first the barbarous name and style of Tarasicodissa, the son of Rusumbladeotus, a name which he changed to Zeno, in memory of one of his countrymen who a generation previously had climbed up to greatness in the Roman State. He came from Isauria, that wild upland region on the northern skirts of Mount Taurus, between Cilicia and Phrygia, which Paul and Barnabas traversed in their missionary journey to Derbe and Lystra, but which the Roman legionary for three centuries after Christ found it difficult to penetrate and impossible to subdue. The part which this obscure mountainous comer of Asia Minor played in the politics of the Lower Empire is truly extraordinary. We shall find that Zeno and his Isaurian country-men were, for near twenty years, the dreaded and hated lords of Constantinople. They depart and disappear for a time, but, two centuries later, another Isaurian, the hero-emperor Leo III, ascends the throne, commences and all but carries through a mighty religious reformation (the Iconoclastic), and transmits his throne to a son whose reign with his own makes up a period of sixty years, the most glorious and the most successful in the whole later history of the Roman Empire. The peculiar position thus occupied by the Isaurians is no doubt explained by the fact that these tameless mountaineers had in great measure preserved their freedom. They had not passed, like the wealthier inhabitants of the plains, between the mill-stones of the Byzantine despotism. Their country was the Switzerland of the Eastern Empire.

From the ranks of the Isaurian adventurers who made their way to the capital the Emperor Leo, who needed all the support which he could obtain against the party of the domineering Aspar, selected Tarasicodissa, who was perhaps the best-born among them, and bestowed upon him in marriage his elder daughter Ariadne. At the death of Leo, his grandchild, the younger Leo, a child of seven years old, son of Zeno and Ariadne, already associated with his grandfather in the Empire and proclaimed consul for the year, succeeded without opposition to the throne. Naturally his reign would have implied for some years to come the regency of his parents; but, to make sure, Ariadne instructed her child, when his father came to make obeisance before him in the Hippodrome, to place on his head the imperial diadem. The precaution was a wise one, for in nine months the child-emperor died. The charge brought against Zeno by one writer, distant from the scene, of having procured the death of his own child, must be dismissed as unworthy of belief since none of the Greek writers, not even those who canvass his actions the most bitterly, have dared to insinuate it.

It cannot be said that the new Emperor did anything to justify his predecessor's selection of him as a son-in-law. He was quite incapable in the field, 'not only a coward but a wretch, an emperor who could not bear even the picture of a battle', says one of our authorities. This author proceeds to say that Zeno's only notion of conquest was by buying off his foes, for which purpose he laid upon his subordinates the duty of raising as much money as possible by

exactions and confiscations. Another historian gives a somewhat different account of the cause of Zeno's financial misgovernment. He says that this Emperor was not so cruel, passionate, or avaricious as his predecessor, but that he was ambitious and vain, with no real knowledge of affairs nor formed habits of business. He was thus exposed to endless speculation on the part of the officials of his exchequer, and at the same time squandered with lavish hand the carefully-hoarded treasures of his father-in-law among his greedy Isaurian friends. This incapacity for business, again, made him dependent on his underlings, especially on one Sebastian, who was Praetorian Prefect during a large part of his reign, and who possessed an extraordinary influence over his master. Like the eunuch Eutropius, ninety years before, Sebastian put up offices and governments for sale as in a market, and suffered no business to be transacted in the palace upon which he did not levy his toll. Some part of the gain of this unblushing traffic he graciously shared with the Emperor, but if the latter had bestowed an office on one of his own friends, the favourite would insist on buying it at a small price from the recipient, that he might re-sell it at a high figure to one of the attenders of his auction-mart.

An Emperor thus governing, of discreditable private character and strengthened by no deep roots of ancestral claim to the loyalty of his subjects, was sure to find his right to rule challenged by usurpers; and in fact the history of the reign of Zeno is chiefly a history of the rebellions against him. The course of these rebellions is drearily similar. With a certain tenacity of purpose, which perhaps explains Leo's selection of him, Zeno generally succeeds in holding on to power. Some popular officer delivers him from the rival of the moment, and becomes for the time 'the man whom the king delighteth to honour'. Then he too falls under suspicion, the Emperor or Empress intrigues against his life; he is forced to make himself the mouthpiece of the popular discontent. Another rebellion and another deliverance by a champion who is doomed to experience the imperial ingratitude, and so the dismal round recommences. Add to the already enumerated causes of discontent the fires, never long smouldering in this reign, of religious bigotry, the incessant battle-cries, 'Nestorian,' 'Eutychian,' 'The Council of Chalcedon,' 'The Council of Nicaea'; add also the intrigues of Verina, the Emperor's mother-in-law, one of the most odious women who ever stepped inside the purple chamber at Constantinople, and the reader will have some idea of the events which formed the staple of the reign of Zeno.

The rebellion of Basiliscus was the first of the series. It was on the ninth day after his accession to the office of Consul, when Zeno was sitting in the Hippodrome presiding over the games, that he received a message from his mother-in-law desiring him to come to her with all speed. He obeyed, and when he reached her chamber, Verina informed him that the generals, the senate, the people, all were united in the resolution to depose him, and that his only safety was in flight. Without a struggle he appears to have given up the prize of empire, took with him his wife Ariadne and his mother Lallis, and such of the imperial treasures as he could pile upon his horses and mules, and stole away by night accompanied by many of his Isaurian fellow-countrymen. Still wearing the rich imperial robes in which he had presided in the Hippodrome, he crossed the Bosphorus to Chalcedon, and was soon in the heart of Asia Minor. Thus did Basiliscus, Verina's brother, find himself at length in possession of the diadem which he had coveted with an insane desire. He associated his son Marcus with him in the empire, and in their joint names issued edicts for the regulation of Church affairs. These edicts were to the utmost extent of his power in the interests of the Monophysite party, of which he, and still more his wife Zenonis, were fanatical adherents. Peter the Fuller was reinstated at Antioch, Timothy the Weasel at Alexandria. Everywhere the opponents of the decrees of Chalcedon began to take heart, and its adherents, except the dauntless Acacius of Constantinople, began to despond.

But Basiliscus, raised to the throne by female influence and intrigue, was threatened by dangers from the same source. Verina had a lover, Patricius, upon whom, rather than upon Basiliscus, she had hoped that the choice of the insurgents would have fallen, but who was put to death by the new emperor. Zenonis, who was a woman of great beauty, had also a lover, the nephew of her husband, the handsome and effeminate Harmatius. This man, who knew more about the palaestra and the hair-dresser's shop than about the art of war, was, by the influence of his paramour, promoted to the high office of Magister Militum in Thrace. He also shared the honours of the consulship with Basiliscus. Puffed up with wealth and official importance, he began to imagine himself a great soldier, and rode about the streets of the capital, aping in arms and accoutrements the great Achilles. The populace followed him with their acclamations, and called him the new Pyrrhus, in allusion to his fresh pink-coloured complexion. But many doubtless thought, what the historian could safely write, that the new hero was more like Paris than Pyrrhus.

Meanwhile the dethroned Emperor Zeno had betaken himself to his native Isauria, and there maintained a feeble resistance to his rival. In the course of his wanderings he came to a castle situated upon a hill, and enquired the name of this place of refuge. When told that it was called (by a curious chance) Constantinople, he gave a deep sigh and said, "Verily man is God's plaything. The prophets foretold that the month of July should see me lodged in Constantinople, and so indeed I am, in this little hill-side fort of a Constantinople, instead of in my royal city". Brighter days, however, were at hand for the fugitive as the second July of his exile drew near. Ulus and Trocundus, the generals of Basiliscus who had been for some time besieging him, perhaps in the mountain fortress just referred to, changed sides and openly espoused his cause. The money and the promises of Zeno had no doubt some share in producing this result; but they had some excuse for their defection in the fact that letters had been received from the Senate at Constantinople informing the generals that the profligacy and folly of Basiliscus had become absolutely unbearable, and inviting them to aid in his deposition. In fact, what with political discontent and what with theological strife, the capital was almost in a state of revolution. Acacius had draped the altar and the clergy in black. Daniel, the greatest of the Stylitae, had descended from his column to harangue and muster the people. A vast multitude of men, women, and children had assembled at the gates of the cathedral to protest against the heretical doings of the Emperor. There was a talk of burning down the city, from which Basiliscus withdrew in terror, but Daniel and the monk Olympius followed him to his retreat, and forced him to listen to their passionate invectives.

Liberated from his long blockade and strengthened by his new allies, Zeno now set forth for the capital. Basiliscus sent Harmatius to meet the foe, having first exacted from him, possibly on account of some rumours of his doubtful loyalty, an oath 'by his holy baptism' that he would not betray him. Harmatius took with him not only the troops which ordinarily followed the standard of the Magister Militum in Thrace, but also a levy, probably a hasty levy, from the citizens of Constantinople. This fact, together with the statement that a terrible massacre of Isaurians took place at the time of the expulsion of Zeno, seems to indicate that the animosity against the Asiatic highlanders was especially bitter among the mob of the capital.

However, neither his baptismal oath nor the rancour of his civic followers availed to keep Harmatius from entering into a transaction with the dethroned emperor, his willingness for which was doubtless increased by the consciousness of danger from the discovery of his intrigue with Zenonis. He advanced to Nicaea, where Zeno and the two generals were quartered. Great terror was at first caused in the Isaurian army by his approach. Zeno was on the point of retreating, but Illus undertook and accomplished the delicate task of detaching Harmatius from his fidelity to his uncle. The terms were high: the rank of Magister Militum Praesentalis (commander of the household troops, ranking above the other Magister Militum)

for life, and the dignity of Caesar for his son Basiliscus, which assured to that son the succession to the empire on Zeno's death. The bargain being concluded, the two armies, now united, marched against Constantinople.

Basiliscus, when he heard that his rival accepted as lawful emperor by the senate, the people, and even by the arch-intriguer Verina, saw that the game was hopeless, and took refuge in the church of St. Sophia, to which he had betaken himself nine years before on the failure of the Carthaginian expedition. Leaving his crown on the holy table, as a sign that he renounced the sovereignty, he passed on with his wife and children into the baptistery, and there sought for shelter. Not even in the hour of her downfall can the ecclesiastical chroniclers forbear to triumph over the heretical Empress, thus compelled to seek the shelter of the Church whose power she had dared to cope with. The patriarch Acacius came and upbraided the fallen Emperor with the impious innovations which he, the Eutychian, had sought to introduce into the Christian Church. According to Procopius he actually delivered the suppliant into the hands of his rival; but this is so contrary to the character of the man and to the religious instincts of the age, that we may safely reject such a story. Doubtless Acacius was a powerful agent, probably the most powerful in the counter-revolution which hurled Basiliscus from his throne. Probably also he was the medium of the negotiations which resulted in the fugitive's surrender of himself to his rival; but this is a different matter from the accusation that with his own hands he delivered him over, a suppliant at the Church's altar, to his enemy.

"The most religious emperor Zeno", says the Paschal Chronicle, "then gave orders that the curtain should be drawn over the amphitheatre. He mounted to his seat, exhibited the games of the circus to the citizens, and received their acclamations. Then he sent to the Great Church, stripped all the emblems of imperial dignity from the fallen Emperor, his wife and children, and induced them to come forth by a promise that their heads should be safe. Zeno then sent him away and those with him to the camp of Limnae in Cappadocia. And they were thrust into one tower of the camp, and the gate was built up, and the tower and the camp itself were guarded by soldiers and by a great multitude of Isaurians. And thus Basiliscus himself and his wife and children, perishing by Hunger, gave up their lives and were buried in same tower of Limnae".

Procopius and some other historians say that the banishment was in the depth of winter, that the unhappy exiles were insufficiently supplied with clothing as well as food, and that cold worked together with hunger for their destruction. Thus was Dante's terrible story of Ugolino and his children in the *Torre del Fame* anticipated by eight hundred years. That deed of horror and of perfidy was perpetrated by an archbishop, this by an emperor, whom, in the very act of describing his wickedness, the chronicler terms 'most religious', because he was not tainted with the heresy either of Nestorius or of Eutyches.

Thus had Harmatius surrendered his uncle and his paramour to a death of horror. He had not long to wait for his reward, in either sense. He received the post of *Magister Praesentalis*, his son was proclaimed Caesar, had a royal seat prepared for him by the side of the Emperor, and joined in distributing the prizes to the charioteers. Soon, however, Zeno began to reflect that a man who had displayed so much perfidy to his kinsman and benefactor, and had violated his solemn baptismal oath, was not likely to serve him more faithfully, when his son, the young Caesar, should have grown to manhood. He argued with himself that he had kept all his promises to his deliverer. *Magister Praesentalis* he was now, and that for life, but he had said nothing as to how long he was to live. His son had been declared Caesar, and, having once worn the imperial purple, should now be dignified with an office in the Church. The Emperor therefore gave orders that 'Harmatius the perjurer' should be slain. It was evidently no judicial sentence that was passed, but an order for a private assassination that was given. An agent for the bloody deed was soon found. Onoulf, son of Edica and brother of king Odovacar, was still

in the imperial service. He had received much kindness from Harmatius when he came a poor barbarian to the capital of the East. His patron had procured for him the dignity of Count, then that of Prefect of Illyricum, and had made him handsome presents of money to enable him to give the banquets which his rank rendered necessary. At Zeno's order Onouf laid wait for his patron at a palace ten miles from Constantinople, and stabbed him in the back when he was mounting a spiral staircase to the Hippodrome. The fickle populace, who had forgotten the shouts of admiration with which, they once hailed the rubicund 'Pyrrhus', as he dashed in brilliant armour along the streets, now applauded his death; and remembering the cruel manner in which he, in conjunction with the Gothic foederati, had punished an insurrection in Thrace during the reign of Leo, cutting off the hands of the peasants who were accomplices therein, they now rejoiced with rapture that one so arrogant and so hard-hearted had at last met with his deserts. The young Basiliscus, son of Harmatius, after his brief dream of Caesarship, was installed as Lector in the church of Blachernae, and appears before his death to have reached the dignity of bishop of the important city of Cyzicus, the metropolis of the Hellespontine diocese.

The next revolt against Zeno was of a different kind, and one which illustrates the peculiar ideas about hereditary succession which were introducing themselves into the originally elective sovereignty of the Empire. These ideas had assumed a somewhat different shape since Pulcheria, sister of Theodosius II, had, by the bestowal of her hand, raised Marcian to the throne and thus familiarised the Romans with the idea of a hereditary right to the purple conveyed through females. The Marcian who now, by assuming the diadem, gave a rallying-point for all the unsubdued discontent with Zeno and his Isaurians, was, on his mother's side, grandson of that Emperor Marcian. He was also son of an Emperor—of that Anthemius sovereign of the West whom Sidonius saw riding through the streets of Rome side by side with Ricimer. Yet upon neither of these relationships did he found his pretensions to the throne. He had married Leontia, the youngest daughter of the Emperor Leo, and set up the claim so often heard of in Eastern, and sometimes in Western, monarchies, that his wife, as being *Porphyrogenita*, born after her father had attained to supreme power, was of higher dignity than her elder sister Ariadne, born while Leo was still a private person serving in the household of Aspar. Marcian raised troops and attacked the palace of his brother-in-law. A bloody battle took place; the two brothers of Marcian, Procopius and Romulus, brought up supports at a seasonable moment; the palace and the diadem were almost won. But, inheriting the slack and indolent disposition of his father, Marcian betook himself to the banquet and the couch, let slip the golden opportunity, and adjourned till the morrow the victory which never came. For during the night Illus, the general of Zeno, who was now holding the high rank of *Magister Officiorum*, brought a large number of Isaurians across the straits from Chalcedon in market boats, the regular transports having been seized by the rebels. He also practised with his bribes so successfully on the fidelity of the insurgent troops, that, when morning dawned, Marcian found himself forsaken by most of his followers, and far from capturing the palace was forced himself to flee to the Church of the Apostles. Hence he was dragged away, and sent, like all the enemies of Zeno, into captivity in the recesses of Asia Minor. He became a monk; he escaped; he attempted another abortive insurrection. Hereupon, if not after his first downfall, he was ordained a presbyter; and henceforth Marcian, with his wife Leontia, who had escaped to the convent of 'The Sleepless Ones' disappears from history. It is clear that Zeno recognised, in the feeble character of his brother-in-law, less danger to his throne than from other claimants of less noble birth. Procopius and Romulus, the brothers of Marcian, were caught in Constantinople while bathing in the baths of Zeuxippus. They escaped, however, from their captivity, fled to the camp of the Gothic general, who, as we shall find in the next chapter,

steadfastly refused to surrender them to their enemies, and finally made their way to Rome, where these sons and grandsons of emperors disappear into the undistinguishable crowd.

The last of the insurgents against the authority of Zeno was also the best and the noblest of his foes, countryman Illus the Isaurian. Sent with his brother Trocundus by Basiliscus to conduct the campaign in the Asiatic highlands against the fugitive Emperor, he had, as we have already seen, not only gone over himself to Zeno's side, but had been the broker through whose mediation the similar defection of Harmatius and the consequent ruin of the cause of Basiliscus had been secured. Such important services should have earned the life-long gratitude of the restored Emperor; but for some reason the ladies of the imperial family pursued him with unrelenting hatred. Three times was his life in danger through their machinations. Before a year had elapsed from Zeno's return, Paulus, a slave in the imperial household, was detected, sword in hand, watching for a favourable moment to slay the general. The Emperor abandoned the slave to the just resentment of Illus, upon whom next year was bestowed the dignity of Consul. While he was busied with the restoration of the Royal Porch, a magnificent work probably, which was to have commemorated his year of office, another assassin, this time a barbarian of Alan race, was found in his apartments, again with a naked sword in his hand. The murderer, being put to the torture, confessed that Epinicus the Phrygian, who, by the favour of the Empress-mother, had risen from an obscure position to the successive dignities of *Comes Privatarum Rerum*, *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum*, and *Praefectus Praetorio*, had hired him for the bloody deed. Again was a victim sacrificed to propitiate the anger of Illus. The Praetorian Prefect, stripped of all his honours and wealth, was handed over to the man whose death he had compassed, but who generously spared his life, and was satisfied with banishing him to his own native Isauria. Visiting him there not long after, Illus learned from the ex-prefect's lips that he in turn had been stimulated to the deed of blood by the arch-intriguer, the Empress-mother, Verina.

For the time Illus held his peace, and remained in honourable and self-sought exile from the court. Before long, however, he was recalled by his master, who, with all the ranks of the military and civil hierarchy, crossed the Bosphorus and came more than six miles along the road from Chalcedon to welcome the returning general. Immediately, perhaps before he would even enter the capital, Illus disclosed to the Emperor the intrigues of Verina against his life, and declared that he could never be in safety so long as that woman remained in Constantinople. Zeno, who knew that he too was never safe from the conspiracies of his mother-in-law, abandoned her without reluctance to his general. She was sent off under the care of the brother-in-law of Illus with a large retinue to Isauria, compelled to take the veil in the cathedral of Tarsus, and then shut up in the fortress of Dalisandus. Epinicus, in return for his information, was, at the request of Illus, received again into the imperial favour, perhaps restored to his old office.

Among the followers of Illus who accompanied him into the capital on that day of his triumph none probably attracted more attention than the Egyptian grammarian, poet, and philosopher, Pamprepius. Rich gifts of intellect were hidden under the unprepossessing countenance of this dark Egyptian, who was possibly a full-blooded negro. His poetical attainments in his native country (perhaps acquired in emulation of his compatriot Claudian) were rewarded by the chair of Grammar in the University of Athens. Here too he studied philosophy under the mighty mystic, Proclus, the last and some say the greatest, of the Neo-Platonists; and, in the judgment of all Athens, Pamprepius ranked pre-eminently the first among the great master's pupils. Having left Athens in consequence of an insult received from one of the local magistracy, who was himself a dilettante philosopher, Pamprepius came to Byzantium and attached himself to the fortunes of Illus, which he powerfully influenced both for good and for evil. There was certainly a strain of nobility in the character of the patron.

“Illus”, says his fellow countryman Candidus, “conferred many benefits on the Roman state, by his brave deeds in war and by his generosity and righteous dealing in the city”. There was also a vein of literary pursuit in him, such as we should by no means have looked for in an Isaurian highlander. When first introduced to the general, Pamprepius recited, with much grace of delivery, a long-meditated discourse, probably in the Platonic or Proclean style, on the nature of the soul. Illus was charmed with what he heard, proclaimed the swarthy Egyptian wisest of all the professors in Constantinople, and arranged that he should be engaged at a large salary, paid by the State, to teach the choicest spirits among the young men who resorted to the ‘Museums’, or, as we should call them, the colleges, of the capital. At the time when we behold him about to re-cross the Bosphorus in the train of his triumphant patron, Pamprepius has reached a higher elevation. He is now Quaestor, belongs therefore to the awful innermost circle of the Illustres, endorses the petitions of the subjects, directs them to the proper office which has to take them into consideration, and prepares the stilted sentences in which Tarasicodissa-Zeno may clothe his meagre thoughts when replying to supplications or promulgating laws.

But there was a worm at the root of this amazing heathen, good fortune of the Egyptian, although for the present all went well with him. Like his master Proclus, he was a *Greek*, or, as we should call it, a heathen in his creed; and made no secret of his Hellenic faith, even in Christian Constantinople itself. The avowed heathenism drew after it the imputation of darker practices, and of a knowledge of the future obtained by unhallowed arts, an imputation to which the windy theosophy of the Neo-Platonist not unnaturally exposed him, and which Pamprepius himself, by mysterious and enigmatical utterances, which could be claimed as prophecies if they turned out true, seems to have intentionally fostered. It would be going too far to attribute either to Illus or his client an attempt at the hopeless task of the restoration of heathenism: but it is probable that the general as well as the philosopher may have shown a deeper interest in the Dialogues of Plato than in the endless theological squabbles of Timothy the Weasel and Timothy Solofaciolus, and that his popularity with the mob of Constantinople may have suffered accordingly.

The insurrection of Marcian, which followed shortly after these events, was partly caused, according to the representations of the rebels, by the harsh treatment of the widow of Leo. Certainly Illus was bound to keep his master harmless from the consequences of a severity which he had himself insisted upon: yet he seems to have wavered for a moment. In his perplexity he turned to the dark Egyptian for counsel. The voice of Pamprepius was in favour of loyalty, and presaged the victory of Zeno. “Providence is on our side”, he said oracularly; and when, notwithstanding the first successes of Marcian, his standard was eventually lowered, men looked with yet heightened reverence on the prophetic powers of the Neo-Platonist professor.

To Zeno’s triumph on this occasion the valour and the skill of Illus, as we have seen, largely contributed. But if the Emperor prized his services, the Empress could not forget her mother’s wrongs. Ariadne on this occasion belied the fair and honourable character which, as far as we can judge, she generally bore in a dark and troublous time. When the Master of the Offices (for this was the dignity now held by Illus) was mounting the stairs to view the races in the Hippodrome, a life-guards-man named Spanicius, hired by Ariadne for the purpose, drew his sword and endeavoured to cut off his head. The armour-bearer of Illus interposed and struck up the assassin’s hand, but the escape was so narrow that the right ear of the intended victim was actually severed, and he ever after wore a skull-cap when he appeared in public.

It was vain to ask this time for the surrender of the instigator of the crime, and probably from henceforward it was only a question of time how soon Illus should revolt. But, according to our chief authority, the Emperor began the quarrel by insisting on the liberation of his

brother Longinus. This person, whose previous history is almost hopelessly obscure, had been for ten years kept a close prisoner by Illus at a castle in Isauria. So strange a predicament for the brother of a reigning Emperor is perhaps explained by the private character of Longinus, which was detestably immoral. He may have inflicted on the general some wrong which in one less powerfully protected would have called for the punishment of death, a punishment which even in his case could be commuted for nothing less than life-long imprisonment. It would seem, however, that the Emperor's request was granted, and that both Longinus and the mother of Zeno arrived in Constantinople, having been voluntarily released by Illus.

The Emperor next proceeded to strip Illus of his military command, which he bestowed on one of the barbarian *foederati*, John the Goth. He then made a harangue to the people of Constantinople—there are some indications that Zeno was vain of his oratorical powers—setting forth his grievances against Illus, and ordering that all his relations and dependents should be banished from Constantinople. The possessions of these men the Emperor, ever thinking of his highland home, distributed among the cities of Isauria.

Illus, thus driven to open revolt, withdrew into his native Taurus-country and endeavoured to strengthen himself by alliances. The kings of Armenia and Persia promised help if he would effect a junction of his forces with theirs. Odovacar, 'the tyrant of Western Rome' was also appealed to, but for the present declined to join the confederacy, though two years later he showed symptoms, or Zeno thought that he showed symptoms, of a willingness to favour the cause of Illus. The insurgent general seems to have at first proclaimed Marcian Emperor, but the attempt to conjure with this name proving fruitless, he next sought out his former persecutor Verina in her exile. Their common hostility to Zeno brought these two old antagonists together. Verina, arrayed in imperial robes, was announced as the lawful disposer of the diadem, and mounting a high platform, in the presence doubtless of the assembled army, proceeded to invest with the insignia of empire a certain citizen of Dalisandus of obscure parentage, named Leontius, whom Illus had selected for the dangerous honour. Leontius nominated the high officers of the household and the state, distributed money to the people, and established his court at Antioch, which had not, apparently, been the residence of an Augustus since the days of Valens.

Zeno, whose position was somewhat insecure, made for himself strange alliances with ecclesiastics and barbarians. He persuaded his fellow-countryman Conon, bishop of Apamea in Syria, to leave his episcopal throne and don the armour of a legionary. At the same time he bestowed the chief command in Isauria on Linges, the bastard brother of Conon, a man of high courage, and probably of great local influence. Of the share which the Goths under Theodoric and the wild Rugians from beyond the Danube took in this war as soldiers of Zeno it will be convenient to speak in the following chapter. After Leontius for little more than two months had possessed the semblance of sovereignty his fortunes began to decline. Illus, who had been worsted in the field, sent his wife, and provisions for a siege, to the fortress of Cherreus. These precautions, and the messages he sent to Leontius and Verina to quit Antioch and come to him with all speed, produced a discouraging effect on his army. The officers dispersed to seek shelter in friendly fortresses, while many of the more obscure abettors of the rebellion took refuge in the caves with which that part of Asia Minor abounds.

The castle of Cherreus also bore the name of its builder Papirius, apparently a kind of robber chieftain who had occupied it as a feudal baron occupied his turrets by the Rhine, in order to levy toll on passers-by and to keep his rustic neighbours in terrified subjection. Papirius was apparently now dead, but his son Indacus, a man of great courage and physical strength, who fought with his left hand and as a runner outstripped the fleetest horsemen, still held the castle and was faithful to the cause of Ulu. Here had Marcian been imprisoned, and here Verina. Hither did the empress-mother now return, a fugitive though no longer a captive.

The fatigues and anxieties of the last few months had been too much for her strength, and on the ninth day after she reached the castle her turbulent and intriguing life came to an end. She was embalmed and placed in a leaden coffin, with the hope doubtless that one day a tomb befitting her dignity might be found for her beside the Bosphorus. After thirty days died Marsus, a faithful friend of Illus, and he by whose intervention Pamprepius was first introduced to him. The castle was strong and provisioned for a long siege, and Illus, after entrusting the details of the daily defence to Indacus, shut himself up in his library and devoted his now abundant leisure to the study of his beloved manuscripts. Leontius took the turn in his fortunes less philosophically. He macerated himself with fastings, and passed his days in unmanly lamentations.

After the siege had lasted two years, the hopes of Illus and Leontius growing ever fainter, the besiegers, under the command of John the Goth, obtained possession of a fort on an opposite hill which in some degree commanded the castle, and plied their engines with great effect. The besieged called for a parley, and by the mediation of the Goth sent to the Emperor at Constantinople a letter reminding him of their past services and praying for forgiveness. The appeal, however, was ineffectual, and the siege dragged on for two years longer. At length, at the end of four years, A.D. 488, treachery accomplished what fair fighting could not achieve. The wife of Trocundus, the brother of Illus, privately communicated to the Emperor her willingness to betray her relative. She was sent for this purpose from Constantinople, probably with a delusive offer of pardon, entered the fortress, and succeeded in opening its gates to the imperial troops. Illus and Leontius were slain, and their heads were cut off and sent to the Emperor. Pamprepius was slain with them. All through the four years of siege he had fed his associates with hopes of ultimate triumph; and it is said that when they found that his prophecies were about to turn out false they themselves in their disappointment cut him to pieces. The authorities for this story are not of the highest class. One would gladly disbelieve a history so inconsistent with the character of the brave philosopher-soldier Illus.

No further rebellion disturbed the reign of Zeno. His brother, the shameless profligate Longinus, was now all-powerful. Master of the Offices in 484, Consul in 486 and again in 490, he was the head of the Isaurian faction in the capital, and doubtless intended to wear the diadem after his brother. The health of the Emperor was now visibly declining, and he was filled with a restless desire to know how it would fare with his family and his beloved Isaurians after his death. With this view he consulted Maurianus the Count, "a very learned man, who was acquainted with certain mystic rites and had predicted many future events", and asked to be informed of the name of his successor on the throne. The answer was ambiguous: "Your successors shall be your wife and one who has served as Silentarius"—that title being given to the guard of honour, thirty in number, who watched in the purple chamber. On hearing this Zeno at once ordered the arrest of a certain Pelagius, formerly a Silentarius but now a Patrician, and an eminent statesman, who seemed to him the most likely person to be thus indicated. Moreover, Pelagius, who was a man of high character and some literary fame (he had written in verse a history of the Empire from the time of Augustus), had dared to rebuke the misgovernment of Zeno and to oppose earnestly his project of declaring his fatuous brother Caesar. His property was ordered to be confiscated, and soon after he was strangled by his gaolers. When the Praetorian Prefect Arcadius heard of this act of iniquity he rebuked Zeno for it with a freedom worthy of better times. Upon this the Emperor ordered Arcadius also to be killed the first time that he should set foot within the palace, but the Prefect, receiving a hint of his danger, 'turned aside as if casually to pray in the Great Church [St. Sophia], claimed the right of asylum there, and so escaped bitter death.'

Next year (April 9, 491) the life of the wretched and suspicious tyrant was ended by an epileptic seizure. Longinus claimed the throne; but now the long-suppressed indignation of the

citizens broke forth; civil war raged, and the Isaurians, who had for years contemplated this event and devised their plan of action, set the city on fire with long poles prepared for the purpose, tipped with flax and sulphur. A considerable part of the city and the Circus was burnt, but at length order was restored and the Isaurian faction owned themselves vanquished. Longinus was sent back to his native land, and many of the Isaurians accompanied him at their own request, doubtless because their lives were imperilled by the fury of the mob.

The prophecy of Count Maurianus came true. The Empress Ariadne was requested to bestow the diadem where she would, and she bestowed it, and her hand, on Anastasius, a native of Dyrrhachium, past the prime of life, not yet even a senator, but one of the *schola* of Silentiarii. With the events of his reign of twenty-seven years, which on the whole fully justified the choice of Ariadne, we have no present concern, but it will be well briefly to follow the fortunes of the Isaurian *émigrés* before we return to the history of Theodoric. When the exiles trooped back to their rough Asiatic homes, it may be imagined that they returned in no good-humour with the new ruler of the East. Soon they were in open insurrection, Conon the militant bishop again taking up arms on behalf of his countrymen ; and it is probable, though not distinctly stated, that they proclaimed Longinus Emperor. Not he, however, but a certain Athenodorus, seems to have taken the command in the war with Constantinople which broke out next year, and which lasted till the end of 497. It remained but a local affair, for the insurgents apparently never pushed their incursions further than into Phrygia; but the Emperor, who had confided the conduct of the war to two generals of the same name, John the Goth and John the Hunchback, was accused by his critics of feebleness and faint-heartedness in its prosecution. After five years of it he grew weary, and secretly confided to Euphemius, Patriarch of Constantinople, that he would gladly see it at an end. As the Isaurians, with all their savageness, were orthodox Chalcedonian Christians, and Anastasius was not, Euphemius leaned somewhat towards the side of the rebels, and most improperly repeated what had been said to him to yet another John, the Patrician, father-in-law of the insurgent general Athenodorus. The Patrician hastened to Anastasius, expecting to be made the instrument of a negotiation, but found the Emperor, instead thereof, highly indignant at this betrayal of his confidence. Next year (498), prosecuting the war in a bolder and more imperial way, he obtained a complete victory over his enemies. Athenodorus and Longinus were taken prisoners and beheaded. Their heads, sent by John the Goth to Constantinople, were fixed high on poles and exhibited at Sycae opposite the city, “a sweet sight to the Byzantines”, says a historian, “in return for the evils which they had endured from Zeno and the Isaurians”. When the overthrow of the rebel cause was certain, Anastasius sent his Master of the Offices to the Patriarch with the insulting message, “Your prayers, O great man! have covered your friends with soot.”

The remembrance of this Isaurian rebellion was maintained by a tribute called ‘Isaurica’, which was thenceforward collected (probably from the malcontent province) for the imperial treasury; and we are told that from this tax, amounting to £200,000 annually, were paid the subsidies to the barbarian foederati.

In the sketch which has been given of the reign of Zeno, its political aspect only has been dwelt upon. Its place in the development of religious doctrine must be alluded to, however briefly, for, as Gibbon truly remarks, “it is in ecclesiastical story that Zeno appears least contemptible”. Throughout his reign the Emperor was a steady supporter of orthodoxy, and the patriarchs of Constantinople, who were thorns in the side of a Basiliscus and an Anastasius, served him as faithfully and as steadily as his own Isaurians. There was a great deal, however, of sheer misunderstanding of the Council of Chalcedon and much personal rancour against it in some of the Eastern dioceses, especially in Egypt and Syria. Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, a man of great gifts and much force of character, induced the Emperor to attempt to remove these misunderstandings and to soften this rancour, by the issue of his

celebrated *Henoticon*, or Letter of Union, a document which was of course drawn up by Acacius himself. In this instrument the *Via Media* of Catholic orthodoxy, as distinct, on the one hand from the Nestorian doctrine that Christ's human nature was a mere robe worn by the Eternal Son, and on the other, from the Monophysite doctrine that the Godhead was weary, suffered, and died, was reaffirmed in terms which appear to the lay mind undistinguishable from the decrees of Chalcedon. A formal adhesion to the utterances of that Council was, however, not insisted upon, and, with some lack of candour, the one allusion to Chalcedon which was introduced was couched in purposely disrespectful terms.

Such was the tenour of the Henoticon of Zeno, a document which has met with but scant favour from ecclesiastical historians. Yet the object which it proposed to itself, the closing of a barren and profitless controversy, was one earnestly to be desired in the interests of a living faith. The mere statesman could not be blind to the fact that this Monophysite logomachy (which in fact paved the way for the conquests of Mohammed) was rending the Eastern Empire in pieces. And from the point of view of a Byzantine official, there was nothing monstrous in the idea of the Augustus preparing a symbol of religious belief for all his subjects, though no doubt, as a matter of ecclesiastical order, that symbol should have been submitted for discussion to a council of bishops. However, issued as it was on the sole authority of the Emperor, it all but succeeded in its object. Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch accepted it; and thus the four great patriarchates of the East, after the discords of forty years, were again united in apparent harmony. There was but one exception, but that was world-important. The Pope of Rome, now but a precarious subject of the Eastern Caesar, unwilling to acquiesce in any further exaltation of the Patriarch of Constantinople, and determined above all things that the decrees of Chalcedon, those trophies of the victory of the mighty Leo, should not merely mould but should be recognised as moulding the faith of the whole Christian world, refused to accept the Henoticon of Zeno, and soon began to clamour for its withdrawal. It will be necessary hereafter to sketch the outlines of the controversy thence ensuing, a controversy in which it is impossible to believe that either party saw any principle at stake other than the sublime principle of self-assertion, the sacred duty of choosing the chief seats in the synagogues and the uppermost places at feasts.

But whatever its motives, this controversy led to a schism between the two great sees of Eastern and Western Christendom, a schism which lasted thirty-five years, which had important results on the earlier fortunes of the Ostrogothic monarchy in Italy, and which undoubtedly prepared the way for the more enduring schisms of later years. The Henoticon of Zeno, which was meant to reconcile the Churches by the Bosphorus and the Nile, laid the first courses of the wall of separation which now parts St. Petersburg from the Vatican.

CHAPTER III.
THE TWO THEODORICS IN THRACE.

SUCH as has been described in the last chapter was the wild welter of sedition, intrigue, religious rancour, military insubordination, imperial tyranny in which the young Ostrogoth was to spend the fourteen years following the death of his father and his own elevation to sole kingship over his people. What were his own aims? Confused and uncertain enough, doubtless; but they gradually grew clearer, and the clearer they became the more they drew him away from Byzantium. What did he require? First and foremost food for his people, who were suffering, as all the world was suffering, from that movement of the nations in which they had borne so large a share; who had wandered from the Middle Danube to the Balkans, and had not yet found an unravaged land where they could dwell in plenty. For himself, he wanted, sometimes, a great place in the Roman official hierarchy, in the midst of that *civilitas* which, in his ten years of hostage-ship, he had learned to love so well. To be saluted as *Illustris*; to command the sumptuously clothed ‘silentiaries’ in the imperial palace; himself to wear the *laticlave* and take his seat in that most venerable assembly in the world, the Roman Senate; to stand beside Augustus when ambassadors from the ends of the earth came to prostrate themselves before him,—this was what seemed sometimes supremely to be desired. But then, again, there were times when he felt that the love and loyalty of his own yellow-haired barbarians were worth all the pomp and flatteries of the purple presence-chamber. He was himself by birth a king, ruler of a dwindled people, it was true, but still a king; an Amal sprung from the seed of gods, and with the blood of countless generations of kings coursing in his veins. Was such an one to wait obsequiously outside the purple veil; to deem it a high honour—when the voice of the sensual poltroon who might happen to be the Augustus of the hour, and whom some woman’s favour had raised from nothingness to the diadem, called him into ‘thesacred presence’? No : the King of the Goths was greater than any *Illustris* of Byzantium. And yet how could he keep his kingship, how sway this mass of brave but stolid souls whose only trade was fighting, without putting himself at enmity with the Empire which, after all, he loved?

The perplexities of his position were not lessened by the fact that he was not the undisputed representative even of the Gothic nation in the eyes of the Eastern Romans. Over against him, the Amal king, stood another Theodoric the Goth, his senior in age, his inferior by birth, brought forward into notice by his connection with other barbarian chiefs, once all-powerful at court, and regarded probably by the Byzantine statesmen as the foremost ‘Scythian’ in their land. This was Theodoric the before-mentioned son of Triarius, surnamed Strabo (the Squinter), nephew of the wife of the great Aspar, distantly connected by blood with the Ostrogothic king, but not belonging to the Amal line. These two Theodorics cross and recross one another’s paths like Una and Duessa in the ‘Faery Queen’. By the Greek historians the older chieftain is generally spoken of as ‘Theuderichus’ simply, while the more nobly born is invariably called ‘the son of Walamir.’ This mistake, for such it must certainly have been, since the family historian asserts him to have been the son of Theudemir, was probably due to the circumstances of his first introduction to the Byzantine Court. Walamir being then king of the Goths, this child, which was brought as a pledge of his fidelity, was known as the son of Walamir; and, that title once given to him, the courtiers of Leo and Zeno were too supercilious or too careless to change it. With his own name and his father’s name thus denied to him, and wavering, as he sometimes felt his own soul to waver, between the gorgeous bondage of the

one career and the uncultured freedom of the other, he may well have sometimes doubted of his own identity. In order that we may be under no such confusion between the two leaders of the Goths, it will be well to drop the name which is common to both of them, for a while, and to call Theodoric son of Theudemir 'the Amal' and Theodoric Strabo 'the son of Triarius.'

Our first undoubted information as to the son of Triarius belongs to the latter years of the Emperor Leo. We may infer that ever since the fall of his great kinsman Aspar he had assumed, with his barbarians, an attitude of sullen opposition or of active hostility to the Empire. At length it became necessary to send an embassy to ascertain what terms would purchase his friendship. For this mission Leo selected Pelagius the Silentiary, the same officer, doubtless, who seventeen years later was foully murdered by the dying Zeno. The son of Triarius received Pelagius courteously, and sent a return embassy to Constantinople, expressing his willingness to live in friendship with the Romans, but claiming the concession of three points,—that the whole of Aspar's inheritance should be made over to him, that he should succeed to all his military commands, and that his people should have settlements assigned them in Thrace. Only the confirmation of the nephew in the military rank of his uncle was Leo willing to concede, and accordingly the war went forward. The son of Triarius divided his forces, and attacked both Philippi and Arcadiopolis. Against the first city he achieved no considerable success, but he pressed the blockade of the second so closely that the inhabitants, after feeding on horseflesh, and even on the corpses of their fellow-citizens, were compelled to surrender. Meanwhile, however, the Goths themselves were suffering all the miseries of famine. Food, not empire, was probably the prize for which many of these campaigns were planned.

And thus the high contracting parties came to an agreement, the terms being that the son of Triarius was to receive the highly honourable post of *Magister Equitum et Peditum Praesentalis*, and faithfully to serve the Emperor Leo against all his enemies, the Vandals only excepted; to receive for himself and followers a yearly subsidy of 2000 lbs. of gold, and further to be recognised as king of the Goths, while the Emperor bound himself not to harbour any rebels against the new king's authority. This last clause possibly points to some growing tendency on the part of the Triarian Goths to enlist under the banners of his better-born rival, the true Amal king. It has been well remarked that this proposal to accept a patent of *Gothic* royalty from the Roman Augustus distinctly indicates inferior ancestry, an absence of true royal descent on the part of the son of Triarius. With the kingship of Alaric, of Walamir, and of the young Theodoric, Roman emperors had had no concern. It was no doubt tacitly assumed that the Goths would find settlements in Thrace, and in consideration of their yearly subsidy would abstain from promiscuous raids upon their neighbours.

The death of Leo and the proclamation of Zeno brought about a change in the attitude of the son of Triarius towards the Empire. The opposition was probably sharper between the Gothic party once headed by Aspar, and the Isaurians, than between any other two factions; and the son of Triarius may have speculated on the elevation of Basiliscus rather than Zeno to the vacant throne. At any rate he now threw off the mask, divested himself, we must suppose, of his dignity as Commander of the Household Troops, and advanced in a threatening attitude to the long wall which defended the Thracian Chersonese. Against him Zeno sent some troops under the command of Heraclius, son of Floras, a brave general, but harsh, unpopular, and destitute of forethought. In his over-confidence he stumbled apparently into some trap prepared for him by the barbarians, was defeated, and taken prisoner. The Emperor sent an embassy to the son of Triarius to arrange for the liberation of his general, whose ransom was fixed at 100 talents (£20,000). This sum, with delicate consideration for the feelings of the captive, Zeno ordered to be paid by the near relations of Heraclius, saying that if any one else (himself for instance) found the money, it would seem as if the great Heraclius was being bought and sold like a slave.

The money was paid to the Goths, and an escort of barbarians was told off to escort him to the friendly shelter of Arcadiopolis. On the march, while Heraclius, who seems not to have been allowed the dignity of a horse, was walking along the road, one of the Goths smote him roughly on the shoulder. An attendant of the general returned the blow, and said, "Fellow I remember what you are. Do you not know who it is that you have struck?". "I know him quite well", was the reply, "and I know that he is going to perish miserably by my hand". With that, he and his companions drew their swords, and one cut off the head of Heraclius, another his hands. What became of the ransom we are not told. The story is not creditable to the good faith or the humanity of the barbarians; but it was stated in explanation, though not in justification of the deed, that Heraclius had once ordered some soldiers serving under him, who had committed a trifling military offence, to be thrown into a dry well, and had then compelled their comrades to bury them under a shower of stones. It was the memory of this cruel deed which now cost him his life.

Instead of Heraclius, Illus was sent to prosecute the war against the Gothic mutineers : but soon the face of affairs was changed by the success of the conspiracy in favour of Basiliscus, which was in fact hatched at the head-quarters of Illus. Zeno was now a fugitive, Basiliscus was draped in the purple, and the son of Triarius resumed his place in the Court of Byzantium. He was, however, indignant at finding himself, the veteran and the representative of the great Aspar, constantly postponed to the young dandy Harmatius, "a man who seemed to think about nothing but the dressing of his hair and other adornments of his person". Possibly this jealousy made him somewhat slack in upholding the tottering fortunes of Basiliscus. His namesake the Amal, on the other hand, cooperated zealously with Illus and the other generals in bringing about the return of Zeno, who contrived to send messengers to him at his quarters at Novi asking for help. A panegyrist of the great Theodoric in his later years ascribed to him the sole glory of restoring the fugitive and helpless Emperor to his throne; but this no doubt is the exaggeration of a courtier.

The upshot of the whole matter is that in the year 478 we find the son of Triarius again outside the pale of the commonwealth, wandering probably up and down the passes of the Balkan, in a state of chronic hostility to the Empire, while his rival, the young Amal king, holds the dignities of Patrician and *Magister Utriusque Militiae*, dignities usually reserved for much older men, and is, by some process in which Roman and barbarian ideas must have been strangely blended, adopted as the Emperor's son-in-arms. It is, however, a curious commentary on the double and doubtful position of the young Ostrogoth, that his duties as *Magister Utriusque Militiae* do not appear to have prevented him from continuing to reside with his people, in the Province of Scythia by the mouth of the Danube.

Soon after the restoration of Zeno to the throne, an embassy came to Constantinople from the Goths in Thrace allied with the Empire whom the Romans call *foederati*, and who were evidently the bands under the command of the son of Triarius. This description, which we owe to the accurate pen of Malchus, is interesting as showing that the term *foederati* was still employed, that these wandering hordes, formidable as they were to the peaceful husbandman, were still nominally the allies of Rome. Nay, the word carries us back a hundred years to the time when Theodosius enlisted the disheartened fragments of the Gothic nation under his eagles, and perhaps permits us to in the son of Triarius the natural successor of the Ostrogothic chiefs, Alatheus and Saphrax.

The request preferred by this embassy was that the Emperor would be pleased to be reconciled with *their* Theodoric, who wished for nothing better favour than to lead a quiet and peaceable life, and refrain from vexing the republic with his arms. On the other hand, they begged the Emperor to consider what harm Theodoric the Amal had done to the State, and how many cities he had destroyed when he too was in opposition. Let Zeno bury old grudges in the

grave of Basiliscus, and only consider which cause was really most for the advantage of the Roman world.

On receiving this message the Emperor convoked a meeting of the Senate and desired the advice of that body as to his reply. The Senators answered that it was out of the question to think of taking both the Theodorics into his pay, inasmuch as the revenues, even now, scarcely sufficed to supply the regular soldiers with their rations. Which of the two the Emperor would select to honour with his friendship, was a matter for and with Augustus himself to decide. He then called in to the palace all the common soldiers who were in the city and all the *scholae* (regiments of household troops); mounted the platform (*suggestum*), from which a Roman emperor was accustomed to harangue his men; and delivered a long oration of invective against the son of Triarius. "This man has always been the enemy of the Roman name. He has wandered, ravaging, through the plains of Thrace. He has joined in the cruel deeds of Harmatius, cutting off, like him, the hands of his captives, and has frightened all the agricultural population from their homes. He exercised a disastrous influence on the commonwealth in the affair of Basiliscus, and persuaded that usurper to make away with his Roman troops, on the plea that the Goths would suffice for his defence. And now he sends an embassy, nominally to sue for peace, but really to demand the office of Magister. If you therefore have any opinion on these matters, utter it boldly, for, indeed, for this purpose have I summoned you into the palace, knowing that that emperor is likely to succeed who calls his brave soldiers into his counsels". The soldiers, seeing which way their advice was asked for, all shouted for war with the son of Triarius; and, after a short interval of hesitation, a defiant answer was returned to his ambassadors. Zeno's resentment against him was further increased by the fact of the discovery of the secret practices of three of the Gothic chief's adherents in the city. These men (one of whom was 'Anthemius the physician') had not only written letters to him themselves, but had forged others (if in truth they were forgeries) from men holding high office in the State, bidding the son of Triarius be of good heart since he had many well-wishers in the city. The three traitors were punished with stripes and exile, the sentence of death being commuted at the express request of the Emperor.

War then, open war, was declared by Zeno on the Gothic *foederati*. It seems, however, soon to have suggested itself to the Emperor, that *his* Theodoric was every day growing weaker, while the son of Triarius was accumulating a larger and larger army; and he accordingly determined, if it were possible, to make peace with the latter on reasonable conditions. He sent therefore to offer him his own previous terms, restoration of his private property (including probably the estates of Aspar), a life unmolested and unmolested, and the surrender of his son as a hostage for the fulfilment of this compact. But the books of the Sibyl were not now for sale at the same price as before. The son of Triarius refused to consent to these terms. He would not send his son as a hostage, nor could he (so he said), now that he had collected so vast a force, live upon the estates which, carefully husbanded, might have sufficed for his previous wants. No! He would keep his men about him, till some great success, or some great catastrophe, had decided the quarrel between him and Zeno.

The Emperor therefore had no resource but to prosecute the war with vigour. The dioceses of Pontus, Asia, and the East (representing the whole of Asia Minor and Syria) were emptied of their legions, which came flocking to Constantinople. Waggons were procured for the transport of arms, draught oxen were bought, corn and all other necessaries for a campaign were laid up in store, and the great Illus himself was expected to take the command.

For some reason or other, not Illus, but his brother-in-law Martinianus, a much weaker man, was named general. As the imperial army, consisting probably of a number of discordant elements without cohesion or mutual reliance, was rapidly becoming disorganized under the nominal command of this man, Zeno determined to accelerate matters by urging the Amal into

action. He sent him a pressing message, urging him to do some deed against the son of Triarius, which might show that he was not unworthily styled Magister of the Roman army. Theodoric however, who was no doubt aware of the recent attempt to resume negotiations with his rival, refused to stir until the Emperor and Senate had both bound themselves by a solemn oath to make no treaty with the son of Triarius. He then arranged a plan of campaign, which involved a march with all his forces from Marcianople (Shumla) to the Gates of the Balkan. There he was to be met by the Magister Militum of Thrace with 2000 cavalry and 10,000 heavy armed soldiers. After crossing the Balkans he was also to be met in the valley of the Hebrus and near Hadrianople by 20,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry, troops being drawn, if necessary, from Heraclea (Monastir) and all the cities and garrisons near Constantinople.

All these junctions of troops were promised : none of them were performed; and thus Theodoric, who punctually fulfilled his share of the bargain, found himself, after an exhausting march over the rugged Balkan country, with only his Goths, unsupported by the imperial troops, in presence of his enemy, who was encamped on the steep and unassailable cliff of Sondis. A pitched battle was impossible; but skirmishes constantly took place between the soldiers of both armies, when engaged in getting fodder for their horses. Every day, too, did the son of Triarius ride within earshot of his rival's camp, and pour forth a stream of insulting epithets on the head of "that perjurer, that enemy and traitor to the whole Gothic race, Theodoric. Silly and conceited boy! He does not understand the disposition of the Romans, nor see through their design, which is to let the Goths tear one another to pieces, while they sit by and watch the game at their ease, sure of the real victory, whichever side is defeated. And we the while, turning our hands against our brethren, like the men who in that story of theirs sprang from the seed of Cadmus, are to be left few in number, an easy prey to the machinations of the Romans. Oh, son of Theudemir! which of all the promises have they kept by which they lured you hither? Which of all their cities opened her gates to you and feasted your soldiers? They have enticed you to your own destruction, and the penalty of your rashness and stupidity will fall on the people whom you have betrayed".

These words, frequently repeated, produced their effect on the Amal's followers, who came to him, and said that indeed the adversary spoke reasonably, and that it was absurd for them to continue an internecine conflict with their kinsmen for the benefit of the common enemy. The son of Triarius, perceiving that his words were finding entrance, came next day to the crest of an overhanging hill, and thence shouted forth his upbraidings to Theodoric: "Oh, scoundrel! why art thou thus leading my brethren to perdition? Why hast thou made so many Gothic women widows? Where are now their husbands? What has become of all that abundance of good things which filled their waggons, when they first set forth from their homes to march under thy standard? Then did they own their two or three horses apiece. Now, without a horse, they must needs limp on foot through Thrace, following thee as if they were thy slaves. Yet they are free men, and of no worse lineage than thine. Ay! and the time hath been when these penniless wanderers would use a bushel to measure their aurei".

When the army heard these too truly taunting words, men and women alike came clamouring round the tent of Theodoric, "Peace, peace with our brethren! Else will we quit thy standards, and take our own road to safety". The king, who was truly head of a limited monarchy, recognising an expression of that popular voice to which he must defer, came down (doubtless with difficulty smothering his wrath) to the banks of the stream appointed for a conference, met and consulted with the man who had just been calling him a scoundrel and a boy, settled the conditions of peace, and then took and received a solemn oath, that there should be no war thenceforward between the son of Theudemir and the son of Triarius.

The reconciled Gothic chiefs sent a joint embassy to the Emperor, demanding, on the part of the son of Triarius, the fulfilment of all promises made to him by Leo, the arrears of pay due

for past years, and the restoration of his relatives [the family of Aspar] if still alive, if not, an oath concerning them from Illus, and any of the Isaurian chiefs to whose keeping they might have been consigned. The claim of the Amal prince (mingled with complaints of the broken promises of the Emperor) was, that some district should be assigned him for a permanent dwelling-place, that rations of corn should be provided for his people till they could reap their own harvest, and that some of the imperial revenue officers, who were called *Domestici*, should be immediately sent to take account of (and no doubt to legalise) the requisitions which the Goths were then levying on the province. If this were not done, the Amal said, he could not prevent his men, famished and destitute, from supplying their needs in any way they could. This last request curiously illustrates Theodorics desire not to sink into a mere chief of lawless plunderers, nor to make an irretrievable breach with the Roman *civilitas*.

To the son of Triarius, Zeno does not appear to have vouchsafed any reply. He answered the Amal's complaints with a wrangling 'Tu quoque' :

"You said nothing at first about requiring the help of imperial troops to beat your rival; that was an afterthought, when you had already made up your mind to negotiate with him, and you hoped to betray our soldiers into a snare. So, at least, our generals thought, and that was why they would not carry into effect the proposed combinations. Nevertheless, if you will even yet be faithful to our cause, and will vanquish the son of Triarius, you shall receive £40,000 in gold and £35,000 in silver, paid down, a yearly revenue of £6,000, and the daughter of Olybrius (sprung from the mighty Theodosius) or some other noble Byzantine damsel to wife".

Though aided by high dignities bestowed on most of the Gothic emissaries, all these attempts to break the league between the two Theodorics proved fruitless, and the Emperor saw himself once more compelled to face the reality of war. He again called out his army and announced that he in person would share the hardships, and applaud the valour, of his soldiers. The announcement that, after a century of seclusion in his palace, the Roman Augustus was going to be once more, in the antique sense of the word, an *Imperator*, roused indescribable enthusiasm in the troops. The very men who had before paid large sums to the generals for exemption from military duty, now gladly paid for liberty to fight. The scouts who had been sent forward by the son of Triarius were taken prisoners : a portion of the Amal's guard, who had pressed forward to the Long Wall, were bravely repulsed by the soldiers who were guarding it. This was the outlook one day, and it shows us what immense recuperative energy yet lay in the Roman state-system, if only it had been guided by worthy hands. The next day, all was changed by the palace-bred sloth and cowardice of the Emperor. It was announced that Zeno would not go forth to the campaign. The soldiers heard the tidings with indignation. They gathered together in angry clusters, and began taunting one another with cowardice. Are you men?" they said; "have you arms in your hands, and will you patiently endure such womanish softness, by which city after city has been sacrificed, and now the whole fair Empire of Rome is going to ruin, and every one who pleases may have a hack at it?". The temper of the troops was so mutinous that by the advice of Martinianus (himself, as has been said, an incompetent commander) they were ordered to disperse into winter quarters, the pretext being alleged that there was a prospect of peace with the son of Triarius. The dispersion was successfully effected, but, as they went, the soldiers growled over their own folly in quitting the neighbourhood of the capital before they had bestowed the purple on some man worthy to wear it and able to save the state.

However, if Zeno failed to exhibit the courage of the lion, he possessed, and could use with some success, the cunning of the fox. The hope of dissolving the Gothic coalition by intrigue proved to be not illusory. He had tried it before, at the wrong end, when he dangled his bribes and his heiresses before the eyes of the loyal-hearted son of Theudemir. He now sent his ambassadors to the son of Triarius, to see upon what terms he could buy peace with him. They

arrived at a critical moment. Theodoric the Amal had swooped down on the fertile country at the foot of Rhodope, was carrying off flocks and herds, expelling or slaying the cultivators and wasting their substance. The son of Triarius watched with grim delight these proceedings of the friend of the Romans, the son of Augustus: but at the same time professed to mourn that the punishment was falling on the guiltless peasants, not on Zeno or Verina, whose happiness would not be interfered with, though they were reduced to the extreme of misery. In this mood the ambassadors found him : but all his newly-kindled and virtuous indignation against the Court, as well as his recently professed horror of Goth warring against Goth, vanished before the splendour of their offers. The promise of regular pay and rations to 13,000 Goths to be chosen by himself, the command of two *Scholae*, the dignity of *Magister Praesentalis*, the regrant of all the offices which he had held under Basiliscus, and the restitution of all his former property, these were the terms which detached the fervid German patriot from his young confederate. As for his relations (the family of Aspar) the Emperor returned a mysterious reply: "If they were dead, it was of no use to say anything more about the subject ; but if they were alive they too should receive their old possessions and go to dwell in some city which he would point out to them". The negotiation was finally ratified on these lines. Money was sent for distribution among the Triarian Goths, and their leader stepped into all the dignities which were previously held by the Amal, but of which the latter was now formally divested. In this 'triangular duel' each combination had now been tried. 'Zeno and the Amal against the son of Triarius' had given place to 'the two Theodorics against Zeno', which in its turn was now replaced by 'Zeno and the son of Triarius against the Amal.'

Of the immediate effect of the announcement of this combination on the Amal king we have no information. We find him, however, early in the next year, exasperated by recent losses, bursting, an angry fugitive, into Macedonia, burning towns and killing garrisons without quarter. Stobi having been thus severely handled, he pressed on to Thessalonica. The inhabitants of that city, ever an excitable and suspicious people, conceived an idea that the Emperor and the Prefect meant to surrender them, unresisting, to the Barbarian. A kind of revolution took place in the city. The statues of Zeno were thrown down, and the mob were on the point of tearing the Prefect to pieces and setting his palace on fire. At the critical moment, the intervention of the clergy and of some of the most respected citizens averted these crimes. The populace, who were asked to confide the defence of their city to whom they would, took the keys of Thessalonica from the Prefect and handed them to the Archbishop, whose zeal against the Arian invaders they doubtless felt to be a sufficient guarantee for the tenacity of his defence. A civic guard was formed, a commander was chosen, and his orders were obeyed. In perusing the few lines which the Byzantine historian devotes to these events we might fancy ourselves to be reading the story of Paris in the early days of 'Madame Lige.'

Meanwhile Zeno, finding himself not strong enough to crush Theodoric, determined at least to soothe him, and to avert, if possible, the conflagration of towns and the slaughter of garrisons. He sent an embassy (consisting of his relative Artemidorus and of a certain Phocas who had been his secretary when he himself filled the office of *Magister Militum*) to remind Theodoric of past favours and dignities conferred upon him, a barbarian by birth, in full reliance on his loyalty. All these advantages he had lost, through no fault of the Emperor, by giving heed to the crafty suggestions of a man who was their common enemy. But let him at least, in order not to make his case more desperate, refrain from inflicting on the cities of a powerful nation such injuries as it would be impossible to forgive, and let him send an embassy to obtain from the goodness of the Emperor such requests as he could reasonably prefer.¹ Theodoric, whose own better instincts were ever on the side of civilisation, issued orders that his soldiers should abstain from conflagration and from needless bloodshed, though they were still to live at free-quarters in Macedonia. His messengers returned with the Emperor's

ambassadors to Constantinople, and were graciously received there. He himself moved with his army to Heraclea.

This city, the *Monastir* of our own day, was situated on the great Egnatian Way, a little less than half-way from Thessalonica on the Aegean to Dyrrhachium on the Adriatic. Built at the western edge of a noble plain, surrounded by the most exquisitely shaped hills, in a recess or bay formed by two very high mountains, between which magnificent snow-capped barriers is the pass to Akridha, and with one of the main branches of the Axios (*Vardar*) flowing through it, a broad and shifting torrent, crossed by numerous bridges, the city has been for centuries, under Caesar and Sultan alike, a highly important centre of civil and military administration for the great plain of Macedonia. Of that plain, indeed, it does not strictly form a part, being raised as it were a step above it towards the central highlands, but the great chain of Scardus stretching behind it (to which belong the snow-capped barriers mentioned above) far more decisively separates it from the western regions, which were then known as Epirus and Illyria, now as Albania.

The rich presents of the bishop of Heraclea to Theodoric and his followers preserved that city for the present from pillage. He made it his headquarters, and was in fact detained there for a considerable time by the sickness of his sister, a sickness which in the end proved fatal. This fact illustrates the domestic aspect of the events which we are now following. It was not an army merely, it was an aggregation of families that was roaming over the regions of Thrace and Macedon, and suffering, too often, the hardships so insultingly portrayed by the son of Triarius.

While Theodoric was at Heraclea the answer of Zeno arrived. Theodoric had urged that the ambassador should be a man of high rank and large powers, as he could not undertake to keep the masses of his followers from lawless pillage, if negotiations were unnecessarily protracted. In compliance with this request the Emperor selected as his ambassador, Adamantius the son of Vivianus, patrician, ex-prefect of the city, and consul. Adamantius was empowered to offer the Goths the district of Pantalia (a little south of Sardica, the modern Sofia) for their habitation, and a sum of £8000 as subsistence-money, till they reaped their first harvests in their new settlement. The Emperor's secret motive in selecting this region was, that the Amal would there act, to some extent, as a restraint on the son of Triarius (of whose precise location we are not informed), while, on the other hand, if he himself relapsed into disloyalty, he could be crushed by the converging forces of the Thracian and Illyrian provinces. Possibly Theodoric saw the imperial game: at any rate he was not eager to accept the Pantalian settlement.

For, meanwhile, another idea had been ripening in his brain. Thrace, Moesia, Macedon,—all these districts were impoverished by the marching to and fro of Romans and Barbarians for the last hundred years. Why should he not cross those soaring Scardus ranges on the western horizon, descend upon the rich and flourishing cities of Epirus Nova, which (except perhaps in an occasional visit from Gaiseric) had not known an invader for centuries, and there, carving out a kingdom for himself, bring the long wanderings of the Ostrogoths to an end? With this view he commenced a correspondence with Sigismund, a wealthy landowner near Dyrrhachium, who had formerly served in the imperial army, and, though a Goth, was supposed to be loyal to the Romans.

This Sigismund was nephew of a certain Edwin, (with what pleasure do we come upon these true Teutonic names in the Byzantine historian's pages!), a man who had great influence with the empress-mother Verina, and had held the high office of captain of the Domestici. To him, then, Theodoric sent, reminding him of the tie of relationship which existed between them, and begging his help in obtaining possession of Dyrrhachium and the rest of Epirus, that he might thus end his long roving, and having established himself in a city defended by walls,

might there receive whatever Fortune should send him. Sigismund, notwithstanding his presumed philo-Romanism, elected to live under a ruler of his own nation rather than under the Emperor, and at once, repairing to Dyrrhachium, propounded to all his acquaintances there the friendly counsels of panic. The barbarian was certainly coming among them : the Emperor acquiesced in his doing so : arrangements for that end were at that very moment being concerted with Adamantius. He would advise them, as a friend and neighbour, to use the short interval still left, in removing their families and most precious possessions to the shelter of some other city or some island, before the Goths were upon them. By these suggestions, coupled with hints of the Emperor's displeasure, if the city were defended against his will, and judiciously aided by the continual fabrication of fresh and more alarming rumours, he persuaded not only the chief citizens, but even two thousand soldiers who were stationed there, to flock out of the city, and was soon able to send word to Theodoric inviting him to claim an unresisting prize.

The messenger arrived, just when the death of his sister had set Theodoric free to march from Heraclea. He called for a parley with the inhabitants of that city, who, notwithstanding the absence of outrages, had taken the alarm, and gone forth to a stronghold in the neighbourhood. To these refugees he offered that he would withdraw with all his people from the town, if they would supply him with a considerable quantity of corn and wine as provision for the journey. They declined, saying that their own stores in so small a fortress were scanty; and Theodoric in a rage burned the greater part of Heraclea, all deserted as it was. He then set forth upon his westward journey over the wild and rugged Scardus Mountains, which none of the enemy had dreamed of his attempting to cross. A few Gothic horsemen, sent forward to secure the heights, struck such terror into the garrison of a fortress, erected probably on a shoulder of the snow-crowned Mount Peristeri on purpose to guard the road, that they gave no thought to the defence of the position, but fled from it helter-skelter. Quite reassured as to the success of his expedition by this disgraceful cowardice, Theodoric marched on, with few or no precautions, in joyous boldness of heart, through the wild and lonely country which the Via Egnatia traverses in this part of its course. This was the order of march : Theodoric himself at the head, pushing cheerily forward, eager to see and to surprise the first city on the other side of the mountains; Soas, the greatest of all the generals under him, in the centre; and Theudimund, brother of Theodoric, commanding the rear. It was no slight sign of the King's confidence in the Roman unwillingness to fight or to pursue, that he dared to give to the waggoners and the drivers of the beasts of burden, the signal to follow him into this rocky region, where, even against unencumbered troops, brave men might easily, in a hundred places, have made a new Thermopylae.

Soon after crossing the highest part of the Scardus range (about 3000 feet high), Theodoric and his men came in sight of the broad expanse of what is now called the Lake of Ochrida, larger than any other piece of water between the Danube and the Aegean. At its northern edge rose conspicuous from afar a steep and isolated cliff, dominating the lake and all the surrounding country. Here, where now stands the castle of Ochrida, stood then the town and fortress of Lychnidus, unassailable by storm of armed men, and moreover well supplied with stores of corn, and with abundance of fountains springing up in its enclosure. At this place, therefore, the eagerness of the young Gothic chief was doomed to meet with disappointment. Even Eoman soldiers of the fifth century could maintain such a post as this: and Lychnidus refused to surrender. Its garrison did not, however, attempt to bar his way, and when, descending into the valley of the rock-chafed Genusus, after two days' march he reached Scampae, he found that city (the modern *Elbassan*) left bare of all inhabitants in the midst of its beautiful plain and rich olive-groves, a prey ready to his hand. A day and a-half or two days more brought him to the shores of the Adriatic, half-islanded in whose blue waters, on its long

and slender promontory, stood the main object of his quest, the usually rich and busy city of Dyrrhachium.

Dyrrhachium, which our Greek historian insists on calling by its old name of Epidamnus, and which we know as Durazzo, is a city of many associations for the classical student. In the pages of Thucydides it figures as the cause, or pretext, of the Peloponnesian War. Caesar faithfully records the severe check which he met with before its walls, and which had well-nigh turned the current of the Civil War and changed the whole after-history of Europe. Owing to the shortness of the crossing between Brundisium and Dyrrhachium the Epirote town was a place familiar to the memory of many a Roman general setting forth to administer an Eastern province, of many a Greek man of letters, with his face set westward, coming to seek his fortune in Rome. As far as Theodoric is concerned, but little of historical interest is added by his connection with the town. Apparently, the discouraging counsels of Sigismund had produced all their intended effect, and the place was already abandoned, for we are simply told that "pushing on from Scampae he took Epidamnus". But it may be allowable to conjecture that now, finding himself beside the waters of Hadria, knowing that he was within fifty miles of Apulia, and perhaps seeing the cloud-like form of Italy in the western horizon, he may then have dreamed the dream, which became a reality when all that fair land from Alps to Aetna was his own.

When news of this unexpected turn in affairs reached Adamantius, who, as has been said, was especially charged with the conduct of the treaty with Theodoric, he sent one of the mounted messengers, who, being under the orders of the *Magister Officiorum*, were called *Magistriani*, to expostulate with the Gothic king for resuming hostilities while negotiations were still pending. He entreated Theodoric not to take any further steps in the path of hostility to the Emperor; above all things not to fit out a naval expedition in the harbour of Dyrrhachium, but to send a trusty messenger who should assure him of a safe-conduct, going and returning, if he came in person to renew the conferences. In order to be nearer to the spot, he himself left Thessalonica and came westward, two days' journey, along the Egnatian Way to Edessa.

Edessa (now *Vodena*) has derived both its ancient and modern name from the wealth of waters with which it is encircled. It stands on a curving shelf of rock, overlooking the whole wide plain of Lower Macedonia; and the river Lydias, dividing itself behind the city into several branches, comes foaming over this rocky screen in innumerable cascades, which remind a traveller, familiar with Italian scenery, of Tivoli. Behind the city, tier on tier, rise three ranges of magnificent mountains, Scardus himself apparently dominating all. The fact that it commands the chief pass leading into these Macedonian highlands is no doubt the reason why the early Macedonian kings fixed their capital there; as it was also the reason why, in this awkward crisis of the Gothic campaign, Adamantius selected it as the scene of his council of war.

At this council he met Sabinianus, a man, as we shall see, of somewhat peculiar and stubborn character, but who, as a skilful general and a firm disciplinarian, towered far above the dead level of inefficiency, reached by most of the commanders of that time. He also met there Philoxenus, a Byzantine official of high rank, who had been employed in some of the earlier negotiations with Theodoric. After opening the imperial letters, appointing *Sabinianus Magister Utriusque Militiae per Ulyricum*, they proceeded to discuss the military position, which they found truly deplorable. Sabinianus had with him only a small band of soldiers, consisting chiefly of his own followers and dependants, while the bulk of the regular army, such as it was, was scattered through the cities of Thrace, or followed the banners of Onoulph, brother of Odovacar and murderer of Harmatius, who still held some high rank in the imperial

service. They could only resolve to send notices of the appointment of Sabinianus in all directions, and summon the troops to his standard.

Meanwhile the horseman sent by Adamantius to Theodoric returned, bringing with him a Gothic priest who had been sent to ensure his safe passage through the barbarian ranks. They took the priest with them, and at once proceeded to Lychnidus (Ochrida), which still held out for the Empire; and were met at the gates by the magistrates and chief citizens of that strong and wealthy city by the lake. Negotiations followed for an interview with Theodoric, who was asked either to come himself to some place in the neighbourhood of Lychnidus, or to allow Adamantius to visit him at Dyrrhachium, sending his lieutenant Soas and another eminent Goth, to be kept as pledges for the ambassador's safe return. The two Goths were sent, but ordered not to advance beyond Scampia (*Elbassan*) till Sabinianus should take a solemn oath that, on the return of Adamantius, they too should be dismissed safe and sound. This was indeed negotiating at arm's length, but no doubt Theodoric, during his ten years' residence at Byzantium, had learned how far it was safe to trust to Roman honour. To this proposition, however, Sabinianus returned an answer, as to which we would gladly know whether it was a mere piece of contrariety, or whether it was founded on loyalty to the Teacher who said "Swear not at all". He declared that he had never in his life sworn about any matter, and would not now break a resolution of this kind, which he had formed long ago. Adamantius begged him to make some concession to the necessity of the times, and not to allow all the negotiations to collapse for want of those few words from him; but all that he would reply was, "I know my duty, and shall not deviate from the rule which I have laid down for myself".

Finding it impossible to overcome the scruples of this obstinate Non-Juror, Adamantius, whose heart was set on fulfilling his mission, started at evening; and by a series of difficult mountain-paths, on which, it was said, no horse-hoof had yet trodden, he worked round to a steep hill overlooking Dyrrhachium, but separated from it by a precipitous ravine through which a deep river ran. Halting here, he sent messengers for Theodoric, who came with a few horsemen to the river's brink. Adamantius, having posted some men on the crown of the hill to prevent a surprise, came down to his side of the river. Theodoric dismissed his attendants, and the two chiefs conversed with one another alone, the mountain torrent foaming and brawling between them. The Gothic King unfolded his complaints against the Roman Emperor, complaints which the Byzantine historian who records them considers well founded.

"I was willing enough", said he, "to dwell quietly outside the limits of Thrace, in my Moesian home, almost on the very confines of Scythia, obeying the Emperor and harming no man. Who brought me forth from my retirement, and insisted on my taking the field against the son of Triarius? The Emperor and his ministers. They promised that the Master of the Soldiery for Thrace should join me with an army : he never made his appearance. Then that Claudius, the steward of the Gothic funds, should meet me with the pay for my troops: he, too, was invisible. Thirdly, the guides who were assigned to me, instead of taking the smooth and easy roads which would have brought me straight to the enemy's camp, led me up and down all sorts of break-neck places, where, if the enemy had attacked me, with all my long train of horses and waggons and camp furniture, I must inevitably have been destroyed. Thus brought at a disadvantage into the presence of our enemies, I was obliged to make peace with them. And in truth I owe them great thanks for having saved me alive, when owing to your treachery they might easily have annihilated me".

Adamantius tried to answer these just complaints. He reminded Theodoric that he, when quite a young man, had received from the Emperor the dignities of Patrician and *Magister Militum*, dignities which were generally reserved for old and long-tried public servants. For these and many other favours he was indebted to the Emperor, whom he ought to look up to and reverence as a father. His recent conduct, however, was quite intolerable. By the artifice of

sham negotiations he had contrived to break out of Thrace, in which the Romans, had they been so minded, could easily have penned him up between the rivers and mountains by which that province was girdled, and had attacked the splendid and flourishing cities of Epirus. It was impossible for the Romans to abandon these cities to him, and equally impossible for him permanently to resist the Romans. Let him therefore go into Dardania, where was a wide and pleasant and fertile country, absolutely longing for cultivators, and there see all his followers well nourished, while at the same time he lived in peace with the Empire.

Theodoric replied with a solemn asseveration that he himself would gladly accede to this proposition; but his army, worn out with long marches, must be allowed to repose for the winter in their present quarters. When spring came, he would be willing to deposit all his goods and all the non-combatant population in some city to be indicated by the Emperor, to surrender his mother and sister as hostages of his fidelity, and then to march with all speed into Thrace, with 6000 of his bravest warriors. With these and the troops quartered in Illyricum and such other forces as the Emperor might please to send him, he would undertake to destroy every Goth in Thrace. A strange promise certainly to be made by this, the ideal Teutonic hero. Of course, as his own followers were all now quartered in Epirus, this sweeping destruction was intended only for the bands which followed the son of Triarius; but even so, considering his recent alliance with that chief and the appeal to their common Gothic nationality on which that alliance had been based, one would be glad to think that the Byzantine historian had misreported the proposals of the son of Theudemir. The reward which he claimed for these services was that he should again receive his old office of Magister Militum, the insignia of which should be stripped off from the hated son of Triarius, and that he should be received into the capital, "there to live as a citizen after the Roman fashion". A striking evidence this of Theodoric's genuine appreciation of that '*civilitas*' which we shall hereafter find so persistently commended by his most famous minister. An indication that his thoughts were already turning, if not yet with any steadiness of purpose, towards Italy, is furnished by a still more startling proposal, that if the Emperor would but give the word, he would march off into Dalmatia in order to restore the exiled Nepos—a kinsman, be it remembered, of Zeno—to the Western throne.

To all these overtures Adamantius as yet could only reply, that he had no power to treat while Theodoric remained in Epirus. But let him abstain from offensive warfare, and all these matters should be laid before the Emperor for his decision. And thus they parted.

While these negotiations were proceeding between Adamantius and the Gothic King, the troops summoned to the standard of Sabinianus had been flocking in to the lake-mirrored fortress of Lychnidus, with an alacrity rare in those degenerate days. Word was brought to the Roman general that a large detachment of the barbarians was descending, in leisurely fashion, the Candavian range of hills which intervene between Dyrrhachium and Lychnidus. They were encumbered with baggage and a long train of waggons; and the rear of the army, commanded by Theudimund brother of Theodoric, had not yet reached the plain. To render the prize more tempting, it was stated that the mother of Theodoric and Theudimund was also with the rear-guard. The conscience of Sabinianus, too scrupulous to swear, could not resist the opportunity of striking so easy a blow, although the pending negotiations of Adamantius rendered such a course somewhat dishonourable. He sent a small body of infantry round over the mountains, with precise instructions when and where to attack the barbarians. He himself started after supper with the main body of his army, and fell upon the Goths at dawn. Surprised and panic-stricken, Theudimund fled with his mother into the plain, breaking down, as he went, a bridge by which they had crossed a very deep ravine. This precaution secured their own retreat, but prevented the escape of the rest of their countrymen. The latter at first, with the courage of despair, fought against the cavalry of Sabinianus. But when the other body of troops, the

infantry who had been sent round, appeared over the crest of the mountain, there was no longer any hope of escape. Most of the Goths were cut to pieces, but more than 5000 were taken prisoners, the more nobly-born of whom were kept in ward, no doubt for the sake of their ransoms, while the rank and file were assigned as slaves to the soldiers, among whom also the booty was divided. Two thousand Gothic waggons fell into the hands of the Romans. Only a short time before, Sabinianus had issued requisitions on the Macedonian cities for a large number of those vehicles. These requisitions were at once countermanded, and indeed, after the wants of the army were fully supplied, so many waggons remained that the blaze of their burning soon lighted up the defiles of Mount Candavia, over which the general despaired of transporting them in safety.

On the return of Sabinianus to Lychnidus, he found Adamantius there, having just come back from his mission to Theodoric. Each sent an account of his operations to the Emperor, Adamantius pleading for peace, Sabinianus magnifying his recent success and beseeching Zeno to make no peace with the barbarian, who might certainly now be driven out of the province, if not utterly crushed. The large boasts of the general told on the unstable mind of the Emperor, who decided that war was more honourable than peace, and directed Sabinianus to carry on uncompromising hostilities against Theodoric with all the troops that he could muster. For some unexplained reason there was associated with him in this commission a man named Gento, a Goth by birth, who had married a wealthy Roman lady of the province of Epirus, and who possessed considerable local influence.

Adamantius, making a virtue of necessity, assembled the troops, addressed them in an eloquent harangue, praised their past valour, and exhorted them to a continued exercise of that peculiarly Roman quality, courage. He then read them the Emperor's proclamation, and stimulated them with the usual promises of special imperial favour for such soldiers as should distinguish themselves by their zeal. He was welcomed with shouts of applause, and had the gratification of making a very successful oration. "And so", says Malchus, surely with a slight touch of scorn, "Adamantius disappeared, not having done anything besides".

From this point onwards we have no further information from Malchus concerning the history of Theodoric, and our most valuable spring of knowledge thus dries up at once. The excuse for narrating so minutely the events of a few months in the life of the Ostrogothic king must be that, for no other part of a life extending over seventy-two years, and rich in momentous deeds, have we a history, for fulness, clearness, and vividness of colour, at all comparable to these fragments of the work of a Byzantine rhetorician fortunately preserved by the industry of a literary emperor. Compelled as we are to trace, by mere conjecture, the vague outlines of the history of Theodoric for the next nine years (479-488), we must conclude that for some reason or other his attempt to establish himself in Epirus proved a failure. Possibly he was too much weakened, and the provincials too much encouraged, by the battle of the Candavian Mountains, for him to maintain himself with force in the midst of a hostile population. Possibly also it was not altogether safe for him to relinquish entirely his communications with the Lower Danube, across which may have flowed the streams of Teutonic migration constantly refilling his wasted ranks.

The narrative returns for a brief space to his rival, the son of Triarius. At the time of the insurrection of Marcian (which occurred probably a few months after the Amal's invasion of Epirus), he marched with great alacrity to the gates of Constantinople. It was easy to see, however, that this promptness proceeded from no exuberance of loyalty towards Zeno, but rather showed an inclination on the part of the Goth to fight for his own hand. The Emperor sent to thank him for his eagerness, but also to beg him to return without entering the city, lest he should awaken a fresh spasm of panic in the minds of the citizens, only just settling down after the exciting scenes of the Marcianic war. The son of Triarius replied, almost in the words

of his namesake, that he himself would gladly comply with the Emperor's command; but his army was large and unruly and he feared that they would not obey the signal of retreat without tasting the pleasures of the capital. Privately, he reckoned not only on the feeble state of the fortifications, but yet more on the hatred of the mob of Constantinople to the Isaurian monopolisers of the favour of the Court, a hatred so intense that even the Goths might be welcomed as deliverers. The Emperor knew that this was his calculation, but knew also something of the desperation with which his countrymen would cling (as, ten years later, they did cling) to their hold of the capital. On all grounds, therefore, it was of the utmost importance to get the Gothic army quietly away from the gates. Pelagius the Silentiary (the same man who was afterwards sacrificed to the jealousy of the dying Emperor) was sent, with great sums of money for the son of Triarius and his followers, with promises of larger presents to come, and threats of the consequences of disobedience, to adjure them to depart from the city. The avarice inherent in the Gothic mind was roused by the actual sight of the dazzling hoards, and the mission of Pelagius was successful in inducing the barbarians to return. Not so, however, with the demand for the surrender of Procopius the brother of Marcian, and Busalbus his friend. To this request the warrior gave a positive denial, saying "that he would obey the Emperor in all other matters, but it was not a righteous thing for the Goths, nor for any one else, to betray suppliants, who had fled to them for protection, into the hands of enemies who were thirsting for their blood". The two refugees accordingly lived for some time under his protection, cultivating a small estate. Eventually, as we have seen, they made their escape to Rome.

It is probably to this period that we must refer a statement made by Joannes Antiochenus that the trouble caused to the state by the pair of Theodorics marching up and down and sacking the cities of Thrace compelled the Emperor to form an alliance with the Bulgarians, whose name then appears for the first time in history. A Turanian people, possibly true Huns, without doubt one of the vast medley of tribes who thirty years before had followed the standards of Attila, the Bulgarians have, as is well known, in the course of centuries become thoroughly Slavonised, and looked to Russia, not to Turkestan, as the lode-star of their race. When the diplomatists of Europe, a few years ago, were revising the treaty of St. Stefano at Berlin, and discussing the respective claims of the big and the little Bulgaria, they were but working out the latest terms of an equation which was first stated amid the vexations that the pair of Theodorics caused to the statesmen of Constantinople.

Theodoric the Amal appears, at some such time as this, to have met the leader of the Bulgarians in single combat, to have wounded him, but not mortally, and to have forced his nation to submit to humbling conditions of peace.

Two years later (481) the son of Triarius, now apparently again in open enmity to Zeno, having obtained some successes against these Hunnish-Bulgarian allies of the Empire, drew near to the gates of Constantinople. He had all but succeeded in taking it, in which case perhaps the Eastern Empire would have survived her sister of the West only five years. But either the bravery of Illus, or a cleverly fomented conspiracy among his own followers, obtained for the capital a fortunate reprieve. The Goth moved across the harbour to Galata; made another attempt, which again failed; marched ten miles up the Bosphorus, thinking to cross over into Bithynia; was worsted in a naval engagement, and then moved westwards into Thrace, meditating an expedition into the comparatively undevastated regions of Greece. He rode at the head of 30,000 Goths; and his wife Sigilda, his two brothers, and his son Recitach accompanied him. We see that in his case, as in that of the other Theodoric, of Alaric, and no doubt of many another Teutonic chieftain, the march of the general meant also the migration of his family.

Moving along the Egnatian Way, they had reached a place on the Thracian coast more than 200 miles from Constantinople, which, in memory of that savage Thracian king who in

the days of Hercules used to feed his horses on human flesh, still bore the name of *The Stables of Diomed*. Here the chief, one day wishing to take some exercise, ordered his horse to be brought to his tent-door. In those days, before the invention of stirrups, a Roman noble generally mounted with the assistance of a groom. The son of Triarius, however, though probably past middle life, disdained such effeminate habits, and always vaulted to his seat unaided. This time, however, before he was fairly astride of his horse, the creature, which was wild and mettlesome, reared up in the air and danced about on its hind legs. Theodoric tried to get the mastery of the horse, but did not dare to grasp the bridle lest he should pull it over upon him. Rider and horse, thus swaying backwards and forwards, came up to the tent-door, before which a spear with a thong fitted to it was hanging, in the fashion of the barbarians. Jostled by his unruly steed against the spear, the chief was pierced by it in his side and forced to dismount. He took to his bed, and soon after died of the wound. Henceforward the undisputed right to the name Theodoric passes over to his Amal rival.

Sigilda, wife of the dead chief, buried her husband by night. Dissensions broke out in his family. His two brothers tried to grasp the leadership and to oust his son, relying perhaps in part on a rumour which strangely obtained currency, that the death which has been so minutely described was, after all, not accidental, but that Recitach, indignant at having received personal chastisement from his father, had repaid the insult by parricide. The lad, however, bided his time. Before long he deprived his uncles of life, and grasped the leadership of the thirty thousand followers of his father—a leadership which he employed to inflict yet more cruel sufferings on the provincials of Thrace than those which they had endured at his father's hands.

After this he must have been reconciled to the Empire (there is a wearisome inconstancy both in the friendships and the enmities of these guerilla chiefs), for the last information that we have concerning him is that the Emperor Zeno, perceiving that Recitach was becoming disaffected through envy of Theodoric, ordered the Gothic king to destroy him, which he accordingly did, although Recitach was his cousin, having an old grudge against him because of the murder of his? (A defect in the MS. leaves us in doubt as to the nature of this old grievance.) Theodoric fulfilled the bloody commission by piercing his young rival under the fifth rib when he was on his way from the bath to the banquet. The murder of Recitach is one of the few blots on the generally fair fame of Theodoric.

By the extinction of the house of Triarius, the Amal became the undisputed head of the Gothic nation in the Eastern peninsula. Thirty thousand men were added to his army, but these implied more than thirty thousand mouths for which he must find provisions. It was impossible for him, at the head of his roving bands of hungry warriors, to settle down into an orderly, hard-working magister militum in Thrace. For six years following the death of his elder rival, he vibrated to and fro with apparent absence of purpose between Romanism—using the word in a political sense—and barbarianism. In 482 he laid waste the two Macedonias and Thessaly, and plundered Larissa the capital of the latter province. In 483, “being almost appeased by the munificence of the Emperor Zeno” (says Count Marcellinus, nearly our only authority here), “and being made Magister Militiae Praesentis, and designated as Consul for the next year, he and his satellites kept for the time within bounds in the portion of Dacia Eipensis and Lower Moesia which had been allotted to him”. His head-quarters appear to have been Novae, on the Lower Danube. It is noteworthy that he was here within fifty miles of Nicopolis, the town which, 130 years before, had formed the centre of the settlement of the Lesser Goths who followed the guidance of ‘their Moses,’ the pure-souled and pious Ulfilas. Probably this portion of Moesia had never ceased to be strongly Gothic in the character of its population.

The next year (484) saw him in the full glory of *Consul Ordinarius*, wearing the toga, doubtless with the peculiar Gabine cincture which marked the Consulate, giving his name to the year, and liberating a slave by a stroke on the day of his inauguration. There are indications

that now, at any rate, if not in the previous year, he took up his abode in Constantinople, and that his enjoyment of the pomps and luxuries of the capital, while his followers were suffering the pangs of hunger in their Danubian settlement, was not viewed with approbation by the Goths. They felt the contrast all the more keenly, since his authority, as became a consul and a magister militum, was strenuously exerted to check their old habits of plunder.

It was in the year of Theodoric's consulship that he soiled his hands with the blood of his kinsman Recitach, and received the adhesion of his followers. It was in the same year that the revolt of Illus broke out. Theodoric was at first ordered to march for its suppression, but he had not proceeded further than Nicomedia in Bithynia, when the timid and suspicious Zeno recalled him and his Goths, and committed the imperial cause to the championship of his strange allies from the middle Danube, the Rugians, under the command of a son of Aspar. This evidence of distrust no doubt alienated the high-mettled Gothic king. In 486 he broke out into open revolt and ravaged a part of Thrace; and in the following year with a large army (swollen no doubt by all the Triarian Goths) he came up to the very gates of Constantinople, and took the town of Melantias on the Sea of Marmora and only fourteen miles from the capital. He found himself, like countless other generals before and after him, unable to take the city of Constantine; but, before he returned to his head-quarters at Novae, the citizens saw the flames ascending from many towns and villages, and knew that they were kindled by the followers of the man who but three years before had ridden through their streets as a Roman Consul.

This endless vacillation between friendship and enmity to Rome was an unfruitful and unstatesmanlike policy; and we may be sure that Theodoric recognised the fact as clearly as any one. But the time was now ripe for the execution of another project, which would find full employment for all the warlike energies of his people, and which, if it succeeded, would give him a fixed and definite position among the rulers of the earth, and would exempt him from the necessity of marching up and down through the thrice-harried Thracian plains, to extort from the wretched provincials food for his almost equally wretched followers.

The scheme shall first be told in the words of Jordanes, who without doubt is here quoting from Cassiodorus, the friend and minister of Theodoric : "Meanwhile Theodoric, who was bound by covenant to the Empire of Zeno, hearing that his nation, abiding as we have said in Illyricum, were not too well supplied with the necessaries of life while he was enjoying all the good things of the capital, and choosing rather, after the old manner of his race, to seek food by labour than to enjoy in luxurious idleness the fatness of the Roman realm while his people were living in hardship, made up his mind and spoke thus to the Emperor : "Though nothing is wanting to me for my service to your Empire, nevertheless, if Your Piety think fit, I pray you to hear freely the desire of my heart." Then, as was wont, leave was granted him to speak without reserve. "The Hesperian clime," said he, "which was formerly subject to the rule of your predecessors, and that city which was once the capital and mistress of the world,— why should they now be tossed to and fro under the usurped authority of a king of Rugians and Turcilingians? Send me thither, if it please you, with my people, that you may be relieved from the expense which we cause you here, and that there, if by the Lord's help I conquer, the fame of Your Piety may beam brightly forth. For it is fitting that I, your son and servant, if victorious, should hold that kingdom as your gift; but it is not fitting that he, whom you know not, should press his tyrannical yoke upon your Senate, and that a part of the Roman Republic should languish in the bondage of captivity under him. In brief, if I conquer, I shall possess the land as of your gift and by your grant: if I am conquered, Your Piety will lose nothing, but rather, as before said, will save the heavy charges which we now bring upon you". On hearing this speech the Emperor, though sorry to part with Theodoric, yet not wishing to sadden him by a refusal, granted what he desired; and, after enriching him with great gifts, dismissed him from his presence, commending to his protection the Senate and People of Rome".

This is the account of the transaction given by Jordanes. The Byzantine authorities put a slightly different colour upon it. *Procopius* says, "The Emperor Zeno, a man skilful in expedients of a temporary kind, exhorted Theodoric to march to Italy, and, entering the lists against Odoacer, to win the Western Kingdom for himself and the Goths. He showed him that it was better for him, now especially that he had attained the dignity of Senator, by the overthrow of a tyrant to obtain the rule over all the Romans and Italians, than, by continuing the struggle with the Emperor, to run so many risks as he must do. Theodoric then, being pleased with the bargain, departed for Italy"; and so on.

The author who generally goes by the name of *Anonymus Valesii*, and who clearly writes from Byzantine sources and with a particular regard for the Emperor Zeno, says, "Zeno therefore rewarded Theodoric with his favours, making him Patrician and Consul, bestowing on him a large sum and sending him to Italy. With whom Theodoric made a bargain that, if Odoachar should be conquered, he on his arrival should reign in his stead as a reward for all his labours."

There is evidently a certain conflict of testimony as to the quarter from which the idea of a Gothic invasion of Italy first proceeded. Odovacar, as we shall see, had made himself obnoxious both to the Byzantine and the Goth. Theodoric's prolonged stay in the Danubian regions was a perpetual menace to Constantinople; and, whatever Jordanes may feign as to the Emperor's sorrow in parting with his adopted son, Zeno certainly desired few things more earnestly than that he might never see his face again; and Theodoric knew this. When matters have reached this point, when the guest has over-stayed his welcome, and both he and the host are keenly conscious of the fact, it may be difficult to say which first gives the signal for departure; and perhaps the means of escape from a position which each finds intolerable, may present itself simultaneously to both by a process of "double independent discovery". Only, in the idea of leading his nation away from the shores of the Danube, haunted by them for a hundred weary years, descending the Alps into Italy and founding an Ostrogothic kingdom on the Hesperian shore, there is a touch of genius which disposes one to look for its conception, rather to the bright and vigorous young Amal king than to the tired brain of the imperial voluptuary.

More important than the question of priority of invention between Zeno and Theodoric is the uncertainty in which the rights of the contracting parties were, no doubt intentionally, left. The Goth asks the Emperor's leave to invade Italy. If Italy was recognised as permanently lost to the Roman Empire, if it was like Dacia or Britain, why was this leave necessary? He says that he will hold the new kingdom as his adoptive father's gift. Did that gift fasten any responsibilities to the receiver? Did it entitle the giver to be consulted in the subsequent disposal of the crown? Was it, to borrow an illustration from English law, like a gift 'for life' or 'to him and the heirs of his body', or 'to him and heirs general'? In feudal times a transaction such as this could hardly have taken place without the creation of a fief; but it is some centuries too soon as yet to talk of fiefs and vassals of the Empire.

All that we can say, apparently, is that Theodoric was despatched on his hazardous expedition with the imperial approval; that the future relations between the parties were left to accident to determine; but that there was, underlying the whole conversation, a recognition of the fact that Italy and Rome still formed part of the *Respublica Romana*; and out of this fact would spring claims which any *Imperator*, who was strong enough to do so, was certain to enforce.

Before we follow the march of Theodoric and his Goths across the mountains we must first consult our meagre authorities to ascertain what Odovacar has been doing, during the thirteen years that he has been undisputed lord of Italy.

CHAPTER IV.

FLAVIUS ODOVACAR.

THE humiliation of Rome was completed by the events recorded in the preceding volume. There was still, no doubt, a legal fiction according to which Rome and Italy yet belonged to the Empire, and were under the dominion of the successor of Augustus, who reigned not in Old Rome by the Tiber, but in New Rome by the Thracian Bosphorus. In fact, however, one will was supreme in Italy, the will of the tall barbarian who in sordid dress once strode into the cell of Severinus, the leader of the Herulian and Rugian mutineers, the conqueror of Pavia, Odovacar.

For thirteen years this soldier of fortune swayed with undisputed mastery the Roman state. He employed, no doubt, the services of Roman officials to work the machine of government. He paid a certain deference, on many occasions, to the will of his nominal superior, Zeno, the Emperor at Constantinople. He watched, we may be sure much more anxiously, the shifting currents of opinion among the rough mercenaries who had bestowed on him the crown, and on whom he had bestowed the third part of the lands of Italy. But, on the whole, and looking at the necessity of concentrated force in such a precarious state as that which the mercenaries had founded, we shall probably not be far wrong if we attribute to Odovacar the effective power, though of course he used not the name, of Autocrat.

The highest praise that can be bestowed on the government of this adventurer from the Danubian lands is that we hear so little about it. Some hardship, perhaps even some violence, probably accompanied the compulsory expropriation of the Romans from one-third of the lands of Italy. There is some reason for supposing, however, that this would be in the main only a loss of property, falling on the large landed proprietors. Where the land was being cultivated by *coloni*, bound to the soil and paying their fixed rent or their share of produce to the lord, no great visible change could probably be made. From motives of self-interest, and to gratify his warlike impatience of toil, the Rugian warrior, entering upon the ownership of his sors, would generally leave the tillage of the soil in the same hands in which he found it. To him, or rather to his bailiffs (*actores*), instead of to those of the luxurious Roman senator, the *coloni* would henceforward pay their dues, and that would be the whole visible outcome of the late revolution. It seems hardly likely that there can have been much gratuitous cruelty or actual bloodshed on the part of the soldiers of Odovacar, or we should surely have had some hint of it from one of the Byzantine historians. It ought, however, to be mentioned that Ennodius draws a somewhat gloomy picture of the financial oppression of Odovacar's reign; but his purpose of blackening the fallen king in order to glorify Theodoric is so obvious that we need attach but little weight to his testimony. Perhaps his best remark is that Odovacar's consciousness of his own lowly origin made him timid in the presence of his army, and prevented him from checking their excesses. There are also some expressions in the letters of Pope Gelasius which hint at "barbaric incursions" and "the continual tempest of war" that had afflicted Italy, but the language employed is extremely vague, and gives us rather the impression of words used to round off a rhetorical period than of a genuine cry of sorrow forced out of the writer by the sight of the misery of his people.

As far as Italy herself is concerned, this part of her annals is an absolute blank, not one of her own sons having said anything at all about it, at least not in a voice loud enough to reach posterity. This absolute extinction of the national consciousness, in a people which had once

numbered among its sons a Livy and a Tacitus, is one of the strangest symptoms of the fifth century. But in truth it seems as if even for the chroniclers, who did in their way try to preserve some of the events of their age from oblivion, the Monophysite Controversy, to us so unintelligible and so wearisome, possessed a fascination which quite diverted their gaze from the portentous spectacle of a barbarian ruling in Italy. It would probably be safe to say that we have three allusions to Timotheus Aelurus, the militant Patriarch of Alexandria, for every time that the name of Odovacar occurs in the pages of the chroniclers.

In geographical extent, the dominions of Odovacar probably did not differ greatly from those of the Roman Emperors of the West during the last twenty-five years of their rule. It is true that Gaul was lost to him. The fair region which we now call Provence, nearly the earliest formed and quite the latest lost *Provincia* of Rome, that region in which the Latin spirit dwelt so strongly that the Roman nobles thought of migrating thither in 401, when Alaric first invaded Italy, refused to submit to the rule of the upstart barbarian. The Provençals sent an embassy to Constantinople to claim the protection of Zeno for the still loyal subjects of the Empire. Odovacar, however, sent his ambassadors at the same time, and again, as before, when the restoration of Nepos was in question, the representations of the new barbarian ruler of Italy prevailed. Zeno, we are told, rather inclined to the cause of Odovacar. The latter however, who perhaps thought that he had enough upon his hands without forcing his yoke on the Provençals, made over his claim to Euric, king of the Visigoths, whose influence was at this time predominant in Gaul.

Sicily, which had been for a generation subjected, first to the devastations and then to the rule of the Vandal king, was now by a formal treaty, which must have been nearly the last public act of Gaiseric, ceded to Odovacar, all but a small part, probably at the western end of the island, which the Vandal reserved to himself. A yearly tribute was to be the price of this concession; but, in the decay of the kingdom under Gaiseric's successors, it is possible that this tribute was not rigorously enforced, as it is also almost certain that the reserved portion of the island, following the example of the remainder, owned the sway of Odovacar.

The other great Italian islands, Sardinia and Corsica, as well as the Balearic isles, formed part of the maritime monarchy of the Vandals, and fell eventually, when it fell, under the sway of Byzantium.

North of the Alps, the dominion of Odovacar was probably more firmly established than had been that of any Italian ruler for a generation. It will be remembered that Raetia, the oblong block of territory which extended from the Alps to the Danube, formed, in the fourth and fifth centuries, a part of the 'Diocese' of Italia. It seems likely that under Odovacar, himself an immigrant from the Danubian lands, and able to draw to his standard many of the bravest and strongest of the adventurers who then roved through that portion of 'Varbaricum', the passes of the Alps may have been more strongly guarded, and Raetia may have been more of an outpost for Italy, than it had been since the wave of westward migration, at the beginning of the fifth century, changed all the landmarks on the north-western frontier of the Empire. In fact, such indications as we have of the policy of Odovacar would dispose one to think that his face was turned towards the North rather than the South. Peace with the Vandals, peace, if not a very cordial peace, with Byzantium, with an energetic policy towards the Burgundians, Alamanni, Thuringians, Rugians, on whose settlements he looked down from his Raetian stronghold—this was probably the policy of the new kingdom. It accorded well herewith that, like Honorius, though not from the same motive of personal timidity, Odovacar fixed his residence at Ravenna rather than at Rome.

There came a favourable opportunity for enlarging his kingdom by an extension to the east of the Adriatic. It will be remembered that Nepos, the exiled Emperor of the West, reigned for some years, apparently as legitimate Augustus, in the province of Dalmatia. As this

province belonged to the Western Empire, he probably owned no subjection to his brother Emperor at Constantinople, nor confessed any other inferiority than such as the ruler of a small and precariously held state must have felt in the presence of the undoubted lord of Illyricum and the Orient. We have already met with his ambassadors at the Court of Byzantium vainly entreating one legitimate Emperor to restore the other to his rightful position; and we also more recently have heard the offer of Theodoric the Amal to restore Nepos, if Zeno so willed, to the Western throne. No effectual help, however, was ever really rendered by Zeno to his dethroned kinsman, and in the year 480, as has been already related, Nepos fell by the traitorous blows of the Counts Viator and Ovida at his villa near Salona. In the following year Odovacar transported an army into Dalmatia, conquered and slew Count Ovida,—perhaps Viator had already fallen in some robber's quarrel over the division of the plunder,—and thus avenged the death of Nepos. There can be no doubt that the result of this campaign was the annexation of Dalmatia to the dominions of Odovacar, though this fact is not expressly asserted by the annalists.

It is worthy of remark that the Byzantine historian Procopius, who probably gives the strict legitimist view of the reign of Odovacar, does not consider that reign to have commenced till the death of Nepos, and thus reduces to ten years an interval which, according to the de facto view generally adopted by historians, lasted at least fourteen.

From this survey of foreign affairs we pass, to consider the internal condition of his kingdom.

In the first year after he had attained to supreme power he put to death a certain Count Bracila at Ravenna. From the form of the name we should have supposed that this was some barbarian rival, anxious to win the favour of the soldiery and to serve Odovacar as Odovacar had served Orestes. But Jordanes, whose statements, in the great dearth of authentic information, we cannot afford utterly to despise, tells us that it was done “that he might strike terror into the *Romans*”. Perhaps, as it had been with Stilicho the Vandal and with Ricimer the Sueve, so now was it with Bracila, the son of some unknown German princeling, that the cause of Rome was most stubbornly maintained by some conspicuous soldier not himself of Roman blood.

Possibly the Teutonic adherents of the new ruler, dwelling on the lands wrested from the old possessors and assigned to them, may still have been governed by their old tribal laws, and may have preserved some remains of their tribal organization. Analogy points to this as a probable conclusion, but we have absolutely no information on the subject. There is no doubt however that, for the great mass of the inhabitants of Italy, the old order of things remained unchanged. Justice was still administered according to Roman laws by Roman magistrates. The taxes of the Empire were still collected by Roman *Rationales*. There were still Praetorian Prefects, Counts of the Sacred Largesses, Counts of the Domestics, Masters of the Offices, and all the rest of the administrative and courtly hierarchy introduced by Diocletian and fully developed under Constantine. Only, the centre and mainspring of all this elaborate organization was no longer a Roman emperor, but a nondescript barbarian chief, King in relation to his followers, Patrician in his dealings with the Senate, a man not wearing the imperial purple nor crowned with the diadem, a man who could do everything in Italy except say by what right he ruled there.

One proof that the time of Odovacar's kingship was no mere revel of barbaric licence and anarchy is furnished by the names of Roman administrators—men of high character and position—who served him in the affairs of the state. Chief among these we must place Liberius. We are not informed of the precise position which he occupied at this time, but from the terms, honourable both to the praiser and the praised, in which his faithful services to

Odovacar are recounted by that king's successful rival, we may infer that it was a prominent one.

Another name with which we are already familiar, that of Cassiodorus, also emerges into notice in this reign. But, though some historians have been of a different opinion, it is now generally admitted that it was not 'Cassiodorus Senator', the minister of Theodoric and historian of the Goths, but his father who held office under Odovacar. The scanty details of the father's political career will be best reserved till we come to deal with the pedigree and the character of his illustrious son. It may be mentioned, however, that he seems to have successively filled the two great financial offices of Count of the Private Domains and Count of the Sacred Largesses.

Pierius, who was *Comes Domesticorum* or Captain of the Guard under Odovacar, was employed to superintend a certain transportation of Roman inhabitants from Noricum to Campania, which will be described in the next chapter. It is an interesting fact that there is still extant a deed of gift from Odovacar to this trusted minister. As the document throws some useful light on the internal condition of Italy at this period, and is really the only authentic record of the reign that we possess, it is transcribed in full at the end of this chapter.

Pelagius, who filled the high office of Praetorian Prefect, does not show so fair a record as some of the other ministers of Odovacar. We hear his name only from Ennodius, the biographer of Epiphanius, the saintly bishop of Ticinum, and he assures us that the province of Liguria groaned under his oppressive exercise of the right of *coemptio*, meaning probably the royal prerogative of buying provisions for the army at a fixed price below the market value. By this extortion, which Ennodius attributes to the long-concealed but at length forth-blazing ardour of the malice of Pelagius, but which probably proceeded simply from the poverty of the exchequer, the possessores of Liguria found that their taxes, already unendurable, were virtually doubled, and the province was brought to the brink of ruin. Epiphanius, that embodiment of good-nature, whose good offices as mediator were perpetually being invoked on behalf of some injured person or class, was appealed to by the half-desperate Ligurian 'possessors,' set off with alacrity for the court, and obtained, probably after a personal interview with Odovacar, a remission of the obnoxious imposts.

Nor was this the only concession made by exchequer of the barbarian king to the prayers of the Bishop. Epiphanius had devoted himself to the rebuilding of the churches of Ticinum and Pavia, both of which, as was previously told, had perished in the sack of the city by the revolted mercenaries. Notwithstanding the poverty of his ravaged diocese, and the opposition of 'that crafty serpent', the devil, to whose agency his biographer attributes the fall of the colonnaded wall of one of the churches, the Bishop succeeded in raising both edifices, in a marvellously short space of time, to their old height, and perhaps in restoring them to their former splendour. An accident which occurred in the progress of the work, the fall of the workmen with a large hoisting machine from the very cupola of the second church, raised the Bishop's fame to a yet greater height, since the people attributed it to his prayers, efficacious to delay the ruin and to check the falling stones in mid-air, that not a bone of one of the workmen was broken. Epiphanius, however, considerately remembered that the restoration of the ecclesiastical glories of his city would not repair the ruined fortunes of its inhabitants,—perhaps even he had been forced to solicit for the purpose contributions which were as hardly spared as the widow's mite,—and he therefore appealed for aid to Odovacar, who directed that Ticinum should enjoy a five years' exemption from tribute. The biographer adds that of all the citizens the Bishop who had obtained the boon reaped the least benefit from it, so modest was he in putting forward his own claims for exemption.

Such benefits, granted by the barbarian and heretical king at the request of the Catholic bishop, are honourable to both parties. But there are not wanting indications that, in his attitude

towards the head of Catholic Italy, towards the Bishop of Rome himself, Odovacar exhibited the same spirit of wise and dignified toleration which during the larger part of his reign was the glory of his great successor. Though the detailed history of the Popes lies outside of the scope of this work, some pages must be devoted to the position and character of the Pontiffs who witnessed the establishment of barbarian rule in Italy.

The stately Leo, the tamer of Attila and the hammer of Eutychnian heretics, died on the 10th of November, 461, and was succeeded by *Hilarus* the Sardinian. The pontificate of Hilarus, which lasted nearly six years, was chiefly occupied with attempts to assert the Papal supremacy over the Churches of Gaul and Spain in a more despotic style than had yet been possible. These attempts were successful. It is a marvellous sight to see how, as the political power of Rome over the provinces of the Empire ebbs away, the ecclesiastical power of her bishop increases. The Tribune and the Centurion disappear, but the Legate of the Pope comes oftener, and is a mightier personage each time of his return. So, too, with the outward splendour of the Papal Court : it grows brighter as that of the Caesars wanes. A long page in the Lives of the Popes is filled with the catalogue of the costly gifts of gold and silver offered by Pope Hilarus, chiefly in the three oratories which he erected in the Lateran Basilica. The names of these vessels (to us scarcely intelligible), their shapes, their weights, are recorded with tedious minuteness by the enthusiastic scribe. But, as has been well observed, these gifts, purchased with the revenues of the spacious and ever-increasing Church domains, were almost a satire on the general poverty of the city. While the life of the citizens was growing harder and the civil edifices were every year putting on more of the appearance of squalor and desolation, the shrines of martyrs and saints were glowing with ever-fresh splendour before the eyes—shall we say the envious, or the awe-stricken eyes—of the Christian Quirites.

Pope Hilarus also made his mark on his times (467) by withstanding a faint attempt at toleration made by the secular power. The Emperor Anthemius was darkly suspected of plotting, in concert with a certain citizen of Rome named Severus, a restoration of the worship of the gods of the Capitol. This was perhaps mere calumny; but what was undoubted was that he was accompanied to Rome by Philotheus, an asserter of the Macedonian heresy and a denier of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. At the instigation of this Philotheus, Anthemius proposed to allow full liberty to all the sects to hold their conventicles in Rome. But the aged Hilarus, who was within a few months of his end (for he died in September 467, only five months after Anthemius' triumphal entry), thundered with so loud and clear a voice in St. Peters against the proposed act of toleration, that the Emperor was obliged to relinquish his design and to pledge himself by a solemn oath to the Pontiff never to resume it.

The successor of Hilarus, Pope Simplicius, presided over the Church fifteen years (468-483), and in that time saw some great events. He witnessed the deposition of Augustulus, and the accession to supreme power in Italy of a Teutonic mercenary. He heard also of an event far more important in the eyes of the chroniclers of the time, the publication of the Henoticon of the Emperor Zeno, that document wherein an emperor, by his sole authority, without the sanction of pope or council, endeavoured to fix the land-marks of Christian belief and to terminate the Monophysite controversy. The long pontificate of Simplicius was chiefly occupied by his struggles for ascendancy against the able but somewhat unscrupulous Patriarch of Constantinople, Acacius. This struggle prepared the way for, and perhaps necessitated, the first great schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, which was opened under his successor.

In this struggle we are bound to remember that there was an element of self-defence mingled with all the aggressiveness of the Roman Pontiffs. Looking back through the dim vista of the middle ages at the steady and resistless growth of the papal power—a growth lasting over far distant centuries which, we are inclined to say, never conspired together for one single

end as they did for this,—we perhaps sometimes overrate the distinctness of vision wherewith the individual pontiffs saw the goal to which they were tending, while we underrate the actual pressure of cares and perils in each successive generation by which they were surrounded. Thus, for instance, at the point of time which we have now reached, in the last quarter of the fifth century from the birth of Christ, it might sometimes seem a doubtful matter to contemporary opinion whether the Roman See would not have to descend from the high place of its dominion at the head of the Christian world.

It was true that the person of the Pope was exalted by the humiliation and the eventual disappearance of the Western Caesar; but the See was in some danger of sharing the fallen fortunes of the city in which it was placed. Whatever might be the precise degree of support which they derived from the theory of an apostolical succession from Peter and an heirship of his power of the keys, it will not be disputed that in fact the position of the Popes at the centre of gravity of the Roman world, in the one great city to which all roads converged, enormously smoothed the way for their advance to the undisputed primacy of the Church. The whole constitution of the new religious community imitated that of the great political system in which it found itself embedded; and, like it, depended on the recognition of great cities as centres of life and power for the countries in which they were situated. The Bishop of Antioch was head of all the Churches of Syria. The Bishop of Alexandria was head of all the Churches of Egypt. It was only natural, in the second and third centuries, that the Bishop of Rome should be head of all the Churches of the Roman Empire, which was practically conterminous with Christendom. Had Peter lived and died at Bethsaida, it is possible that the primacy of the Christian Church might have been claimed for the bishopric of Bethsaida: it is certain that the claim would not have met with so easy nor so worldwide acceptance.

Since, then, the position of the Roman bishops in the forefront of the Christian Church was Papal originally connected so closely with the political ascendancy of their city, it was possible, now that political ascendancy was lost, that ecclesiastical supremacy might go with it. And, if the Pope lost his primacy, to no see was he more likely to lose it than to the pushing, ambitious, powerful see of Constantinople; that see whose representatives were ever at the ear of the Emperor, moulding the ecclesiastical policy of his reign; that see whose splendour was beheld by all the strangers who visited the New Rome; that see which already, in the course of little more than a century, had acquired the primacy first of Thrace, then of Pontus and Asia; that see which had just succeeded in accomplishing the subjection of the Patriarch of Antioch, and was now profiting by the religious wrangles of the Egyptians to reduce to similar dependence him of Alexandria.

Of all the many able and somewhat unscrupulous men who ever stood in the *ambo* of the great church at Constantinople perhaps none was cleverer and none bolder than Acacius. We have already seen him opposing the usurper Basiliscus, restoring Zeno, and guiding the pen of that Emperor as he traced the characters of the great Henoticon, that instrument which, as he no doubt hoped, would be looked back to by posterity as a more triumphant ‘End of Controversy’ than the Tome which the great Leo himself had presented to the fathers of Chalcedon. Now that our point of view is transferred to Rome from Constantinople, we can perhaps see a little more clearly what reasons Acacius had, apart from any deep spiritual interest of his own in the subject-matter of the controversy, for desiring its settlement on the basis of the Henoticon. The Council of Chalcedon had by its twenty-eighth canon (a canon passed, it is said, after the departure of Leo’s legates and of the majority of the bishops) rested the primacy of Old Rome solely on the political ground, making no mention of the commission to Peter, and had assigned the same prerogatives to the Bishop of New Rome, leaving apparently but an honorary precedence to the Bishop of the elder capital. Since this was the judgment of Chalcedon, a judgment which, when the grounds of it were considered, would evidently, in a

very few years, through the political changes that were going forward, give the see of Constantinople priority over that of Rome itself, the authority of the Council of Chalcedon must be upheld, and therefore neither Basiliscus nor any other emperor should be allowed to lapse into mere Monophysitism. But, on the other hand, since the good-will of the occupants of the thrones of Antioch and Alexandria was necessary to the success of the designs of Acacius, since the doctrine of the single nature of Christ was popular in those capitals and the name of the Council of Chalcedon was abhorred by very many, it would be wise to readmit them to communion by a scheme which should avoid the actual mention of the double nature of Christ and the express ratification of the decrees of the Third Council. With this object the Henoticon was framed, and for a generation or two seemed likely to be successful. In this, as in most ecclesiastical controversies, words were the all-important things. The personal vanity of the combatants must be conciliated, their pretensions to knowledge of Divine things must be respected: if these could be saved harmless, the faith might take care of itself.

Of course, just as much interest as Acacius Bishop of Constantinople had in upholding the Henoticon, just so much had Simplicius Bishop of Rome in destroying it, and the troubles of the see of Alexandria afforded him a useful lever for the purpose. Timothy the Weasel was dead. His rival, the other Timothy, called Solofaciolus, died five years later. Acacius determined to put Peter the Stammerer, a well-known follower of the Weasel's, on the episcopal throne of Alexandria, the Henoticon being the basis of union between the two Churches, by the Bosphorus and by the Nile. At first the plan succeeded. Peter the Stammerer subscribed the Henoticon, reigned as bishop at Alexandria, and was during his eight years' episcopate the useful tool of his Byzantine benefactor. But there was a rival candidate for the see, one John Talaias, who had been actually elected on the death of Timothy, but who had, so it was said, solemnly sworn to Zeno that he would never accept the dignity. He was also charged with simony and with misappropriation of the treasures of the Church. What was more undoubted, and perhaps more to the point, was that he was a friend and dependent of Illus, who was now falling into disgrace at Constantinople, and was indeed on the very verge of rebellion. All these circumstances made it easy for Acacius to nullify the election of Talaias and drive him into exile from Alexandria. He fled, however, to Rome, and there, in Pope Simplicius, found a willing listener to all his grievances against the Patriarch of Constantinople. Once, twice, even—four times did Simplicius write to Acacius insisting more and more peremptorily that he should withdraw from the communion of Peter the Stammerer, that rebel against the decrees of Chalcedon, and should not hinder the return of Talaias to his see. Acacius had not the courtesy to reply to any of these letters. While affairs were still in this position the fifteen years' pontificate of Simplicius came to an end. He died on the 2nd of March, 483, and his relics are still exhibited to the people once a year in his native town of Tivoli. The Pope who, born by the waters of 'headlong Anio' had doubtless as a boy often wandered through the vast villa of Hadrian, then still in its original glory, had lived to see Rome itself, the Rome of Horace and of Hadrian, pass under the yoke of a petty chieftain of Herulian mercenaries.

On the death of Simplicius, when the clergy and Odovacar, people of Rome were assembled in the church of St. Peter to elect his successor, one of the Roman ministers of King Odovacar made his appearance among them. This was Basilius, perhaps the same Caecina Basilius whom Sidonius had chosen for his patron twenty-six years before, when he visited Rome, and whose somewhat reserved but honest character he described in writing to his friends. He now filled the office of Praetorian Prefect to the barbarian King—another indication that in the civil government of Italy Odovacar retained the forms of the imperial hierarchy of office unaltered. Addressing the assembled multitude, Basilius informed them that they must not presume as to elect a new Bishop of Rome without the concurrence of his master. This announcement probably only meant that all such rights, not of nomination but of

veto, as the emperors had wielded previously to 476, must now be deemed to have survived to Odovacar. But he then proceeded to read a decree forbidding the new Pope, whoever he might be, to alienate any of the lands or ornaments of the Roman Church, and in case of disobedience, threatening the buyer with civil penalties, and the seller—strange menace from a layman and an Arian—with the spiritual penalty of anathema. We know nothing of any special proceedings of Simplicius which may have prompted this decree. It seems to have been accepted without murmuring at the time, though, nineteen years after, it was denounced by a similar assembly held in the same place, as an unhallowed interference on the part of a lay ruler with the affairs of the church, and the assembled clergy with difficulty, while the decree was being read, contained their indignation at the insolent tone of the fallen layman who had dared to interfere with a priest's monopoly of anathema.

The new Pope, Felix II, threw himself heartily into the quarrel with Constantinople. He sent two legates, Vitalis and Misenus, with a letter to the Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople, haughtily commanding them to desist from all further proceedings in the matter of the recognition of Peter the Stammerer. The legates were imprisoned as soon as they arrived at the Hellespont, their papers were taken from them, and they were threatened with death unless they would obey the Emperor's orders and recognise Peter as Patriarch of Alexandria. On the other hand, gifts and promotion were to be theirs if they complied with the imperial mandate. The legates, who were evidently weak and timid men, submitted to the coercion and the blandishments of the dread Augustus, and communicated with Acacius at a solemn festival at which the name of the Stammerer was read in the Diptychs, or tablets containing the roll-call of orthodox prelates in communion with the see of Constantinople. By this concession they of course surrendered the whole matter in dispute. Their master, Felix, was informed of this disloyalty by his faithful allies, the so-called 'sleepless' monks of Constantinople, who, perhaps from pure conviction, were passionate adherents of the Council of Chalcedon. On the return (484 A.D.) of his legates he held a synod at Rome (no doubt attended only by Italian bishops), and therein condemned the traitorous conduct of his legates, deposed them from their sees, and even excluded them from the holy Table. He went further, and the Council accompanied him. By an unheard-of stretch of power they condemned Acacius as a promoter of heresy, pronounced him deposed from his episcopal office, and cut him off 'as a putrid limb' from the body of the Church.

Next came the question by whom this sentence was to be served on the object of it, on the great Acacius, in all his pride of place and strong in the favour of his sovereign. Tutus, a *Defensor* of the Church, was dispatched on this errand; and, notwithstanding the vigilance of the imperial guards, arrived in safety at Constantinople. There monkish fanaticism relieved him of the most dangerous part of his task. One of the Sleepless ones fastened the fatal parchment to the dress of Acacius as he was about to officiate in the church. Acacius quietly proceeded in the holy ceremony. Suddenly he paused: with calm, clear voice he ordered the name of Felix, Bishop of Home, to be struck out of the roll of bishops in communion with his Church. The ban of Rome was encountered by the ban of Constantinople. Some of the monks who had dared to affix such a stigma on the all-powerful Patriarch were killed by his indignant followers, others were wounded, and the rest were shut up in prison.

This scene in the great Church of the Divine Wisdom at Constantinople was the commencement of the first great schism between the Eastern and Western Churches,—a schism which lasted thirty-five years, and covered almost the whole period of the reign of Theodoric. Several overtures towards reconciliation were made. One by one all the chief actors in the scene were removed by death, Acacius in 489, Zeno in 491, Felix in 492. But the See of Rome was inflexible; she might 'spare the fallen', but she would 'war down the proud'. There could be no peace with Byzantium till the name of Acacius, who had dared to strike a Roman

pontiff out of the diptychs, was struck out of the diptychs itself, nor till Peter the Stammerer's accursed name was also expunged: all which did not take place till the year 519.

It is possible that the quarrel between the two sees of Rome and Constantinople reacted on the political relations of Italy and the Empire. It is certain that these relations became rapidly more unfriendly soon after the mutual excommunication of the pontiffs, and continued so till the end of the reign of Odovacar.

At the outset it is probable that Zeno did not view the Teutonic mercenary's accession to power with any great dissatisfaction. In Augustulus he could have no interest: for his kinsman Nepos his sympathy was of a very languid character. His vanity was flattered by the fact that 'all the ornaments of the palace', including no doubt the diadem and the purple robe, were sent by Odovacar to Constantinople. The story of the embassies from Italy to Byzantium told by Malchus illustrates that aspect of the case in which it was possible for the Eastern Caesar to look upon the recent events in Italy with not unmingled dissatisfaction. It was not unpleasant to hear from the lips of a Roman Senator that Italy did not need a separate royalty, since Zeno's own imperial sway would suffice for both ends of the earth. And, however little the facts of the case might correspond with this deferential theory, Odovacar suing with some humility for the title of Patrician, Odovacar representing himself as in some sort a lieutenant of the Emperor, presented a not unwelcome spectacle to the imperial vanity. Add to this, that at any rate for the first three or four years of the reign of Zeno, Onoulf the brother of Odovacar, the client and the assassin of Harmatius, was a soldier of fortune about the Court, probably a connecting link between the Augustus and his brother. We can thus understand why, down to about 480 or 481, the Courts of Ravenna and of Constantinople may have regarded one another with no very unfriendly feelings.

The conquest of Dalmatia may have told both ways on this friendly relation. The barbarian's promptitude in avenging the death of her cousin Nepos would recommend him to the favour of the Empress Ariadne; but, on the other hand, by the addition of Dalmatia to his dominions he became a disagreeably near neighbour to the lord of the Lower Danube.

Then came, almost contemporaneously and not unconnected with one another, the schism between the two sees and the revolt of Illus. John Talaias, the fugitive patriarch of Alexandria, the client of the Roman popes, was, as we have seen, also a client of Illus, and may very probably have been the medium of communications between that general and Odovacar. Onoulf also, perhaps at this time, quitted the service of Zeno, since three years later we find him commanding his brother's armies in Noricum. But, as our information concerning this alienation between the Emperor and the King is very meagre, and is all furnished by one author (Joannes Antiochenus), it will be best to give it in his own words :—

"Illus therefore, having gone into open revolt, between proclaimed Marcian Emperor, and sent to Odovacar the *tyrannus* of Western Rome, and to the rulers of Persia and Armenia: and he also prepared a navy. Odoacer, however, replied that he could not ally himself with him, but the others promised alliance as soon as he could join his forces with theirs".

Joannes then describes the revolt of Illus, its early successes and subsequent decline, and continues :—

"In the consulship of Longinus (486, two years after the date of the previous extract), when Theodoric was again disposed for revolt and was ravaging the districts round Thrace, Zeno stirred up against Odoacer the nation of the Rugians, since he was apprised that the latter was making arrangements to ally himself with Illus. But when Odoacer's troops had obtained a brilliant victory [over the Rugians], and moreover had sent gifts to Zeno out of the spoils, he disclaimed his allies and professed satisfaction with what had been done".

The story of the Rugian war, taking us as it does out of Italy into the lands of the Middle Danube, and opening up some interesting glimpses into the life of the new barbarian states

founded amidst the ruins of the Empire, must be told in the next chapter. But meanwhile it is important to note that already in the year 486 the friendly relations between Odovacar and Zeno had been replaced by scarcely veiled enmity; and thus the mind of the Emperor was already tuned to harmony with that fierce harangue against the usurped authority of a king of Rugians and Turcilingians which, according to Jordanes, Theodoric delivered before him some time in the year 488.

CHAPTER V.

THE RUGIAN WAR.

‘The Emperor stirred up against Odoacer the nation of the Rugians’. To understand the meaning of this statement, and to complete our knowledge, scanty at the best, concerning this war, which occupied the attention of Odovacar during three years of his short reign, 486-488, we must turn back to the life of the saintly hermit of Noricum, *Severinus*.

The picture of the long-continued and hopeless misery of a people which the biographer of the Saint draws for us is very depressing. Those lands between the Danube and the Noric Alps which now form one of the most thoroughly enjoyable portions of ‘the playground of Europe’, the valleys round the Gross Glockner, the Salzkammergut, Salzburg with its castle rock and its noble amphitheatre of hills, Lorch with its stately monastery, Linz with its busy industries, all the fair domains of the old Archduchy of Austria down even to Vienna itself, were then in that most cruel of all positions, neither definitely subjected by the barbarian nor efficaciously protected against him, but wasted by his plundering bands at their will, though still calling themselves Roman, and possibly maintaining some faint show of official connection with Italy and the Empire. The Thuringians on the north-west and the Alamanni on the west appeared alternately under the walls of Passau, and seldom departed without carrying some of its wretched inhabitants into captivity. The latter nation of marauders pushed their ravages sometimes as far inland as to Noreia, in the very heart of Noricum. The Ostrogoths from Pannonia levied contributions in the valley of the Drave; and the Suevic Hunimund, the enemy of the Ostrogoths, marching across the unhappy province to meet his foe, sacked the city of Boiotrum, which he surprised while the inhabitants were busy over their harvest, and shed the blood of the priests in the baptistery of the basilica.

In the midst of this anarchy, the only semblance of firm and settled government seems to have been offered by the powerful monarchy of the Rugians, who occupied a compact territory north of the Danube corresponding to the eastern half of Bohemia, the west of Moravia, and a part of Lower Austria. And such order as they did preserve was probably but the reservation to themselves of an exclusive right to levy contributions on the Roman provincials. “I cannot bear”, said the Rugian king Feletheus to Severinus, “that this people, for whom thou art interceding, should be laid waste by the cruel depredations of the Alamanni and the Thuringians, or slain by the sword or carried into slavery, when there are near to us tributary towns in which they ought to be settled”. And this was the motive for bringing a great army of Rugians against the city of Lauriacum, in which were assembled the trembling fugitives who had escaped from the other barbaric invasions. Nor could all the exhortations of the Saint, though they seem to have prevented actual bloodshed, change the barbarian’s purpose of removing the Provincials (who are always spoken of by the once mighty name of Romans) out of their city of refuge and dispersing them among various towns in his own dominions, where ‘they lived in benevolent companionship with the Rugians’, the benevolent companionship, doubtless, of the lamb with the wolf.

So long as he lived, no doubt Saint Severinus did much to soften, in individual cases, the hardships of this harassed and weary existence. In his monastery at Faviana he collected great

magazines of food and stores of clothing, from which he used to relieve the hunger and nakedness of the captives or refugees who travelled along the great Danubian road. But though his heart was full of pity for his brethren, his presence was not always welcomed by them. The stormy petrel of Noricum, he was constantly appearing at some still undemolished Roman settlement and prophesying to the inhabitants, "The time of this *castellum* is come. In two days, or in three days, the barbarians who have devastated so many cities will appear before your walls". The practical counsel of the Saint was generally contained in one of two words. It was either 'Fast' or 'Fly'. Himself an anchorite who practised the austere forms of self-discipline, never eating before sunset except on feast-days, and allowing himself only one meal a week in Lent, yet ever preserving, even under the stress of this abstinence, a cheerful and unruffled countenance, he loved to accompany his message of coming woe by an exhortation to the provincials to disarm the anger of the Lord by fasting and prayer. This counsel was not always acceptable. At Innstadt, for example, when the priests asked for relics for their church, and the merchants that leave might be obtained for them to trade with the Rugians, and when the Saint replied, "It is of no use; the time is come for this town, like so many other *castella*, to be desolated", a certain presbyter, filled with the spirit of the devil, cried out, "Oh, go away, holy man! and that speedily, that we may have a little rest from fastings and watchings". The Saint wept, for he knew that open scurrility is the evidence of secret sins; and then he prophesied of the woe that should come upon them, and how that human blood should be shed in that very baptistry in which they were standing. All which came true almost immediately after he had departed. Hunimund drew near to the city and took it, and the scurrilous priest was slain in that very basilica, to which he had fled for refuge".

Once or twice the Saint lifted up his voice for war, and promised victory; but as a rule, if he did not recommend the spiritual weapons of fasting and prayer, he counselled the inhabitants to withdraw before the barbarian forces. Thus he vainly urged the people of Joviacum (a town about twenty miles below Passau) to escape before the Herulian invasion, which he foreboded, should come upon them. The citizens of Quintana, who had already fled once, to Passau, were exhorted to flee again, to Lauriacum; and the few disobedient ones were massacred by the Thuringians. But always, during the last and dreariest years of his life, when the barbarian darkness seemed gathering most hopelessly over the doomed provincials the Saint foretold that the Romans should be delivered from their enemies, and led up out of Noricum, as Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt. "And then", said he, "as Joseph asked his brethren, so do I beg of you, that ye carry my bones up hence. For these places, now so crowded with cultivators, shall be reduced into so mighty a solitude that the enemy, hunting for gold, shall break open even the sepulchres of the dead".

Severinus preserved the mystery as to his origin and parentage till the end, unimparted even to his nearest friends. His pure Latin speech showed that there was no admixture of the barbarian in his blood, and it was generally believed that he had spent some time as a hermit in the East before he suddenly appeared in the towns of the Danubian Noricum. He would sometimes casually allude to the cities of the East, and to immense journeyings which he had in past times performed there. But he did not permit himself to be questioned as to his past history. Near the close of his life, an Italian priest of noble birth and weighty character, Primenius by name, fled to Noricum, fearing to be involved in the fate of Orestes, of whom he had been the confidential adviser and friend. After many days had passed in friendly intercourse between them, Primenius one day hazarded the enquiry, "Holy master, from what province first sprang that light which God has deigned to bestow on us in thee?". The man of God turned aside the question with a joke: "If you think I am a runaway slave, get ready the ransom, that you may offer it on my behalf when I am claimed". Then, more seriously, he

discoursed on the unimportance of race or birthplace in comparison with that Divine call which, he earnestly asserted, had led him to those regions to succour his perishing brethren.

The young recruit whom Severinus had blessed him and on his journey to Italy, and to whom he had prophesied the splendid future which lay before him, beyond the Alpine horizon, was not unmindful of that early augury. King Odovacar sent to the Saint a friendly letter, promising him the fulfillment of any petition which he might choose to make. On this invitation Severinus asked for the forgiveness of a certain exile named Ambrose, and the King joyfully acceded to the request. On another occasion several noble persons were speaking about the King in the Saint's presence, and "according to custom", says the biographer, "were praising him with man's flattery". We note the presence of these 'many noble persons' of Noricum, Roman citizens no doubt, in the Saint's cell, and their high praises of the barbarian ruler of Italy, as interesting signs of the times, even if their panegyrics were, as the biographer hints, somewhat conventional and insincere. The Saint enquired, "Who was the king thus greatly lauded?". They replied, "Odovacar". He answered, "Odovacar who shall be safe between thirteen and fourteen years", predicting thus with accuracy the duration of the new king's unquestioned supremacy in Italy.

But the chief relations of the hermit of Noricum were naturally with the Rugian kings, and through his biography we gain an insight into the inner life of one of these new barbaric royalties, of which we should otherwise know nothing. *Flaccitheus*, king of the Rugians (perhaps from about 430 to 460), was greatly alarmed at the vast multitude of Goths, apparently full of enmity against him, who were settled on his border in Lower Pannonia. Asking the advice of the holy man, whom he consulted like a heavenly oracle, he told him in much perturbation that he had requested from the Gothic princes a safe-conduct into Italy, and that the refusal of this request filled him with alarm as to their intentions. Severinus replied, "If we were united by the bond of the One Catholic Faith I would gladly give thee advice concerning the life to come. But since thy enquiry relates only to the present life, I will tell thee that thou needest not be disquieted by the multitude of these Goths, since they will shortly depart and leave thee in safety. Live a peaceful life; do not undergo the curse laid upon him "who maketh flesh his arm", lay no snares for others, while taking heed of those laid for thyself: so shalt thou meet thine end peacefully in thy bed".

The divine oracle soothed the anxious King, who went away greatly comforted. Soon afterwards, however, a crowd of barbarian, probably Gothic, marauders carried off a number of the Rugians, whose King again came to the Saint for counsel. By divine revelation Severinus warned him not to follow the robbers, to beware of crossing the river, and to avoid the snares which in three several places his enemies had laid for him. "Soon shall a faithful messenger arrive who shall assure thee of the truth of all these sayings". And in fact, very shortly afterwards, two Rugian captives, who had escaped from the dwellings of the enemy, arrived at the King's court and confirmed the Saint's predictions in every particular. The devices of the enemies of the Rugian king being thus frustrated, his affairs went on prospering, and in due time Flaccitheus died in rest and tranquillity.

To him succeeded his son *Feletheus* or *Feva*, who at first followed his father's example, and was guided in all things by the counsels of the holy hermit. But before long the influence of his wife, the cruel and guilty Giso, began to assert itself, always in opposition to the healthful spirit of divine grace. This woman (evidently an Arian), among her other infamous actions, even sought to re-baptize certain Catholics, but was obliged to desist when her husband, out of reverence for Saint Severinus, forbade the sacrilegious deed. This queen was wont to cause certain of the 'Romans' (that is, provincials) to be carried across the Danube and there kept in bitter bondage. This had she once done with some of the inhabitants of Faviana, whom, when carried captive, she condemned to slavery of the most degrading kind. Severinus,

grieving for his neighbours, sent messengers entreating her to restore them to their homes. But she, flaming out in violent wrath, returned a message of angry contempt to the hermit: "Go, oh slave of God! skulk into your cell to pray, and let me issue such orders concerning my slaves as I think fit". The Saint, when he received this answer, said, "I trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, who will make her do of necessity that which her evil will refuses to do at my request".

That very day the judgment of God came upon the arrogant queen. There were certain barbarian goldsmiths who were kept close prisoners in the palace and obliged to work all day at ornaments for the royal family. The little prince Frederic, son of Feletheus and Giso, out of childish curiosity (and perhaps attracted by the glitter of the gold) ventured in amongst these men. The workmen at once caught up a sword, and held it to the child's throat. "No one", said they, "shall now enter this room unless our lives and our liberty are assured to us by oath. If this be refused we will first kill the child and then ourselves, for we are made desperate by the misery of this dungeon". The cruel and wicked queen at once perceived that the vengeance of God had come upon her for her insults to the holy man. She sent horsemen to implore his pardon, and restored to their homes the Roman captives for whom he had that day interceded. The goldsmiths received a sworn assurance of safety, upon which they let the child go, and were themselves dismissed in peace. The revered servant of Christ recognized the good hand of his God in this interposition, which had actually accomplished more than he asked for, since not only the Roman captives but the oppressed barbarian gold-workers had obtained their freedom. The queen and her husband hastened to his cell, exhibited the son whom they acknowledged themselves to have received back from the very gates of death through his intercession, and promised obedience to all his commands in future.

One instance of the prescience of the Saint may be noticed here, because it incidentally throws some light on the condition of the soldiers who guarded the boundaries of the Empire. What happened to the legions on the Danubian *limes* may easily have occurred also to those stationed *per lineam valli* in our own island (England). "At the time", says Eugippius, "when the Roman Empire still held together, the soldiers of many towns were supported by public pay for the better guardianship of the limes". This obscure sentence perhaps means that local troops were drafted off to the limes, and there received, as was natural, imperial pay and equipments. "When this custom ceased, the squadrons (*turmae*) of cavalry were obliterated; but the Batavian legion (stationed at Passau) lasted as long as the limes itself stood. From this legion certain soldiers had gone forth to Italy to bear to their comrades their last pay, and these men had been slain on the march by the barbarians, no one knowing thereof. On a certain day, while Severinus was reading in his cell, suddenly he closed the codex and began to weep and sigh. Then he told the by-standers to run quickly to the river's brink, which, as he affirmed, was in that very hour stained with human gore. And immediately word was brought that the bodies of the aforesaid soldiers had just been swept on shore by the force of the stream".

At length the time (482) drew near for the saint to die. Of the very day of his death, as of so many of the events which had made his life memorable, it was believed that he had an intimation from Heaven. Not long before it arrived he sent for the king and queen of the Rugians. "Giso", said he to the queen, "dost thou love this man" (pointing to the king) "or silver and gold best?". "My husband better than all wealth", said she. "Then", he said, "cease to oppress the innocent, lest their affliction be the cause of the scattering of your power: for thou dost often pervert the mildness of the king. Hitherto God has prospered your kingdom. Henceforward you will see..." The royal couple took leave of him and departed.

Next stood Ferderuchus by his bed-side—Fer-deruchus the king's brother, who had received from Feletheus a present of the few Roman towns remaining on the Danube, Faviana among them. Severinus spoke of his own imminent departure, and besought the prince not to draw down upon himself the Divine wrath, by touching the stores collected during the saint's

lifetime for the poor and the captives. Ferderuchus eagerly disclaimed the intention imputed to him, and professed a desire to follow the pious footsteps of his father Flaccitheus. But Severinus replied, "On the very first opportunity thou wilt violate this my cell and wilt be punished for it in a manner which I do not desire". Ferderuchus repeated his protestations of obedience and departed. The Saint knew his covetous nature better, perchance, than he did himself. The end followed speedily. At midnight Severinus called his monks to him, exhorted them to persevere according to their vocation, kissed each one of them, made the sign of the cross, and died, while they were reciting around him the 150th Psalm. Scarcely was his worn body laid in the slight shell which the brethren had prepared for it, mindful of his prophecy concerning their speedy migration southwards, when Ferderuchus, poor and impious, and made ever more ruthless by his barbarous avarice, bore down upon the monastery, determined to carry off the stores of raiment collected there for the use of the poor. When these were swept away he proceeded to take the sacred vessels from the altar. His steward did not dare to execute this part of his master's commands himself, but deputed the work to a soldier named Avitianus, whose unwilling sacrilege was punished by an immediate attack of St. Vitus's dance. Alarmed and penitent, the soldier turned monk, and ended his days in solitude on a distant island. Meanwhile the covetous Ferderuchus, unmindful of the dying saint's exhortations and of his own promises, continued to ransack the monastery, and finally carried off everything except the bare walls, which he could not convey across the Danube to his own land. But vengeance soon overtook him; for before a month had elapsed, being slain by Frederic his brother's son (the boy who once wandered into the workshop of the goldsmiths, now grown up to manhood), he lost both booty and life.

These events occurred in the early part of 482, and they are connected—but precisely how connected it is impossible to say—with the war which Odovacar, five years later, waged against the Rugians. The biographer of Severinus, after describing the defeat of Ferderuchus by his nephew and the death of the former, says, "For which cause king Odovacar made war upon the Rugians". But as the sacrilegious inroad of Ferderuchus seems to have followed close upon the death of the Saint, which certainly happened in 482, and is expressly stated to have been followed in its turn by the expedition of Frederic, and as Odovacar's Rugian war did not break out before the end of 486 (being in fact assigned by two chroniclers to the year 487), it is clear that the death of Ferderuchus was not immediately avenged by the Italian king. Possibly (but this is a mere conjecture) some brotherhood in arms may have connected Odovacar and Ferderuchus in old days, when the former was still an adventurer in Noricum, and he may have been bound by Teutonic notions of honour to avenge, sooner or later, the death of his comrade. Possibly the increased sufferings of the provincials at the hands of the Rugians, after the death of Saint Severinus, may have called upon a king, who now in some sort represented the majesty of Rome, to redress their wrongs. At any rate, in these elements of strife, and in the fact that between the Alps and the Danube no other barbarian power existed which could vie with the monarchy of Feletheus, we find some explanation of the sentence in which John of Antioch informed us that "the Emperor Zeno stirred up against Odoacer the nation of the Rugians".

The events of the war are soon told. Possibly the Rugians made some movement against Odovacar in 486. It is certain that in 487 he returned the blow, invaded their territory, put the young general Frederic to flight, and carried Feletheus (or Feva) and his wicked wife prisoners to Ravenna.

Afterwards, probably in the following year, Odovacar was informed that Frederic had returned to his own land, upon which he sent his brother Onoulf with a large army against him. Frederic was again forced to flee, and betook himself to Theodoric the Amal, who was then

dwelling at Novae (probably the place which is now the Bulgarian town of Sistova), on the Lower Danube.

After this conquest of *Rugiland* (so Paulus Diaconus informs us that the country of the Rugians was called) the emigration of Roman provincials into Italy took place, as foretold by Severinus. Onoulf ordered it; Pierius, Count of the Domestics (who received from Odovacar the deed of gift mentioned in the last chapter), superintended the taking the doing of it. A certain aged priest named Lucillus, to whom Severinus had predicted his decease, and who had then replied, "Surely I shall go before thee", was still living, and directed the removal of his remains, which, mindful of the Saint's injunction, the emigrants were set upon carrying up out of the land of bondage. They went at evening, chanting psalms, to the Saint's resting-place. The usual mediaeval marvels of the charnel-house followed,—the body found undecaying, though unembalmed, after six years' entombment, even the hair and the beard still untouched, a sweet odour filling all the neighbourhood of the tomb. The body, with its cerements unchanged, was placed in a chest, which had been prepared some time before in anticipation of the removal, set upon a waggon (*carpentam*), and drawn by horses over the mountainous passes which separate Noricum from Italy. In the sad procession which followed the relics of the saint walked all the Roman inhabitants of Noricum, leaving the ruined towns by the Danube for the new homes allotted to each of them in Italy.

After long journeymings, the body of the Saint reached a village (*castellum*) called Mons Feletis (possibly Felitto in Campania, about fifteen miles east of Paestum), and there it abode during at least four of the troublous years that followed, healing the sick, giving speech to the dumb, and working the usual wonders that attested the genuineness of a Saint's relics in the fifth century. But, after a time, a devout and illustrious widow named Barbaria, who had known the Saint by report during his life, whose husband had often corresponded with him, and who now greatly venerated his memory, finding that his body, though brought with all honour to Italy, yet lacked a permanent resting-place, sent to Marcian the presbyter and the congregation of monks which had gathered round the sacred relics, inviting them to lay their precious deposit within her domain. The Pope, Gelasius, gave his consent. All the dwellers in Naples poured forth to receive in reverence the body of the Saint, and it was duly laid, according to her invitation, 'in the Lucullan Castle', where a monastery was founded, presided over, first by Marcian and then by Eugippius, the biographer to whom we owe these details. The usual miracles were wrought by the sacred bones. A blind man was restored to sight. The chief of the Neapolitan choir was cured of a most stubborn headache by leaning his forehead against the dead man's bier. Demons were cast out, and innumerable other miracles of bodily and mental healing perpetuated the fame of Saint Severinus of Noricum till the fear of the Saracen marauders caused tomb and monastery to be transported to the safer asylum of Naples.

But who was the illustrious lady who invited the monks to settle on her land? and what is the Lucullan Castle where Severinus was laid? It is impossible to prove, but we may venture a conjecture that this widow Barbaria, evidently a lady of high rank, is none other than the mother of Romulus Augustulus. She too sprang from Noricum, her husband Orestes had doubtless often corresponded with Severinus concerning the affairs of the provincials in that country. Yet they might well have known the Saint by fame only, not by personal intercourse, since, about the same time that Severinus suddenly appeared by the banks of the Danube (shortly after the death of Attila), Orestes, accompanied doubtless by his wife, must have left his native country, Pannonia, and come to seek his fortune in Italy. These, however, are but slight coincidences; but when it is remembered that it was to 'the Lucullan Castle' that Augustulus was consigned by the barbarian conqueror, our conjecture rises many degrees in probability. It is true that nothing is said as to his being accompanied by his mother, but this companionship, in itself probable, is rendered yet more so by a letter written by command of

Theodoric to *Romulus and his mother*, which we find in the official correspondence of Cassiodorus.

As for the Lucullanum (whose site was left somewhat doubtful when it was previously mentioned in this history), it seems to be agreed by the best antiquaries of Naples that it corresponds, as nearly as the alteration of the coast-line will permit, with the Castel dell' Ovo, that remarkable island or peninsula which juts out from the shore of modern Naples between the Chiaja and the Military Harbour. Perhaps some of the mainland in the modern quarter of Santa Lucia, lying westward of the present Royal Palace, went to make up the pleasure-grounds and to form the fishponds of the luxurious conqueror of Mithridates, that Lucullanum which was the gilded prison of the last Roman Emperor of Rome.

NOTE C. ODOVACAE'S NAME IN AN INSCRIPTION AT SALZBURG.

A READER of this boob, visiting Salzburg, might, unless forewarned, think that he had stumbled upon an important contribution to our scanty knowledge of the acts of Odovacar.

In the side of the Monchsberg, a steep cliff immediately above the church and cemetery of St. Peter, there are two caves which tradition connects with the memory of Maximus, who is said to have suffered death at the hands of the barbarians in the year 476 or 477. There is still visible in the cave this inscription on a stone: "Anno Domini 477 Odoacer, rex Ruthenorum, Gepidi, Gothi, Hungari et Heruli".

There was also a wooden tablet (now, I think, removed to the Museum) bearing a long inscription, the most important sentences of which, for our purpose, are the following: "Quo [Attila] mortuo regnante Zenone imperatore anno Domini 477 Odoacer, natione Rhutenus, Romam cum Herulis ingreditur, Latinos annis 14 opprimens...".

In spite of the minuteness of their details, and of the very interesting place with which they are connected, these two inscriptions are of no historical value. Both of them give the date according to the computation of Dionysius Exiguus, from the birth of our Lord; that fact alone makes it impossible that they could be in any sense contemporary documents. (The Dionysian computation was not adopted even in Italy till about 530). Nor, if the date were treated as an alteration of later times, will the substance of the inscriptions stand the test of criticism any better. Both introduce the Hungarians into the list of the assailants of Juvavia, and the Hungarians did not appear in Europe till the ninth century. Both make Odovacar a Ruthene instead of a Rugian, the Ruthenians having apparently emerged not long before the Hungarians. The inscription on the wooden tablet makes Severinus bishop of *Ravenna*,—a ridiculous blunder. It would require fuller data than I possess, to decide when these inscriptions were really placed in the caves, but probably not earlier than the fall of the monarchy of the Avars in 796 (soon after which time German civilization began to rear Salzburg on the ruins of Juvavia), perhaps much later.

The same remarks which have been made as to the inscriptions apply to a work entitled 'Historia de origine, consecratione et reparatione speluncae seu eremitorii ejusque capellae in monte prope coemeterium sancti Petri in civitate Salisburgensi, ex antiquissimis monumentis et manuscriptis in lucem protracta' (printed in 1661).

The historian of Roman Salzburg, Dr. Ignaz Schumann von Mannsegg (in his monograph *Juvavia* published 184a), comments on this MS. at considerable length (pp. 247-361), while admitting that it is not entirely accurate. But it also mentions Hungarians among the invaders, and is evidently a comparatively late production, not at all deserving the attention which Dr. Schumann has given to it. The only reason for alluding to it at all is that it speaks of Odovacar as an ordinary barbarian king and invader ('Eodem anno 476 ille Rugiorum princeps Odoacer exercitum suum ingen tem et fortissimum per has Noricales terras in Italiam duxerat, etc.). And if this little treatise had any contemporary authority at all, we might be forced by it to

reconsider the theory, now admitted by all scholars, that Odovacar was not in form a foreign invader, but rather a ringleader of mutinous soldiers in the pay of the Empire.

The caves in the Monchsberg, and the cemetery of St. Peter below them, are extremely interesting, and probably do carry us back to the earliest days of Christian Juvavia. It is quite possible that monks under the presidency of a certain Maximus may have congregated there after a partial destruction of the city by the Huns in 452. Quite possible too that Maximus and fifty of his companions may have been hurled down the steep sides of the Monchsberg, and so met their death at the hands of some of the barbarians who were at that time the scourge of Noricum. But it may be said positively that Odovacar had nothing to do with this massacre, and it may be almost as strongly asserted that ' the heretic Widemir (the Ostrogoth), whom the MS. 'de Origine' tries to connect with it, was also guiltless, and very likely entirely ignorant of the cruel deed.

CHAPTER VI.
THE DEATH-GRAPPLE.

In the preceding chapter we saw that Frederic, Theodoric the last scion of the Rugian stock, after his unsuccessful revolt fled before the army commanded by the brother of Odovacar, and sought refuge at the Court of Theodoric. Perhaps the injury done to one who was certainly an ally, and who may have been a kinsman, quickened the preparations of Theodoric. Or perhaps his bargain with the Byzantine Court having been concluded, he had been given to understand that he and his foederati, who had now received a commission to invade Italy, must look for no more rations or pay from the imperial treasury. Certain it is that, at what seems to us a most unseasonable time for such a march, in the late autumn of 488, he broke up his court or camp or settlement at Sistova, that high fortress on the south of the Danube overlooking what is now the flat and marshy Wallachian shore, and started with his nation-army on the long and difficult journey to Italy.

Seldom, since Moses led the Children of Israel through the wilderness, has a more ill-compacted host tempted to penetrate through hostile countries and to win, by the edge of the sword, a new possession. In the case of Alaric, and of others of the great Teutonic chiefs, we have already had our attention called, by Claudian and other authorities, to the *family* aspect of their marches, migrations rather than campaigns. But of this journey of Theodoric the emphatic language of contemporaries justifies us in saying, that it was preeminently a nation, in all its strength and all its helplessness, that accompanied him. His own family, mother, sisters, nephews, evidently were with him, as before on the march to Dyrrhachium. And as with the chief, so with the people. Procopius says, ‘With Theodoric went the people of the Goths, putting their wives and children and as much of their furniture as they could take with them into their waggons.’ Somewhat more minutely, but with too much of his usual vapid rhetoric, says Theodoric’s panegyrist, Ennodius, “Then, after you had summoned all your powers far and wide, the people, scattered through countless tribes, come together again as one nation, and a world migrates with you to the Ausonian land, a world every member of which is nevertheless your kinsman². Waggons are made to do duty as houses, and into those wandering habitations all things that can minister to the needs of the occupants are poured. Then were the tools of Ceres, and the stones with which the corn is ground, dragged along by the labouring oxen. Pregnant mothers, forgetful of their sex and of the burden which they bore, undertook the toil of providing food for the families of thy people. Followed the reign of winter in thy camp. Over the hair of thy men the long frost threw a veil of snowy white; the icicles hung in a tangle from their beards. So hard was the frost that the garment which the matron’s persevering toil had woven (for her husband) had to be broken before he could fit it to his body. Food for thy marching armies was forced from the grasp of the hostile nations around, or procured by the cunning of the hunter”.

The question has been often asked, what must we suppose to have been the number of this moving multitude? The calculation can be only conjectural, but the data that we have point to a high figure. In the campaign in Epirus, as the reader may remember, the defeat of the mere rearguard of the Ostrogothic army led to the capture of 5000 prisoners (a yet larger number having been cut to pieces), and put 2000 waggons at the disposal of the Byzantine host. In the same campaign a body of 6000 men, the most valiant in the army, are spoken of by Theodoric as a sort of flying column with which he was willing to march into Thrace and annihilate the

forces of the son of Triarius; while that rival, on making his peace with the Empire, had obtained the promise of rations and pay for 13,000 men, to be selected by himself from the number of his followers. Looking at these facts, remembering that probably many of the Triarian Goths had joined Theodoric's standard after the extinction of the family of their leader, and that some, perhaps many, Rugians must have followed the fugitive Frederic into his camp, we shall probably be safe in estimating the fighting strength of Theodoric's army at 40,000 men, and the total number of the nation on its travels at 200,000. If anything, this conjecture is too low, since we find it stated that the Gothic army which besieged Rome only fifty years later (but they had been years of peace and unexampled prosperity) consisted of not less than 150,000 fighting men.

Accepting the moderate computation here suggested, we can imagine, or rather we cannot imagine, the anxiety which must have gnawed the soul of Theodoric when he had cut himself loose from his communications in Moesia, when his progress was barred by enemies upon whose neutrality he had, perhaps rashly, reckoned, when weeks lengthened into months, winter months, and still his long array, with all the sick, the children, the delicate women, with 200,000 mouths needing daily food, stood upon the snow-covered Illyrian uplands, and could not yet descend into the promised land, could not yet even see their final foe.

The first 300 miles were probably much the easiest part of the journey. They would be travelling along the great Danubian highway, perhaps the most important of all the roads connecting the eastern and western portions of the Roman Empire, and one which, even in those days of feebleness and decay, and after all the ravages of Goth and Hun, was still probably kept in a fair state of repair. Possibly too, as Theodoric was still in the territory of the now friendly empire, supplies for his followers would be forthcoming, if not from the imperial magazines, at any rate on moderate terms in the markets of the provincials. But when he reached Singidunum (Belgrade), the scene of that boyish victory of his over the Sarmatian king, his difficulties began, if they had not begun before. It is pretty clear from the facts, even if it were not expressly stated by Procopius, that, after the Ostrogoths performed their celebrated march to the Aegean under Theudemir (in 473), the Gepidae moved across the Danube (from Dacia into Pannonia) and occupied either the whole of the broad lands thus evacuated, or at any rate the south-eastern corner of them, including the important and still not utterly ruined cities of Singidunum and Sirmium. Now, into this corner of the land, this long strip of country (the modern province of Slavonia) between the rivers Drave and Save, Theodoric's road led him, and through it he must lead his way-worn and hungering followers; but the Gepid barred the way. An embassy was sent, we may imagine, with such an appeal as Moses made to Sihon king of the Amorites which dwelt at Heshbon: "Let me pass through thy land : we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: but we will go along by the king's high way, until we be past thy borders". Like that appeal, however, this of Theodoric's, though it might have been based on the claims of kindred and on memories of the far-distant days when the Gepids manned one boat and the Goths two in the first migration, if made, was disregarded, and the nation-army, all encumbered as it was with baggage and diluted with non-combatants, had to fight for its right of way.

The decisive engagement came off at the river Ulca, concerning which we are told that 'it is the defence of the Gepidae which protects them like a mound, gives them an audacity which they would otherwise lack, and strengthens the frontier of the province with a wall that no battering ram can crumble'. It is not easy from this description to identify the river in question. The Save, which at this time must have formed the southern boundary of the Gepid territory, would have seemed a probable suggestion, but we have no hint that it ever was called by any name like Ulca. On the whole, the least improbable conjecture seems to be that we have here to do with the Hiulca Talus, a great sheet of water (possibly connected with streams above and

below, and therefore not quite incorrectly termed a river) which, according to the striking description of Zosimus, mirrored the towers of the high hill-city of Cibalis, an important place, the exact site of which has not yet been discovered, but which was 101 Roman miles higher up the valley of the Save than Singidunum. If this identification be correct, the landscape on which Theodoric and his countrymen looked on this day of unwelcome conflict, was one which had already been the theatre of great events, for here it was that Constantine the Great fought the first battle in that long duel with his brother-in-law Licinius which finally gave to the Christian Emperor the undisputed mastery of the Eastern and Western worlds. Here too, only seven years later, was born one of the ablest of his successors, the ferocious but statesmanlike Valentinian.

The ambassadors who were sent to the Gepid king, Traustila, returned with an unfavourable reply. No passage through his dominions would be conceded to the Ostrogoths; if they still desired it they must fight for it with the unconquered Gepidae. Then indeed was the distress of the wandering nation at its height. Famine, and the child of famine, pestilence, urged them on : behind them lay the frozen road marked by their blood-stained footprints, before them a yet worse and steeper road, one which even a fugitive would have shunned, leading over a quivering morass and up to the frowning ranks of their enemies. The Gothic vanguard charged across the morass; many were swallowed up in its muddy waters; those who reached the opposite side were falling fast beneath the shower of lances which the mighty arms of the Gepidae hurled against their frail wicker-work breastplates. In that apparent shipwreck of the fortunes of a noble nation, the calm valour of Theodoric saved his people. Like Henry IV at Ivri, he shouted, "Whoso will fight the enemy let him follow me. Look not to any other leader, but only charge where you see my standard advancing. The Gepids shall know that a king attacks them : my people shall know that Theodoric saves them". Then he called for a cup, and performed with it some old Teutonic rite by way of augury, the nature of which is not described to us, and on he dashed, urging his horse to a gallop. We may conjecture that his keen eye had discerned some causeway of solid ground through the morass, along which he led his followers. However this may be, his charge was completely successful. "As a swollen river through the harvest-field, as a lion through the herd", so did Theodoric career through the Gepid ranks, which everywhere melted away before him. In a moment the fortune of the day was turned. They who a little while ago were vaunting victors were now fugitives, wandering without cohesion over the plain, while the Amal king moved proudly on, no longer now at the head of his troops, but encompassed by thousands of stalwart guards.

A great multitude of the enemy were slain, and only the approach of night saved the trembling remnant. What was more important, the store waggons of the Gepidae fell into the hands of the Goths; and so well were they supplied with corn from all the cities of the neighbourhood, that the satisfied wanderers congratulated themselves on the pugnacity of their hosts, which provided them a feast such as they could never have obtained from their hospitality.

How long the campaign against the Gepids other lasted we know not. We hear vaguely from the panegyrist of innumerable other combats with the Sarmatians and others, the mention of which may or may not be due to some confusion with Theodoric's boyish exploits in the same region. What seems certain is, that either in this guerilla warfare, or in mere foraging expeditions through a country which was of course perfectly familiar to the chief and to all but the mere striplings in his army (since they had migrated thence only sixteen years before), winter, spring, and the greater part of summer wore away. It was not till the month of August that the Ostrogoths who may perhaps have marched by different routes, some up the valley of the Save, others by that of the Drave, and who may then have concentrated at Aemona (Laybach), finally crossed the Julian Alps, and descended by the road trodden by so many

conquerors—Theodosius, Alaric, Attila —past the Pear-tree and the Frigid Stream, into the plains of that Italy which they were to win by bloody battle, to hold for sixty-six years, to love so fondly, and to lose so stubbornly.

We are told that the flocks and herds which accompanied them on their march, soon showed, by their improved condition, the superiority of the tender pastures of Italy over the scanty herbage of the Alpine uplands.

At the eleventh mile-stone from Aquileia (*Ad Undecimum*) the host reached the confluence of the river Frigidus with the Sontius (Isonzo), and here probably it was that Odovacar and his army stood ready to meet them and dispute their passage. South-westwards, in the sea-like plain, rose the ghostly ruins of Aquileia, over which near forty years of desolation had passed. No fleets of merchantmen lined her broken wharves; no workman's hammer resounded in her ruined Mint; the Baths, the Amphitheatre, the Forum, were all silent. Only, perhaps, a few black-robed priests and monks still clustered round the repaired basilica, keeping warm the embers of religious life in the province of Venetia, asserting the continuity, and preparing the way for the revival, of the power of the Patriarchate of Aquileia.

Odovacar had taken a strong post on the Isonzo, and had fortified it strongly. In his well-defended camp a large army of various nationalities was mustered under his orders. Ennodius speaks of 'so many kings' trooping to the war under Odovacar's banners. Pompous and inflated as his style is, it is difficult to suppose that this detail is absolutely devoid of truth. Perhaps, in the motley host who first acclaimed Odovacar as king, there may have been chiefs and princelings who retained some of their old semi-royal position towards their followers, while towards him they were but generals under a generalissimo. Perhaps also the nations on the Danube, Alamanni, Thuringians, Gepidae, had sent their contingents to defend the menaced throne of the conqueror of the Rugians.

Of the battle of the Isonzo, which was fought on the 28th of August, we have no details. Odovacar had all the advantages of position, of preparation, and of a force which must surely have been more easily handled than the long train, encumbered with women and with waggons, which emerged from under the shadow of the Tarnovaner Wald. But it is probably true, as Ennodius declares, that the vast mass of the defending armament wanted a soul. Its leader, who throughout this war shows not a single instinct of generalship nor trace of that soldierly dash which first made him conspicuous among his fellows, had probably grown torpid during his thirteen years of royalty, amid such animal delights as Italy could offer to a barbarian autocrat. And on the other side were three powerful champions, Youth in the leader, Loyalty in the led, and Despair in both. The deep river was crossed, the *vallum* climbed, the camp taken: a crowd of fugitives scattered over the plain announced to the villages of Venetia that the day of Odovacar's supremacy was drawing to a close.

Odovacar fled from the Isonzo to the line of the Adige, thus abandoning the whole modern province of Venetia to the invader. So large and so fair a slice of Northern Italy owning his sway, justified that invader in looking on himself as from that day forward a ruler in Italy, not the mere leader of a wandering host. Near the close of his reign, when a question arose how far back the judge might go in enquiring into the wrongful ouster of a Roman from his farm, Theodoric made his 'Statute of Limitations' commence with the victory of the Isonzo. 'If,' he said, 'the expropriation took place after the time when by the favour of God we crossed the streams of the Sontius, when first the Empire of Italy received us, then let the farm be restored to its former owner, and that whether thirty years have since elapsed or not. Further back than that, into the wrongs inflicted at the time of the Herulo-Rugian land settlement, Theodoric did not consider himself bound to travel or to enquire.

Odovacar's next stand was to be made at Verona; and here 'in the Campus Minor,' as before at the Isonzo, he entrenched himself in a *fossatum*, a large square camp, doubtless sur-

rounded with those deep fosses of which the archaeologist who has studied the Roman military works in Britain and Germany can form some not wholly inadequate conception. On the top of the mound, formed of the earth thrown up out of the ditch, would probably be planted a line of sharp stakes. Here the attacked king stood at bay, having the line of the deep and rapid Adige behind him, to compel his followers to fight by the impossibility of escape. There had been some vaunting words uttered by Odovacar in the parleys which preceded the combat; and 'if the tongue could have achieved victory instead of the right arm' says Ennodius, 'his array of words would have been invincible'. But in truth his army was a very formidable one in point of numbers: and when Theodoric, on the night before the battle, pacing up and down, saw the wide extent of the camp-fires gleaming like earthly constellations upon the hills between him and Verona, his heart well-nigh died within him. But, as his panegyrist truly says, there was a certain calm and noble stability in the nature of the Ostrogothic king. He was not easily elated by good, nor depressed by adverse fortune, and his serene assurance of victory communicated itself to his countrymen.

At dawn of the 30th of September the trumpets of the two armies sounded for battle. While Theodoric was arming himself with breastplate of steel, was buckling on his greaves, and hanging to his side that sword which his Roman admirer calls 'the champion of freedom,' his mother Erelieva and his sister Amalfrida came to him, not to depress his courage by womanly lamentations, but, anxious as to the result of the day, to try to read in his beloved face the omens of victory. He reassured their doubting hearts with cheering words :

"Mother, this day it behoves me to show to the world that it was indeed a man-child whom you bore on that great day of the victory over the Huns. I too, in the play of lances, have to show myself worthy of my ancestors' renown by winning new victories of my own. Before my soul's eye stands my father, the mighty Theudemir, he who never doubted of victory, and therefore never failed to achieve it. Bring forth, oh my mother and my sister, my most splendid robes, those on which your fingers have worked the most gorgeous embroidery. I would be more gaily dressed on this day than on any holiday. If the enemy do not recognise me, as I trow they shall, by the violence of my onset, let them recognise me by the brilliancy of my raiment. If Fortune give my throat to the sword of the enemy, let him that slays me have a grand reward for his labour. Let them at least say, "How splendid he looks in death," if they have not the chance to admire me fighting".

With these words of joyous confidence, instinct with the life of the coming age of chivalry, Theodoric leaped on his charger and was soon in the thickest of the fray. It was time for him to make his appearance. Even while he was saying his farewells, the Ostrogoths were slightly wavering under the onset of the enemy. The charge of Theodoric and his chosen troops restored the fortunes of the day. There are indications, however, that the victory, perhaps owing to the position of the Rugo-Herulian troops which made escape all but impossible, was more stubbornly contested than that of the Isonzo, and that the Ostrogothic loss was heavy. Before the end of the day, however, the troops of Odovacar were all cut to pieces, or whelmed beneath the swift waves of the Adige, save a few bold swimmers who may have escaped, Horatius-like, by swimming the stream. In these fierce battles of Teuton against Teuton, we hear nothing of quarter asked or night of granted. Apparently Odovacar, in order to urge his troops to more desperate efforts, must have broken down the bridge behind them leading to Verona. He himself escaped, but not westward. He sped across the plain, towards the south-east, and took refuge in the impregnable Ravenna. One authority, of a late date, says that he first fled to Rome, and finding the gates of the city closed against him, wasted the surrounding country with fire and sword. In the face, however, of the clear testimony of the contemporary writer, whom scholars call the Chronographer of Ravenna, and who evidently watched the successive

acts of the bloody drama with minute and eager interest, it seems safer to affirm that the beaten king fled at once from the battle-field to the secure shelter of Ravenna and her dykes.

Theodoric meanwhile repaired to Mediolanum, that great city which had been so often in the third and fourth centuries the residence of emperors, and which was still the most important city of the Province of Liguria, as its successor, Milan, is of the modern Lombardy. Here he received the submission of a large part of the army of his rival. Great as had been the number of the slain, it was still a goodly host which stood before him, their arms bright and dazzling as a German's arms were bound to be on a day of parade, and which, probably by the clash of spear on shield, acclaimed him as victor and lord. The Amal's heart may well have beat high at the sight, and it doubtless seemed to him that the labour of conquest was over and that he was undisputed lord of Italy.

But this early success was a delusion. Easily as these Teutonic bands turned about from one lord to another, there was still too much vitality in the cause of Odovacar for him to be abandoned so utterly by his followers as seemed to be the case at Milan in October 489. Treason to the new lord was already preparing itself in the hearts of the surrendered army, and the manager, for a time the successful manager, of this treasonable movement, which seemed likely to change the whole course of the war, was Tufa. This man, evidently a person of mark in the Rugo-Herulian army, perhaps one of the 'kings' whom Ennodius describes as commanding it, had been solemnly, in an assembly of the chiefs, appointed *Magister Militum* by Odovacar on the 1st of April in this year (489). The part which he now played, whether it were the result of deep and calculated treachery or simply of unreasoning impulse, vibrating backwards and forwards between the old master and the new, reminds a modern reader of the conduct of Marshal Ney in 1815, setting forth from Paris with the assurance to Louis XVIII that he would in a week bring back the Corsican usurper in an iron cage, and, before the week was over, deserting to Napoleon with all his troops. But assuredly, if Tufa may pair off with Ney, we are under no temptation to carry the parallel further. The glorious young Amal king is as much above the gouty Bourbon epicure, as the incapable resourceless Odovacar is below the mighty Napoleon.

Theodoric, who seems to have been thoroughly blinded by his confidence in Tufa, sent him, probably within a few days after the interview at Milan, to besiege his old master at Ravenna. Tufa advanced along the great Emilian Way, as far as Faventia, about eighteen miles from that city. There he began the blockade of the capital, but when Odovacar came forth, came to Faventia itself, and had an interview with his former subordinate, Tufa changed again, abandoned the cause of Theodoric, and had the baseness to surrender the 'Comites Theodorici,' probably some Ostrogothic nobles, members of the *Comitatus* of Theodoric, into the hands of Theodoric's enemy. They were loaded with chains and brought into Ravenna, and there it is but too probable that they were foully murdered by Odovacar, an event which, more than any other, embittered the contest of the two rivals.

This defection of Tufa, accompanied probably by a large part of the troops committed to his charge, caused a violent revulsion in the fortunes of Theodoric. The Ostrogoth, who had been dreaming of dominion, now found himself again called upon to plan for the mere safety and subsistence of himself and his people. Milan seemed to him too exposed, too accessible from Ravenna, to be safely selected as his winter-quarters. He chose instead the city of Ticinum (Pavia), which resting on two rivers, the Ticino and the Po, would offer more difficulties to an advancing army. Here too still dwelt the saintly bishop Epiphanius, towards whom, notwithstanding the difference of his creed, the young Ostrogoth seems to have been drawn, as Ricimer and Euric had been drawn, by the transparent beauty and holiness of his character. He said at once, 'Here is a bishop who in all the East has not his equal, whom even to have seen is a high privilege.' And, according to the biographer, he added that the city must

be safe where such a good man dwelt, that here was a wall which no soldiers could storm, no Balearic slingers could over-shoot. Whether he indulged in quite such soaring flights of rhetoric or not, it is clear that he did select Pavia not only for his own quarters in the winter of 489-490, but also as a place of safe deposit where he might leave his venerable mother, and where all the other non-combatants of the Gothic army might be collected, for what remained to them of the war, a period, as it turned out, of three years. During this period, Epiphanius played his difficult part with that success and which is sometimes the reward of a perfectly simple and unselfish character, surrounded by unscrupulous and greedy men. Though he evidently inclined to the side of Theodoric, he succeeded in maintaining friendly relations with Odovacar. He obtained from both princes the one boon on which his heart was set, the liberation of 'prisoners and captives,' and this not for his own Roman compatriots only. Often did an Ostrogoth or a Turcilingian, whose wife and children had fallen into the hands of the enemy, obtain, through the prayers of the Bishop, that redemption which gold would have been powerless to procure. To the not over-welcome guests in his own city the generosity of Epiphanius was conspicuous. It was a singular state of affairs, as his biographer truly, if somewhat bombastically, points out. "Those forces of Theodoric, which the whole East had scarcely been able to support, were now contracted within the limits of a single town. You saw that town swarming with the gatherings of tribesmen, the heads of mighty clans cooped up in narrow hovels. Whole homesteads seemed to have migrated from their foundations, and scarcely was there standing room for the new inhabitants". In these strangely altered circumstances of his diocese the Bishop applied himself to relieve, to the utmost of his ability, the bodily needs of the new-comers, forgetting, or teaching himself to forget, that it was by them and such as them that the estates of his bishopric had been laid waste, and his own income pitifully diminished. And living, as he had now to live, for three years, constantly under the eyes of "a most clever people, quickly touched by the lightest breath of suspicion, in troublous times such as make even gentle hearts cruel through fear", he showed himself so uniformly kind and true that he retained their unwavering esteem and confidence. As has been already said, the princes, who were at deadly war with one another, agreed in venerating Epiphanius.

The campaign of the year 490 was marked by the formation of great transalpine alliances which, though we hear but vaguely concerning them, must have exercised an important influence on the fortunes of the war. Gundobad, king of the Burgundians, of whom we have heard nothing since, sixteen years before, he left his client Glycerius defenceless against Nepos and stole back to his own kingdom by the Rhone, now seeing the tide apparently on the turn against Theodoric, and fearing probably that, if he conquered, the Ostrogoth of Italy and the Visigoth of Gaul would join hands and the Burgundian would have an evil time between them, invaded Liguria with a large army. Whether he came as an ally of Odovacar to effect a seasonable diversion in his favour, or simply to rob and ravage on his own account, is not clear from history, very possibly was not altogether clear to the mind of the Burgundian. What is undoubted, is that Theodoric, in some way, either by force or favour, caused him to abandon his opposition, that a treaty was concluded between them which in after years was ripened into a firm and lasting friendship, but that, in the meantime, Gundobad, in returning across the Alps, took with him a long train of captives who were to languish in exile for at least four years, while their native fields in Liguria were well-nigh relapsing into a wilderness for lack of cultivators.

The natural counterpoise to the Burgundians in the political scale was the power of the Visigoths, and those remote kinsmen of the people of Theodoric interfered on his behalf in this campaign. Odovacar seems to have occupied the months of spring and early summer in winning back the country between Ravenna and Cremona, aided perhaps by the attacks of

Gundobad on Liguria which called all Theodoric's energies to the western end of the valley of the Po. Milan was then visited by Odovacar, and roughly handled by him in retribution for the readiness with which its bishop, Laurentius, and its principal citizens had welcomed Theodoric in the preceding year. At length, on the river Addua (Adda), ten miles east of Milan the great battle of the year was fought. We only know that in it Theodoric was helped by his Visigothic kinsmen, and that, after another terrible slaughter on both sides, victory again rested on the standards of Theodoric. In this battle Odovacar lost his Count of the Domestics, the officer who had superintended the emigration of the provincials from Noricum to Campania, and to whom he had given the lands in Melita and Syracuse, his faithful friend and counsellor Pierius. Odovacar himself fled, and again shut himself up by the lagoons of Ravenna, never more to emerge from their shelter.

It is apparently to the same year, 490, that we must refer a mysterious movement against the followers of Odovacar all over Italy, of which we have some dark intimations in the Panegyric of Ennodius. He speaks of it as in some sort a counter-blow to the treachery of Tufa.

"It pleased them [Tufa and his confederates] to promise a kingdom to Odovacar when he again stretched out a peaceful hand towards them. But, as soon as their deed was brought to light, the miscalculation which their hostile minds had made became apparent. You [Theodoric] appealed to that Providence which watched over all your steps, and, that the greed of those deserters might not go unpunished, you unfurled the banners of revenge and made the people, whose friendship to you was now thoroughly proved, the confidant of your secret designs. Not one of your adversaries got scent of the scheme, though more than half the world had to share it with you. Over the most widely severed districts [of Italy] was arranged a sacrificial slaughter. What but the will of the Most High can have brought this to pass, that in one instant of time the score which had been so long accumulating against the slaughterers of the Roman name should be wiped away?". It has been truly pointed out by the best of our German guides, that these words point to a kind of 'Sicilian Vespers' of the followers of Odovacar all over Italy: and, from the sanctimonious manner in which the Bishop claims Heaven as an accomplice in the bloody deed, we may perhaps infer that the Roman clergy generally were privy to the plot.

The action of the drama for the next three years is almost entirely confined to Ravenna, which city, Caesena and Rimini, were the only places in Italy that still held out for Odovacar. Theodoric seems to have recognised the impossibility of taking Ravenna by assault. His only hope was to reduce it by blockade, and that was a slender hope, so long as he was not master of the Adriatic and vessels could enter the harbour of Clapis, bringing provisions to the besieged king. However, he occupied a position 'in the Pineta,' in that magnificent pine-wood which every traveller to Ravenna knows so well, skirting its eastern horizon and shutting out the sight of the sea. Here, at three miles distance from the city, he entrenched himself with a deep and widely extended *fossatum*, and waited for events. His taking up this position, eastward, that is sea-ward of the city, probably implied a determination to cut off, as much as possible, all succours from the sea, while his flying squadrons no doubt blocked the communications with the Emilian Way and effectually prevented assistance by land. The blockade, by one means or other, must have been a tolerably one, since corn, in the markets of Ravenna, rose to the famine price of six solidi per modius, equivalent to seventy-two shillings a peck, or £115 4s. a quarter. This was, it is true, not quite equal to the price (£192 a quarter) paid in the camp of Jovian during the disastrous retreat of the Roman army from Persia. But, on the other hand, in the good days that were coming for Italy under the peaceful reign of that very Theodoric whose *fossatum* now caused such terrible distress to the Queen of the Adriatic, the ordinary price of one modius of wheat was to be not six solidi but one-sixtieth of a solidus, equivalent to 6s. 4d. a quarter.

Before the year 490 ended, Theodoric, considering himself now *de facto* lord of Italy, sent Faustus, a Roman noble, chief of the Senate and Consul for the year, to claim from Zeno the imperial robes, perhaps also the imperial diadem, which Odovacar, in his politic modesty, had sent to Constantinople after the downfall of Augustulus. Faustus, however, probably arrived only in time to stand by the wretched and crime-polluted death-bed of the Emperor, to hear his ravings about the guardsman who was to be his successor, and to behold his remorse for the murder of Pelagius. In April of the next year Zeno was a corpse, and Anastasius the Silentiary reigned in his stead. From him Theodoric was one day to receive the recognition which he desired, but he was not to receive it yet.

The chief event of the year 491 was a desperate sally made from Ravenna by the besieged king. Odovacar had by some means or other procured a reinforcement of Heruli fresh from their Carpathian homes. With these recruits, seeing that Theodoric was dwelling securely behind his *fossatum*, and believing him to have relaxed his guard, he one night issued forth from Ravenna and attacked the entrenchment of the Goths. The battle was long, and great was the number of the slain on both sides. But, at length, Odovacar had again to acknowledge himself defeated. His Magister Militum, a certain Libila (or Levila), was slain, perhaps drowned in attempting to cross the sluggish and slimy Ronco. The Heruli, as Ennodius exultingly remarks¹, after making proof of Theodoric's prowess in their own home, had now an opportunity of repeating the experience on Italian soil. This engagement occurred about the 10th (or 15th) of July. Odovacar again retired into his lair; and Theodoric, a month later, returned to his temporary capital at Pavia. It is possible that the Burgundian invader was not yet finally disposed of: and no doubt the home-loving Ostrogoth longed again to behold the faces of his mother and his children. Of course, the blockade was continued with unabated vigour.

In the year 492 we have again a strange dearth of events in the early part of the year; the only incident which our careful diarists at Ravenna have to record being that, on the 26th of May, 'an earthquake took place at night before the crowing of the cocks'. Possibly both parties sought to strengthen themselves for each campaign by drawing fresh recruits from beyond the Alps, in which case the difficulty of crossing the snow-covered passes might well postpone the conflict of the year till June or July. Theodoric, however, now took a step, which probably should have been taken before, in order to make his blockade perfect. He went southward to Ariminum, about thirty miles distant (one sees the Rock of S. Marino which overhangs Rimini, cutting the horizon as one looks southward from the church towers of Ravenna), and he appears to have reduced that town to his obedience. What was more important, he made himself master of a fleet of cutters (called *dromones*, 'runners,' in the Latin of that age). With these he arrived at the Lions Harbour, a port about six miles from Ravenna, where in later days he built a small palace—perhaps a country retreat—in a camp which, probably from this circumstance, was called *Fossatum Palatioli*. Here we must leave him, watching with ships and soldiers against the entrance of any provisions into Ravenna, while the scene shifts for a moment to the banks of the Ticino and the Adige.

Few men, one would think, in the Ostrogothic army had more powerful motives for loyalty than Frederic prince of the Rugians. His father and mother had been led into captivity by the armies of Odovacar, he himself, twice defeated and expelled by the same armies, had sought the palace of Theodoric a helpless fugitive. As a member of Theodoric's Comitatus, he had now entered Italy, and had fought by his side in three, perhaps in four, bloody battles. He was, if he could exercise patience and fidelity for a few months longer, about to taste delicious and long-delayed vengeance on the enemy of his race. Yet, with characteristic fickleness, at this crisis, or perhaps some months earlier, Frederic deserted the standards of Theodoric and entered into a treasonable correspondence with the double traitor Tufa, who, with some sort of

army under his orders, was still roving about the plains of Lombardy. Perhaps some remembrance of their common Rugian nationality working in the mind of Frederic drew him away from the Ostrogothic chief, and towards the followers of Odovacar. Perhaps Theodoric had not assigned a sufficiently high place in his counsels to the son of a king whose word had once been the mightiest in all the regions of the Middle Danube. More probably, Frederic saw simply a better chance of plunder and of eventual kingship, by fighting for his own hand, and with barbarian naturalness went straight towards what seemed to be his own interests, without troubling himself for fine words to justify his treason.

The Rugians occupied Pavia ; this we know from the distress which they caused to the soul of the saintly Epiphanius. Possibly enough, they may have laid their hands on some of the moveable property of the Ostrogoths in that City of Refuge : but the women and children and the rest of the non-combatants must have escaped unharmed, for we should certainly have heard of it had there been any general massacre. For nearly two years the Rugians made Pavia their head-quarters. "A race", says Ennodius, "hideous by every kind of savagery, whose minds, full of cruel energy, prompted them to daily crimes. In fact, they thought that a day was wasted which had passed unsignalised by any kind of outrage". The sweet discourses of the prelate, however, softened even these wild men's hearts. "Who could hear without astonishment that the Rugians, who will scarcely condescend to obey even kings, both feared and loved a bishop, a Catholic and a Roman? Yet so it was; and when the time for their departure came, they left him even with tears, although they were returning to their parents and families."

The mention of a period of nearly two years for the stay of the Rugians at Pavia, coming as it does after the description of three years of Gothic tarriance in that city, brings us down nearly to the end of 494 for the date of their final expulsion. As we shall see, Odovacar had disappeared from the scene before that date. The Rugians therefore probably continued fighting on their own account, and required a separate castigation from Theodoric. But of all this we have no record.

We do know however that, in the year with which we are now dealing (492), the two traitors Tufa and Frederic quarrelled about the division of the spoil. A battle ensued between them in the valley of the Adige, betwixt Trient and Verona. After many thousands of men had been killed on both sides, the death of Tufa put an end to the battle. Frederic, as has been said above, probably remained to trouble his benefactor some little time longer, but henceforth he disappears from history. Ennodius is jubilant, and not without cause, over this merciful arrangement of Providence, by which the two traitorous enemies of the King were made to counter-work one another's evil designs, and Frederic first earned, at the expense of Tufa, the triumph which his own defeat was afterwards to yield to Theodoric.

The year 493, the fifth year of the war, the fourth of the siege, the second of the complete blockade of Ravenna, opened upon a terrible state of things in the hunger-stricken capital. Men were staying the gnawing of their stomachs by eating hides and all kinds of unclean and horrible victuals, and still they were dying fast of famine.

At length the stubborn heart of Odovacar was quelled. He commenced negotiations for a surrender, and on the 25th of February he handed over his son as a hostage for his fidelity. On the following day Theodoric entered Clapis in state, that seaport being probably assigned to the Ostrogothic army for their head-quarters. On the next day, 27th of February, peace was formally made between Theodoric and Odovacar, John the Archbishop of Ravenna acting as mediator.

The life of the defeated king was to be safe. Nay more, he and his conqueror were, at any rate in appearance, to be joint rulers of the Western Empire. The arrangement was so obviously destitute of any of the elements of stability, so sure to breed plots and counter-plots, so

impotent a conclusion to the long blockade of Ravenna, that we might hesitate to accept its accuracy, but that a recently-discovered fragment of the well-informed John of Antioch confirms the statement of Procopius too emphatically to allow us to reject it.

It was not till the 5th of March that the victorious Ostrogoth rode through the gates of Ravenna, and took possession of the city which for the remaining thirty-three years of his life was to be his home. Before he entered the Archbishop went forth to meet him, 'with crosses and thuribules and the Holy Gospels' and with a long train of priests and monks. Falling prostrate on the ground, while his followers sang a penitential psalm, he prayed that 'the new King from the East' would receive him into his peace. The 'request was granted, not only for himself and the citizens of Ravenna, but for all the Roman inhabitants of Italy. The terms of the real peace had no doubt been strenuously debated with the Teutonic comrades of Odovacar; but a ceremony like this, pre-arranged in all probability between the King and the Archbishop, was judged proper, in order to impress vividly on the minds both of Italians and Ostrogoths that Theodoric came as the friend of the Catholic Church and of the vast population which, even in accepting a new master, still clung to the great name of Roman.

For ten days there were frequent interviews between the two chieftains; then, on the 15th of March, the Ostrogoth invited his rival to a banquet in the Palace of the Laurel-Grove, at the south-east corner of the city. Odovacar came attended by his faithful *comitatus*, but was probably led to a seat of honour and thus separated from his friends. Two men knelt before him to prefer some pretended request, and clasped his hands in the earnestness of their entreaty. Then rushed forth some soldiers who had been placed in ambush in two alcoves on either side of the banquet-hall. But when they came in sight of the victim something in his aspect, either his kingly majesty or possibly his white hairs, *or* simply the fact that he was defenceless, struck such a chill into their hearts that they could not attack him. Then strode forth Theodoric and raised his sword to strike him. ^e "Where is God?", cried Odovacar in a vain appeal to Divine justice. "This is what thou didst to my friends", shouted Theodoric, kindling his rage by the remembrance of his comrades, slain by his rival after their base betrayal by Tufa. The blow descended on Odovacar's collar-bone, and stayed not till the sword had reached his loin. Theodoric himself was surprised at the trenchancy of his stroke, and said with a brutal laugh, "I think the wretch had never a bone in his body".

The assassinated king was at once buried in a stone coffin close by the Hebrew synagogue. His *comitatus*, powerless to save him, fell in the same fatal banquet-hall. His brother (possibly Onoulf) was shot down with arrows while attempting to escape through the palace garden. Sunigilda, the wife of Odovacar, was closely imprisoned, and died of hunger. Their son Thelane, whom his father in prosperous days had designated as Caesar, and who had more recently been given over as a hostage for his fidelity, was sent off to Gaul, doubtless to Theodoric's Yisigothic ally King Alaric, and, having subsequently escaped thence to Italy, was put to death by order of the conqueror. So did the whole brood perish, and Italy had but one undoubted master, the son of Theudemir.

"No! It was not well done by thee, descendant of so many Amal kings! Whatever a mere Roman emperor, a crowned upstart of yesterday, might do in breaking faith with his rivals, a Basiliscus or an Armatius, thou shouldest have kept thy Teutonic truth inviolate. And so, when we enter that wonderful cenotaph of the Middle Ages, the church of the Franciscans at Innsbruck, and see thee standing there, in size more than human, beside the bearers of the greatest names of chivalry, Frankish Charles and British Arthur, and Godfrey with the Crown of Thorns; one memory, and hardly more than one, prevents our classing thee with the purest and the noblest of them,—the memory of thy assassinated rival Odovacar".

CHAPTER VII.
KING AND PEOPLE.

Now that Theodoric has safely brought his people into the promised land of Italy, has conquered and slain his enemy, and seated himself at Ravenna, undoubted king and ruler of the land, it may be well to pause for a little space, and, before we contemplate the new State which he founded there, to ask ourselves what was understood in the Gothic host by that word, kingship, in virtue of which he ruled them. We shall find indeed, as we proceed, that the spirit and maxims of the new kingdom, its form, and the machinery of its administration, were Roman rather than Gothic. Still, even in order to grasp this fact more clearly, it will be well to devote a few pages to a subject upon which volumes have been usefully written, that of *German Kingship*.

'God save the King!'— words how lightly spoken by revellers at a banquet, or by shouting crowds as a monarch moves slowly through their midst! Yet in this familiar formula are enshrined two words of mysterious power, which have come down with the stream of national life, 'through caverns measureless to man,' from those distant highlands wherein the eye of science strains, and strains in vain, to discover the origins of the human race and of human society. To argue from the ancient origin of these two names of power that there is any necessary connection between them; to maintain, as the advocates of the divine right of kings once did, that religion forbids men to govern themselves under republican forms, however clear it may be that the State will best be so administered, is an absurdity of which few men will now be guilty. But, nevertheless, it is permitted us to gaze, with a wonder in which there is something of love and something of reverence, on this wonderful word, so different in form in the various languages of the earth,—Melech, Basileus, Rex, Thiudans, King,—yet so essentially the same in power, which constrains the many members of one vast community, her strong men,, her wise men, her holy men, to bring the best of their gifts to the treasury, and to devote the strength of their lives to the service of one man, in mind and body no different from themselves, but—a King.

Reverence for the kingly office seems to have been deeply implanted in the heart of the Germanic branch of the great Aryan family; and it has been, in the World-life, the especial function of the Germanic peoples to carry kingship and faithfulness to the king, or—to borrow two words from the Latin tongue—Royalty and Loyalty, farther down into the ages than any other group of free nations. How early the old Homeric royalties of Greece and the kings of Rome disappeared from the scene we all know. On the other hand, the long-lived royalties of Assyria, of China and of Persia, were mere despotisms, giving no free play to the national character, and stiffening the peoples that were subjected to them with immobility. To reign on such terms, to be the master of millions of slaves, was comparatively an easy task, when once the nation had become used to the clank of its fetters. But to maintain for generations, to prolong into the strangely different world of modern society, that peculiar combination of kingly authority and popular freedom which was characteristic of most of the Germanic royalties in the first century after Christ, and which contained the seeds of the institution which we now call Constitutional Monarchy,—this has been a great and marvellous work, and one which could only be accomplished by a race with exceptional faculties for governing and being governed.

We have the authority of Tacitus, that acute observer of the life of states and nations, for asserting that German kingship was, in his day, for the most part thus compounded of the two apparently antagonistic principles of Authority and Liberty. He contrasts the *libertas Germanorum* with the *regnum Arsacis*, when deciding that Rome has suffered more from the free barbarians beyond the Rhine than from the compact despotism of the monarchy beyond the Euphrates. When describing the sway of the Gothic kings, he says that, "though somewhat stricter than that of most other German rulers, it still stretched not to the infringement of liberty". Only one race, the Suiones, who dwelt in the islands of Baltic and on the Swedish promontories, were "under the absolute rule of one man, to whom they were bound to pay implicit obedience". The great power attained in this tribe by even the slaves of royalty, the fact that the nation could not be trusted with the custody of its own arms, which were kept, in time of peace, in a locked-up arsenal guarded by a slave, were emphatic proofs of the absence of the popular element in the government of this nation, and strengthened by contrast the general picture of German freedom.

It is, however, from Tacitus also that we receive our impressions of the extraordinary manifoldness of political life amongst the German nations. In its way, his sketch of Germania in the first century reminds us of the mediaeval *Reich*, with its wonderful assortment of kingdoms, duchies, ecclesiastical states, republican free towns, all congregated together, like the clean and unclean beasts in the ark, under the rule, often only the nominal rule, of some Hapsburg or Luxemburg emperor. Of course, in the Germania, even this semblance of unity is wanting; but the variety of political life is there. Observing the language of Tacitus with attention, we soon discover from his pages that the kingly form of government was not universal among the Germans. *Rex vel princeps, rex vel civitas*, are alternative expressions, frequently used by him. The mere fact that the chief ruler of a barbarian state is not always called by the same name by the historians of a civilized country, who have occasion to mention his existence, is not one upon which it would be safe to lay much stress. We must be conscious that we talk with great looseness of Indian chiefs, of Zulu kings, and so forth, and that we have no very clear idea of a difference in rank and power between Cetewayo and the father of Pocahontas, when we speak of the former as a king and of the latter as a chief. Something of the same vagueness may be observed in the Homan writers, taken as a class, from Caesar to Ammianus, when they speak of the leaders of the Teutonic tribes who warred on Rome. But with Tacitus the case is different. His eye was quick for all political facts. His mind was always revolving the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of government. Even when describing the wild freedom of Germany, he is half-thinking about Rome and her vanished liberties; when face to face with Parthia, he is comforted by the thought that at least he is not under the lawless despotism of an Eastern king.

Every word therefore of Tacitus respecting the political institutions of our Teutonic forefathers is precious; and these hints of his about the *Rex*, or the *Civitas* show us that there were German tribes not under the sway, however lenient, of one sole king.. Some modern writers speak of these tribes as Republican, and the expression, though not used by Tacitus himself, brings before us more vividly than any other the nature of the rule under which the Cherusci, the Batavi, and many other German tribes, were living at the Christian era. In time of war these republican tribes elected a leader (*Heritogo*, in modern German *Herzog*, translated in Latin by *Dux*, in English by *Duke*), who was necessarily a man of tried bravery. In peace they may have been presided over by some officer, also elective, who acted as supreme judge, and as president of their assemblies; but even the name of this president has perished. In any case, however, the distinguishing mark of these magistracies was their non-hereditary character. The general or the judge was chosen for some special emergency; perhaps in some cases he held his

office for the term of his natural life: but he held it only by the free choice of his countrymen, and had no claim to transmit any power to his son.

In the royal tribes, on the other hand, the birth, of the supreme ruler was everything. Doubtless the king was rich, doubtless he must be personally brave (or else his warriors would soon find a fitter leader), doubtless he had a large following of devoted henchmen; but none of these things alone would qualify him to be chosen king. He must be sprung from some kingly family—the Amals, or the Balthae, or the Asdings, or the Merovings—who had been kings (or at any rate nobles) from a time to which the mind of man runneth not to the contrary; some family which, while the nation was still heathen, boasted that it was sprung from the seed of gods, and which still linked itself with the remembrance of the heroes of old, even after the missionary-priest had dispeopled Walhalla and sent Odin and Gaut to dwell for ever beside Jupiter and Venus in the penal lake of fire.

Yet, being born of the kingly family, it was by no means needful that he should be what we call ‘the head of the house’ by lineal descent. It is hardly necessary to say, to those who know anything of the history even of mediaeval monarchy, that the strict principles of primogeniture and representation, which would make the crown descend in a line as definitely fixed as the course of succession to an English estate settled ‘in tail male,’ were quite unknown to the Germanic nations. Of course a veteran Gothic warrior-king, gathered to his fathers in a good old age, and leaving a warlike eldest son in the vigour of his years, would generally be succeeded by that son.

That is the natural course of things, and in all such cases monarchy and primogeniture easily become entwined together. Still, even in these instances, the nation chose, the nation raised the first-born on the shield, and acclaimed him as king. And if the dead king’s children were minors, or if the eldest son was a *nothing*, incapable in council or a coward in the field, if there was some national hero standing near to the throne, and overshadowing by his fame the relatives who came before him in the strict order of descent, in all such cases the elective element in Germanic kingship asserted itself, and, by no fraud upon the postponed claimants, by no usurpation of the preferred claimant, the worthiest, kingliest, wisest, Amal or Balth, was called to the throne.

No doubt this manner of bestowing the crown—inheritance tempered by election—had its dangers, leading, as it did easily, to the wars and heartburnings of a disputed succession. It may very probably have been a presentiment of these dangers which led Gaiseric to promulgate a law of succession for the Vandals, according to which the oldest of his descendents at each vacancy, in whatever line of descent, was to be called to the empty throne; a provision, however, which did not work well in practice nor avert the dreaded danger. But in the main, for communities such as were the German tribes, living in the midst of foes, and in need, before all things, of strong and wise leadership, we may believe that the principle of choice out of one particular family worked well, and tended, by ‘the survival of the fittest’, to bring about an improvement in the strain of royal blood, and to make the kings more and more fit by stature, strength, and capacity of brain, to stand forth as unquestioned leaders of men.

Around the king’s person, parting him off in some degree from the great mass of the free but undistinguished warriors of the nation, but also constantly checking and curbing his power, and compelling him ‘so to rule as not to transgress the bounds of liberty,’ stood the nobles. Who can say whence they sprang? For they too, like the king, have an old-world origin, and if a warrior is noble, it is because the oldest man in the host cannot remember a tradition of the days when the ancestors of that warrior were anything else but noble. Partly, perhaps, they are descended from younger branches of the kingly house : partly they represent the vanished royalty of smaller tribes, whom the great nation, as it rolled onwards, has incorporated with itself: partly, it may be, here or there, they are the descendants of some great chief of a pre-

existing people, Finnish or Basque or Celtic, whom the invading Teutons have found it easier to win over and to assimilate than to destroy.

But in any case, whatever its origin, the important thing to notice about this old Teutonic nobility is, that it is essentially a counterpoise to the kingly power. In after days, when the new Teutonic kingdoms are reared 'in Welshland', a new nobility will arise, the so-called 'nobility by service,' represented by the 'king's thegns' among our own ancestors. These men, the king's butlers and seneschals and chamberlains, will shine by the borrowed light of their master, and naturally for a time will do nothing to check and everything to magnify his power. While they and the obsequious ecclesiastics who stand with them round the new-raised throne are hymning the praises of Our Lord Clovis or Chlotachar, the old nobility, which used to remind him, sometimes with a certain roughness, that he was only the first among his equals, will have had its ranks thinned by the wars and the migrations, will find itself in the midst of a new and hostile order of things, unpopular with the Roman provincials, anathematized by the clergy, vexed by the exactions of the king's officers, and continually postponed to the new and pliable 'service-nobles' of the Court, and thus, silently and sullenly, will vanish away.

A conspicuous feature in the social life of the ancient Germans, and one which probably aided the development of kingly power (though assuredly it was not the origin of that power), was the institution which the Latins called *comitatus*, and which the Germans now speak of as *Gefolgschaft*. We have no name exactly corresponding to it, but our historians are endeavoring to introduce the term *Comrades* to describe the members of a *Comitatus*. The description of such a band given by Tacitus remains the most accurate and the most vivid picture that we possess of it.

"When the young nobles have received their arms and are enrolled in the ranks of the warriors, they take their places by the side of the hardy veterans, nor do they blush to be seen among the 'comrades'. Each receives his rank in the 'comradeship' according to the judgment of him whom they follow, and great is the rivalry among the comrades which shall attain to the highest place beside his chief, and of the chiefs which shall have the most numerous and the most eager comrades. This is their dignity, this their strength : to be ever surrounded by a great cluster of picked youths is in peace a distinction and in war a defence. Nor is this so in a chief's own tribe only, but among neighbouring states also; his name and his glory are spread abroad if his comradeship excel in numbers and valour. Such chiefs are in request for embassies, are loaded with presents: by their mere renown they often virtually end a war. When the day of battle is come, it is disgraceful for the chief to be excelled in bravery by the comrades, disgraceful for them not to equal the chief's valour. Yea, and base for all the rest of his life is he accounted by himself and others who has escaped alive from the battle, leaving his chief behind him. Him to guard, him to defend, in his glory to merge every brave deed of his own, this is the one great point of honour with the comrade. The chiefs fight for victory, the comrades for their chief. If the community in which they were born grows sluggish with too long peace and restfulness, most of the young nobles seek of their own accord those nations which may then be waging war elsewhere, both because this race hates rest, and because renown is more easily won on well-balanced battlefields; nor can a great comradeship be well kept together except by violence and war. Each comrade claims from the chief's generosity that great war-horse of his, that gory and conquering spear. For the rest, the seat at the banquet, the bountiful though coarse repast, are taken as sufficient pay. The material for the chief's generosity is provided by war and rapine. You would find it harder to persuade them to till the ground and wait a year for the harvest, than to challenge a foe and earn honourable wounds. For it seems ever to them a dull and stupid thing to accumulate, by the sweat of your brow, that which you might make your own by the shedding of blood".

This passage has given rise to many dissertations which are not perhaps the most fruitful part of German archaeology. Who might become the head of a *comitatus*, what precise relation existed between the 'comrades' and their chief, what states were founded by the leaders of a *comitatus*, and other questions of the like nature, have been discussed with much ability and some bitterness, but seem after all to resolve themselves only into the setting of one man's guess against another's. More important is it to keep the poetical aspect of this Germanic institution vividly before us. All admit that it has in it the promise of chivalry, the germs of the feudal relation between lord and vassal. We have already had occasion, in tracing the achievements of the young Theodoric, to see how vigorous was the institution in his day, four centuries after it had been described by Tacitus. It had undoubtedly a considerable influence in developing the idea and the power of royalty among the German races. Probably also the life of adventure and hardship which it promoted, favored the growth of great qualities of mind and body among the royal families from whom some of the rulers of mediaeval, and a few of the rulers of modern Europe have descended. For to what depths of degradation they might sink when the stimulating influence, of the *comitatus* was withdrawn, and the barbarian king could wallow undisturbed in the swinish delights of his barbarian royalty, is abundantly shown by the dreary story of the sons of the Merovings.

Around the king and his 'comrades', and around the outer circle of the nobles, gathered the great mass of the nation, the free but not noble warriors, who were known as 'free Franks' in the army of Clovis, and as *ceorls* on the soil of England. Of the social life of these men, of their days passed in alternations of fierce excitement and sturdy idleness, of their carousings and their mad devotion to the dice-box, Tacitus draws for us a striking and well-known picture. Our present business is to follow them to what our fathers called the *Folcmote*, other tribes the *Folks-Thing* or the Mall, and Tacitus the *Concilium*, the assembly from which in direct lineal succession our own Parliament is descended. So long as the tribe is contained in narrow limits, each new and full moon sees the assembly of the tribesmen. As it grows into a wide-spreading nation, the times of meeting are necessarily reduced, till, in the vast Frankish Empire, they occur only twice or thrice in the year. The men come armed, and the mere fact of being free and a warrior is enough to give a right to attend the Folc-mote, though, for full voice and vote, it is necessary that a man should also have land—which means a home—of his own. Among all these armed men the *Things-fried*, the peace of the great meeting, prevails; and however hot the discussion may be, none may dare to lift a hand against his opponent in debate. They do not assemble punctually,—'this,' says Tacitus, 'is the fault of their German freedom,'—but often waste two or three days in waiting for those who come not on the appointed day. Then, at length, when it pleases the multitude to begin, they sit down, all arrayed in their armour. The priests, inconspicuous generally in the German polity, but prominent on these occasions,—perhaps in order to guard the *Things-fried* by religious reverence,—call for silence, and the clash of the barbarians talk and song ceases. The king, if there be a king, if not, the head of the state, begins the debate. The warriors follow in no exact order of precedence. Age, noble birth, mighty deeds in war, the gift of eloquence, all give a speaker the right to be heard: but none, not even the king, orders; all must seek to persuade. If the speaker's advice displeases, he is interrupted by the indignant clamour of his hearers: if it meets their approval, they brandish their mighty spears and so give to the barbarian orator his most coveted applause.

And what is the business thus debated of? Many matters doubtless, belonging to the peaceful life of the tribe, which Tacitus has not described to us. He mentions the accusation, or, as we should call it, the impeachment, of great offenders, upon whom the punishment of death may be inflicted. This man, who was a traitor to the tribe, is hung from a tree; that one, who was only a *Nithing* and a coward, is plunged into a morass with a hurdle over him to prevent

his struggling out of it; another, who is found guilty of some lighter offence, is fined so many horses or oxen.

The judicial work of the assembly at an end, its administrative work begins. They elect the chiefs who are to dispense justice and keep some kind of barbarian order in each shire or village. Then, no doubt, there are often questions of boundary to settle, some rudimentary works of civilisation to be talked over, the clearance of this forest, the dyking out of that encroaching stream. But after all, the debates of these warriors turned most naturally towards war. Over and over again, in these German Folc-motes, was the question raised, "When and how and where must we make a stand against this all-pervading tyranny of Rome? Shall we make war on such and such a subject-tribe and punish them for their submission to the common enemy? Or shall we strike boldly at the great enemy himself? Shall we swim the Rhine, shall we swarm over the easily crossed *Pfahlgraben*, and win great spoil in the rich cities beyond?"

To complete the picture of the social state of the German tribes we should need to inquire into the condition of the slaves, and of the men, if there were such, who occupied a position akin to that of the Roman *colonus*, bound to till the land of a lord and to make him certain payments out of the produce, and yet not entirely dependent on his caprices. That there were slaves following in the train of these stalwart barbarians there can be no doubt: nay, we are informed by Tacitus that "even a German warrior, in his overmastering passion for play, would sometimes sell himself, and doubtless his wife and children also, into slavery".

So far therefore, the grand outline of popular freedom exhibited to us by the German folc-mote, at which every warrior has a right to be present, requires some modification. Like the free commonwealths of Greece and Rome, the German state does rest, to some extent, on a basis of slavery. It is clear, however, that slavery was not, as in some of those commonwealths, the cornerstone of the fabric. The most careful inquirers are of opinion that slavery, or serfdom, constrained the movements of but a small part of the population of ancient Germany¹: and it is noteworthy that when Tacitus speaks of the idle life, during peace, of the German warrior, he says that household cares and the tillage of the fields were left [not to the slaves but] to the women, the old men, and the less robust members of the family.

To go back to our main subject, the power of the kings in that Germany which Tacitus described: it is manifest that it was subject to some strong controlling forces. A body of nobles, nearly as proud of their birth as the king himself, watched his movements and jealously resented every word or gesture which would seem to imply that he was a master and they his slaves. The frequently held popular assemblies, even if attended, as was probably the case in quiet times, by but a small part of the nation, kept alive the tradition of the rights of the people. It was a very different thing to dictate an unpopular order, as the Caesar of Rome might do, in the privacy of his *secretarium*, leaving the odium of its execution to the officer who sped with it to some distant province; and to have to defend that order oneself, as must the leader of the free warriors of Germany, in the next assembly of the people, to see the spears brandished in menace rather than in applause, to hear the harsh murmur of martial voices uttering in no courtly tones their disapprobation of the deed.

So far we have been dealing with the political life of our Teutonic forefathers at the time when Tacitus wrote. From that date till Theodoric's establishment of his Italian kingdom four centuries had passed; an interval of time which may count for comparatively little in a changeless Oriental monarchy, but which counts for much in European states, when the busy brain of an Aryan people is kindled by some new and great idea, or is brought forcibly into contact with other civilizations than its own. Four centuries before the date at which these words are being written, the Canary Islands were believed to be the uttermost limit of the habitable world in the direction of the setting sun. All the myriad influences which America

has exerted upon Europe—to say nothing of those which Europe has exerted upon America—Peruvian gold, voyages of the Buccaneers, Negro-slavery, the Rights of Man—have had but those four hundred years to work in.

During the four centuries which we are now specially considering, from Domitian to Zeno, the ever at heart and mind of Germany were ever in contact with the wonderful fascination of the world-Empire of Rome. First, for two or three generations, they had to fight the almost desperate battle of defence against Roman aggression. Then, when Quadi and Marcomanni, by their stubborn resistance to the noble Marcus, had renewed the old teaching of Arminius, and shown the barbarians that Rome was not invincible; still more when, in the miserable anarchy of the third century, Rome herself seemed to have lost the power of self-preservation, and to be falling from ledge to ledge down the precipice of ruin, the Germans began to entertain the idea of something more than self-defense, and with ever-increasing pertinacity to renew the attempt to carve out for themselves settlements (not necessarily independent settlements) in the fair ‘Welchland’ on the other side of Rhine and Danube.

All these wars, all this stir and movement among the peoples, tended to increase the power of the kingship. A weapon which was to pierce the Empire’s defensive armour of castles and legions needed to be sharpened to a point and tipped with steel; and that steel point was royalty. Moreover, in the very act of the migration, many old associations would be loosened, the kinships which had dwelt in the same secluded valley for generations, and which mistook

‘the rustic murmur of their bourg

For the great wave that echoes round the world’,

would be shaken out of their boorish conservatism, which, with all its dulness, nevertheless had been a certain bulwark against royal encroachments. Above all, the members of the old nobility, conspicuous for their deeds of headlong valour, would, many of them, leave their bones to whiten on the Roman battlefield, and more and more, as they fell in war, would their places be filled up by the young and dashing ‘comrades’ of the king, men perhaps of noble birth themselves, but magnifying the office of their chief, and prouder of their loyal service to him round whose standard they gathered than of their own descent from the gods of Walhalla.

Let the reader apply these general principles to some of those incidents in the Germanic migration which have been already recorded: let him think of Fridigern, of Athanaric, of Eriulph, the chiefs of the Visigoths, of Hermanric the mighty and wide-ruling king of the Ostrogoths: then let him remember how Alaric’s elevation on the shield and the acclamation of his name as king gave at once a point and a purpose to the previously desultory warfare of the Goths, and led, by no obscure connection of causes and effects, to the occupation of the Eternal City itself by the forces of the barbarians. One instance of a Folc-mote, at least of a council of war, which might possibly bear that character, we noticed in the pages of Claudian. It was that held before the battle of Pollentia, in which the poet represents an old chief as pleading for peace and harshly silenced by the vengeful voice of Alaric. We do not need the doubtful authority of the poet to assure us that, if assemblies of the people were held during these marchings and counter-marchings on the soil of Italy, this would generally be the result. All military instinct would be in favour of obeying rather than arguing with the young and brilliant leader of the Goths; and the necessities of the ‘war power,’ which made a temporary autocrat of so constitutional a ruler as President Lincoln, might well make Alaric the Balthe the unquestioned disposer of the lives and fortunes of his people.

The vassalage into which so many German kings were forced under the yoke of Attila the Hun probably tended towards the effacement of popular freedom. Before Attila, Ardaric and Walamir might tremble, but to their subjects they would be terrible, as representing not only their own power, but all the consolidated might of that heterogeneous monarchy.

As for the polity of the Vandals, we saw, in tracing the history of the conquest and land-settlement of Africa, how vast a preponderating influence was thereby assigned to the king. It is true that, by careful examination, some traces of the old Teutonic freedom may still be discovered among the warriors of Gaiseric, but they are indeed rare and feeble. Peace and war, treaties, persecutions, all seem to be decided upon and carried through by the overwhelming authority of the king.

And thus we come to the subject with which we are now specially concerned, the kind and degree of kingly authority wielded by the Amal Theodoric. It must be stated at once that this was absolutely unlike the limited and jealously watched authority of the German kings described by Tacitus. After the Ostrogoths crept forth from under the world-shadowing might of Attila, they fell into a position of more or less dependence upon the power of Eastern Rome; a power materially far less formidable than that of the terrible Hun, but more potent in its influence on the minds and thoughts of men. It is impossible to prove what effect the forty years between the death of Attila and the death of Odovacar had upon the 'Walamir-Goths but it is almost certain that many old German ideas and customs were lost during that time of close intercourse and frequently-renewed alliance with Byzantium. For the fact that they did not become altogether Romanised and sink into the position of a mere military colony of the Empire, their old hereditary loyalty to the Amal kings was mainly answerable. The reader will remember in what insulting terms Theodoric the son of Triarius taunted the squalid retinue of his rival for their fall from their once high and prosperous estate. He was correct in saying that it was their loyalty to Theodoric the Amal that had brought them into that abyss of wretchedness. But the instinct of the nation was right. Theodoric was indeed the people's hope, and their loyalty to him brought them safely through so many dangers and trials and seated them at length as lords in the fairest lands of Italy.

But when the great enterprise was thus at length crowned with success, the author of it was no longer a king after the old Germanic pattern, bound to consult and persuade his people at every turn. As an uncontrolled, unthwarted ruler he had led them from Novae to Ravenna. As an uncontrolled, unthwarted ruler he was thenceforward to guide the destinies of the nation in his palace by the Adriatic.

There is no trace of anything like a single meeting of the Folc-mote during the reign of Theodoric. All action in the State seems to proceed from the king alone, and though he condescends often to explain the reason for his edicts, he does this only as a matter of grace and favour, not of necessity, and in doing so he employs the same kind of language which is used in the Theodosian code. There is, as we shall see, at his death a faint acknowledgment of the right of the people to be consulted as to his successor; but here again there is no more recognition of the elective character of the monarchy, if so much, as in the case of the successive wearers of the purple at Byzantium. In short, though Theodoric never assumed the title of emperor, his power, for all practical purposes, seems to have been exactly the same as an emperor's; and we get a much more truthful idea of his position by thinking of him as the successor of Theodosius and the predecessor of Charles the Great, than by applying to him any of the characteristics of Teutonic royalty which we find in the Germania of Tacitus.

But though the kingship of Theodoric was thus greatly changed from the old model of his forefathers' royalty, there is one case of an early German ruler, described to us by Tacitus himself, whose career is in some respects very similar to that of the Amal hero. Maroboduus, king of the Marcomanni, a very few years after the birth of Christ led his people across the Erzgebirge, and established a strong kingdom in Bohemia and Bavaria and on the Middle Danube. A disciplined army of 70,000 men, hovering upon a frontier only 200 miles from Italy, caused even the great Augustus to tremble for the peace of his Transalpine provinces. No German had ever seemed more formidable to Rome, but he was formidable only because he

was despotic. It is evident that in his kingship the rein was drawn far tighter than was usual in the Germanic states of that day, and this harsher system of government, though it made him for the time a more dangerous foe to Rome, prevented his dynasty from striking root in the affections of his people. When Arminius attacked him after about twenty years of rule, 'the name of king,' that is, of despotic king, 'alienated the sympathy of his own countrymen from Maroboduus, while the cause of Arminius was popular, as he was fighting for liberty.' By this war Maroboduus was greatly weakened, and had to sue for the degrading help of Rome to avert absolute overthrow. Only two years later the Gothic chieftain Catualda, who had once been driven from his country by the might of Maroboduus, ventured on an expedition of revenge, which, by the help of the disloyal nobles of the Marcomannic kingdom, was completely successful; and forced Maroboduus, a hunted exile and outlaw, to seek the protection of Tiberius, who received this disarmed enemy of the Roman people into his territory, and permitted him to spend the eighteen remaining years of his life in the friendly shelter of Ravenna. Strange vicissitude of fortune, which caused the first great absolute monarch of a German nation to grow old, amid the contempt of his people, in the very same capital which witnessed the splendid reign and honoured death of the greatest of German despots, Theodoric.

Happily the reign of the Amal king ended in no such disastrous collision with the free spirit of his people as that which brought the might of Marobodus to the ground. Yet, if there were any traditions of a healthy national life still lingering among the warriors whom he had settled in Italy, these must have been continually wounded by what they saw and what they heard at the Court of Ravenna. True, they still were summoned to appear, at any rate those who lived in the north of Italy, once a year in the presence of their King, and to receive a donative from his hand. They were not turned into Roman legionaries; they fought still in the old national order, with the great Gothic broadsword and under the command of their own captains of thousands. But when they stood in the presence of their countryman, the great Amal, they found him surrounded with all the pomp of Byzantine royalty. The diadem which the Western Emperors had worn was upon his head, silken robes, dyed with the purple of the murex, flowed over his shoulders, *silentarii* in bright armour kept guard before the curtain which separated the awful *secretum* of the sovereign from the profane crowd of suitors and suppliants, the Prefect of the Sacred Bedchamber, some Roman courtier intent on currying favour with his new lord by an exaggerated display of servile devotion, stood ready to stop on the threshold any of his old 'comrades,' of however noble blood, who would venture unbidden into the presence of the King.

The donative and the ration-money were given and were welcome to the spendthrift Goth, who had perhaps already dived away his lands to some fellow-soldier after they had sung together the old Gothic songs and drunk too deeply of the new delights of the wine of Italy. But before receiving the money, the old and grizzled warrior had perhaps to listen to some eloquent harangue from the lips of the fluent Roman quaestor, Cassiodorus, about the delights of being admitted to the royal presence and the living death which those endured who beheld not the light of his countenance—a harangue which almost made the donative loathsome, and which, if anything could have done so, would have quenched his loyal enthusiasm, when at last the veil was drawn asunder and the well-known form, conspicuous in so many battle-fields from the Bosphorus to the Ticino, moved forth to receive their acclamations.

The picture here drawn of Gothic dissatisfaction at the exaltation of the royal prerogative is chiefly a conjectural one, but the fact is that almost all our information as to the feelings of the Gothic element in Theodoric's new state has to be derived from a few faint and widely-scattered hints, combined and vivified by the historical imagination. The information which reaches us as to the manner of the kingdom—and it is abundant—comes all from the Roman side. The rhetorical Cassiodorus, the courtly Ennodius, the dispirited Boethius, are all Romans.

Even the Goth Jordanes is more than half-Roman at heart, and derives all his materials from Cassiodorus. We are therefore really without a picture of the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy from the true Ostrogothic point of view. Only, in reading the phrases in which these rhetoricians and churchmen magnify the might of their master, we are sure that they must have grated on the ears of all that was self-respecting and genuinely Teutonic in the countrymen of Theodoric.

To a certain extent we, who have imbibed from our childhood the idea that kingship is never so great a blessing to the world as when it is rigorously—almost jealously—controlled by the national will, can share the feelings of disgust with which our imaginary Gothic warrior listened to the fulsome flatteries of his Roman fellow-subjects. It is difficult for the most loyal admirer of Theodoric not to turn away with something more than weariness from the volume of state correspondence in which, for page after page, the great King, by the pen of his secretary, praises his own virtue, his own wisdom, his own moderation, his own love of equal justice for Goth and Roman. Partly we become reconciled to this apparent want of modesty by remembering that, though the King is supposed to speak, it is well understood that the clever Quaestor really speaks for him. All the world knew that in these letters it listened, not to Theodoric praising himself, but to Cassiodorus praising Theodoric. The will of the King is undoubtedly expressed in these letters, and we may be sure that his share in them was by no means limited to a mere formal assent, or the languid addition of his stencilled signature at the bottom. Yet when Theodoric knew that the substance of the royal will was therein contained, he probably gave himself little trouble about the form. For that, the learned Quaestor was responsible. A brave Gothic warrior would have blushed to enumerate his own good qualities with so many swelling words of vanity. But if this was the custom of the country, it must be complied with; and probably the King saw his short, business-like, verbal instructions expanded into the turgid state document, with similar feelings to those with which an Englishman receives from his lawyer the great expanse of sheepskin covered with legal verbiage, that is required to give validity to a purchase which was settled in an interview of an hour.

After all, the great justification for the somewhat despotic form assumed by the government of Theodoric must be found in the object which he proposed to himself, and which, with signal success, he achieved. What was that object? It was in one word, *Civilitas*; the maintenance of peace and tranquillity, and the safeguarding of all classes of his subjects from oppression and violence at the hands either of lawless men or of the ministers of the law. The golden words of Ataulfus, as recorded by Orosius, seem to have expressed exactly the aim which Theodoric kept constantly before him. Not to obliterate the Roman name, not to turn *Romania* into *Gothia*, but to correct the inherent lawlessness of the Gothic character by the restraint of those laws without which the state would cease to be a state, to restore the Roman name to its old lustre and increase its potency by Gothic vigour; this was the dream which floated before the mind of Ataulfus, this was the dream which became a reality for forty years under Theodoric and his descendants.

The state papers of the Ostrogothic monarchy, as will be seen by any one who glances through the abstract of the letters of Cassiodorus, are filled almost to satiety with the praises of this great gift, *Civilitas*. It was attained, however, not by the fusion, but rather by the federation, of the two peoples, over both of whom Theodoric was king. Whatever may have been his hope as to the ultimate effect of his measures, and probably the vision of a united Italian people did sometimes fascinate the mind of the King, or at any rate of his ablest minister, they well knew that at present the absolute assimilation of the two nations was impossible.

The Goth could not be taught in one generation that reverence for the name of Law, that disposition to submit to authority, however harshly displayed, which had become an instinct with the Roman people. The Roman could not in one generation become imbued with that free heroic spirit, that love of danger and of adventure, which rang in every Gothic battle-song. This had perhaps never been precisely the endowment even of his forefathers, for even the Fabricii and the Valerii were inspired to do great deeds rather by a lofty sense of duty, self-respect, loyalty to their comrades and their country, than by the mere animal delight in fighting which fired the sons of Odin. And whatever the Roman's prowess had once been, it had now utterly left him, and generations of intermixture with a new stock were needed to bring back the iron into his blood.

Meantime, then, the two nations were to be governed with a strong and impartial hand, not as one people, but for one end, the happiness of all. The Gothic sword was to preserve the soil of Italy from foreign foes, while the Roman practised the arts of peace and administered the laws which had come down from his forefathers. The situation was like that which existed in Normandy under William Longsword, like that which his descendant William the Bastard strove to establish in England after the Conquest; striving unsuccessfully because his English subjects, at any rate after the revolt of 1068, refused to give him that willing obedience which undoubtedly was rendered during the larger part of his reign by the Roman population to Theodoric. Or, to choose an illustration from our own times, the relation of the Ostrogothic King to the two classes of his subjects was like that of an enlightened and conscientious Governor-General of India to the Europeans and Hindoos under his sway. Fusion of the two nations is at present an impossibility. It is impossible to legislate for the European indigo-planter exactly as if he were a native Rajah, or for the headman of a Hindoo village as if he had the same ideas as a Queen's soldier from Devonshire. The best rulers keep the fusion of the two nations before them as an event possible in the far-distant future, and meanwhile strive so to govern that the thought of a common interest in the prosperity of the whole country, the idea of a true *Res Publica*, may take root in the minds of both races, that no violence be practised by the European against the Hindoo, and no chicane by the Hindoo against the European, that 'Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.'

This equal balance held between the two diverse nations requires, however, a steady hand the scales. A Folc-mote of the Goths would have made short work of the liberties of the Romans; a meeting of citizens in the Roman Forum, lashed to fury by the harangue of some windy orator, would soon have pulled down the statues of the Gothic king. And thus we are brought by these considerations to the same conclusion to which, as we have seen, all the events in the history of his nation tended. German kingship as wielded by Theodoric had to be despotic. The crown of the arch must be made strong and heavy to repress the upward thrust of the two opposing nationalities.

This being so, the laws and usages of the Gotho-Roman state throw not much light on the development of Teutonic institutions. It is the dying Empire, as we shall see, rather than dawning Feudalism, which is displayed in the correspondence of Theodoric's secretary. The *Edictum Theodorici*, to which reference will be made in the next chapter, is not, like the codes of other German races—the Burgundian, the Salian, the Ripuarian—an exposition in barbarous Latin of the customary law of the tribes who had come to seat themselves within the borders of the Empire; but it is rather a selection of such parts of the Theodosian code and of the Roman *Responsa Prudentum* as were suitable for the new monarchy, a few unimportant changes being made in some of their provisions by the supreme will of the king.

Gothic law we may be sure there was, to be administered where Goths only were concerned; but it has left little trace in any written documents, no doubt because in the great majority of cases Romans were concerned either alone or together with Goths, and here the

irresistible tendency of the magistracy which Theodoric had taken over from the Empire was to make Roman law supreme.

There are two offices, however, which we may notice here, before we pass on to consider the Roman side of Theodoric's administration, since they are both purely Teutonic, and were no doubt always held by men of barbarian origin. One is that of the Count of the Goths, the other that of the Saiones.

1. The *Comes Gothorum* (we know not his Gothic title) was no doubt in practice always a general high in office, perhaps usually a great provincial governor. But his chief duty was to decide, doubtless according to the old traditional law of his people, any disputes which might arise between one Goth and another. Should the controversy be between a born Goth and a born Roman, in that case he was to associate with himself a Roman jurisconsult and decide the strife 'according to fair reason'. In estimating what 'fair reason' required, we may probably conclude that the Roman law, with its vast store of precedents, the accumulated experience of ages, aptly quoted and enforced by a quick-witted jurisconsult, would be almost uniformly victorious over the few and crude maxims of German Right, born in the forest or the pasture-land, and dimly present in the brain of some stalwart Count of the Goths, more able to enforce his conclusions with his sword than with his tongue.

2. The Saiones were apparently a class of men peculiar to the Ostrogothic monarchy. More honoured than the Roman lictor (who was but a menial servant of the magistrate), but hardly perhaps rising to the dignity of a sheriff or a marshal, they were, so to speak, the arms by which Royalty executed its will. If the Goths had to be summoned to battle with the Franks, a Saio carried round the stirring call to arms. If a Praetorian Prefect was abusing his power to take away his neighbour's lands by violence, a Saio was sent to remind him that under Theodoric not even Praetorian Prefects should be allowed to transgress the law. If a new fort had to be built on some dolomite peak commanding the ravines of the Adige, and shutting out the barbarians of Northern Tyrol, a Saio was dispatched to urge and guide the exertions of the provincials. The Saiones seem to have stood in a special relation to the king. They are generally called 'our Saiones,' sometimes 'our brave Saiones,' and the official virtue which is always credited to them (like the 'Sublimity' or the 'Magnificence' of more important personages) is 'Your Devotion.'

One duty which was frequently entrusted to the Saio was the *tuitio* of some wealthy and unwarlike Roman. It often happened that such a person, unable to protect himself against the rude assaults of sturdy Gothic neighbours, appealed to the King for protection. When the petition was granted, as it probably was in almost all cases, the person thus taken under the *tuitio regii nominis* acquired peculiar rights, and any maltreatment of his person or injury to his property was treated as more than an ordinary offence against *civilitas*, as a special act of contempt towards the royal authority. He seems to have had, at any rate in certain cases, a peculiar privilege of suing and being sued directly in the Supreme Court (*comitatus*) of the King, overleaping all courts of inferior jurisdiction. But the chief visible sign of the King's protection, and the most effective guarantee of its efficiency, was the stout Gothic soldier who as Saio was quartered in the wealthy Roman's house, ready to fight all his battles, and to make all other Goths respect the person and the property of him to whom Theodoric had pledged the royal word for his safety. A payment, of the amount of which we are not informed, but which probably varied according to the wealth of the Roman and the lineage of the Goth, was paid, *commodi nomine*, by way of douceur, by the defended to the defender.

The relation thus established was one which, being itself a somewhat barbarous remedy for barbarism, might easily degenerate from its original intention. Sometimes the protected Roman, having this robust Goth in his house, sharing his hospitality and ready to do his bidding, used him not merely for his own defence but for the oppression of his poorer and

weaker neighbours. Sometimes the Saio, tired of ever guarding the soft, effeminate noble committed to his care, and perhaps stung by the silent assumption of superiority in knowledge and culture which lurked in all the Roman's words and gestures, would turn against his host and even violently assault his dainty person. Thus, to his eternal disgrace, did Amara, who actually drew a sword against the Senator Petrus, whose defender he was. He wounded his hand, and, had not the Roman been partly sheltered by a door, would have severed it from the wrist. Yet, notwithstanding this evil deed, he had the audacity to claim from Petrus, *commodi nomine*, the Saio's usual gratuity. Rightly did the indignant King order that Amara should be removed from the post of defender, the duties of which he so strangely discharged, that his place should be given to his countryman Tezutzat, and that he should refund twice the sum which he had exacted for his gratuity.

Slight indications like this of the footing upon which the two nations lived may help us to understand the difficulty of the problem set before Theodoric the common ruler of both of them, and to appreciate more highly the skill which for thirty years he displayed in solving it.

CHAPTER VIII.
THEODORIC AND HIS COURT.

WE have endeavoured in the previous chapter to look at Theodoric king of the Goths and the Romans with the eyes of such of his old barbarian comrades as survived the hardships of the march and the perils of four bloody battles, and found themselves quartered in the pleasant lands of Italy, with every possession that heart could desire except their old freedom. Let us now hear what the Roman inhabitants of the land, the orators and churchmen, who alone could translate his deeds into literature and so transmit his fame to posterity, have to tell us concerning him.

No stirring It may be stated at once that no great events mark his and no great historian illustrate his reign. Seldom has there been a better illustration of the proverb, 'Happy is the nation that has no annals'; for in the comparative poverty of our historical information one thing is clear, that the period during which Theodoric bore sway, a period equivalent to the average length of a generation of mankind, was a time of great and generally diffused happiness for the Italian population, one that stood out in emphatic contrast to the century of creeping paralysis which preceded, and to the ghastly cycle of wars and barbarous revenges which followed that peaceful time.

But, had the events of this reign been many we could have said little about them. By some strange fatality, the Ostrogothic King, with all his generous patronage of arts and literature, never lighted on the 'sacred bard' who should keep his fame green through the centuries, nor on the fluent historian who should weave the various actions of his time into a connected history. Or, if such a work ever was written—and possibly the later books of Cassiodorus' history of the Goths would have answered to this description—the foolish sieve of Time, which so often retains the sand and lets the pure gold fall through into oblivion, has not preserved it to our days.

Much valuable and interesting information however, as to both home and foreign affairs, can be obtained from the official correspondence of Cassiodorus, the manner of the composition of which has been glanced at in the previous chapter. But the only continuous account of the history of his reign—except a few meagre sentences of Jordanes—is contained in the mysterious fragment which is quoted by historians as *Anonymus Valesii*, and which is always printed (for no very obvious reason) at the end of the history of Ammianus Marcellinus.

This unknown scribe, with whom we have already made some acquaintance, takes his literary name from Henri de Valois, a French scholar of the seventeenth century, who first introduced him to the modern world. According to an opinion now generally accepted, he is none other than that Maximian Bishop of Ravenna whose mosaic portrait we still see on the walls of S. Vitale, where, arrayed in alb and pallium and with a jewelled cross in his hand, he consecrates the new church in the (imaginary) presence of Justinian and his Court. Whoever the writer be, he writes as an ecclesiastic and as an inhabitant of Ravenna. A vein of something like legendary adornment runs through his narrative, nor should we be justified in quoting him as an absolutely accurate witness for events, some of which may have happened twenty or thirty years before his birth, and the latest of which (as recorded by him) probably happened in his boyhood. But, as has been before hinted, there is every reason to think that for some of his names and dates he relies upon the absolutely contemporary but now perished 'Annals of Ravenna'; and on the whole, as historical authorities go, he is, notwithstanding his anonymousness, a very fair voucher for the truth of the facts which he records.

As the extract is not long, and is of considerable importance, it will be well to translate it entire:—

THE ANONYMUS VALESII ON THEODORIC.

‘Now Theodoric had sent Faustus Niger on an embassy to Zeno. But as the news of that Emperor’s death arrived before the return of the embassy, and as the entry into Ravenna and the death of Odoacer had intervened, the Goths confirmed Theodoric to themselves as king, without waiting for the orders of the new Emperor.

‘He was a man most brave and warlike, the natural son of Walamir king of the Goths. His mother was called Ereriliva, a Gothic woman but a Catholic, who took at baptism the name Eusebia.

‘He was an illustrious man and full of good-will towards all. He reigned thirty-three years, and during thirty of those years so great was the happiness attained by Italy that even the wayfarers were at peace¹ For he did nothing wrong. Thus did he govern the two nations, the Goths and Romans, as if they were one people, belonging himself to the Arian sect, but arranging that the civil administration of the Romans should continue as it was under the Emperors. He gave presents and rations to the people, yet though he found the Treasury quite bankrupt, by his own labour he brought it round into a flourishing condition. Nothing did he attempt against the Catholic faith. He exhibited games in the Circus and Amphitheatre, so that he received from the Romans the titles Trajan and Valentinian (as he did in truth seek to bring back the prosperous times of those emperors); and on the other hand, the obedience rendered by the Goths to the Edictum Theodorici showed that they recognised its author as in all things their Mightiest.

‘Unlettered as he was, so great was his shrewdness that some of his sayings still pass current among the common folk, a few of which we may be allowed here to preserve.

‘He said, “He who has gold and he who has a devil can neither of them hide what they have got.”

‘Also, “The Roman when in misery imitates the Goth, and the Goth when in comfort imitates the Roman.”

‘A certain man dying left a wife and a little boy too young to know his mother. The child was taken away by a friend of the fathers into another province, and there educated. Returning as a young man to his mother, he found that she had betrothed herself to a suitor. When however she saw her son she embraced him, and blessed God for restoring him to her : so he abode with her thirty days. At the end of that time her lover returns, sees the youth and asks “Who is this?” She replied, “My son.” When he found that she had a son, he began to claim back again his earnest-money, and to say, “Either deny that this is your son, or else go hence.” Thus compelled by her lover, the woman began to deny the son whom she had previously owned, and ordered him out of the house as a stranger to her. He answered that he had returned, as he had a right to do, to his mother in the house of his father. Eventually the son appealed to the King against his mother, and the King ordered her to appear before him. “Woman!” said he, “you heare what this young man urges against you. Is he thy son or no?”. She answered, “He is not my son, but as a stranger did I entertain him”. Then when the woman’s son had told all his story in the King’s Court, the King said to her again, “Is he thy son or no?”. Again she said, “He is not my son”. Said the King to her, “And what is the amount of your possessions, woman?”. She answered, “As much as 1000 solidi” [£600]. Then the King swore that nothing would satisfy him, unless the woman took him (the young man) for her husband instead of the suitor. With that the woman was struck with confusion, and confessed that he was indeed her son. And many more stories of the same kind are related of him.

‘Afterwards he received from the Franks a wife named Augofleda; for he had had a wife before his accession to the throne who had borne him two daughters. One, named Arevagni, he

gave in marriage to Alaric king of the Visigoths in Gaul, and the other, named Theodegotha, to Sigismund son of King Gundebaod [the Burgundian].

‘Having made his peace with the Emperor Anastasius through the mediation of Festus for his unauthorised assumption of the royal title, [the Emperor] also restored to him all the ornaments of the palace which Odochar had transmitted to Constantinople, contested ‘At the same time there arose a strife in the the Papacy, city of Rome between Symmachus and Laurentius, both of whom were consecrated [bishops]. By Divine ordering Symmachus, the worthier of the visit to two, prevailed. After peace had been restored King Theodoric went to Borne, the Church’s capital, and paid his devotions to the Blessed Peter as devoutly as any Catholic. To meet him, Pope Symmachus and all the Senate and people of Rome poured forthwith every mark of joy, outside the gates of the city. Then Theodoric entering the city came to the Senate, and at the Palma delivered an address to the people of Rome, promising that by God’s help he would keep inviolate all that the preceding Roman sovereigns had ordained.

‘Celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of his accession he entered the city in triumph, rode to the palace, and exhibited to the Romans the games of the Circus. He also gave to the Roman people and to the poor a yearly supply of grain to the amount of 120,000 modii [3750 quarters], and for the restoration of the palace or the repair of the walls of the city he ordered 200 lbs. [of gold = £8000] to be paid annually from the proceeds of the duty on wine.

Moreover, he gave his sister Amalafriqda in marriage to Transimund king of the Vandals.

‘He made Liberius, whom in the beginning of his reign he had appointed Praetorian Prefect, Patrician, and gave him as his successor in the former office—[The name seems to have dropped out.] Therefore Theodorus son of Basilius [and Odoin his Count (?) conspired against him. When he had discovered this plot he ordered his head to be cut off in the palace which is called “Sessorium.” For(?) at the request of the people he directed that the words of the promise which he had made them in his popular harangue should be engraved on a brazen tablet and fixed in a place of public resort.

‘Then returning to Ravenna in the sixth month he gave Amalabirga his sister’s daughter in marriage to Herminifrid king of the Thuringians. And thus he pleased all the nations round about him; for he was a lover of manufactures and a great restorer of cities.

‘He restored the aqueduct of Ravenna which Trajan had built, and after a long interval of time again introduced water into the city. He made the palace perfect, but did not dedicate it, and he finished the porticoes round the palace.

‘Also at Verona he erected baths and a palace, and carried a portico from the gate to the palace. The aqueduct, which had been long destroyed, he renewed, and introduced water through it. Moreover he surrounded the city with new walls.

‘At Ticinum [Pavia] also he built a palace, baths, and an amphitheatre, and carried new walls round the city. On many other cities also he bestowed many benefits. Thus he so charmed the neighbouring nations that they came under a league with him, hoping that he would be their king. The merchants too from divers provinces came flocking together to him, for so great was the order which he maintained, that, if any one wished to leave gold or silver on his land, it was deemed as safe as if within a walled city. An indication of this was the fact that throughout all Italy he never made gates for any city, and the gates that were in the cities were not closed. Any one who had any business to transact did it at any hour of the night as securely as in the day.

‘In his time men bought wheat at 60 modii for a solidus [about 12s. a quarter], and for 30 amphorae of wine they paid the same price [2s. 4d. per gallon].

‘Now King Theodoric was an unlettered man, and so unsuccessful as a student that after years of reigning he was still utterly unable to learn the four letters of his own signature to one

of his edicts Thiud, if in Gothic, THEO if in Latin. Wherefore he ordered a golden plate to be engraved, having the four letters of the royal name pierced through it, so that when he wished to sign any document he could place the plate upon the paper, and drawing his pen through the holes could give it the appearance of his own signature.

‘Then Theodoric, having conferred the honours of the consulship on [his son-in-law] Eutharic, triumphed at Rome and Ravenna. But this Eutharic was a man of very harsh disposition, and a bitter enemy of the Catholic faith.

‘After this, when Theodoric was staying at Verona through fear of hostile movements among the barbarians [north of the Alps], a strife arose between the Jews and Christians of the city of Ravenna. For the Jews, disliking those who were baptized, often by way of derision threw persons into the water of the river, and in the same way they made sport of the Lord’s Supper. Hereupon the people being inflamed with fury, and being quite past the control of the King, of Eutharic, and even of Peter who was then bishop, arose against the synagogues and soon burned them. Then the Jews rushed to Verona, where the King was, and by the agency of Triwan the Grand Chamberlain, himself a heretic and a favourer of their nation, they got their case against the Christians presented to the King. He promptly ordered that, for their presumption in burning the synagogues, all the Roman population of Ravenna should pay a contribution sufficient to provide for their restoration; and those who had no money to pay were to be flogged through the streets of the city while the crier proclaimed their offence. Orders to this effect were given to Eutharic-Cilliga and to the Bishop Peter, and thus it was done’.

The ‘Anonymus’ then begins to narrate the story of the religious troubles and persecutions which clouded the last years of Theodoric, and which will be described in a later chapter.

Let us try to bring to a focus the somewhat confused and inartistic picture which is here drawn for us by the most valuable of all witnesses to character, an unfriendly contemporary.

Evidently there was peace and prosperity, at any rate comparative prosperity, throughout Italy in the reign of Theodoric. Absolute freedom from hostile invasion—except, as we shall see, some trifling ravages of the Byzantines in Apulia—was a great thing; a thing to which Italy may almost be said to have been a stranger during the ninety years that had elapsed, since the clarions of Alaric first sounded in the plains of Pollentia. But yet more important for Italy, in her then condition, was the presence in the royal palace of a strong will, wielding irresistible power and guided by benevolence towards all classes of the people. Long enough had the name and the reality of power been disjoined the one from the other. Long enough had flatterers and rhetoricians pretended to worship the almost divine majesty of the Emperor, while every one knew that in reality some menacing barbarian freebooter, or some yet more intolerable barbarian life-guard, was master of the situation. Now, the man who was hailed as king was once more in truth a king of men. He knew, every Goth in his disbanded army, every Roman possessor in the most secluded valleys of the Appennines, knew, that Theodoric was and would be undisputed master. He could be terrible to all extortionate and unjust governors, because behind him there loomed no figure greater than his own; he could be just, because the welfare of his subjects was in truth his own highest interest; he could be gentle, because he was irresistible.

The same picture of firm and just rule is brought before us by a few sentences of Procopius, who again, as a man employed in the Byzantine army, may be considered as a witness unfriendly to the Gothic rule.

‘Theodoric’ says he, ‘was an extraordinary lover of justice, and adhered rigorously to the laws. He guarded the country from barbarian invasion, and displayed both intelligence and prudence in the highest degree. Of injustice towards his subjects there was hardly a trace in his

government, nor would he allow any of his subordinates to attempt anything of the kind, save only that the Goths divided among themselves the same proportion of the land of Italy which Odoacer had given to his partisans. So then Theodoric was in name a tyrant, but in deed a true king, not inferior to the best of his predecessors, and his popularity grew greatly, contrary to the ordinary fashion of human affairs, both among Goths and Italians. For generally, as different classes in the State want different things, the government which pleases one party, has to incur the odium of those who do not belong to it.

‘After a reign of thirty-seven years he died, having been a terror to all his enemies, and left a deep regret for his loss in the hearts of his subjects.’

The fact that such results were achieved by an unlettered chieftain, the scion of an only half-civilised German tribe, must be accounted a signal victory of human intelligence and self-restraint, and justifies, if anything can justify, the tight rein which, while curbing himself, he kept upon the old Teutonic freedom. Obviously however, with the best good-will on the part of the King, these results could not have been obtained in detail unless he had been well served by ministers—from the necessity of the case chiefly Roman ministers—like-minded with himself. To these men, the Sullys and the Colberts of the Gothic King, let us now turn our attention.

The first man who served as Praetorian Prefect under Theodoric, holding that great office for the first seven years of his reign, was Liberius. This man—who was of course Roman, not Teutonic, by origin—had occupied an important place among the ministers of Odovacar. Unlike the treacherous Tufa, he remained faithful to the last to his barbarian chief, and took an active part in directing the operations against Theodoric. On the downfall of his old patron, he showed no unmanly fear as to his own fortunes, no servile haste to propitiate the new lord of Italy, but, with calm sadness, intimated that he accepted the judgment of Heaven, and since he could no longer be loyal to Odovacar, he was willing to serve with equal loyalty that monarch’s conqueror. Theodoric was wise enough to accept the proffered service, and, as we have seen, to confer upon the true-hearted Roman the still vast powers of the Praetorian Prefect.

Unhappily these seven first years of the reign of Theodoric—perhaps its most interesting portion—are an almost absolute blank. Liberius left no such copious record of official work behind him as was left by the fluent Cassiodorus. But we are informed incidentally that one of the chief cares of the new ministry was, as we might have expected, finance. He introduced a wise economy into every department of the State, and while the Exchequer found itself every year in a more flourishing condition, the tax-payer was conscious that, at any rate, there was no addition to his previous burdens. It seems probable that some, at least, of that praise which arose from a prosperous and contented Italy should be attributed to these early measures of Liberius.

One work of great delicacy and importance, which was successfully performed by him, was the assignment of the *Tertiae*, or third part of the soil of Italy, to the new-comers. Broadly, as has been already said, the new land-settlement was probably a transfer of these Land-thirds from the men of Odovacar to the men of Theodoric. But there may have been reasons, unknown to us, which prevented this from being the sole principle of distribution, and which obliged the commission, of which Liberius was the head, to proceed in many instances to a new division as between Roman and Goth. Here we are told he showed great tact and skill, settling neighbour by neighbour in such a way that not rivalry but friendship sprang out of their new relation, introducing probably the Gothic settlers chiefly into those parts of the country where the land really cried out for more numerous cultivators* and ever impressing upon his Roman countrymen the great principle of the new government, that the Goth was there for the defence of the whole land, and that, by sacrificing one-third, the Roman cultivator might reckon on enjoying the remaining two-thirds in security.

It was probably through the hands of Liberius that the tedious negotiations with Byzantium passed, those negotiations which ended at length in the recognition of Theodoric as legitimate ruler of Italy. The chief persons employed in these negotiations were Faustus and Festus, two Roman noblemen of about equal rank, and whom it is not easy to distinguish from one another. Faustus was a successor, though not the immediate successor, of Liberius in the office of Praetorian Prefect; and Festus, who was dignified with the high title of Patrician, was apparently at about the same time Prefect of the City. It may be useful, as a note of distinction between them, to observe that Faustus was the unsuccessful ambassador to Constantinople in 493, Festus the successful one in 497. Further, that while Faustus, in the disputed Papal election of 498, took the part of the ultimately successful candidate, Pope Symmachus, Festus, who desired to obtain a pontiff favourable to the Henoticon of Zeno, sided with the Anti-Pope Laurentius.

It was in one of the lucid intervals of this prolonged struggle for the chief place in the Roman Church that Theodoric visited the ancient capital of the Empire. 'Murders, robberies and infinite evils' had afflicted the citizens of Rome, and even the nuns had been cruelly maltreated in this street warfare, which was to decide whether Symmachus or Laurentius was henceforward to have the power of binding and loosing in the kingdom of heaven. But, as has been said, there was a lull in the storm, during which the Ostrogothic King wisely determined to visit the city. Constantinople, the New Rome by the Bosphorus, he had gazed upon near forty years before with eyes of boyish wonder. Now he was to see for himself the mysterious and venerable city by the Tiber; that city which had so long cast her spell upon his people, but of which he, a barbarian from the Danube, was now unquestioned lord. Having knelt devoutly at the shrine of St. Peter, in the long pillar-lined basilica (so unlike its modern representative) reared amid the gardens of Nero, he was met outside the gates of the city by the procession of Pope, senators and people, who, with shouts of loyal welcome, pressed forth to greet him. Then came, as the Anonymus Valesii has told us, the speech in the Forum, the games in the Circus, probably also in the Colosseum, and the solemn renewal of the grain largesse to the Roman populace, which had perhaps been interrupted since the days of Odovacar.

It seems probable that this may have been the occasion chosen by the King and his enlightened minister for the formal publication of the *Edictum Theodorici*. It is true that the somewhat obscure language of the Anonymus Valesii does not prove, as was once supposed, that it was promulgated at this time. The solemn privilegium, to which he refers, engraved on a brazen tablet and posted in the Forum, was quite a different document, and little more than a promise to observe the laws of his predecessors, such a promise as William the Norman gave to govern according to the laws of King Edward. But there is a certain amount of concurrent testimony in favour of this date, and no valid argument against it. Upon the whole, it may fairly be stated as a probable conjecture, though not an ascertained fact, that Theodoric's visit to Rome was the occasion of the publication of the Edict, and that Liberius was its author.

This Edict, of which a slight sketch is given in the note at the end of this chapter, is (as was stated in the last chapter) utterly unlike the codes which formulated the laws of the other barbarian monarchies. There is hardly a trace in it of German law or German ideas: it is Roman and imperial throughout. We may remember how Sidonius complained of a certain renegade Roman governor, as 'trampling under foot the laws of Theodosius and setting forth the laws of Theodoric.' But here it is a German, a Theodoric himself, who, wisely no doubt for the most part, and with statesmanlike insight into the necessities of the case, treads the laws of his Amal forefathers in the dust and exalts on high the laws of Theodosius.

It may have been—though there is nothing but one darkly enigmatic sentence in the Anonymus to confirm the conjecture—the publication of this obviously Romanising edict, and the evident desire of Theodoric to draw as close as possible to his Roman subjects, which

brought the Gothic disaffection to a head. Odoin, a barbarian Count, planned a conspiracy against his lord. We have no details of the plot or of its discovery. We only know that it failed, and that in the Sessorian Palace, just within the southern wall of Rome (hard by the Basilica della Croce, where rests Helena, mother of Constantine and discoverer of the Holy Cross), the treacherous Goth knelt down to receive the blow of the executioner, and the headless trunk of Odoin showed to all the world that the mild and righteous Theodoric could also be terrible to evil-doers.

It may have been during this tarriance at Rome that Theodoric commenced his great works of draining the Pontine Marshes and repairing the Appian Way, works commemorated in an inscription still preserved in the Piazza at Terracina. At the last-named place, situated about sixty miles from Rome, where a spur of the Volscian mountains juts out into the blue Tyrrhene Sea, stand yet on the brow of the hill the massive ruins of the so-called Palace of Theodoric. It may be doubtful how far this name is correctly given to them : but if the great Ostrogoth ever did dwell here, and look forth from these windows over the sea, which his wise rule was covering with the whitewinged messengers of commerce, and over the plain where the peaceful army of his labourers was turning the wilderness of the Pontine Marshes into a fruitful field, it was probably during this visit to Eome, in some weeks of villeggiatura, away from the sun-baked capital, that he thus sojourned at Terracina.

We see, from the statement of the Anonymus Valesii, that it was also during the King's residence in Rome that he took in hand the repair of the walls and of the imperial residence on the Palatine. So large a sum as £8000, spent yearly on these objects, would make a marked difference in the condition of both sets of buildings. We learn, from a letter of Cassiodorus that 25,000 *tegulae*—the square flat bricks which the antiquary knows so well—were used yearly in the restoration of the walls. We may well wonder, not that some tiles have been discovered bearing the name and titles of 'Our Lord Theodoric, the benefactor of Rome', but that the number of these is not much larger¹.

Upon the whole we may probably conclude that this Roman visit, which lasted for six months, was one of the happiest periods in the life of Theodoric. There was peace abroad and at home. The barbarian stranger had borne the ordeal of an entry into the fastidious city by the Tiber, once the capital of the world, successfully, though it was an ordeal before which born Romans, like Constantius and Honorius, had well-nigh quailed. He had addressed the people in the Forum, he had shared the deliberations of the Conscript Fathers in the Senate House, and it seems safe to say that he had produced a favourable impression upon both assemblies. As he journeyed along the Flaminian Way to his chosen home by the Hadriatic, he felt himself more firmly settled in his seat, more thoroughly king of all the Italians as well as of all the Goths, than he had done before. The headless corpse of Odoin was well atoned for by the remembrance of the enthusiastic shouts, both of welcome and farewell, of the Roman people.

During this sojourn in Rome, Liberius, who was now probably a man advanced in years, was honourably dismissed from the laborious though dignified post of Praetorian Prefect, and received the rank of Patrician, which was generally conferred on those who were retiring from this office with the favour of their sovereign.

His successor as Praetorian Prefect, though perhaps not his immediate successor, was Cassiodorus, father of the writer so often named in this history. And here, in order to disentangle a needlessly complicated discussion, a few sentences must be devoted to the Cassiodorian pedigree.

From a sketch of the history of his ancestors, which Cassiodorus (the author) included in the official letter announcing to the Senate his father's elevation to the Patriciate, we learn that, for at least three generations the family had taken an active part in public life.

The first Cassiodorus who is here mentioned attained to the rank of an *Illustis*, and held a leading position in the province of *Bruttii*, which, with the neighbouring island of Sicily, he defended, apparently with a troop raised at his own cost, from an invasion of the Vandals. This may very probably have occurred in the year 440, when, as we learn from the Chronicle of his descendant, 'Gaiseric sorely afflicted Sicily'.

His son, the second Cassiodorus, was a Tribune (or, as we should say, Colonel) in the army of Valentinian III, and a *Notarius* in the secret cabinet of the Emperor. In both capacities he seems to have attached himself zealously to the party of the brave and statesmanlike Aetius, the man to whom all true Roman hearts then turned with longing. In company with the hero's son Carpilio he went on an embassy to the court of Attila, one doubtless of the innumerable embassies with which the Emperor sought to soothe the anger of the terrible Hun in the years between 440 and 450. According to his descendant, Cassiodorus exercised, over the quarrelsome Mongol, something of the same magnetic influence that was afterwards obtained by Pope Leo. He dared to meet the omnipotent victor in argument; he calmly braved his wrath; he convinced him of the reasonableness of the Roman demands; he inspired him with respect for the State which could still send forth such ambassadors: finally, he brought back with him the peace which was well nigh despaired of. We are not bound to believe all this highly-coloured picture, which seems to be at least suggested by the embassy of Leo, perhaps simply adapted from that well-known scene. But we may fairly presume that his conduct earned the approbation of his superiors, since Aetius offered him the rank of an *Illustis*, and some charge upon the public revenues, if he would remain at court. Cassiodorus, however, preferred returning to his beloved *Bruttii*, and there, under the shadow of the purple hills of Calabria, ended his days in quietness, undisturbed apparently by the ruins of the falling Empire.

His son, the *third* Cassiodorus, entered more boldly into public life. When still a young he discharged the duties of *Comes Privatarum Rerum* and *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum* (the two offices which represent the duties of our Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and Chancellor of the Exchequer), and in both capacities he earned the good opinion alike of his own countrymen and of his barbarian master Odovacar.

In the struggle between Rugian and Ostrogoth he seems not to have taken a part, but, as soon as Theodoric's throne was set up at Ravenna, he and then at once offered his services to the new monarch, and they were gladly accepted. The inhabitants of Sicily, who looked upon the Gothic rule with doubt and suspicion, were won over by their neighbour to the side which he had made his own; and, on the other hand, his wise and soothing words restrained Theodoric from the revenge to which some hostile acts of the Sicilians might otherwise have impelled him. For these services he had been rewarded with the post of Corrector of Lucania and *Bruttii*, chief governor, that is to say, of his own native province. He had large herds of horses on his estates—the Calabria of that day by the dense shade of its forests afforded great advantages to the horse-breeder—and out of these he made such generous presents to Theodoric that his son in later years, speaking by the mouth of the King, said (no doubt hyperbolically), 'he has mounted our whole army.'

This was the man who, having passed through all the lower ranks of the official service with credit and success, was now, in the first or second year of the sixth century, raised to the high honour of *Praefectus Praetorio*; an honour which had been already held for the extraordinary term of eighteen years by his kinsman Heliodorus, at Constantinople, when Theodoric himself was a guest of the Eastern Emperor. His own tenure of office was not long—we may conjecture it to have ended by the year 504—nor, except from the general terms of laudation in which it is referred to by his son, have we any information respecting it. We are fairly entitled to infer that he carried forward the policy of mild firmness and equal justice to

both nations, which had been inaugurated by Theodoric and Liberius, and that his short administration contributed its share to the peaceful happiness of Italy.

Its chief event however, and that which has made it worth while to dwell upon the family honours in so much detail, was the fact that it his son to the notice of Theodoric, and was the means of starting that son on an official career which lasted for nearly forty years, and will for ever connect his name beyond any other name in literature with the varying fortunes of the Ostrogothic monarchy.

Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus Senator, the fourth of the family whose fortunes we have to trace, was born at Squillace in Calabria about the year 480. The year was a memorable one, since it witnessed the birth of three of the foremost men of their age—Cassiodorus, Boethius, and Benedict, the politician, the philosopher, and the saint. The place—let it be sketched for us by the loving hand of the greatest of its sons :—

‘Scyllacium, the first city of Bruttii, founded by Ulysses the overthrower of Troy, is a city overlooking the Hadriatic Sea [more strictly the Gulf of Tarentum], and hangs upon the hills like a cluster of grapes; hills which are not so high as to make the ascent of them a weariness, but high enough to give a delicious prospect over the verdant plains and the deep blue back of the sea. This city sees the rising sun from its very cradle. The coming day sends forward no Aurora as herald of its approach, but with one burst uplifts its torch, and lo! the brightness quivers over land and sea. It beholds the rejoicing Sun-god, and so basks in his brightness all the day, that with good reason it might challenge the claims of Rhodes to represent itself as his birthplace. Its sky is clear, its climate temperate. Sunny in winter, it yet enjoys cool summers, and this moderation reflects itself in the character of its inhabitants. For a burningly hot country makes its children sharp and fickle, a cold one heavy and cunning; the best characters are produced by a more temperate clime.

‘Scyllacium has an abundant share of the delicacies of the sea, possessing near it those Neptunian doors which we ourselves constructed. At the foot of Mount Moscius we hewed out a space in the bowels of the rocks, into which we caused the streams of Nereus to flow. The sight of the fishes sporting in their free captivity delights all beholders. There man feeds the creatures on which he himself will shortly feed ; they swim eagerly to take the morsels from his hand : sometimes, when he has fished to satiety, he sends them all back into the water.

‘Fair is it to see the labours of the husbandmen all round while tranquilly reposing in the city. Here are the cluster-drooping vineyards, there the prosperous toil of the threshing-floor, there the dusky olive shows her face. Thus, as Scyllacium is an unwalled town, you might at choice call it a rural city or an urban farm; and, partaking of both characters, its praises have been sounded far and wide’.

Such was Scyllacium and such Bruttii in the days of Theodoric’s minister. It may be feared that a modern traveller would not find all the delights in the modern Squillace and the modern Calabria which then existed, still less that delicate and lovely civilisation which ten centuries before had tinged every shore and headland of ‘the Greater Greece’. Still, as then, the purple chain of Aspromonte divides the sparkling waters of the Eastern and the Western seas. Still do cities, beautiful at a distance, crown the finely-modelled hills that project into the plain. But the temple, with its pure white marble columns, has disappeared: a squalid comune replaces the Greek republic, instinct with life and intelligence, or the well-ordered Roman civitas. Instead of the white-robed Hellenes, wild-looking peasants, clad in goatskins, with their guns in their hands, slouch along through the cactus-bordered ways. The Saracen, the Spaniard, and the Bourbon have laid their heavy hands on the lovely region and brutalised its inhabitants. May better days be in store for it and for them in the Italy of the future!

The son who was born to Odovacar’s minister at Squillace was named, as we have seen, Senator. It seems a strange thing to give a title like this as a personal name ; but there is no

doubt that it was done in this case. Cassiodorus speaks of himself as Senator, and is so addressed by others. His letters are written by 'Senator, a man of illustrious rank'; and in his Chronicle, when he has to record his own consulship (A.D. 514), his entry is 'Senatore, viro clarissimo consule'

It is evident that the young Senator received the best education that Italy could furnish in his day, and imbibed with enthusiasm all that the rhetoricians and grammarians who conducted it could impart to so promising a pupil. All through life he was essentially a literary man. We may perhaps in this aspect compare him to Guizot, a man of letters who rose to be first minister of a mighty monarchy, but whose heart was always given to the studies which engrossed him, when still a professor in the University of Paris. There are some indications in Cassiodorus' works that, next to Rhetoric, next to the mere delight of stringing words together in sonorous sentences, Natural History had the highest place in his affections. He never misses an opportunity of pointing a moral lesson by an allusion to the animal creation, especially to the habits of birds. Of course most of the stories which he thus introduces are mere imaginations, and often of a very laughable kind; but, had he fallen on a happier and more scientific age, it is reasonable to think that there might have been found in him some of the qualities of a Buffon or an Audubon.

It seems probable that, immediately on the elder Cassiodorus receiving the post of Praetorian Praefect, Senator, still quite a young man, obtained an appointment as his Consiliarius, or legal assessor, a post generally filled by young men with some legal training,—we shall find Procopius holding it in the tent of Belisarius,—and one which no doubt gave valuable experience to any man who hoped some day to sit himself on the judgment-seat.

It was while he was thus acting as Consiliarius to his father that he pronounced in presence of Theodoric an oration in his praise, which by its eloquence so delighted the King that he appointed him, still quite a young man, to the office of Quaestor, which brought with it what we should call cabinet-rank. The rank of *Illustris* gave him the privilege of sharing the secret and friendly conversation of the monarch, and entitled him to pronounce in his master's name solemn harangues to the ambassadors of foreign nations, to the Senate, sometimes perhaps to the citizens and the army. Allusion has already been made to the spirit in which Theodoric probably regarded the necessary labour of translating his own weighty, sledge-hammer sentences into the tumid Latin of the Lower Empire. But, however Theodoric may have regarded that work, there can be no doubt that Cassiodorus thoroughly enjoyed it. To have the charge of the correspondence of so great a king, to address to the officials of Italy, or even to the Sacred Majesty of Byzantium, a series of flowing sentences interspersed with philosophical reflections, excellent if not new, and occasionally to illustrate one's subject with a 'delicious digression' on the habits of birds, the nature of the chameleon, the invention of letters, or the fountain of Arethusa,—this was happiness indeed; and, though the emolumenta of the office were large, one may believe that Cassiodorus would have been willing to pay, instead of receiving them, for the privilege of doing the very work which was more to his liking than that done by any other Italian between the mountains and the sea.

Cassiodorus has been aptly likened to one of the *improvisatori* of modern Italy. The *Variae* are State papers put into the hands of an *improvisatore* to throw into form, and composed with his luxuriant verbiage, and also with his coarse taste. The shortest instructions begin with an aphorism or an epigram. If they are more important or lengthy, they sparkle and flash with conceits or antitheses, and every scrap of learning, every bit of science or natural history, every far-fetched coincidence which may start up in the writer's memory, however remote in its bearing on the subject, is dragged in to exalt or illustrate it, though the subject itself may be of the plainest and most matter-of-fact kind. You read through a number of elaborate sentences, often tumid and pompous, sometimes felicitous and pointed, but all of the

most general and abstract sort; and nestling in the thick of them, towards the end of the letter or paper, you come upon the order, or instruction, or notification, for which the letter or paper is written, almost smothered and lost in the abundance of ornament round it.

Yet let us not be unjust to the rhetorician-statesman. We can all see, and seeing must smile at, the literary vanity which peeps out from every page of his letters. All who consult those letters for historical facts must groan over the intolerable verbosity of his style, and must sometimes wish that they could have access to the rough, strong sentences of the Gothic King, instead of the wide expanse of verbiage into which his secretary has diluted them. Yet literary vanity was by no means the only motive of his service. Like his father, and like Liberius, he had perceived that this so-called barbarian was the best and wisest ruler that Italy had had for centuries, and that the course of true civilisation could be best served by helping him to work out his own scheme of a State, defended by German arms but administered by Roman brains. Perhaps too he saw, what we can see so plainly, the heavy price which Italy as a land had paid for Rome's dominion over the world. The desert expanse of the Campagna, though

‘A less drear ruin than than now,’

may have spoken to him, as it does to us, of the disastrous change since the days when Rome was a little town and those plains were covered with the farms of industrious and happy husbandmen. Above all, as the instincts of a true statesman may have showed him, a return, at that time of day, to the imperial order of things meant dependence on the Eastern Emperor, on grasping, grovelling, eunuch-governed Byzantium. ‘Let the old Roman Empire go, and let Italy live: and if she is to live, none so fit to guide her destinies as Theodoric.’ It would be unsafe to assert that this thought, thus definitely expressed, found an entrance to the mind of Cassiodorus or any other patriotic Roman of the sixth century. But it was the limit towards which many thoughts were tending (ignorant, as ours are, of the future that is before us but conscious that some bit of the past has to be put away); and the subsequent history of Italy, traced in characters of blood from Belisarius to Barbarossa, showed how well it had been for her if that idea, of dissevering her from the wreck of the ruined Empire, might but have been realised.

It was with this hope doubtless, of reconciling the proud and sensitive Roman to the hegemony of the sturdy Goth, that Cassiodorus, near the middle of his official life, composed in twelve books that history of the Goths with which we have already made acquaintance through the extracts taken from it by the hasty and ignorant Jordanes'. In this book, as he himself says, speaking of it through the mouth of his king, ‘he carried his researches up to the very cradle of the Gothic race, gathering from the stores of his learning what even hoar antiquity scarce remembered. He drew forth the kings of the Goths from the dim lurking-place of ages, restoring to the Amal line the splendour that truly belonged to it, and clearly proving that for seventeen generations Athalaric's ancestors had been kings. Thus did he assign a Roman origin to Gothic history, weaving as it were into one chaplet the flowers which he had culled from the pages of widely-scattered authors.’

In other words, he collected what ‘hoar antiquity among the Gothic veterans had to tell him of the old Amal kings, the fragments of their battle-songs and sagas, and persuaded or forced them to coalesce with what his classical authors, Dio and Trogus and Strabo, had to tell him about the early history of the dim Northern populations. By identifying the Goths with 'the Getse—an error for which he is not originally responsible—and by claiming for them all the fantastic imaginations of the poets about the ‘Scythians’—a word of as wide and indefinite a meaning as the ‘Indians’ of modern discoverers—he succeeded in constructing for the fore-elders of Theodoric a highly respectable place in classical antiquity. He ‘made the Gothic origin Roman’, nay, rather pre-Roman, carrying back their earliest kings to Hercules and Theseus and the siege of Troy, and thus giving that connection with the cycle of Homeric

legend which an upstart nation valued, as an upstart family with us values a pedigree which shows that it came over with the Conqueror.

All this seems a little childish to us now, and indeed the chief work of a modern enquirer is to unwind that which Cassiodorus wound together so carefully, to disentangle what 'hoar antiquity' told him (the only thread that is of any value) from the flimsy and rotten threads which he collected from various authors in his library. But, for the man and the age, the work was doubtless a useful and creditable one. Many a Roman noble may have accepted a little more readily the orders of the so-called barbarian, who turned out to be not so great a barbarian after all, now that Cassiodorus, nearly the most learned man of his day, had proved that Goths fought against the Greeks at the siege of Troy, and that possibly even Theodoric might be the remote descendant of Telephus. And the great King himself, who from those early days at Byzantium had always half-loved and admired the Roman State, though he felt that his rude Goths had in them something nobler;—to him this reconciling history of his clever secretary, which showed that he might be a true-hearted Goth and yet listen with delight to the verses of Homer, and gaze with rapture on the statues of Praxiteles, since these too were kinsmen of his forefathers, must have been a welcome discovery, and must have given him fresh courage to persevere in his life-work of conveying the blessings of *civilitas* to both nations of his subjects.

Strange is it to reflect that, after all, there was a truth underlying this odd jumble of Scytho-Geto- Gothic-Greek traditions,—a truth which scarcely till the beginning of this century was fully brought to light. Philology has now made it clear that Goth, Roman, and Greek were not really very distant relations, and the common home of the Aryan nations in the Asiatic highlands or elsewhere is something like a scientific compensation for the lost belief that all European nations were represented by their progenitors at the siege of Troy.

If Cassiodorus, with a true conviction that he was thus best serving his country, brought his loyal service to Theodoric, there can be no doubt that the heart of Theodoric also warmed towards him. He found in him the very minister whom he needed, to help him in fashioning his own great ideas of government, and to put them in the most acceptable shape before the Roman people. Often, we may be sure, in the 'gloriosa colloquia' which the subject so lovingly commemorates, did King and Quaestor talk over the difficulties of the state, the turbulent freedom of the Goths, the venality and peculation of the Roman officials, the want of any high aim among the nobles or great purpose among the citizens, still proud of the name of Romans, but incapable of being stirred by anything nobler than a chariot-race, a battle between the Blues and Greens, or at best a contested Papal election. Often too would the remedies for these evils be discussed. Cassiodorus, like so many fluent rhetoricians, would perhaps think that it only required a sufficient number of his eloquent essays to establish *civilitas* in the new state, to make the Romans honest and the Goths law-abiding. Theodoric, with the Northern patience and the Northern melancholy, would refuse to accept any such optimistic view of the situation; and sometimes, while feeling that the work was long and his life was shortening, would heave a sigh at the remembrance that Providence, so gracious to him in all else, had denied him the gift of a son, strong and valiant, to carry on his great enterprise.

Amalasintha, the only legitimate child of Theodoric, was a woman endowed with much of her father's courage and strength of will, and more than her father's love for the civilisation and literature of Rome. Possibly foreseeing that this tendency to copy the manners of the less war-like people might bring her into collision with the martial Goths after his decease, Theodoric determined to marry her to no Roman noble, but to a Goth of the purest blood that he could meet with. He already had one daughter (the child of a concubine) married to a Visigothic king and living in Spain. From his connection with that country he heard that there was dwelling there a scion of the old Ostrogothic house, Eutharic son of Wimeric, grandson (or more likely great-grand-son) of King Thorismund the Chaste, and therefore a lineal descendant

of the mighty Hermanric, who once ruled all the lands between the Baltic and the Euxine. Eutharic was well reported of for valour and prudence and comeliness of person.

The King summoned him to his court, gave him his daughter's hand in marriage, and four years later conferred upon him the honour of the consulship. The Gothic prince-consort visited Rome in order to celebrate his assumption of the consular *trabea* with becoming magnificence. Senate and people poured forth to meet him. The games which he exhibited in the amphitheatre were on a scale of surpassing magnificence. The wild beasts, especially those from Africa, amazed and delighted the mob, many of whom had seen no such creatures before. Even Symmachus the Byzantine, who was present at the time in Rome on an embassy from the Eastern Emperor, was obliged to confess his stupefied admiration of the scene. When his sojourn in Rome was ended, Eutharic returned to Ravenna, and there exhibited the same shows, with even greater magnificence, in the presence of his father-in-law.

Of the prince thus romantically brought into the family of Theodoric we know very little, but that little makes us believe that he might have been found a useful counterpoise to the Romanising tendencies of Amalasantha. The Anonymus Valesii, in the extract before quoted, calls him 'a man of harsh disposition and an enemy to the Catholic faith.' This perhaps means no more than that he stood firmly by the customs of his Arian forefathers, and was not inclined to bandy compliments with the priests and prefects whom he found standing round the throne of his father-in-law. But, whatever were his good or bad qualities, he died, before the death of Theodoric gave him an opportunity of making his mark on history. Amalasantha was thus left a widow, with a son and a daughter, Athalaric and Matasuentha, the former of whom must have been born in 518, as we are told by Procopius that he was eight years old at the death of his grandfather.

From the family of Theodoric we return to the description of his ministers and friends. The elder Cassiodorus seems to have retired from office soon after his son had entered public life, and to have spent the rest of his years in the ancestral home in Bruttii, which was dear to four generations of Cassiodori. For some years the great office of Faustus, Praetorian Prefect was administered by Faustus, Prefect, to whom a large number of letters in the Variarum tire addressed. An act of oppression, however, against a neighbour in the country alienated from him the favour of the just Theodoric and caused his downfall. A certain Castorius, who seems to have got into debt, perhaps into other kinds of trouble, had his farm unjustly wrested from him by the all-powerful Prefect. On making his complaint to the King and proving the justice of his cause, he obtained a decree for the restitution of his own farm and the addition of another, of equal value, from the lands of the wrong-doer. 'Grimoda the Saio' and 'Ferrocinctus the Apparitor,' apparently one Goth and one Roman officer, were charged with the execution of this decree, which further declared that if 'that well-known schemer' should attempt anything further against Castorius he should be punished with a fine of fifty pounds of gold (£2000). With some allowable complacency Theodoric was hereupon made by his quaestor to exclaim, 'Lo a deed which may henceforward curb all overweening functionaries! A Praetorian Prefect is not allowed to triumph in the spoliation of the lowly, and on the cry of the miserable his power of hurting them is taken from him at a blow.'

The Illustrious Faustus received leave of absence from the sacred walls of Rome for four months : and it may be doubted whether, when he returned thither, he any longer wore the purple robes of the Praetorian Prefect.

Soon after this signal display of the King's justice an invitation was sent to the elder Cassiodorus, inviting him, in very flattering terms, to return to Court, where probably he would have been asked to reassume the great office which he had previously held. Apparently, however, the hill of Squillace had greater charms for him than the palace of Ravenna. We have no evidence that he again took any active part in public affairs.

A pleasing contrast to the rapacious and intriguing Faustus was afforded by one who had been faithful through good and evil fortune, the King's friend *Artemidorus*. This man, one of the nobles of Byzantium, a friend and relation of the Emperor Zeno, had been strangely attracted by the young barbarian, to whom he was sent as ambassador, on the eve of his march into Epirus. He left, for his sake, the splendid career which awaited him in the Eastern Empire, followed him through all his campaigns, and sat, an ever-welcome and genial guest, at the royal table. Not aspiring to high dignity, nor desirous to burden himself with the cares of State, he found for several years sufficient occupation for his artistic, pleasure-loving nature, in arranging the great shows of the circus for the citizens of Ravenna. At length, however (in 509), Theodoric persuaded him to undertake the weightier charge of Prefect of the City, and sent him in that capacity to Rome to govern the capital and preside over the Senate. The light-hearted Byzantine seems to have discharged the duties of this serious office more creditably than might have been expected.

Very different from this brilliant, joyous Greek was the other close friend of Theodoric, the rugged Gothic soldier *Tulum*. Sprung from one of the noblest Gothic families, he mounted guard as a stripling in the King's antechamber. His first experience in war was earned in the campaign of Sirmium, and here he showed such vigour and courage, and such a comprehension of the art of war, as procured for him in early manhood the place of chief military counsellor to Theodoric. A marriage with a princess of Amal blood still further consolidated his position. He was admitted to the friendly conversation of the King in his moments of least reserve, and, surest mark of friendship, often dared to uphold against his master the policy which he deemed best for that master's interests. In the Gaulish campaign of 509, in the campaign, or rather the armed neutrality, of 524, he was again conspicuous. Returning from the last by sea he suffered shipwreck, probably somewhere on the coast of Tuscany. The ship and crew were swallowed up by the waves. Tulum, with his only child, took to an open boat, and he had to depend on his own strength and skill to save them both by rowing. Theodoric, who was awaiting his arrival, saw with agony the imminent danger of his friend. The aged monarch would fain have rushed into the waves to rescue him, but, to his delight, Tulum battled successfully with the billows, and soon leaping ashore received his master's affectionate embrace.

We may perhaps conjecture that at the close of Theodoric's reign Tulum and Cassiodorus stood in friendly rivalry, the one at the head of the Gothic, the other at the head of the Roman party, among the nobles who were loyal to the new dynasty.

Of two other names by which the Court of Theodoric was rendered illustrious, Symmachus the orator and historian, with his son-in-law Boethius, the Marquis of Worcester of his age, it will be well to speak later on, when we have to discuss the melancholy history of their end. Enough to say here that, during the greater part of this period, they appear to have been on friendly terms with the King, though not zealously and continuously engaged in his service like Cassiodorus and Liberius.

The usual residence of Theodoric was Ravenna, with which city his name is linked as inseparably as those of Honorius or Placidia. The letters of Cassiodorus show his zeal for the architectural enrichment of this capital. Square blocks of stone were to be brought from Faenza, marble pillars to be transported from the palace on the Pincian Hill: the most skilful artists in mosaic were invited from Rome, to execute some of those very works which we still wonder at in the basilicas and baptisteries of the city by the Ronco.

The chief memorials of his reign which Theodoric has left at Ravenna are a church, a palace, and a tomb. Of the last it will be the fitting time to speak when the great Amal is carried thither for burial.

The marvellous basilica which now bears the name of S. Apollinare Nuovo was originally dedicated to St. Martin, and from its beautiful gold-inlaid roof received the title S. Martinus in

Caelo Aureo. An inscription under the windows of the tribune, still visible in the ninth century, recorded that King Theodoric had built that church from its foundations in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Notwithstanding the words of the ecclesiastical biographer, who ascribes the work to an orthodox bishop, Agnellus, it is difficult not to believe that to Theodoric's order are due those great pictures in mosaic which give the church its peculiar glory. On the opposite sides of the nave, high attics above the colonnades are lined with two long processions. On the north wall, the virgin martyrs of the Church proceed from the city of Classis, each one bearing her crown of martyrdom in her hand, to offer it to the infant Christ, who sits on Mary's lap, attended by four angels. Between the virgin martyrs and the angels intervene the three wise men from the East, who, with crowns on their heads, run forward with reverent haste to present their offerings to the holy Child. The star glows above them in the firmament. On the south wall a corresponding procession of martyred men, also bearing crowns in their hands, moves from the palace at Ravenna onwards to the Christ in glory, who sits upon his judgment-seat and is also guarded by four angels. The dignity of both groups is their most striking characteristic. Not all the quaint stiffness of the mosaic can veil the expression of solemn sadness in the faces of the martyrs, who look like men who have come out of great tribulation and have not yet seen the face of Him for whom they suffered. Nor does the same deficiency in the mode of representation prevent our seeing the look of radiant triumph on the faces of the virgins. Here are Agnes with her lamb, the child-martyr Eulalia of Merida, Lucia of Syracuse, Agatha of Catania, all the most celebrated maidens who suffered for the faith in the terrible days of Diocletian. No wrinkled and faded convent-dwellers are these. Fresh, young, and beautiful, apparelled like the daughters of a king, they move on with a smile of triumph upon their lips to see the wondrous Child for whose sake they, scarcely yet emerged from childhood, gave up their tender bodies to torture and to death.

Besides the human interest of these figures, there - is the local interest derived from the fact that we have here contemporary views of the Ravenna of the sixth century. Classis is represented as a walled city, with colonnades, domes and pediments. Hard by, three ships, one with sails fully spread, the others under bare poles, are entering the narrow lighthouse-guarded passage from the sea. The palace of Theodoric, as represented on the other side, consists of four tall Corinthian columns with arches springing from their capitals, a pediment above, and in a horizontal space of white the word PALATIUM. On one side of this, the main entrance, is a long low colonnade with an upper storey over it. The objects which most catch the stranger's eye are the curtains between the pillars. Looped up half-way, and with large square patches of purple upon them, they have a singularly modern aspect, but are no doubt a pretty faithful representation of the veil which guarded the privacy both of the Eastern Emperor and the Gothic King.

The palace itself, as we learn from local records, occupied a large space on the eastern side of the town. It adjoined the beautiful church of S. Martinus in Caelo Aureo, which was perhaps used as a royal chapel. Only one fragment of it, but one of pretty well-ascertained genuineness, exists to the present day. It is a high wall, built of the square brick-tiles with which we are so familiar in Roman work, and with eight marble pillars in the upper part supporting nine arched recesses, one of them of considerable width. It is the mere shell of a ruin : the house behind it is entirely modern. A porphyry vase, or rather high trough, let into the lower part of the wall used to be shown as the former coffin of Theodoric, but this notion is now generally abandoned, and the prevalent idea seems to be that it was once a bath. The palace we are told was surrounded with colonnades, and had many dining apartments (triclinia) within it. We learn from the Anonymus Yalesii that this edifice, which no doubt took many years to build, was completed but not 'dedicated' at the time of Theodoric's death.

Here then, on the eastern side of his capital, dwelt for more than thirty years the great Ostrogoth, looking forth towards the dark Pineta where he had had that terrible night of battle with Odovacar, and seeing, it may be, from some high tower in his palace, the blue rim of the Hadriatic. Beyond that sea, but of course invisible, lay his own fair province of Dalmatia; beyond that again those, wasted plains of Moesia, where he had wandered so often, the fugitive lord of a brigand people.

Statues in abundance were reared in his honour, at Rome, at Ravenna, at Ticinum, in all the chief cities of Italy. We hear of one statue made by Boethius with so much art that it ever turned towards the sun, and hence was called Regisol; but this is probably a mere legend of the Middle Ages. In another sculptured group, erected on a pinnacle of his palace, and conspicuous to mariners from afar, Theodoric, grasping shield and spear and clothed in a coat of mail, sat on a brazen horse covered over with gold. The two cities Rome and Ravenna completed the group. Rome was apparently standing, guarding him in calm dignity, with shield and spear; while Ravenna seemed gliding rapidly forward to meet her lord, her right foot passing over the sea and her left resting on the land. The statues of the horse and his rider, Charles the Great, after his coronation in Rome, carried across the Alps to Aix-la-Chapelle, declaring that he had seen nothing like them in his whole realm of Francia.

Pavia and Yerona were also places honoured with the occasional residence of Theodoric. At both he built a palace and public baths. Of neither of these two palaces is any remnant now to be seen. A grim square fortress of the fifteenth century, much injured by the French Republicans, stands (it is believed) on the site of Theodoric's palace at Pavia. So too at Verona: the palace, of which there were still some noble remains incorporated into the castle of the Viscontis, was blown up by the French in 1801, and an absolutely modern building stands upon its site. This, like the castle at Pavia and so many buildings in Italy of great historic name, is now occupied as a barrack.

It seems probable that Theodoric's residence at both these places depended on the state of Transalpine politics. When the tribes of the Middle Danube were moving suspiciously to and fro, and the vulnerable point by the Brenner Pass needed to be especially guarded, he fixed his quarters at Verona. When Gaul menaced greater danger, then he removed to Ticinum. It was apparently the fact that Verona was his coign of vantage, from whence he watched the German barbarians, which obtained for him from their minstrels the title of *Dietrich of Bern*. Thus strangely travestied, he was swept within the wide current of the legends relating to Attila, and hence it is that the really grandest figure in the history of the migration of the peoples appears in the Nibelungen Lied, not as a great king and conqueror on his own account, but only as a faithful squire of the terrible Hunnish king whose empire had in fact crumbled into dust before the birth of Theodoric.

CHAPTER IX.

THEODORIC'S RELATION'S WITH GAUL.

The respite from foreign invasion during the reign of Theodoric was chiefly due to his commanding position at the head of the new Teutonic royalties of Europe. That position was in great measure strengthened and consolidated by a system of matrimonial alliances with the chief of the royal families of the barbarians. The somewhat entangled sentences in which they are described by the anonymous authority quoted in the last chapter, deserve therefore a more careful study than we might at first, when repelled by their uncouth form and by the harsh sound of the barbarian names with which they are filled, be disposed to give to them.

We see from them that Theodoric was himself the brother-in-law of the king of the Franks and the king of the Vandals, and that the owner of the Visigothic, and the heir-apparent of the Burgundian royalty were married to his daughters. Our informant might have gone further, and told us that a niece of Theodoric was married to the king of the Thuringians. Here was a vision of a 'family compact,' binding together all the kingdoms of the West, from the Scheldt to Mount Atlas, in a great confederacy, filling all the new barbarian thrones with the sons, the grandsons, or the nephews of Theodoric, a matrimonial State-system surpassing (may we not say?) anything that Hapsburg or Bourbon ever succeeded in accomplishing, when they sought to make Venus instead of Mars build up their empires. We shall see however that, when it came to the tug of war between one barbarian chief and another, this family compact, like so many others in later days, snapped with the strain. Yet it was not at once a failure; for one generation at least the position of Theodoric, as a kind of patriarch of the kingly clan, was one of grandeur and influence, and did undoubtedly promote the happiness of Europe.

With the Vandal sovereigns of Carthage his relations were, till near the close of his reign, friendly. Gaiseric's son, Huneric (477-484), that fierce and cruel persecutor of the Catholics, had ended his short reign before Theodoric started on his march for His cousins and successors, Gunthamund (484-496) and Thrasamund (496-523), though still Arians, abated sensibly the rigour of the persecutions at home and pursued a fair and moderate policy abroad. The corsair-state of the fierce adventurer Gaiseric had lost something of its lawless vigour. It was passing into the rank of gular monarchies, and becoming flaccid and respectable. Sicily, which had been subjected for many years to their depredations, and then under Odovacar had paid a tribute something like our own Danegeld as the price of quietness, was now free both from invasion and from tribute. On the death of his first wife (possibly soon after 500) Thrasamund married Amalafida, the widowed sister of the Ostrogothic king. A thousand Gothic nobles with five thousand mounted servants followed Amalafida to her African home, and the fortress of Lilybaeu, (*Marsala*), at the extreme western corner of Sicily, was, with more generosity perhaps than statesman-like prudence, handed over to Thrasamund as the dowry of his elderly bride.

With two of the three great powers that still divided Gaul, the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Franks, Theodoric's relations were more varied and less uniformly amicable.

The Visigoths now held, not only the fair quadrant of France between the Loire and the Pyrenees, but also the greater part of Provence, besides the whole of Spain, except the north-western angle, which was still occupied by an independent Suevic monarchy. This powerful people, mindful of the old 'brotherly covenant,' was friendly to the Ostrogothic ruler of Italy, as it had been to its Ostrogothic invader. Their king Alaric II, the son-in-law of Theodoric, had

mounted the throne in the year 485. He was a man of whom we hear no unfavourable testimony, but who seems not to have possessed the harsh energy of his father Euric, far less the dash and originality of his mighty namesake Alaric the Great.

Between the dominions of Theodoric and his Visigothic son-in-law lay the goodly land which owned the sway of the Burgundians. Their domain, considerably more extensive than when we last viewed it on the eve of Attila's invasion now included the later provinces of Burgundy, Franche-Comté, and Dauphiné, besides Savoy and the greater part of Switzerland—in fact the whole of the valleys of the Saone and the Rhone, save that for the last hundred miles of its course the Visigoths barred them from the right bank and from the mouths of the latter river.

Gundobad, whom we met with twenty-one years ago in Rome hanging on to the fortunes of his uncle Bicimer, wearing the robe of the Patrician, and even creating an emperor of his own, the insignificant Glycerius, returned, as we then saw, to his own country in 474, probably on the death of his father Gundiok, leaving his hapless client-emperor in the lurch. According to the frequent usage of these Teutonic nations, the kingdom of Gundiok was divided between his four sons; but these four had now been reduced by death to two, Gundobad and Godegisel. Gundobad, the first-born and the more powerful, ruled at Lyons and Vienne, while Godegisel held his court at Geneva.

But the family of one of the dead brothers was destined to exert a more powerful influence over the fortunes of Gaul than either of the surviving kings. Hilperik, whose capital had been Lyons, and who died apparently between 480 and 490, had, as some authors conjecture, married a wife Caretene, whose virtues and whose Catholic orthodoxy are recorded in an inscription still to be seen in her husband's capital. Caretene, whose fervour of fasting and whose gentle persuasive influence on her harsh husband are alluded to in the letters of Sidonius, as well as in this inscription, was allowed by her Arian husband to bring up her children—they were only daughters—in the Catholic faith which she herself professed. One of these daughters, Hrothchilde, whose name history has softened into Clotilda, was dwelling, as an orphan ward, at the court of her uncle Gundobad, when there came thither on business of State frequent embassies from Clovis king of the Franks.

The ambassadors on their return home used to praise to their master the grace and accomplishments of the young princess. He sent to ask for her hand, which, in the year 492 or 493, was accorded, not perhaps very willingly, by the Burgundian king.

This marriage of the king of the Franks (whether we call him Chlodovech, Hlodwig, Luduin, Louis, or Clovis) with the young Catholic orphan of the house of Hilperik of Burgundy prepared the way for the Frankish Empire, and for events which changed the face of Europe. For she, mindful of the training received from the devout Caretene, and hostile to the Arian faith of her father and uncles, determined to win over her heathen husband, not merely to Christianity, as the other Teuton conquerors understood it, but to orthodoxy. Later ages have believed that she entered the palace of Clovis filled with thoughts of terrible revenge against Gundobad and his family. When, a generation later, her own sons inflicted terrible calamities on the royal house of Burgundy, the idea perhaps occurred to some courtly bard of representing these cruelties as mere retaliation for the atrocities which their mother's father and his house had suffered at the hands of Gundobad. Accordingly, Hilperik was alleged to have been slain with the sword; his wife, with a stone tied round her neck, to have been thrown into the water; his two daughters to have been banished; his sons (of whose very existence there is no other trace) to have met death from the hands of the same cruel relative. There is some reason to think that all this, though set forth in the pages of Gregory of Tours, who lived but a century after the death of Hilperik, is mere untrustworthy legend. If Caretene was really the wife of Hilperik, we see from the epitaph at Lyons that she survived him at least fifteen years, dying in

the year 506. Moreover a letter to Gundobad from Avitus, the Catholic bishop of Vienne, no flatterer of the king, but rather, if the anachronism may be permitted, leader of the Constitutional Opposition in the Burgundian realm, while condoling with his sovereign on the death of a daughter, refers to his earlier domestic afflictions, and reminds him with what 'ineffable piety' he had mourned the deaths of his brothers [Hilperik and Godomar]. It seems in the highest degree unlikely that such a letter could have been addressed by its author to the avowed murderer of Hilperik.

When Clovis married Clotilda he was aged twenty-seven, and had been reigning for twelve years. Seven years before, he had by his overthrow of the Roman kinglet Syaorius advanced from Flanders into the valley of the Seine; and, at the accession of Theodoric, we must probably think of his dominions as touching the Visigothic kingdom at the Loire, and the Burgundian kingdom on the Catalaunian plains, comprising in fact already one third, but not the fairest nor the richest third, of Gaul. This portentous growth of the Frankish power in twelve years was but an augury of the yet mightier extensions which should take place when the prayers of the Catholic Clotilda should be accomplished, and her husband should accept the faith of the great mass of the Roman provincials.

The statesmanlike vision of Theodoric saw the necessity of including the Frankish lord of Soissons in his system of family alliances. At the very outset of his reign he sought for and obtained the hand of Audefleda, the sister of Clovis, who bore him one daughter, his only legitimate child Amalasintha. Providence, as we have seen, denied him a son, while a whole clan of martial sons and grandsons filled the palace of the Frankish king. This difference had much to do with the very different duration of the political systems reared by the two kings.

The course of our narrative takes us back for a short time to consider the internal affairs of Italy after Odovacar's death. We are told by one chronicler that 'all his army wherever they could be found, and all his race, perished with him'; by another, that 'all his colleagues who ministered to the defence of the kingdom were put to death'. These statements are almost certainly exaggerated, if not altogether untrue. Certainly the after-life of Theodoric shows that he was not a man given to needless bloodshed. But he did issue one edict, an edict which he was wise enough to be persuaded to cancel, and which shows, it must be admitted, that the fierce bitterness of the struggle had not yet entirely faded from his mind.

This edict was to the effect, that only those among the Roman population who could prove that they had been loyal to the cause of Theodoric should enjoy the full rights of citizens. His recent opponents, even had their services been rendered compulsorily to Odovacar, lost the power of disposing of their property by will and of bearing evidence in courts of justice. A most monstrous enactment, and one which showed that its author was still more familiar with the simple pastoral life led by his people in the plains of Moesia, than with the necessities of an old and complex civilisation, in which such a party-measure as this could Epiphanius not fail to work frightful injustice. The good Epiphanius, who had been busily engaged in repairing the ravages of war, and inviting the best the citizens of surrounding towns to settle at Ticinum, heard the general lamentation of Italy, and was besought to make himself its exponent at the Court of Theodoric. He consented, on condition that Laurentius of Milan would share the burden with him. The two bishops journeyed together to Ravenna, and were received with all veneration by the King.

And here let us observe for a moment, that we have in this embassy an excellent illustration of the way in which barbaric conquest forced the Church onwards in the path of temporal dominion. The edict against the adherents of Odovacar was a purely civil edict. Whether wise or foolish, it in no way specially concerned the Church, nor trenched upon ecclesiastical privilege. Neither was it, like the revenge wreaked by Theodosius on the citizens of Thessalonica, an outrage upon humanity, a gross and obvious breach of the law of Cod. It

was a very harsh and ill-conceived measure, but it related to matters which were entirely within the domain of the civil governor; and as such, we cannot imagine that either Ambrose or Eusebius would have felt himself entitled to remonstrate against it, nor that Theodosius or Constantine would have tolerated such an interference. Now, however, that a Barbarian, instead of a Roman, sits in the seat of power, the moderating influence of the ecclesiastic in purely political matters is eagerly invoked by the governed, and not repelled by the governor.

Epiphanius, being invited to state his case, congratulated ‘the most unconquered prince’ on the success which had crowned his arms. He reminded Theodoric of the promises which he had made to the Almighty when, under the walls of Ticinum, he had been attacked by the bands of the enemy, who greatly exceeded his own troops in number, but whom by heavenly aid he had then been enabled to overcome. By heavenly aid, for the very air seemed to serve his purposes. When Theodoric required serene weather for his operations, they were over-arched by an unclouded sky; when rain would help him more effectually, torrents fell. Now let him profit by the example of his predecessor. Odovacar fell because he ruled unrighteously. Might the present King—such was the prayer of Liguria—confirm to innocent men the blessings of the laws, even at the risk of some, who little deserved it, obtaining his protection. ‘To forgive sins is heavenly; to punish is an earthly thing.’

The Bishop was silent and the ‘most eminent King’ began to speak. When he opened his lips every heart was wrung with a fearful anxiety to know what would be his decision.

‘Oh, venerable Bishop!’ he said, ‘though your merits command my respect, and your many kindnesses to me in the time of confusion deserve my gratitude, yet the hard necessities of reigning make that universal forgiveness which you praise impossible. I have the divine warrant for the position which I here take up. Do we not read of a certain king, who, because he neglected to take the destined vengeance on the enemy of his people, was himself rejected by God. That man weakens and brings into contempt the divine judgments who spares his enemy when he is in his power. As for the patience of our Redeemer, of which you speak, that comes after the severity of the law has done its work. The wise surgeon first cuts deep to remove the gangrened flesh, before he applies the healing liniment. By allowing criminals to go unpunished, we exhort the innocent to commit crime.

‘Nevertheless, since heaven itself bends to your prayers, the powers of earth must not disregard them. I consent that not a single head shall fall, since you may prevail with God that the minds of the most hardened offenders shall be turned from the perverseness of their way. Some few, however, of the chief incendiaries must be removed from their present dwellings, lest they rekindle the flame of civil discord.’

Theodoric then ordered the Quaestor Urbicus—a man who, we are told, surpassed Cicero in eloquence and Cato in integrity—to prepare a royal letter embodying these concessions, which of course must have included the repeal of the civil disabilities of the vanquished party. The absolute honesty of Urbicus did not prevent him from so wording the decree that even the excepted cases were included in the amnesty, a difference which we must suppose that Theodoric’s imperfect knowledge of Latin prevented him from observing.

After the interview was ended, Theodoric called Epiphanius aside to express to him the sorrow with which he beheld the desolate state of Italy after the war, weeds and thorns filling all the fields, and especially ‘that mother of the human harvest, Liguria, which used to rejoice in her numerous progeny of husbandmen’, now robbed of her children, and lying, through vast spaces of her territory, untouched by the plough, and with her vines trailing in the dust. All this was the work of the Burgundians, who, after the foray mentioned in the preceding chapter, had carried back great numbers of the Ligurians captives across the Alps. Theodoric, however, had gold, and would willingly unlock his stores for their ransoming, if Epiphanius, whose pleading voice none could resist, would himself intercede with Gundobad for their restoration.

Epiphanius with tears of joy welcomed the commission conferred upon him by his prince. He could not help acknowledging how much the new sovereign surpassed the previous emperors, the rulers of his own race, not only in justice and in warlike deeds, but in pity for the sufferings of his people. They had too often carried, or suffered the people to be carried, captive, whereas he was bent on redeeming them. If Victor, Bishop of Turin, might be joined with Epiphanius in the commission, he felt that he could safely answer for the result. The King assented, and 'the awful pontiff,' having said farewell and received the money for the ransom, departed upon his mission. It was the month of March; the Alpine passes were of course still covered with snow; but the brave old man faced the hardships of the road as cheerfully as when, twenty years before, he set forth upon his celebrated embassy to Euric. 'Not once' we are told, 'did his feet slip upon the frozen snow, whose soul was founded upon the Rock.' He was so intent on fulfilling his mission that he tolerated with impatience even the halts for refreshment, and when his companions were appalled at the difficulties of the way, he alone knew no fear. At the fame of his approach, young and old, men and women, flocked from distant hamlets to get a sight of the venerable peace-maker. They brought with them generous offerings of food for the travellers. Epiphanius and his companions accepted what was absolutely necessary for their own wants, but bestowed the greater part on the poor of the district. As one of those companions was Ennodius himself, the biographer of the Saint, we have the satisfaction of knowing that every incident characteristic of life and manners in the story of this legation is from the pen not only of a contemporary, but of an eye-witness.

When the deputation reached Lyons, Rusticus, the successor of Bishop Patiens, and a man who had always served the interests of the Church, when still an official of the State and not a bishop, came forth to meet them, and gave them a sketch of the crafty character of the King, which put Epiphanius on his guard and caused him to rehearse the speech which he was about to deliver before him.

When, however, King Gundobad heard of the Bishop's approach he at once said to his servants, 'That is a man whose character and whose countenance I have ever associated with those of the blessed martyr St. Laurence; enquire when he is willing to see me, and invite him accordingly'.

The day of audience came. The courtiers flocked in crowds to see the man whose eloquence had conquered so many conquerors. Victor was invited to commence the proceedings, but he courteously threw off upon his companion the weight of the harangue.

'Most worthy Sovereign,' said Epiphanius, 'only an unutterable love for you has forced me thus to wage war upon time and nature, to dare the perils of the avalanche, to thread my way through forests paved with snow, to leave my foot-prints on the ice-fields, where even the foot is clasped by the all-binding frost. But when I see two excellent kings thus situated, one asking what the other has not yet granted, how can I refrain from setting before them the testimony of the heavenly word, "It is more blessed to give than to receive". Divide this promise between you; weigh it out in equal scales; nay, rather do thou press in and claim more than the half of it for thyself, by letting the captives whom he wishes to redeem, go forth free of charge. Despise the ransom-money which he offers, and which he has sent by me. That money, if scorned, will make thine armies wealthy; if accepted, it will make them beggars.

'Hear, oh King, the words of that Italy for whom you once fought. "How often," she says, "did you on my behalf oppose your mailed breast to the enemy! How often did you toil in counsel that I might be kept free from invasion, that my sons might not be carried captive, whom now you have carried captive yourself!" Even when they were being dragged from their homes, the matron, wringing those helpless hands that were chained to her neck, thought of thee as one who would avenge her. The fair young girl, struggling to preserve her honour, thought of thee as one who would applaud her victory. The simple husbandmen, those hardy

children of the soil, accustomed to ply the heavy mattock, now, when their necks were tied together with thongs and their hands were bound in manacles, said, "Are not you our Burgundians? See to it, how you shall answer for this before your pious King. How often have the hands which you presume to bind, paid tribute to your lord and ours! We know right well that he never ordered these wicked deeds." Yea, many and many a one had to pay for his confidence in thee with his life, being struck down for some too haughty word to his captors.

'Oh! restore these honest hearts to their country; then will they still be thine. Fill that Liguria, which thou knowest so well, with happy cultivators, and empty her of thorns and thistles. So may a long succession of thy sons stand at the helm of the Burgundian state, and thou live again in their glories. It is not strangers who ask this of thee. The lord of Italy is joined to thee now by the tie of kindred : let the wedding-gift to Sigismund's bride be the freedom of the captives; the wedding-gift of thy son to her and to Christ.' Having thus spoken he and Victor arose and went to the King, laid their heads upon his breast, and wept.

The reply of Gundobad, who was, we are told, 'wealthy in speech and rich in all the resources of eloquence,' practically amounted to an enunciation of the maxim of modern Gaul, '*À la guerre comme à la guerre*'. 'It might suit this bright Christian star to inculcate the law of kindness towards an adversary, and of moderation even in warfare, but the statesman had to remember the quite different maxims by which the world is governed. The rule of warriors is, that everything which is not lawful in peace becomes lawful in war. Your business is to cut up your adversary's power root by root, and so gradually detach him from his kingdom. This had Gundobad done to his adversary. He had repaid him scorn for scorn; when mocked with the semblance of a treaty, he had forced his secret opponent to show himself an open foe. Now however, by divine permission, a peace had been established between them, which, he hoped, would be a long-lasting one. If these holy men would return to their homes he would consider what course it might be best to take, for the welfare of his kingdom and the safety of his soul, and would decide upon his answer.'

When the bishops had departed the King called to him his councillor Laconius, a man of high—evidently ERoman—birth, grandson of Consuls, of pure and pious life, one who was always ready to second every kind and generous impulse which he perceived in his sovereign. 'Go,' said the King to him, 'hoist all your sails to the winds. After hearing that holy man Epiphanius, and seeing his tears, I am ready to grant all you desire. Prepare a decree in my name which shall make this bargain as tight as possible. All the Italians who through fear of the Burgundian marauders, under stress of hunger, or by compact on the part of their prince have come hither as captives, shall be at once liberated, free of charge. Those, however, whom our subjects in the ardour of battle carried captive on their own private account, must pay a ransom to their masters, for it would only make future battles more bloody, if the soldier had not a hope of profiting by the ransom of his captives.'

With joyful alacrity Laconius prepared the documents setting forth the royal indulgence and brought them to the Bishop, who embraced the bearer of so precious a gift. Soon the news spread abroad, and you would have thought Gaul was being emptied of its peasants, so great a number flocked from all the cities of Sapaudia to thread the passes of the Alps for their return. Stripped of all exaggeration, the recital of Ennodius testifies that he himself, who was sent by the Bishop to the governors of the fortresses with the orders of release, in one day procured the liberation of 400 captives from Lyons alone, and that in all more than 6000 persons returned to their own land. Apparently the treasure confided by Theodoric to Epiphanius was all needed for the ransom of those who were in private hands, and was even supplemented by the pious offerings of Avitus, bishop of Vienne, and Syagria, a devout lady—possibly a daughter of the slain 'King of Soissons'—who was looked upon as a living treasury for the Church's needs.

A visit to Geneva, to the Burgundian King Godegisel, was needed in order to obtain the same concession from him which had been already granted by his brother of Lyons. Then Epiphanius set forth accompanied by the rejoicing host of his redeemed captives. They went apparently by the way of the Col de Lauteret and the Col de Genève. As they went, the multitude sang hymns of praise to God and the Bishop, who seemed to their excited imaginations another Elijah, just ready to ascend to heaven in a chariot of fire. The Bishop returned to Ticinum in the third month after he had quitted his home.

The mind of Epiphanius, however, was still beset with cares for the fortunes of the restored captives. They had returned as beggars to their native land, and the lot of those who had once held high station among them was especially hard. It seemed as if they were to be still as miserable, but less pitied than when they were in the hand of the enemy. An appeal to Theodoric was the natural remedy; yet Epiphanius would not make that appeal in person, lest it might seem as if he were claiming from the King those thanks, and that distinguished reception, which were the rightful meed of his services in Gaul. He seconded, however, the prayers of the petitioners, and by his letters on their behalf obtained that relief for each which was necessary. The precise mode in which Theodoric helped these returned exiles to stock their farms and recommence the operations of husbandry we are not informed of, interesting as such a detail would have been.

About two years afterwards he again journeyed to Ravenna, to obtain a relief from taxes for his which had suffered, and apparently was still suffering, from a plague of great waters. His admiring biographer thus addresses him in the recollection of that journey: 'Never did thy limbs, though weakened by disease, prove unequal to the task imposed upon them by thy soul. Cold, rains, the Po, fastings, sailings, danger, thunderstorms, the bivouac without a roof on the banks of the river, the doubt of reaching harbour in that inundated land, were all sweet to thy virtue which rejoiced in its triumph over these obstacles'. Arrived at the court of Theodoric, he pleaded with him to show his confidence in the security of his dynasty, by a remission of taxation which would assuredly one day benefit his successors; and said, in words which Theodoric seems to have adopted for his own, 'The peasant's wealth is the wealth of a good ruler'. The King replied that, although the 'immense expenses' of the State made it difficult to forego any part of the revenue, and notwithstanding the necessity of bestowing regular gifts on the Gothic defenders of the kingdom, he would, in testimony of his esteem and gratitude to the petitioner, remit two-thirds of the taxes for the current year. The remaining third must be paid, else would the straitness of the treasury bring about in the end greater evils than those which Epiphanius was now seeking to remove.

With this concession in his hands, the Bishop hastened to return home. He had a suspicion that his end was not far off; a thought which did not occur to any of the multitudes who flocked to visit him. His own presentiment, however, was a true one. The snowy air of Ravenna had prepared the way for a fatal attack of catarrh which seized him on his way home, at Parma. The people of Ticinum saw with consternation the return of their beloved bishop as a dying man. They stood in the forum, whispering and panic-stricken, and thinking that the end of the world was at hand if Epiphanius was to be taken from them. On the seventh day after his entry into Ticinum he died, having on his lips the triumphant song of the wife of Elkanah—'My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, mine horn is exalted in the Lord: because I rejoice in thy salvation.' He died in the fifty-eighth year of his age and the thirtieth of his episcopate: certainly one of the noblest characters of his time, and a man who deserved a better biographer than the one who has fallen to his lot, the wordy and vapid Ennodius.

The death of Epiphanius occurred in the year 497. We retrace our steps one year, to notice a very important event of 496. In that year, at some place unknown, but near the banks of the Rhine, and probably not far from Strasburg, Clovis met the Alamannic hosts in battle.

Both nations were yet heathen, both perhaps equally barbarous. Both had felt the heavy hand of Julian, while the Empire still stood. Both had pressed in, when the Empire could no longer keep them at bay; the Frank, as we have seen, through the woods of Ardennes and across the flat lands of Picardy, to the Seine, to the Loire, and to the Catalaunian plains; while the Alamanni oversprang the too long dreaded *limes*, stormed the camp of the Saalburg on the heights of Taunus, and settled themselves in the lovely land, still crowded with Roman villas and rich with Roman vines, which was watered by the Neckar and the Main, and which sloped down to the right bank of the Middle Rhine. Which now of these two nations was to speak this word of power in the regions of the Ehine? That was the doubtful question which the issue of this day was to decide. Clovis had been intending to cross the Rhine, but the hosts of the Alamanni came upon him, as it seems, unexpectedly and forced a battle on the left bank of the river. He seemed to be overmatched, and the horror of an impending defeat overshadowed the Frankish king. Then, in his despair, he bethought himself of the God of Clotilda. Raising his eyes to heaven he said, 'Oh Jesus Christ, whom Clotilda declares to be the Son of the living God, who art said to give help to those who are in trouble and who trust in thee, I humbly beseech thy succour! I have called on my gods and they are far from my help. If thou wilt deliver me from mine enemies, I will believe in thee, and be baptized in thy name.' At this moment, a sudden change was seen in the fortunes of the Franks. The Alamanni began to waver, they turned, they fled. Their king, according to one account, was slain; and the nation seems to have accepted Clovis as its over-lord.

Clovis hastened back to his queen, and told her the story of his vow. At the Christmas festival, he stood in the white robes of a catechumen in the basilica of Rheims, and heard from the mouth of Saint Remigius the well-known words, 'Bow thy neck in meekness, oh Sicambrian! Adore what thou hast burned, and burn what thou hast adored'.

The mere conversion to Christianity of a Teutonic ruler of a Roman province was an event of comparatively little importance. It was but a question of time, a generation sooner or a generation later, when all the men of this class should renounce their hope of the banquets of Walhalla for an inheritance in the Christian City of God. But that the king of the Franks should be baptized into that form of Christianity which was professed by Clotilda and Remigius, that he should enter into devout and loyal communion with the Catholic Church was an event indeed of worldwide significance, well worthy of the congratulations which it called forth from Pope and Metropolitan, from Anastasius of Rome and from Avitus of Vienne. The title 'Eldest Son of the Church' borne by the kings of France, while she still had kings, perpetuated, to our own day, the remembrance of the rapture with which the hard-pressed and long-suffering Catholics of the Empire greeted the fact that at length force, barbarian force, was coming over to their side. They had been oppressed and trampled upon long enough. Carthaginian Hilderic had cut out the tongues of their confessors. Euric of Toulouse had shut up their churches and turned cattle into their church-yards. But now the young and irresistible conqueror beyond the Loire would redress the balance. Clovis, and his sons, and the nobles who would inevitably follow their example, from above, with the great mass of patient orthodox Roman provincials from below, would yet make an end of the Arian oppression.

In the presence of this new arrangement of forces, with the certainty that henceforth every bishop and every priest throughout Western Europe would be a well-wisher, open or concealed, of the Frankish monarchy, there should undoubtedly have been a close league for mutual defence formed between the four great Arian and Teutonic monarchies, the Visigothic, the Burgundian, the Ostrogothic, and the Vandal. The statesmanlike mind of Theodoric must have perceived this truth. To some extent, as we shall see, he endeavoured to act upon it, but, from one cause or another, with no great persistency or success. Both he and his Burgundian kinsman belonged to the class of tolerant Arians: in fact, Gundobad seemed at times more than

half ready to turn Catholic himself. Possibly they felt themselves out of sympathy with the narrower and bitterer Arianism which reigned at the courts of Toulouse and Carthage. And, what was of more importance, diplomatists were wanting to them. Precisely the very men who would in any other matter have acted as their skilful and eloquent representatives, travelling like Epiphanius from court to court, and bringing the barbarian sovereigns to understand each other, to sink their petty grievances, and to work together harmoniously for one common end, precisely these men were the Catholic prelates of the Mediterranean lands to whom it was all-important that no such Arian league should be formed. It has been forcibly pointed out by a historian of the Burgundians that, whereas all over the Roman world there was a serried array of Catholic bishops and presbyters, taking their orders from a single centre, Rome, feeling the interests of each one to be the interests of all, in lively and constant intercourse with one another, quick to discover, quick to disclose the slightest weak place in the organization of the new heretical kingdoms, of all this there was not the slightest trace on the other side. The Arian bishops took their fill of court favour and influence while it lasted, but made no provision for the future. They stood apart from one another in stupid and ignorant isolation. Untouched apparently by the great Augustinian thought of the world-encompassing City of God, they tended more and more to form local, tribal Churches, one for the Visigoths, another for the Vandals, another for the Burgundians. And thus in the end the fable of the loosened faggot and the broken sticks was proved true of all the Arian monarchies.

It seemed as if the first to fall would be the kingdom of the Burgundians. In the autumn of 499, Gundobad was aware that his younger brother, Godegisel of Geneva, was engaged in a treacherous correspondence with Clovis, the object of which was the expulsion of Gundobad, and the elevation of Godegisel as sole king of the Burgundians, probably on condition of ceding some territory to his Frankish ally. Sorely perplexed and doubtful of the result, he was, as has been said, almost prepared to avert the blow by himself joining the Catholic Church. The two leading bishops in his dominions—Stephen of Lyons and Avitus of Vienne—besought him to convoke his prelates to a conference, at which they might by disputation establish the Catholic verity. Could the King have seen the letter written three years before by Avitus to congratulate Clovis on his conversion, the letter in which he speaks of Gundobad as ‘king indeed of his own people but your dependant,’ and declares, ‘we are affected by your good-fortune; whensoever you fight, we conquer’ he might have been less disposed than he was to maintain friendly relations with this eloquent and brilliant prelate but secret enemy of his crown and people. As it was, he said to the bishops, with some force of argument, ‘If your faith is the true one, why do not your colleagues prevent the King of the Franks from declaring war against me, and leaguings himself with my enemies? Where a man covets that which belongs to another, there is no true faith’. Avitus cautiously replied, ‘I know not why the King of the Franks should do this; but I know that the Scripture says that states often come to ruin because they will not obey the law of God. Turn with your people to that law, and you will have peace’. Not in this sentence only, but throughout this curious colloquy, there ran an under-current of assurance, that if Gundobad would reconcile himself to the Church, the Church would guarantee his safety from the attacks of Clovis. The King on this occasion replied with some heat, ‘How? Do I not recognise the law of God? But I will not worship three Gods!’

However, the bishops obtained their request: and it was fixed that a public disputation should take place at Lyons on the festival of St. Justus (2nd September, 499); the same festival, half-religious, half-popular, of which Sidonius gives so lively an account in connection with his epigram on towel. The King only stipulated that the discussion should not take place before a large assembly of the people lest there should be a breach of the peace.

The debate, which lasted two days, took the usual course of such disputations where neither party can enter, or wishes to enter, in the slightest degree into the difficulties and the

convictions of its opponent, but each is simply bent on shouting its own shibboleth. Avitus made a long speech, Ciceronian in its style, proving the Athanasian Creed out of Holy Scripture. Boniface, the Arian champion, replied with the taunt of polytheism, to which already the King's words had given the cue. Next day Aredius, a high functionary of the Court and a Catholic, met the bishops of his party and besought them to discontinue the discussion, which was only embittering religious hatred, and was, besides, disagreeable to the King. They looked upon him as a lukewarm and timeserving believer, and refused to take his advice. The King renewed his complaints of the hostile machinations of Clovis, and now for the first time mentioned the dreaded defection of his brother. The bishops answered, that if Gundobad would only turn Catholic it would be easy to arrange an alliance with Clovis. They then proceeded to reply to the charge of polytheism. Boniface, who is represented as vanquished in the argument, could only shriek out his invectives against the worshippers of three Gods, till he had shouted himself hoarse. Then the orthodox bishops proposed an appeal to miracle. Both parties should repair to the grave of St. Justus, and ask the saint which confession of faith was the true one, and a voice from the grave should decide the question. The Arians replied that such a course would be as displeasing to God as Saul's attempt to raise Samuel from the tomb, and that they for their part would rest their case on nothing else than the appeal to Holy Scripture.

Thus the *Collatio Episcoporum* broke up. Nothing had been accomplished by it. Gundobad had not been persuaded, perhaps had not seen, among his own chief nobles, sufficient pliability of faith to make him venture on declaring himself a convert. He, however, took Stephen and Avitus into his inner chamber, embraced them, and begged them to pray for him. As they left him they meditated on the words 'No man can come unto Me, unless the Father which hath sent Me draw him.' Politically, there was nothing left but for the Arian and Athanasian to fight it out on the soil of Burgundy.

Early in the year 500 the storm broke. Gundobad, who had perhaps marched northwards in order to anticipate the junction of the two armies, was met by Clovis, and seems to have shut himself up in the strong *Castrum Divionense*. This place, the modern Dijon, now made memorable to the traveller by the exquisite tombs of Jean-sans-Peur and Philippe-le-Bon, almost the last rulers of a separate Burgundy, was then an *urbs quadrata*, showing still to the barbarians what was the likeness of a camp-city of the Romans. The wall, strengthened with thirty-three towers, which surrounded the city, was thirty feet high, and, as we are told, fifteen feet thick. Large hewn stones formed the foundation and the lower courses, but the upper portions were built of smaller stones, probably of what we call rubble masonry. A stream, which to some extent added to the strength of the camp, flowed in under a bridge at the northern gate, traversed the city, and emerged from it at the southern gateway. Here, apparently, Gundobad made his stand—his unsuccessful stand. The Frankish host, aided by the men of Geneva, overcame the Burgundians of Lyons. Gundobad fled to Avignon, on the very southernmost border of his dominions, and there, clinging perhaps to the protection of his Visigothic neighbour, he remained for some months in obscurity.

Godegisel and his Frankish ally marched through the length and breadth of the kingdom, and the younger brother dreamed that he had reunited the whole of the dwellings of his people under his own sway. Discontent, however, was working beneath the surface; and, possibly on the departure northward of Clovis and his host, it broke out. Gundobad with a few followers, whose number daily augmented, crept cautiously up the valley of the Rhone, and at length, appearing before his old capital Vienne, besieged his brother therein. Godegisel, whose supply of provisions was small, ordered all the poorer inhabitants to be expelled from the town. Among them was an ingenious man, a Roman doubtless by birth, who had had the charge of the chief aqueduct of Vienne. Going to the tent of Gundobad he confided to him the existence of a certain ventilation hole, by which troops could be introduced through this aqueduct into

the heart of the city. Gundobad followed the engineer's advice. He himself headed the detachment of troops which went through the aqueduct; and in a few hours Vienne was his own again. With his own hand he slew the treacherous Godegisel, and, we are told, 'put to death, with many and exquisite torments, the senators [no doubt Roman nobles] and Burgundians who had been on his side.' The Frankish troops, which had been left to guard the newly-erected throne, he did not dare either to keep, or to dismiss to their homes. He accordingly sent them to his ally, the King of the Visigoths, who kept them for some time in honourable captivity at Toulouse.

The inactivity of Clovis during these later events, by which the whole fruits of the victory of Dijon were wrested from him, is left quite unexplained in the meagre annals of the time. There is some slight indication of Visigothic influence having been thrown on the side of Gundobad: but, though we have no evidence to adduce in support of it, we can hardly repress the conjecture that Theodoric, the father-in-law of Sigismund, heir of the Burgundian kingship, Theodoric, who from the provinces of Raetia and Liguria could, when summer was advanced, so dangerously operate on the flank of an army of Clovis descending the Rhone valley, must have been the real counterpoise to the Franks in the year 400, during Gundobad's war of Restoration. Whatever the cause, the restored King, who now wielded the whole might of the Burgundian nation, and was more powerful than any of his predecessors, was during the remaining sixteen years of his reign left unmolested by the Frank; nay even, as we shall see, was invited to join in the schemes of Frankish conquest, though on terms of partnership not unlike those which the Horse accepted from the Man, in the old fable.

In the early years of the new century, probably about 503 or 504, Clovis was again at war with his old enemies, the Alamanni. As the Frankish historian, Gregory, is silent about this campaign, we can only speak conjecturally as to its causes and its course. We can see, however, that king and people revolted against their Frankish overlord, that there were hints of treachery and broken faith, that Clovis moved his army into their territories and won a victory, much more decisive, though less famous, than that of 496. This time the angry King would make no such easy terms as he had done before. From their pleasant dwellings by the Main and the Neckar, from all the valley of the Middle Rhine, the terrified Alamanni were forced to flee. Their place was taken by Frankish settlers, from whom all this district received in the Middle Ages the name of the Duchy of Francia, or, at a rather later date, that of the Circle of Franconia.

The Alamanni, with their wives and children, a broken and dispirited host, moved southward to the shores of the Lake of Constance, and entered the old Roman province of Raetia. Here they were on what was held to be, in a sense, Italian ground; and the arm of Theodoric, as ruler of Italy, as successor to the Emperors of the West, was stretched forth to protect them. Clovis would fain have pursued them, would perhaps have blotted out the name of Alamanni from the earth. But Theodoric addressed a letter to his victorious kinsman, in which, while congratulating him on having aroused the long dormant energies of his people, and won by their means a triumph over the fierce nation of the Alamanni, having slain some and forced others humbly to beg for life, he warned him not to push his victory too far. 'Hear,' said he, 'the advice of one who has had much experience in matters of this nature. Those wars of mine have had a successful issue, over the ending of which, moderation has presided.' Throughout the letter the tone is hardly so much of advice as of command, to the Frankish conqueror, to pursue his ruined foe no further.

The Alamanni gladly accepted the offered protection and dominion of Theodoric. The king of the Ostrogoths became their king, and they, still in their old heathen wildness, became his subjects, conforming themselves doubtless but imperfectly to the maxims of the Roman *civilitas*, but, for one generation at least, leaving the mountain-passes untraversed, and doing

rough garrison duty for their king, between the Alps and the Danube. Eastern Switzerland, Western Tyrol, Southern Baden and Wurtemberg, and Southwestern Bavaria probably formed this new Alamannis, which will figure in later history as the *Ducatus Alamanniae* or the Circle of Swabia.

The next stroke from the heavy hand of Clovis fell upon the Visigothic kingdom, and it was a crushign one. In the year 507 the Frankish King announced to his warriors, possibly when they were all assembled at the Field of Mars, 'I take it very ill that these Arians should hold so large a part of Gaul. Let us go and overcome them with God's help, and bring their land under our rule.' These abrupt denunciations of war have not unfrequently been resorted to by Frankish sovereigns. We heard one of them in our own day, when, at the New Year's festivity of 1859, the Emperor of the French suddenly informed a startled Europe that his relations with his brother of Austria were not as good as he could desire.

In this case, rapid as was the action of Clovis, there was apparently time for a brief and lively interchange of correspondence between Italy Gaul. Theodoric, hearing of the threatened outbreak of hostilities, employed the pen of his eloquent Quaestor Cassiodorus to compose a series of letters, to all the chief persons concerned, to Alaric, to Clovis, to Gundobad, nay, even to the semi-barbarous kings of the tribes still tarrying in Germany, the Heruli, the Warni, the Thuringians, in order to avert by all possible means the dreaded encounter.

To his Visigothic son-in-law Theodoric uttered His letter a note of warning: 'Strong though you are in your own valour and in the remembrance of the great deeds of your forefathers, by whom even the mighty Attila was humbled, yet since your people's strength and aptitude for war may, by long peace, have been somewhat impaired, do not put everything to the hazard of a single action. It is only constant practice which can make the actual shock of battle seem anything but terrible to man. Let not, then, your indignation at the conduct of Clovis blind you to the real interests of your nation. Wait till I can send ambassadors to the King of the Franks, and till I have endeavoured to make peace between two princes, both so nearly allied to me, one my brother and the other my son, by marriage.' To 'his brother Gundobad' Theodoric expressed his regrets that 'the royal youths' should thus rage against one another, his desire that they might listen to the counsels of reverend age, as represented by himself and Gundobad, and his proposal that a joint embassy from the three nations (Ostrogoths, Visigoths, and Burgundians) should be addressed to Clovis, in order to reestablish peace between him and Alaric. The German chieftains, he reminded of the benefits and the protection which they, in past times, had received from Euric, the father of the now menaced prince. He expressed his conviction that this lawless aggression threatened equally every throne of a neighbour to Clovis, and begged them to join their ambassadors to his, in a summons to the Frankish King to desist from the attack on the Visigoths, to seek redress for his alleged wrongs from the law of nations [but where were the courts then, or where are they now, in which that law is administered?]; if he would not obey these counsels, then to prepare himself for the combined onset of them all.

The letter to 'Luduin' (as Theodoric, or Cassiodorus, styles the King of the Franks) reiterates the same thoughts, dwells on the miseries which war inflicts upon the nations, declares that it is the act of a hot-headed man to get his troops ready for war at the very first embassy, and urges, almost commands, the Frank to accept his mediation. The letter contains the following passage, which certainly went far to pledge Theodoric to armed championship of his son-in-law: 'Throw away the sword, ye who wish to draw it for *my disgrace*. It is in my right as a father, as a friend, that I thus threaten you, He who shall suppose that such monitions as ours can be treated with contempt—a thing which we do not anticipate—will find that he has to deal with us and our friends, as his adversaries.'

Yet, in spite of all this correspondence and all these embassies, directed by one who had been a man of war from his youth, and who had a true statesman's eye to the necessities of the position, Alaric the Visigoth stood alone, and fell unaided. The Franks crossed the Loire; directed their march to Poitou : at the Campus Vogladensis, ten miles from Poitiers, the two armies met. Alaric would have played a waiting game, trusting to the eventual arrival of succours from his father-in-law; but the ignorant impetuosity of his troops, who vaunted that they were at least the equals in arms of the Franks, forced him to accept the offered battle. Alaric fell, slain, it seems, by the hand of Clovis himself. His troops fled from the field of hopeless rout. Amalaric, the grandson of Theodoric, and the only legitimate child of the late King, was hurried away to Spain by his guardians. A few cities still held out for the Visigoths, but almost everywhere, from the Loire to the Pyrenees, the Frank roamed supreme. The religious fervour of Clovis was satisfied. That pious monarch would no longer be chagrined by seeing so large a part of Gaul in the hands of the Arians.

What was the cause of this sudden collapse of the great Arian confederacy and of Theodoric's entire failure to redeem his pledge, by championing his son-in-law? It seems probable that it is to be sought in the unexpected defection of Gundobad, who did not even remain neutral in the conflict, but positively allied himself with the Frankish invader. The reasons for this change of attitude are not fully known to us. Ever since the *Collatio Episcoporum*, Gundobad had been on increasingly friendly terms with the Catholic Episcopate, especially with the courtly Avitus. His first-born Sigismund, perhaps both his sons, had formally joined the Catholic communion. Some of the courtiers had followed their example. Gundobad himself, though to the day of his death he refused to abjure the faith of his forefathers, showed a willingness to do everything for the creed of his Roman subjects, except to make that one ignominious confession of hereditary error. He might perhaps also allege that in the catastrophe of 500 he had been left to fight his battles alone, and that he was under no obligation, for Alaric's sake, a second time to see the terrible Sicambrian devastating the Rhone-lands. Whatever the cause, it is clear that Burgundia went with Francia against Vesegothia in the fatal campaign; and it is highly probable that Theodoric did not know that this was to be her attitude till the very eve of the contest, and when it was too late for him to take measures for forcing his way past the territories of a hostile nation to the relief of his son-in-law.

At the death of Alaric the situation was further complicated by a division in the Visigothic camp. The child Amalaric, now a refugee in Spain, was, as has been said, the only legitimate representative of the fallen king. But Alaric had left a bastard son named Gesalic, now in early manhood, who, according to the lax notions about succession prevalent among the Teutonic peoples, might fairly aspire to the kingdom, if he could make good his claim by success. He appears, however, to have been but a feeble representative of his valiant forefathers. He lost Narbonne to Gundobad, and after a disgraceful rout, in which many of the Visigoths perished, he fled to Barcelona, whence, after four years of a shadowy reign, he was eventually expelled by the generals of Theodoric.

The great city of Arles, once the Roman capital of Gaul, maintained a gallant defence against the united Franks and Burgundians, and saved for generations the Visigothic rule in Provence and Southern Languedoc. Of the siege, which lasted apparently from 508 to 510, we have some graphic details in the life of St. Caesarius, Bishop of Arles, written by his disciples. This saint, who was born in Burgundian Gaul, had for years lain under suspicion of being discontented with the Gothic yoke, and had spent some time in exile at Bordeaux under a charge of treason. Released, and permitted to return to his diocese, he was busying himself in the erection of a convent, where holy women were to reside under the presidency of his sister Caesaria, when the Franks and Burgundians came swarming around the city; and the half-

finished edifice, which was apparently outside the walls, was destroyed by the ferocity of the barbarians.

The siege dragged on and became a blockade. A young ecclesiastic, struck with fear of captivity and full of youthful fickleness, let himself down the wall by a rope, and gave himself up to the besiegers. Not unreasonably the old suspicions as to the loyalty of Caesarius revived. The Goths, and the Jews, who sided with the Goths, surrounded the church, clamouring that the Bishop had sent the deserter, on purpose to betray them to the enemy. 'There was no proof,' say his biographers, 'no regard to the stainless record of his past life. Jews and heretics crowded the precincts of the church, shouting out "Drag forth the Bishop! Let him be kept under strictest guard in the palace!" Their object was that he should either be drowned in the Rhone, or at least immured in the fort of Ugernum [one of the castles by the river, not far from Arles], till by hardship and exile his life was worn away. Meanwhile his church and his chamber were given up to be occupied by the Arians. One of the Goths, in spite of the remonstrances of his comrades, dared to sleep in the saint's bed, but was smitten by the judgment of God, and died the next day.

'A cutter (*dromo*) was then brought, and the holy man was placed in it that he might be towed up [to the above-named castle] past the lines of the besiegers. But as, by divine interposition, they were unable to move the ship, though tugging it from either shore, they brought him back to the palace, and there kept him in such utter seclusion that none of the Catholics knew whether he was dead or alive.

At length however there came a change. A certain Jew tied a letter to a stone and tried to fling it to the besiegers. In it he offered to betray the city to them on condition that the lives, freedom, and property of all the Jews were spared; and he indicated the precise spot in the walls, to which the besiegers were to apply their ladders. Fortunately, next day the enemy did not come so near the walls as usual. Hence the fateful letter was found, not by the Burgundians, but by the Goths, and thus the selfish cruelty of the Jews, hateful both to God and man, was exposed. Then was our Daniel, St. Caesarius, drawn up from the den of lions, and the Jews his accusers, like the satraps of Darius, were sent to take his place.'

The brave defence of Arles enabled Theodoric still to intervene to save the remnants of the Visigothic monarchy in Gaul. This he could doubtless do with the more success now that the embarrassing claim of Gesalic was swept away. In the spring of the year 508 he put forth a stirring proclamation to his people, prepared by Cassiodorus. 'We need but hint to our faithful Goths that a contest is at hand, since warlike race like ours rejoices at the thought of the strife. In the quiet times of peace, merit has no chance of showing itself, but now the day for its discovery draws nigh. With God's help, and for the common good, we have decided on an invasion of Gaul. We send round our faithful Saio, Nandius, to warn you to come in God's name fully prepared for our expedition, in the accustomed manner, with arms, horses, and all things necessary for the battle, on the 24th of June'.

The Ostrogothic army advanced to the relief of the courageous garrison of Arles. Conspicuous among the generals, perhaps chief in command, was Tulum, who had recently shown in the war of Sirmium that a Gothic lord of the bedchamber could deal as heavy blows as any trained soldier among the Byzantines or the Huns. The possession of the covered bridge which connected Arles with the east bank of the Rhone was fiercely contested, and in the battles fought for its capture and recapture, Tulum showed great personal courage, and received many honourable wounds.

But the united armies of Franks and Burgundians required much defeating ; and still the siege of Arles was not raised, though its stringency may have been somewhat abated, and though all Provence to the eastward of the city was probably secured to Theodoric.

We have reason to believe that in the next year a bold and clever stroke of strategy was executed by the Ostrogoths. An army under Duke Mammo seems to have mounted the valley of the Dora-Susa, crossed the Alps near Briançon, and descended into the valley of the Durance, plundering the country as they proceeded. They thus threatened to take the Burgundians in rear as well as in front, and put them under strong compulsion to return to defend their homes, in the region which we now know as Dauphiné.

The decisive battle was perhaps not delivered till the early part of 510. Then the Goths under Count Ibbas completely routed the united armies of the Franks and Burgundians. If we may believe the boastful bulletin transcribed by Jordanes, more than 30,000 Franks lay dead upon the field. Certainly many captives were taken by the united forces of the Visigoths and Ostrogoths, since all the churches and houses of Arles were filled with their unkempt multitudes. St. Caesarius gladly devoted the proceeds of the communion-plate, which he sold, to the redemption of some of these captives; and when cavillers objected to so uncanonical a proceeding, he replied that it was better that the communion should be celebrated in delf, than that a fellow-man should remain in bondage one hour longer than was necessary.

To complete the history of the good prelate, it may be mentioned that some years later the cry of disloyalty was again raised against him, and he was taken to Ravenna, under a guard of soldiers, to give account of himself to his new sovereign, Theodoric. As soon as the King saw the firm and venerable countenance of the Bishop, he seems to have instinctively felt that this was a man to be conciliated, not intimidated. He rose from his seat to greet him, doffed his crown to do him reverence, asked him concerning the toils of his journey, and affectionately enquired what tidings he could give him of the people of Arles, and what, of his own Goths who were garrisoning it. As soon as Caesarius had left the royal presence, Theodoric, we are told, imprecated woe on the malicious accusers, who had caused a man of such evident holiness to be annoyed by so long and so needless a journey.

‘When he entered to salute me,’ the King is said to have exclaimed, ‘my whole frame trembled. I felt that I was looking on an angelical countenance, on a truly apostolic man. I hold it impiety to harbour a thought of evil concerning so venerable a person.’

After the interview the King sent to the saint a silver dish weighing 60lbs., together with 300 golden solidi (£180), entreating him to use the salver daily and to remember his son Theodoric who had presented it. The saint, who never had an article of silver on his table except an egg-spoon, at once sold the dish (which would probably be worth 240 solidi, or £144) and applied the proceeds to his favourite charity, the liberation of captives. Mischief-makers informed the King that they had seen his present exposed for sale in the market; but when he learned the purpose to which Caesarius was applying the proceeds, he expressed such admiration of the virtues of the saint, that all his courtiers followed suit and repaired to the Bishop’s dwelling to shake him by the hand. But already the crowd of poor sufferers, in his oratory and in the atrium of his lodgings, was so great that his wealthier admirers found it no easy matter to gain entrance to his presence.

The result of the battle of Arles was to put Theodoric in secure possession of all Provence, and of so much of Languedoc as was needful to ensure his access to Spain, whither, peace having been concluded with Clovis and Gundobad, Ibbas and the Ostrogothic army now marched, to cut up by the roots the usurped dominion of Gesalic. That feeble pretender was soon driven forth from his capital, Barcelona, and wandered, an exile, to the Court of Thrasamund the Vandal, Theodoric’s brother-in-law. Notwithstanding this tie of kindred with his pursuer, Thrasamund received the fugitive kindly, and enabled him to return to Gaul, having provided him with large sums of money, with which he enlisted followers and disturbed the peace of the Gothic provinces. Theodoric upon this wrote a sharp rebuke to his brother-in-law, telling him among other things that he was certain he could not have sought the counsel of

his wife; the wise and noble Amalafrida, before taking a step so fatal to all friendly relations between the two kingdoms. The Vandal King frankly confessed his fault, and sent ambassadors with large presents, apparently of gold plate, to soothe the anger of his brother-in-law. Theodoric cordially accepted the apology, but not the presents, saying that, after reading the words of Thrasamund, it was sweeter to give back his presents than to receive costly gifts from any other sovereign.

As for Gesalic, weak and cowardly intriguer, his attempted rebellion was again with ease suppressed. After a year spent in troubling the peace of Gaul he returned to Spain, was defeated by Ibbas in a pitched battle twelve miles from Barcelona, again took flight—this time for Burgundy—was captured a little north of the river Durance, and was put to death by his captors.

After the overthrow of the Visigothic kingdom, Clovis received from the Emperor Anastasius letters bestowing on him the dignity of Roman Consul. In the church of St. Martin at Tours, he appeared clothed in purple tunic and mantle, the dress of a Roman and of a sovereign, and with the diadem on his head. Then, mounting his horse at the door of the atrium of the church, he rode slowly through the streets to the cathedral, scattering gold and silver coins as he went, and saluted by the people (the Roman provincials doubtless) with shouts of ‘Chlodovechus Consul! Chlodovechus Consul!’

After having murdered the rest of the Salian and Ripuarian princes in Gaul, and left himself in a solitude which he sometimes affected to deplore, (but this was only in the hope of tempting any forgotten kinsman who might be lingering in obscurity, to come forth and meet the knife of the assassin), Clovis, the eldest son of the Church, died at Paris in the forty-fifth year of his age and the thirtieth of his reign, and was buried in the Basilica of the Holy Apostles, which had been reared by him and Clotilda. Already, in the founder of the Merovingian family, we see indications of that shortness of life which was to be so remarkable a characteristic of its later generations. At his death his kingdom was divided between his four sons, Theodoric, Chlodomir, Childebert, and Chlolochar. The three last only were sons of Clotilda.

For the rest of his reign, Theodoric the Amal ruled Spain and Visigothic Gaul as protector of his grandson Amalaric, but in his own name, and with power nearly as uncontrolled as that which he exercised in Italy itself. The chief limitation to that power consisted in the great influence wielded by Theudis, an Ostrogoth whom he had appointed guardian of Amalaric, perhaps *Praefectus Praetorio* of Spain. Theudis married a wealthy Spanish lady, surrounded himself with a body-guard of 2000 men, and affected some of the state of independent royalty. There was no open breach between him and his master, but when, towards the end of his reign, Theodoric invited the too powerful minister to visit him at Ravenna, Theudis, who was doubtful as to the return journey, ventured to refuse obedience to the summons, and Theodoric did not consider it prudent to enforce it. The aged king probably knew that he was not transmitting a perfectly safe inheritance to his Visigothic grandson.

We return to contemplate the declining fortunes of the Burgundian monarchy. Gundobad had certainly reaped little benefit from his desertion of the Arian confederacy and his alliance with Clovis. He had quite failed to secure the coveted lands at the mouths of the Rhone : he had even, it would seem, lost Avignon, though he may have gained the less important city of Viviers (Alba Augusta) in exchange. A strong chain of Ostrogothic fortresses barred the passage of the boundary river, the Durance, and he was now cooped up between two mighty neighbours, one of whom ruled from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, and the other from the Danube to Gibraltar. Whether the mutual relations of these two states were friendly or hostile, he was but too likely to come to ruin between them.

However, Gundobad died in peace in the year 516, having outlived Clovis five years; and was succeeded by his son Sigismund, son-in-law of Theodoric, and a convert to the Catholic faith. The new king, a man of an unstable hysterical temperament, left scarcely a fault uncommitted which could hasten the downfall of his throne. After alienating, probably, the affections of his Burgundian warriors by abjuring the faith of his forefathers, he lost the hearty good-will of the Catholics by engaging in a quarrel with their bishops, on account of their excommunication of his chief treasurer for marrying his deceased wife's sister. The resolute attitude maintained by the bishops, who put 'the most excellent king' in a kind of spiritual quarantine till he should come to a better mind, coupled with an opportune attack of fever, brought Sigismund to his knees in abject surrender, and he was reconciled to the Church, but doubtless with some loss of royal dignity.

The natural ally of the Burgundian against his too powerful neighbour the Frank, was evidently the Ostrogothic King. Instead of recognising this fact, Sigismund exhausted the vocabulary of servitude in grovelling self-prostration before the Emperor Anastasius, a sovereign whose power was too remote from the scene of action to be of the slightest service to him, when the time of trial should come. At the same time, he irrevocably alienated Theodoric by a domestic crime, which reminds us of the family history of another distinguished convert, Constantine, and, perhaps with less justice, of a passage in the life of another pillar of orthodoxy, Philip II of Spain. The daughter of Theodoric had borne to Sigismund a son who was named Segeric. This youth contemplated, we are told, his eventual accession to both thrones, the Burgundian and the Ostrogothic, and, though we have no reason for asserting that his maternal grandfather designed to make him his heir, such a union of the kingdoms would have had much to recommend it to the statesmanlike mind of Theodoric. But Sigismund, after the death of his Amal wife, had married again. His second wife, a woman not of noble birth, but of orthodox creed, inflamed the fathers jealousy against his son, who had flouted her as unworthy to wear the clothes of her late mistress, and whom she accused of not being willing to wait the ordinary course of nature for the succession to his inheritance. The wretched Sigismund listened the poisonous insinuation, and, without giving his son an opportunity of justifying himself, cut him off by a coward's stroke. One day when Segeric was flustered with wine (we remember how Sidonius speaks of the deep potations of the Burgundians), his father advised him to enjoy a siesta after the banquet. Suspecting no evil he fell asleep. Two slaves by the King's command entered the chamber, fastened a cord round his neck, and strangled him.

Scarcely was the foul deed done than it was repented of. The miserable father, finding that his son had been falsely accused, threw himself upon the corpse, and bitterly bewailed the blind folly which had bereft him of his child. Truly, and with Teutonic frankness, did the servant who witnessed his repentance, say, 'It is not he, but His thou, oh King, who needest our pity.' He fled to his beloved monastery at Agaunum, to that spot so well known to the modern traveller, where 'a key unlocks a kingdom,' as the Rhone, between nearly meeting mountain barriers, emerges from Canton Valais into Canton Vaud. Here, in the narrow defile, on the site of the imaginary martyrdom of the 'Theban Legion' (who, with Maurice at their head, were fabled to have gladly suffered martyrdom at the hands of Maximian rather than offer sacrifice to the gods of the Capitol), a house of prayer arose, and was so richly endowed by Sigismund, that it passed, though incorrectly, for his original foundation. In this retreat the King many days of misery, fasting and weeping. Here he ordered a choir to be formed, whose songs were to arise to Heaven night and day, that there might be a ceaseless ascription of prayer and praise to the Most High. One cannot condemn the religious turn which was taken by the bitter self-condemnation of the unhappy Sigismund, even though it induced him to issue the somewhat harsh order for the extrusion of all women and all secular persons from the vicinity of Agaunum. But one may condemn the clouds of adulation which Avitus, at the installation of

the new choir, sent rolling towards the royal murderer from the pulpit of the basilica of Agaunum. He called him 'pious lord,' he praised his devotion, praised his liberality to the Church, regretted that she could find no words adequate to his virtues, but assured him that on that day, by the institution of the perpetual choir, he had surpassed even his own good deeds. And this, to the assassin of his own son, to the man whose conscience was at that very hour tormented by the Furies, the avengers of his child. Not with such poisonous opiates did Ambrose soothe Theodosius, after the massacre of Thessalonica. But then Ambrose had not been always a priest. While administering justice in the Roman praetorium, he had learned, it may be, some lessons of truth and righteousness which gave an increased nobility even to his ecclesiastical career.

The crime of Sieismund, however glossed over by the pulpit eloquence of Avitus, did not wait long for its punishment in this world. In 523, the year following the murder of Segeric, came the crash of a Frankish invasion, more disastrous even than that of 500. Three sons of Clovis joined in it, Chlodimir, Childebert, and Chlotochar (Lothair), incited thereto, according to the story current a century later, by the adjurations of their mother Clotilda, who urged them to revenge the wrongs which her family had suffered from Gundobad, more than thirty years before. We have seen how much reason there is to look with doubt, or even with absolute disbelief, upon this long-credited story. It is true that the one successor of Clovis who was not born to him of Clotilda, Theodoric, king of Metz and lord of the Arverni, took no part in the enterprise; but that abstention is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that his wife Suavegotta was the daughter of Sigismund.

On the other hand, the other and greater Theodoric, (after whom no doubt the son of Clovis was named), enraged at the murder of his grandson, adopted an attitude of something more than friendly neutrality towards his nephews, the Frankish invaders of Burgundia. Procopius, if we could trust his narrative of these distant affairs, draws for us a curious picture of the almost commercial arrangement between Ostrogoths and Franks for an 'invasion on joint account' of the contracting parties. He says, 'Afterwards, the Franks and Goths made an alliance for the injury of the Burgundians, on condition that they should subdue the people and divide their land; the nation which should fail to assist its confederate in the campaign, paying a certain stipulated quantity of gold, but not being shut out from its share in the division of the territory'. He then describes how Theodoric gave instructions to his generals to delay their march, and not enter Burgundian territory till they should hear of the victory of the Franks; and how the weight of the conflict thus fell upon the Franks alone, who gained a hard-fought victory. As they chided their allies, when they at length appeared, for their tardy arrival, the latter pleaded in excuse the difficulty of the Alpine passes. The stipulated amount was paid by them, and Theodoric was admitted to his equal share of the conquered territory, receiving general praise for the dexterity with which he had contrived to secure a large accession of territory, without bloodshed, by the payment of a moderate sum of money.

Whatever may have been the compact which Procopius has thus curiously distorted,—for certainly his account resembles more the transactions between Byzantium and Ctesiphon than the probable arrangements between two warlike Teutonic nations,—it must be admitted that in its immediate result the campaign of 523 was greatly to the advantage of Theodoric. With no hard fighting, he pushed his frontier in the Rhone-lands northwards from the line of the Durance to that of the Drome, thus adding to his dominions all that he did not already possess of Provence, and no inconsiderable portion of Dauphiné besides. The leader of the Ostrogothic army which achieved this bloodless conquest was Tulum, the hero of the campaign of 509 and the valiant succourer of Arles.

Meanwhile Sigismund fought and lost a battle with the Frankish invaders, probably near the northern frontier of his kingdom, fled to his favourite retreat of Agaunum, and was given

up to the enemy by his Burgundian subjects, whose love he had no doubt lost when he slew his son.

All seemed lost, but was not lost yet. As the Frankish hosts were retiring, probably on the approach of winter, Godomar, the younger and more energetic son of Gundobad, collected some troops and assumed the government, probably as a kind son of regent on behalf of his captive brother. That brother with all his family was at once murdered by Chlodimir, with that ruthless indifference to human life which is an especial note of the Merovingian house. Sigismund, his wife, and his two sons were all thrown down a deep well in the neighbourhood of Orleans; and, as some faint justification of the crime, later generations trumped up the story, that after this manner had his father Gundobad dealt by Hilperik, the father of Clotilda, and his sons. But the wicked deed did not avail to stay the reaction against the Franks, and perhaps even strengthened the position of Godomar, the now recognised King of the Burgundians.

The new King by his valour and energy restored for a time the almost desperate fortunes of his people. The Frankish brothers, joined this time by Theodoric of Auvergne, invaded the country. Godomar met them in battle at Véséronce on the Rhone, about thirty miles east of Lyons. Chlodimir was slain by a javelin. The Burgundians, when they saw the long and carefully-tended hair of the dead man, drawn back from his forehead and descending to his shoulders, knew that they had slain a royal Meroving. They cut off the head and exhibited it on a spear-point to the Frankish victorious warriors, who, discouraged by the death of their leader, broke their ranks and fled from the field. The little children of Chlodimir were cruelly murdered by Childebert and Chlotchar, who, intent upon this partition, left his death unavenged and Burgundia in peace.

This then was the condition of affairs in Gaul when Theodoric the Ostrogoth died. The friendly Frankish monarchy of the Visigoths was all but rooted out of the land. That of the Burgundians still lived on, but had been shorn by Theodoric himself of some of its territory in the south, and really awaited but the first vigorous effort from the Franks to crumble into ruin. The dominions of the chief royal house of the Salian Franks, which at the accession of Clovis reached but from Utrecht to Amiens, now touched the Pyrenees at the southwest, and the Main and Neckar in the east. The Thuringians, under their king Hermanfrid, Theodoric's nephew by marriage, were the only power in Germany that seemed to have a chance of maintaining their independence against the Franks, and they too, soon after the death of Theodoric, were to be incorporated with the new world-empire of the Merovingians.

Looking thus over the map of Western Europe at the beginning of the sixth century, is it possible for us not to cast one glance at that country whose chalk cliffs, seen from the shores which owned the sway of Clovis, looked then near and fair as now they look from France when lit up by the sun of a summer morning. Yet this is how the contemporary Procopius speaks of the island of *Brittia*, which can hardly be any other than our Britain. After describing the wall bunt across it by the ancients, which, according to him, ran from north to south, and separated the fruitful and populous east from the barren, serpent-haunted western tract, in which no man could live for an hour, he proceeds to tell a well-known story, which he scarcely likes to repeat, since it sounds like fable, and yet which is attested by such numberless persons who themselves witnessed the strange phenomenon that he does not like entirely to reject it:—

‘The coast of the continent over against *Brittia* is dotted with, villages, in which dwell fishermen, husbandmen, merchants, who serve the kings of the Franks but pay them no tribute, being excused by reason of the service which I am about to describe. They understand that they have it in charge to conduct by turns the souls of the dead to the opposite shore. Those upon whom the service devolves, at nightfall betake themselves to sleep, though waiting their summons. As the night grows old, an unseen hand knocks at their doors, the voice of an unseen person calls them to their toil. Then they spring up from their couches and run to the shore.

They understand not what necessity constrains them thus to act: they know only that they are constrained. At the water's edge they see barks not their own, with no visible passengers on board, yet so deeply loaded that there is not a finger's breadth between the water and the rowlocks. They bend to their oars, and in one hour they reach the island of Brittia, which, in their own barks, they can scarce reach in a night and a day, using both oar and sail. Arrived at the other side, as soon as they understand that the invisible disembarkation has taken place, they return, and now their boats are so lightly laden that only the keel is in the water. They see no form of man sailing with them or leaving the ship, but they hear a voice which seems to call each one of the shadowy passengers by name, to recount the dignities which they once held, and to tell their father's names. And if women are of the party, the voice pronounces the names of the husbands with whom they lived on earth. Such are the appearances which are vouched for by the men who dwell in those parts. But I return to my former narrative.'

So thick was the mist and darkness that had fallen upon the land where Severus died, where Constantine was saluted Imperator, and where Pelagius taught that man was born sinless. And truly, the analogy of that which happens to the spirits of the dead, well describes the change which had come over Britain. Our historians tell us indeed that Anderida fell two years before Theodoric won his kingdom. They conjecture that Eburacum fell during the central years of his reign, and that Cerdic, the pirate ancestor of Queen Victoria, conquered the Isle of Wight, where his descendant now abides in peace, four years after the death of the great Ostrogoth. But to the questions, so intensely interesting to us, how all these things happened, how the struggle was regarded by those engaged in it, what manner of man the Roman Provincial seemed to the Saxon, and the Heathen to the Christian, what were the incidents and what the nature of the strife,—to all of these questions we can scarce obtain more answer than comes back to us from the spirits of those with whom we once shared every thought, but who, summoned by the touch of an unseen hand, have left us for the Land of Silence.

CHAPTER X.

THEODORIC'S RELATIONS WITH THE EAST.

For five-and-twenty years—that is to say, for three-quarters of its whole duration—the reign of Theodoric ran parallel to that of Anastasius, the handsome but elderly officer of the household whom, as we have already seen, the favour of Ariadne, widow of Zeno, raised to the imperial throne. The character of the man who was still, probably, in the view of all the provincial populations, the only legitimate ruler in the lands west of the Euphrates, could not but seriously affect, for good or for evil, the fortunes of Theodoric and of the new realm which he was founding; and, upon the whole, it may be said that the influence exerted upon them by Anastasius was for good.

There are few sovereigns of whom more contradictory characters are given than those which the historians of the period—chiefly ecclesiastical historians—have drawn of Anastasius. Avaricious and generous; base and noble : one who sold the offices of the state to the highest bidder; one who found the custom of so selling them in existence and resolutely suppressed it; a destroyer of the resources of the provinces; a careful cherisher of those resources,—such are some of the contradictory qualities assigned to him in the pages of these writers. Even his personal appearance has not altogether escaped from this perplexing variety of portraiture. While Cedrenus tells us of the lofty stature, the vivid blue eyes, and the white hair of the noble-looking Silentarius, to whom Ariadne gave her hand and the imperial crown, Zonaras declares that his two eyes were of different colours, the left black and the right blue, and that hence he derived his surname of Dicorus.

As to his religious opinions, some authors say (or hint) that he was a Manichean, others an Arian, others an Eutychian,—a set of statements about as consistent with each other as if a modern statesman were represented as at once an Agnostic, an Ultramontane, and a Calvinist. The truth appears to be that Anastasius was not at first an eager partisan of any of the theological fashions (it were giving them too high honour to call them faiths) which distracted the dioceses of the East. He was himself inclined to Eutychianism,—that form of doctrine which exalted the Divinity of Jesus Christ at the expense of his true Humanity; but if I read his actions aright, he wished to reign in that spirit of toleration for all faiths which had been the glory of the reign of Valentinian I more than a century before him, and which was to be the glory of the reign of his great Gothic contemporary Theodoric. Events, however, were too strong for him. Scarcely anything is harder than to preserve perfect fairness and toleration towards men who are themselves intolerant and unfair. Thus, as time went on, Anastasius began to press more heavily on the adherents of Chalcedon than on their opponents. The bishops of that way of thinking began to find themselves driven from their sees, perhaps on insufficient pretences. The mob of Constantinople, sensitive on behalf of the faith of Chalcedon, took the alarm. There were tumults, bloodshed, even armed rebellion. The majesty of the purple was degraded. Anastasius became a partisan, and a partisan of the unpopular cause. Before he died, he, whose chief ambition it had apparently been to serve the state well as a civil ruler, and to let theology take care of itself, had the sad conviction that he was known to most of his subjects only as the hard and bitter persecutor of that form of theology which attracted their ignorant but enthusiastic allegiance.

Hence, no doubt, from the position occupied by this Emperor in Church affairs flow those strangely diverging currents of testimony as to his character which have been commented upon above. We have unfortunately hardly any information as to the civil transactions of his reign from a secular historian. No Priscus, and no Procopius, tells us how the transactions of this Emperor in peace and war were viewed by the statesmen of his day. We have only from the ecclesiastical writers the history of the wild war-dance performed round his venerable figure by monks and priests, archimandrites and patriarchs, some shouting ‘Anathema to the Council of Chalcedon!’ and others ‘Anathema to Eutyches, to Zeno, to Acacius! Away with the men who communicated with Peter the Stammerer! Away with the Manichean Emperor!’. The shriek of the latter, the Chalcedonian party, reaches the ears of posterity in the more piercing tones, because it has in the end won the prize of a character for orthodoxy, but we can also distinguish some notes of the war-cry of its enemies, and they help us in some measure to understand why and how the aged and tolerant Emperor was forced into acts which his calumniators represent as worthy of Herod or Diocletian.

To Anastasius as a financial administrator the historian can, with but little hesitation, assign a high place among the rulers of the Empire. Procopius, who styles him ‘the most provident and most economical of all the Emperors,’ tells us that at his death the imperial treasury contained 320,000 pounds of gold (£14,400,000), all collected during the twenty-seven years of his reign. Yet, at least in one instance, the Emperor had not increased but lessened the weight of taxation on his subjects. This was the case of the tax called Chrysargyron, which had been first imposed, some say, by Constantine, and which seems to have been a licence-tax levied once in four years on all who lived by any kind of trade. From the manner of its collection it pressed with extreme severity on small hucksters and others of the poorest class; and it also seemed to give the State’s sanction to vice, since it was levied upon prostitutes and others who traded only upon immorality. These perhaps paid their Chrysargyron more readily than any other class, feeling that they thereby purchased indemnity for their evil courses. The tax had long been denounced by statesmen and divines, and now (in the year 501) Anastasius determined that it should cease. When he had gone through the form of obtaining the sanction of the Senate to its abolition, he burned in the Circus, in the presence of all the people, the rolls containing the names of the persons liable to the tax. Still, however, as Anastasius well knew, there was one class of men who viewed the abolition with regret. These were the clerks in the office of the Chrysargyron, whose employment, one of the most distinguished in the whole civil service, was taken from them by the reform. Fearing that under his successors the tax might, on the representation of these men, be revived, he took a precaution which, though ingenious, showed some of that not very imperial quality of slyness which we can discern also in his ecclesiastical proceedings, and which partly accounts for the bitterness with which his outwitted theological opponents have persecuted his memory. Inviting the officers who had been charged with the collection of the Chrysargyron to meet him at the palace, he delivered an oration, in which he professed to regret his hasty abolition of the tax, and his rash destruction of the documents connected with it. After all, said he, it was desirable to have some records of the manner of collecting an impost which, at any time, the necessities of the State might compel him to revive. If therefore the worthy numerarii before him had among their private papers any such documents, the Emperor would thank them to bring such papers to him, and would reward them handsomely for doing so. On a given day the revenue officers met the Emperor again. The papers were given up and paid for. ‘Are there any more?’ he asked. ‘None, gracious lord,’ replied all the officers, and swore it by the Emperor’s life. ‘Then now shall all be destroyed,’ said the Emperor, who burned them at once in the presence of all, and threw even the ashes of the rolls into running water. So intent was he on the thorough performance of the act by which he

‘ took the tax away,
And built himself an everlasting name’ .

Some of the other financial measures carried by Anastasius are spoken of in more doubtful terms. One of them seems to have been the commutation of the of the tithes payable in kind from the cultivator to the treasury for a fixed money-payment, which, according to Evagrius, was calculated on an oppressive scale. Of course if the commutation was unfair the measure cannot be defended; but, in itself, the principle of allowing the possessor to sell his corn to the nearest purchaser, and bring the tenth part of the gold representing it into the treasury, was a good one.

Another reform was the abolition, at least the partial abolition, of the curial system. We are told that he took away the collection of taxes from the local senates, and sent instead officers called Vindices to each city, charged with the execution of this duty : ‘Whereby the revenues in great part came to grief, and the glory of the cities departed. For [under the old system] the nobles were inscribed each in the album of his city, and thus every city had its own council, with defined and well-ascertained powers’. So says Evagrius, writing a century after the accession of Anastasius, when it was perhaps not easy to discriminate exactly between his work and that of his successors. From the history of the Curies, as far as we have been able to trace it, one would be inclined to say that the abolition of these local senates must in itself have been a wise and righteous measure. Their ‘glory’ was but a bright robe covering deep and cruel wounds. Overcharged with terrible responsibilities, and with scarcely any real power, they stood helpless in presence of the imperial despotism, with whose rapacity they were unable to cope; and thus the privilege of having one’s name inscribed in their rolls, once an eagerly-sought distinction, had become a most intolerable burden. The Curies were in fact bankrupt, and the curiales were no longer shareholders in a flourishing enterprise, but contributories struggling to evade their liability.

In these circumstances, to sweep away the Curies with their system of ruthlessly enforced ‘joint and several liability’ for the taxes of the district was probably an act of mercy. Still it was a step towards centralisation. The Vindices were not local officers, but received their commission direct from the imperial treasury. In the days of financial pressure which were approaching, when Justinian’s wars, his wife, and his architects had well-nigh beggared the Empire, and when the chief concern of the ruler was how to wring the last *solidus* out of the exhausted tax-payer, it may be that the vindex of the Emperor was found more efficacious than the old-fashioned duumvir of the Curia. But the blame for this oppression must rest, not on Anastasius, who remodelled the taxing-machine of the State, but on Justinian, who wasted the revenues provided by it.

Other traits of the character of this Emperor seem to disclose a generous and sympathetic nature. Even his enemies attest his habit of abundant almsgiving, both before and after his elevation to the throne. And to any city in his dominions which had suffered from hostile invasion he was wont to grant a remission of all taxes for the space of seven years.

Among the great works which signalled the reign of Anastasius was the construction of a wall, more than fifty miles long, drawn from the Sea of Marmora to the Euxine, at a distance of about thirty-five miles from the capital. The wall was apparently strengthened by a fosse, which was really a navigable canal uniting the two seas. This Great Wall of Anastasius played an important part in the defence of Constantinople for many centuries, giving as it did to the capital, so long as it was kept in good repair, all the strength of an insular position.

The Isaurian war (which has been described in a previous chapter), waged against the brother and the countrymen of Zeno, occupied five years at the beginning of the reign of Anastasius. Then, after a peaceful interval of five years, came four years of war with Persia. The peace between the two great monarchies of the Eastern world, which had lasted for sixty

years, was at length broken by the King of Kings. Kobad, who mounted the Persian throne in 487, was under great obligations, both moral and pecuniary, to his barbarous neighbours on the northern frontier, the Ephthalites, or so-called White Huns, by whose aid he had been twice enabled to win or to recover his crown. To enable him to discharge the material obligation, he applied to Anastasius for a sum of money, which was, according to one account, to be a loan, according to another the repayment of an old debt, for expenses incurred on the joint account of the two civilised Empires in defending the passes of the Caucasus from the barbarians. Under whatever name the request was made it was refused by Anastasius, and Kobad prepared for war. In the first year of the war the Persians, after a stubborn resistance, took the great city of Amida, the capital of the Roman territory on the upper waters of the Tigris. An army, or rather four armies under virtually independent commanders, were despatched by Anastasius to the seat of war. From want of co-operation and want of generalship these four armies effected little or nothing, blundering into a victory here and a defeat there, but on the whole losing ground before the able strategy of Kobad. It might perhaps have gone hard with the opulent cities of Syria but for the fortunate circumstance that Kobad himself was forced to return to defend his territory against the barbarians on the Oxus; and in his absence his generals fought as badly as those of Eome. The siege of Amida was vigorously pressed by the generals of Anastasius, and the Persians must in a very few days have surrendered it from want of provisions, when messengers came from Kobad proposing a peaceful settlement. If Anastasius would pay £40,000 Amida should be restored to him, and all should be again as it was before the war. The Roman generals accepted these terms, and did not discover till too late that Amida, which their master had bought for 1000 pounds of gold, was really theirs by right of conquest. However, the peace, which was concluded for seven years, lasted for one-and-twenty, and was doubtless a great advantage to both Empires.

The recovered city of Amida was so generously assisted by the Emperor that it soon seemed to flourish even more than it had done before the war broke out. Upon the whole, the Persian war, if it had not brought any great glory, had not brought shame on the arms of Anastasius.

In the year in which the Persian war ended (505), occurred the first passage of arms between the of Anastasius and those of Theodoric. This will therefore be the most suitable opportunity for reviewing the notices, scanty and scattered as they are, of the intercourse between the two monarchs.

We know from ecclesiastical history that in the year 493 Faustus, who was then Master or the Offices, was sent along with Irenaeus (like himself an *Illustris*) to Constantinople on the King's business, and that, on their return to Rome, Faustus did his utmost to heal the schism between the Churches by representing to Pope Gelasius the injury to the cause of orthodoxy which resulted from his insisting on the damnation of Acacius, whose memory was dear both to sovereign and people at Byzantium.

The only result of their representations, however, was a long and somewhat haughty letter from Gelasius to the Emperor, excusing himself for not having written before, assuring him that Gelasius as a Roman loved and venerated the Roman sovereign, but reminding him that there were two powers by which the world was governed, the sacred authority of pontiffs and the power of kings.

'Of these two, so much the weightier is the office of the priest inasmuch as he has to give account for kings also in the day of the Divine judgment. You know, most clement son, that though you excel all the rest of the human race in dignity, you must nevertheless meekly bow the neck to the chief stewards of the Divine mysteries when you receive the sacraments at their hands, and in the affairs of the Church it is for you to obey, not to command ... It is vain to say that the populace of Constantinople will not bear the condemnation of their late bishop. You

have repressed their turbulence at the games : can you not in this matter, which concerns the good of souls, exert the same authority? Let them call the Apostolic See proud and arrogant: they are herein only like a sick man who blames the doctor that uses sharp measures for his restoration to health. If we are proud who do but obey the teaching of the Fathers, what are they to be called who resist us and fight against Divinity itself?’

Certainly the pretensions advanced by Pope Felix were not abated by his successor. We do not hear what reply the Emperor made to this lordly letter. We can hardly be wrong in supposing that the two ambassadors just mentioned, Faustus and Irenaeus, were sent by Theodoric to announce his final triumph over Odovacar, and to claim the ratification of the bargain made with Zeno, that Italy, if thus conquered, should be, perhaps, abandoned by the Empire, at any rate recognised as the possession of Theodoric. Apparently, however, the embassy was not successful. Anastasius was offended at Theodoric’s haste in declaring himself king of the Romans as well as the Goths in the land of Italy, and perhaps refused to be bound by the undefined promises of his predecessor.

Again therefore, in the year 497, was an embassy sent to Constantinople. This time the royal envoy was the Patrician Festus, and he was accompanied by two bishops, Germanus and Cresconius, who bore a letter from the Pope. Gelasius was now dead, and the chair of St. Peter was filled by an Anastasius, namesake of the Caesar of Byzantium—a man of gentle and peaceable disposition, eager to end the quarrel which reflected so little and pacific credit on either of the two Churches. The letter of Anastasius the Pope to Anastasius the Emperor bore willing testimony to the virtues and the piety which the latter had displayed in a private station, and, though still not surrendering the indispensable damnation of the unfortunate Acacius, offered to recognise the validity of all orders conferred by the laying on of his hands. The ecclesiastical difference seemed in a fair way of being settled, and probably the conciliatory temper of the bishops smoothed the path for their colleague the Patrician. For (to quote again the words of the Anonymus Valesii transcribed in a former chapter¹) ‘Theodoric made his peace with the Emperor Anastasius, through the mediation of Festus, for his unauthorised assumption of the royal title. The Emperor also restored to him all the ornaments of the palace which Odoachar had transmitted to Constantinople.’

Thus, then, peace and friendship are established, on paper as well as in fact, between Ravenna and Constantinople, and Theodoric is formally recognised as, in some sense or other, legitimate ruler in Italy. What was the precise relation thus established between the two monarchs I must give up the attempt to explain. I see no statement of a formal abandonment by the Empire of the sacred soil of Italy; yet neither do I see any formal recognition by Theodoric that he was governing it in the Emperor’s name, or that the latter was his superior. To me the whole matter seems to have been purposely left vague, as is so often the case when Fact and Law are felt by all parties to be hopelessly at variance with one another. A spectator of modern politics, who feels his inability to explain the precise legal relation of the Hapsburg monarch to the Sultan in respect to Bosnia, of the Queen of England to the same potentate in respect to Cyprus and Egypt, or even the exact nature of the tie which unites the Emperor of Germany to his crowned partners, or vassals, of Bavaria and Saxony, need not be ashamed to confess that he cannot absolutely decide whether Theodoric was dependent or independent of the Emperor of the New Rome.

Whatever may have been the exact title assumed by Theodoric, or the moral limits of his power, there is no doubt that geographically it extended far beyond the country which we call Italy. Of his Gaulish dominions enough has been already said. Raetia, including the eastern half of Switzerland, the Tyrol, and Bavaria south of the Danube, theoretically formed part of his kingdom, though in practice, as we have seen, the somewhat loosely subordinated Alamanni soon occupied most of the lands between the Alps and the Black Forest. In Noricum,

Pannonia, and Illyricum, the whole that is of the modern Austrian Empire south and west of the Danube, Theodoric was regarded as the legitimate successor of the Emperors of the West. It is a question, which we have no means of solving, how far Rugians, Heruli, and Gepidae may practically have limited his dominions in this direction; but it is important to remember that, at any rate after the compact of 497, the Emperor of the East had no claim to rule directly in those countries any more than in Ravenna. Illyricum evidently was Theodoric's in fact, as well as in right. All that island-studded coast of Dalmatia, Diocletian's vast palace at Salona, and the highlands behind, which we now call Bosnia and Herzegovina, were really held by the strength of the Goths, and administered in accordance with the erudite rescripts of Cassiodorus. The frontier of the two monarchies was apparently that settled in the year 395 between the two sons of Theodosius; and thus Dyrrhachium, the birth-place of the Emperor Anastasius, was only some fifty miles south of that part of the Dalmatian coast-line which owned the sway of the great Ostrogoth.

This being the extent of Theodoric's rights in the Illyrian lands, he determined in 504 to vindicate them by a campaign against his old enemies the Gepidae. Doubtless he had not forgotten that hard fight by the river Ulca, when his people found their passage barred by the inhospitable King; but now, with his new rights, he found an additional grievance in the fact that Sirmium, one of the greatest cities in the whole Illyrian Prefecture, was held by the Gepid barbarians. The ruins of this great provincial capital lie near to Mitrovitz on the Save, in the extreme east of the modern province of Sclavonia. Nevertheless, from the point of view then taken, Bishop Ennodius was right in speaking of it to the King as 'the threshold of Italy, in which the senators aforetime used to watch lest the neighbouring nations gathered round should inflict their deadly wounds on the body of the Roman people'. It was no alleviation of the calamity, says the Bishop, that the loss of this city had not happened under Theodoric's rule. It ought again to belong to Italy, and, till it was recovered, his honour felt a stain.

There seems to have been division in the councils of the Gepid nation, one part following Trasaric the son of Trastila (the king whom Theodoric had defeated at the river Ulca), and the other following: a certain Gunderith. Trasaric asked Theodoric's help against his rival, perhaps promised him Sirmium as a recompense. In course of time the Gothic King found that the promises of the Gepid were only made to be broken, and sent an army consisting of some of his noblest young Gothic warriors against him. Pitzias was leader of this expedition: the next in command was named Herduic. Tulum, a young Gothic noble employed in the household of the King, first made himself famous in this campaign. So too did a Gothic stripling named Witigis, who earned a reputation for valour in this campaign which was hereafter to be more fatal to his countrymen than the most pitiful display of cowardice could possibly have proved.

It is impossible to extract any details as to this war of Sirmium from the vapid rhetoric of Ennodius or the jejune sentences of Jordanes. All that can be said is that though the Gepids had procured the assistance of the Bulgarians—that new and terrible nationality which had lately shown itself on the banks of the Lower Danube—Theodoric's generals obtained a victory—an easy victory we are told—over the allied barbarians. Trasaric was expelled from Sirmium, and his mother, the widow of the inhospitable Trastila, was taken captive by Pitzias. In his treatment of the recovered city the general was careful to show that he looked upon it as a lost prize regained, not as an alien possession conquered. All tendency to ravage on the part of the soldiers was sternly checked, and the Sirmian citizens, when the standard of Theodoric was planted in their citadel, could again rejoice in the long-lost luxury of 'the Roman peace'.

This appearance of a Gothic army so near the frontier line of Theodoric and Anastasius not unnaturally brought their forces into collision. There was a certain Mundo, a son or grandson of Attila, who had fled from the face of the Gepidae, and was wandering through the valleys of what we now call Servia, at the head of a band of marauders, of whom, as Jordanes

contemptuously says, he called himself king. Against this prince of freebooters the Emperor sent the general Sabinian, son and namesake of Theodoric's old antagonist. Ten thousand men marched under his standards, and a long train of waggons carried the arms and rations of the soldiers. Mundo, on the point of being overpowered, invoked the assistance of the Goths, and Pitzias descended from the mountains of Bosnia to his aid. The battle was joined in the valley of the Morava, at a place called Horrea Margi. If we may believe Jordanes, the Ostrogothic reinforcements consisted of only 2000 infantry and 500 cavalry. If we may believe Ennodius, the Bulgarians were again opposed to them, employed by the subtle Greeks as a bulwark to break the first fury of their onset. Perhaps, on putting the two accounts side by side, and observing that Marcellinus the chronicler (who acknowledges the defeat of the Imperial troops by Mundo without any reserve) makes no mention of the Ostrogoths on one side nor of the Bulgarians on the other, we may conclude that the arrangement between the confederates was that Mundo the Hun should deal with Sabinian and the troops of the Empire, while Pitzias with his disciplined Goths broke the fierce onset of the Bulgarians.

The Gothic general saw from afar the barbarian host rushing to the battle, and lashed the eager spirits of his own young warriors into fury by his impassioned words. 'Remember, my comrades, by whose order you have marched hither. We fight for the fame of our King, and let each man deem that his eyes are upon us. If a whole shower of lances darkened the sky the valiant warrior would still be visible. Plunge your breasts into that line of steel, that by your carelessness of life the victory may be assured. Have these men forgotten Theodoric? Is there not one living still who remembers how his mighty arm smote them long ago? Or do they think that Theodoric is unlike his people? They shall find that we can fight as well as our King.'

The battle, by the account of the conquerors themselves, was a hardly-fought one. Neither Bulgarians nor Goths would believe that it could be possible for a foe to resist the fury of their onset. But at length the desperate shock and countershock were over. It was seen that the Bulgarians were beaten, and with loud lamentations they, who boasted that they had never before turned their backs before an enemy, streamed from the lost battle-field.

Sabinian fled in terror when he saw the discomfiture of his confederates. Pitzias, we are told, that he might not incur the imputation of avarice, forbade his soldiers to strip the bodies of the slain, and left them to the dogs and the vultures. The very chivalry of these days was barbarous. We hear no more of Mundo, but Theodoric's courtier takes pride in declaring that 'the Roman realm has returned to its ancient limit. Once again, as in the days of old, the Sirmians are taught to obey : the neighbours who have hitherto been keeping back our possessions from us' (apparently the Eastern Emperors) 'are now made to tremble for their own territories'.

Three years after the war with Mundo, we find the ships of Byzantium making a piratical raid on the Apulian coast. Our information as to this affair comes entirely from a chronicler of the Eastern Empire (Marcellinus Comes), and he very honestly condemns an operation so unworthy of a Roman Emperor. His words are these : 'Romanus Count of the Domestics, and Rusticus Count of the Scholarii, with one hundred armed ships and as many cutters bearing eight thousand armed men, went forth to ravage the coasts of Italy. They proceeded as far as the very ancient city of Tarentum, and then, recrossing the sea, bore back to Anastasius Caesar [the news of] this inglorious victory which, with pirate-daring, Romans had snatched from Romans'.

As we hear no more of raids or revenges between the two states we may perhaps conclude that the complaints of Theodoric and the condemnation hinted by his subjects, caused Anastasius, himself at heart a lover of peace, to lay aside his unfriendly attitude and to resume the peaceful intercourse which had been for three years interrupted. If so, we may possibly place about this time a letter—the first in the collection of Cassiodorus—which was borne by

two ambassadors from the Court of Ravenna to that of Constantinople. In that letter, Theodoric, or rather Cassiodorus writing in his name, complains, in well-chosen and weighty words, of the interruption of friendly relations with 'the most clement Emperor'. He praises the condition of Peace : Peace, the fair mother of all noble arts, the nurse of the succeeding generations, by whom the race of man is prolonged, who is the softener of savage manners. Theodoric himself learnt 'in your republic' how to govern Romans with a mild and equal sway. His kingdom is meant to be an imitation of the Emperor's : the Senate who are the Emperor's friends are his also; and his love for the venerable city of Rome is or ought to be another powerful link between them. The two republics, which under earlier sovereigns were always looked upon as forming one body, ought to be not only not discordant but bound to one another by bonds of love, ought not merely to love, but actively and vigorously to help one another. With words of courtly greeting to the 'most glorious charity of your Mildness,' but words which seem carefully framed to convey compliments only, without any recognition of real superiority, Theodoric concludes by referring the Emperor to his ambassadors for fuller information as to his feelings.

Either on this occasion, or another of his numerous embassies to the Eastern Court, Theodoric sent Agapetus (Patrician and Illustris) to represent him. In the letter charging him with this appointment he is informed that, for such a commission as his, it is necessary that 'a man of eminent prudence be selected, one who can dispute with persons of the keenest subtlety, and so manage as not to lose his cause in an assembly of literati, where the best-trained intellects of the world will come against him. Great art is required in dealing with these artful men, who think that they can anticipate every argument that you can employ.'

It is possible that among these word-fencers whom the ambassadors of Theodoric had to contend with, there may have been a man whose name is memorable in the history of the Latin tongue, Priscian the Grammarian. We possess a poem of his in praise of Anastasius, written in flowing hexameters, much above the ordinary level of the Latinity of his times. The descent of the Emperor from Pompey the Great, his Isaurian victories, his abolition of the Chrysargyron, his establishment of public granaries, his repression of the factions of the Circus, are all duly commemorated. One of the titles given to the Emperor (besides Isauricus and Parthicus) is Gothicus, a circumstance which seems to point to a date after the outbreak of hostilities with Theodoric for the delivery of the oration. And in the poem occur the following remarkable lines, which indicate that then, at any rate, notwithstanding all the optimism of Cassiodorus, there were some Romans disposed to look upon the Emperor, not the King, as their natural sovereign and protector:—

'But of all acts our grateful praise that claim,
Two, mighty Prince! most illustrate your name.
The first, your choice of rulers for the land,
And then, your goodness to the exiled band.
All of her sons whom Elder Rome may send
You greet, you succour, as a fostering friend.
Step after step they mount in your employ,
Till grief for their lost country turns to joy.
Fortune and life to you, great lord, they owe,
And night and day for you their prayers shall flow'

But whatever disposition Anastasius may have felt to trade upon the doubtful loyalty of the Romans towards a Gothic ruler, the increasing discontent of his own subjects towards the end of his reign found him employment enough, without his engaging in any further contests

with Theodoric. We must now plunge therefore into those dreary theological faction-fights which were briefly referred to at the commencement of the chapter.

The state of ecclesiastical parties in the Empire throughout this whole period was most peculiar, and was enough to strain the powers and the patience of the wisest and the most enduring of rulers.

There was Egypt, venerating the memory of Cyril above all other ecclesiastics, cherishing, if not venerating, the name of Eutyches, set upon maintaining to the uttermost the doctrine of the unity of the nature of Jesus Christ, who, they maintained, as God was born, as God was crucified.

Syria, which had given birth to the opposite doctrine, that of Nestorius (whose denial that Mary was rightly called 'the Mother of God' had brought about all this controversy), fluctuated still between Nestorianism and Monophysitism in the strangest and most bewildering uncertainty.

At Constantinople the populace, led by a rabble of fanatical monks, were attached with incomprehensible fervour of loyalty, not to Eutychianism, not to Nestorianism, but to the very name of the Council of Chalcedon, which excommunicated both, and proclaimed the narrow *Via Media* of orthodoxy between them. Middle ways do not generally thus enlist the passions of a religious mob in their behalf. But so it was, that throughout the reign of Anastasius, if at any time words were used by a person in a prominent position which seemed to reflect on 'the Synod of the Six Hundred and Thirty' (the number of fathers who met at Chalcedon), blood might be expected soon to flow in the streets of Constantinople.

The upper classes seem at this time to have been generally Monophysite, or at least strongly attached to the Henoticon of Zeno. They probably felt the danger of dismembering the Empire which would be incurred by crushing the fanaticism of Alexandria by the fanaticism of Constantinople.

And Rome, the seat of Peter, and still in a certain sense, notwithstanding her barbarian rulers, the capital of the Empire? Rome seemed at this time to have no ears for the original controversy; so set was she on maintaining the damnation of Acacius, who had dared to excommunicate a pope. Of course she was out of communion with Monophysite Alexandria, but then she was equally out of communion with orthodox Constantinople, which held fast by the Council of Chalcedon and venerated the Tome of Leo, but which would not strike the name of Acacius out of her diptychs. Bishop after bishop of that see suffered persecution and exile for maintaining the faith of Chalcedon against the Monophysite Emperor; but as they would not admit that Acacius was inevitably damned, Rome, the champion of Chalcedon, would have none of them.

Anastasius, as has been already said, was probably at heart, like most of the Byzantine nobles, a Monophysite. But he was strongly suspected, and probably with truth, of the much more dangerous heresy of caring very little about the whole matter, and preferring justice and mercy and the practice of the Christian virtues to all this interminable wrangle about such questions as whether Christ ought to be said to subsist in two natures or to consist of them. While he was still in a private station, he had been accused of attending the conventicles of the heretics and yet retaining his seat in the great Catholic Basilica. Euphemius the bishop had sent for him, and sharply rebuked him for such dangerous dalliance with error, concluding the interview by a threat that, if the offence were repeated, he would cut off his hair and expose him to the derision of the mob. This story, it should be said, rests on the doubtful authority of Suidas. It seems improbable that even the Patriarch of Constantinople would dare to use such a menace to an officer of the household, past middle life and held in high honour by the people.

However, the doubt, the suspicion as to the orthodoxy of the elderly Silentiarius, devout and charitable as all tongues proclaimed him to be, remained in the mind of the Patriarch

Euphemius. When Ariadne presented him to the Senate as the future Emperor, Euphemius long resisted his election, and at length, it is said, only withdrew the objection on receiving from Anastasius a written confession of his faith, in which he declared that he held as true all the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon. No doubt if such a humiliating condition were enforced upon him, the remembrance of it would rankle in the mind of the new Emperor, who is said to have made the recovery of the document, either from Euphemius or his successor, the main object of his ecclesiastical policy for some years. There is some variation, however, in the accounts of this matter given by the different historians, and, as we so often find to be the case, the further they are removed from the transaction the more detailed does their information about it become. Probably the importance of the affair has been overrated by ecclesiastics.

Anastasius, however, had reason enough to look coldly on Euphemius, not only as the personal enemy who had threatened to subject him to bitter humiliation, but also as the partisan, and hardly the secret partisan, of his rival the Isaurian Longinus. In the year 496, after the close of the Isaurian campaign, when, according to the triumphant Emperor, 'the prayers of the Patriarch had covered his friends with soot'; by one of those exertions of high-handed power which were becoming almost the rule at Constantinople, Anastasius deposed Euphemius from his see, and sent him into exile at Euchaita, a city of Pontus. The demand for his deposition came undoubtedly from the Emperor, but it was apparently carried into effect in a regular manner by a synod of bishops, before whom Anastasius laid the proofs of the Patriarch's treasonable complicity with the Isaurian insurgents. It was, at any rate ostensibly, for political not for theological offences that Euphemius was cast down from his high place.

The new Patriarch of Constantinople was Macedonius, a gentle and sweet-souled man, too good for the days of wrangle in which he lived. Euphemius, before his departure for the solitudes of Pontus, desired to have the sworn promise of his successor that he should not be molested on his journey. Macedonius, who had the permission of the Emperor to grant this safe-conduct, was told that his predecessor was in the baptistery of the basilica, waiting for the interview. With generous thoughtfulness he called to a deacon and desired him to take off from his shoulders the bishop's mantle, that he might not seem to flaunt before the eyes of the fallen Patriarch the ensigns of a dignity which was no longer his. He also himself borrowed money from the Usurers to provide for the travelling expenses of Euphemius and his retinue. The banished man lived on for nineteen years in exile; apparently had to change his place of abode on account of the invading Huns; and died in 515 at Ancyra in Galatia.

During the fifteen years that Macedonius governed the Church of Constantinople there was a division, growing gradually wider and wider, between him and his Emperor. At the time of his elevation he signed the Henoticon, and perhaps anathematised the Council of Chalcedon. Gradually however, under the influence of the monastic and popular enthusiasm which prevailed in the capital, he 'hardened into a stern, almost a fanatic partisan of that very Council.' With the usual fairness of religious disputants, the man who battled on behalf of the Via Media with Eutychians was accused of himself inclining to Nestorianism. One charge made against him in this connection and much insisted upon was that, in order to support his heretical views, he had altered a letter in a celebrated passage of the New Testament which has often since been the battlefield of controversy.

The increasing estrangement between the Emperor and the Patriarch, the increasing irritation of the Chalcedonian mob at the proceedings of their sovereign (who everywhere, but especially in Syria, was pressing more and more heavily on those bishops who did not accept the Henoticon), was brought to a crisis by the proceedings of a band of strangers and schismatics, who one Sunday burst into the Chapel of the Archangel in the Imperial Palace, and dared to chaunt the Te Deum with the addition of the forbidden words, the war-cry of many an Eutychian mob, 'Who wast crucified for us'. The Trisagion, as it was called, the

thrice-repeated cry to the Holy One, which Isaiah in his vision heard uttered by the seraphim, became, by the addition of these words, as emphatic a statement as the Monophysite party could desire of their favourite tenet that God, not man, breathed out his soul unto death outside the gates of Jerusalem. What one party asserted with the loud voice of defiant psalmody the other party were of course bound to deny, maintaining their denial, if need were, by force. On the next Sunday the Monophysites sang the verse which was their war-cry in the great Basilica itself. Shouts were heard from the angry mob; to shouts succeeded taunts; to taunts blows and strifes. The magistrates, acting perhaps at the instigation of the Emperor, loudly and fiercely upbraided Macedonius as the author of all this tumult. But there were men, well-known faction leaders, on the other side, whose presence goaded the Chalcedonian populace to fury. Chief among these was Severus, who had been throwing all Syria into confusion by his zeal for the condemnation of the synod, and who was to be rewarded for his turbulence by being seated on the episcopal throne of Antioch. It was soon seen on which side the voice of the multitude was given. A vast crowd of citizens, accompanied by and in the their wives and children, and headed by the abbots of the orthodox monasteries, surged through the streets of Constantinople, shouting, 'Christians, lo, the day of martyrdom! Let no one abandon our father!'. They hurled their insults at the Emperor himself, denouncing him as a Manichean, as unworthy to reign.

Anastasius, terrified at the turn which things had taken, ordered the great gates of the palace on every side to be barred, and the ships made ready for his flight. So he sat solitary in the vast enclosure, trembling at the brutal clamours which reached him from without. At length he determined to bend to the storm. Though he had sworn that he would never again look upon the face of Macedonius, he sent some trusty retainers to the Patriarch to beg him to come and salute him. As Macedonius, in that his hour of triumph, glided through the streets, the mob shouted with joy, 'Our father is still with us!', and, ominous sound for the Emperor, the soldiers of the household regiments, through whose ranks he passed, echoed the cry. When the Patriarch entered the presence chamber, he frankly rebuked the Emperor for his alleged enmity to the Church. An apparent reconciliation was effected. The mild character of the Patriarch (who had not only forgiven but sent away with a handsome present an assassin who sought his life) made the restoration of peace an easy task.

The reconciliation, however, was but superficial. The dignity of the Emperor had been too deeply wounded for it to be real. Yet, from fear of the populace, he did not dare to bring the venerated Patriarch openly to trial. He caused him to be hurried out of his palace, rowed across the Bosphorus to Chalcedon, and thence escorted to the same little town of Euchaita whither his predecessor had been conveyed fifteen years before. A council was hastily summoned, and the absent Patriarch was deposed from his see. After four years of exile at Euchaita, he was driven by a Hunnish invasion to Gangra, a town in Paphlagonia, where he shortly after died. One of his faithful followers declared that on the night of his decease the injured Patriarch appeared to him, having in his hand a roll, and saying, 'Depart hence, and read what is here written to Anastasius'. In the roll was written, 'I indeed depart to my fathers, whose faith I too have kept. But I shall not cease to importune the Lord until thou comest, that the cause between us two may be brought to judgment.'

Anastasius in fact survived Macedonius three years, but he lived somewhat too long for his fame. The irregular and illegal deposition of the Patriarch is one of the worst acts that can be laid to his charge; and the remaining seven years of his life were poisoned by the results which flowed from it—an ever-increasing unpopularity with his Byzantine subjects, and an ever-dwindling hope of seeing the fires of religious faction dying out and peace restored to the Empire. Again, in the year after the expulsion of Macedonius, the terrible war-cry of the corrupted Trisagion sounded through the streets of Constantinople. It was on a memorable day

that the flames of religious war were thus rekindled. The 6th of November in every year was kept as a solemn fast, in memory of that awful day in 472 when the heaven at Constantinople was blackened with the ashes of Vesuvius, while half the cities of Asia Minor were rocking with the violence of an earthquake. On the Sunday which preceded the fortieth of these anniversaries, Marinus, the able but grasping Praetorian Prefect, and Plato the Prefect of the city, were standing in their place of honour in the Great Church of Constantinople, when the singers (as it was believed by their command) thundered forth the words, 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,' with the terrible addition breathing defiance, menace, and insult, 'Who wast crucified for us.' The orthodox took up the strain and chaunted the verse in the way used by their forefathers. Again psalmody gave place to blows : men wounded and dying lay upon the floor of the church; the ringleaders of the tumult were led off to the dungeons of the city. Next day the scene of strife was transferred to the atrium or oblong porch in front of the Church of St. Theodore, and a yet greater slaughter of the champions of the Catholic faith took place there. On the third day, the 6th of November, the day of the solemn procession, the orthodox mob streamed from all parts into the great forum. There they swarmed and swayed to and fro all that day and all that night, shouting forth, not the greatness of the Ephesian Diana, but 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' without the words 'Who wast crucified.' They hewed down the monks—a minority of their class—who were on the side of the imperial creed, and burned their monasteries with fire. They carried the standards of the army and the keys of the various gates of the city to the Forum, where a sort of camp was established, with monks for its officers. A poor monk from the country was found hiding in the palace of Marinus. Having persuaded themselves that it was by his advice that the deadly words had been added to the hymn, they cut off his head and carried it about on a pole, shouting, 'See the head of an enemy of the Trinity!' The statues of Anastasius were thrown down. The Emperor's nephew Patricius, and Celer Master of the Offices and general-in-chief in the Persian War, were sent to the populace with soothing words; but, notwithstanding their senatorial rank, they were greeted with a shower of stones. Ominous cries claimed the Empire for Areobinda, related by marriage to the family of Valentinian III, and a general who had achieved some successes in the Persian War. The houses of Marinus the Prefect and of Pompeius, a nephew of the Emperor, were burned. At length, after two days of continued riot, the triumphant mob, fresh from their work of destruction, brandishing gospel and cross as the ensigns of their war, and shouting 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' without the heretical addition, streamed into the Circus Maximus and stood before the Podium of the Emperor. There on his imperial throne, but without the diadem or the purple, sat the aged monarch (he who was now eighty-one years of age), and seemed by his helpless attitude to enquire what was their will. The mob shouted that the two Prefects, Marinus and Plato, should be thrown to the wild beasts. No lighter punishment, in the judgment of those accurate theologians, would suffice for the crime of these men, who had added four words to the Trisagion. Anastasius, whose own voice was no doubt 'changed to a childish treble' could not himself answer the hoarse hymn-shouters, but he bade the criers make proclamation to the people that he was ready, if they wished it, to lay down the burden of empire; but, inasmuch as all could not be masters, it would be necessary that his successor should be chosen. Perhaps this was an adroit device to divide the victorious Chalcedonians, united in opposition to Anastasius, but not united in their choice of Areobinda or any other successor. Perhaps the mob were touched with pity and relenting at the sight of those white hairs uncrowned and bowed low before them. Whatever the cause, the multitude were appeased. They melted away out of the streets and Forum and back into their homes, having received from the Emperor nothing but fair words, perhaps promises and oaths to respect the faith of Chalcedon.

The promises, if they were given, were not kept; for, though the Emperor seems to have abstained from again shocking his subjects in the capital by the sound of the heretical Trisagion, he continued, with the help of Timotheus, his Monophysite Patriarch of Constantinople, to rule the Church in the interests of the heretical party, no longer, it would seem, contented with exacting the signature of Zeno's Henoticon, but insisting on an express anathema to the Council of Chalcedon. For refusing this anathema the gentle Flavianus, who had tried to please all parties, and had satisfied none, was thrust out from the see of Antioch, where the busy Monophysite Severus reigned in his stead. All over the East, especially in Syria, was heard the wail of the orthodox for sees widowed of their Catholic bishops and handed over to heretical intruders.

The discontent caused by these high-handed proceedings furnished a pretext which enabled a military adventurer named Vitalian to shake the throne of Anastasius. Though the son of an officer in the imperial army, Vitalian was of Gothic extraction. He was a man of diminutive stature, and had a stutter in his speech : he had all the fire and the courage necessary to lead a band of mutineers and barbarians to victory, and along therewith the address to feign an interest (which he can hardly have felt) in the theological controversy, and to link his cause with that of the prelates deposed for their adherence to the Council of Chalcedon. This was the pretext for rebellion which was flaunted before the eyes of the Byzantine populace, and which has to some extent imposed on later ecclesiastical historians, who have looked upon him as the champion, certainly the ruthless champion, of the Fourth Council of the Catholic faith. The recently-discovered fragments, however, of the history of Joannes Antiochenus (who evidently drew from nearly contemporary sources) show that the rebellion had a much more ignoble origin. Vitalian had a grievance in his removal from the office of distributor of the rations to the *foederati*; the mutinous soldiers alleged that they had a grievance in the withholding of some arrears of pay; the Huns, who formed perhaps the bulk of the army, needed no excuse at all for their willingness to swarm across the Danube under the guidance of their savage chiefs Saber and Tarrach and the like, and to devastate the cultivated plains of Moesia and Thrace.

The war was waged chiefly in the neighbourhood of Varna (then called Odessus); but twice, nay three times, Vitalian, by a bold dash through the passes of the Balkan, or by assembling a fleet and sailing along the Euxine coast, succeeded in penetrating to the very suburbs of Constantinople. The first time, Anastasius affixed to the city gates brazen crosses with a long statement of the true origin of the insurrection, to disprove Vitalian's assumption of the character of a champion of the faith. At the same time he promised—and this has an important bearing on our main subject—that 'he would bring men from Old Rome to settle matters concerning the faith.' To remove the discontent of the taxpayers he announced that he remitted a fourth part of the tax on cattle for the provinces of Bithynia and Asia, and deposited the paper containing this pledge on the Holy Table in the Great Church.

For the time Vitalian retired, and the wave of war rolled back across the Balkans. The insurgent general was declared a public enemy by the Senate, and an army of 80,000 men was despatched against him, under the command of the Emperor's nephew Hypatius. The Roman army was encamped behind its waggons at a spot called Akrae, on the sea-coast a little north of Varna. The arrows of the Huns dealt death among the draught oxen, their savage onset broke the line of the waggons, and then (we are gravely told), in the mist raised by their enchantments, the panic-stricken and flying Romans fell into a deep ravine, where they perished, to the number of 60,000. Their dead bodies piled one upon another filled the rocky chasm. Hypatius fled to the shore and tried to hide himself in the sea, but his head, 'like a sea-bird's', was seen above the waves : the barbarians dashed into the breakers and captured their valuable prize, the nephew of an Emperor. Vitalian pushed on with a fleet of 200 ships to the

suburbs of Constantinople, and overpowered the imperial general John, who rushed into his master's presence and implored him to grant the enemy's terms, however hard they might be. Dispirited by so terrible a defeat of his troops and by the capture of his nephew, Anastasius consented to treat, conferred on Vitalian the dignity of Magister Militum of Thrace, paid him the enormous sum of £200,000 as ransom for Hypatius, and, it is to be feared, made some promises, even swore some oaths, which were not meant to be kept, that he would restore to their episcopal thrones the exiled adherents of Chalcedon.

The slippery character of Anastasius made it well-nigh impossible for him ever to end a dispute. Vitalian felt sure that the Emperor was plotting against him, and next year resolved to anticipate the blow by another dash for Constantinople. A battle by land and sea followed, under the very walls of the capital. Now at length fortune turned against the fiery little Gothic rebel. A rough Thracian soldier named Justin, who had fought his way up from the lowest ranks to the position of Captain of the Guard (*Excubitorum Praefectus*), thrust his ship boldly forwards into the hostile fleet, which was commanded by Vitalian himself, grappled a ship, made prisoners of all the soldiers on board, and struck such terror into the sailors of Vitalian that they turned and fled. Seeing this, the army on land fled likewise, leaving heaps of their comrades slaughtered on the field. Soon the whole force of Vitalian, Huns, mutinous Romans, Goths, had melted away like snow in summer; and the arch-rebel himself, so lately an important personage in the state and the arbiter between contending creeds, slunk away into obscurity, in which he remained for the rest of the reign of Anastasius.

At the end of the year 514, while the rebels' power was still unbroken, the Emperor, in fulfilment of his promise to Vitalian to settle the dispute concerning the faith in concert with the Bishop of Old Rome, sent two letters to Hormisdas, who now sat in the chair of St. Peter, saying that the common fame of the Pope's gentleness and moderation induced him to break the long silence caused by the harshness of his predecessors, and to suggest that a council, at which the Pope should preside, and in which he should act as mediator, should be held at Heraclea on the shore of the Propontis (about 60 miles west of Constantinople), in order to settle the affairs of the Church and heal the troubles which had arisen in the province of Scythia. The day for the Council's assembling was to be the 1st of July, 515. Hormisdas sent a prompt and courteous reply, declaring that peace was his desire, as it had been that of his venerable predecessors. The time for the Council was too near, perhaps had been purposely fixed at too early a date, to make it possible for the Pope and his bishops to attend it; but the ice had now been broken, and negotiations between Rome and Constantinople could go forward, whether the Council were ever to assemble or not. On the 8th of July Hormisdas again sent a short note to the Emperor, commending his zeal for the restoration of unity to the Church, and referring him to the five legates whom he was at the same time despatching from Rome, for fuller information as to the terms upon which he would assist at a new Council.

The legates (two bishops, a presbyter, a deacon, and a notary) were headed by Ennodius, Bishop of Ticinum, whom we already know so well as biographer of Epiphanius and turgid panegyrist of Theodoric. The letter of instructions (*Indiculus*) addressed to these legates is still preserved; a long and circumstantial document and curiously characteristic of its author and of the times. Throughout the letter runs that almost exaggerated fear of Greek subtlety, that sense of inferiority to Greek diplomacy, which we trace also in the works of Cassiodorus. We have seen how, in instructing Theodoric's ambassador to Constantinople, the accomplished secretary had warned him of the difficulty of dealing with men 'who think they can foresee everything'. It was with a determination to foresee everything that Hormisdas supplied Ennodius and his colleagues with this marvellous paper, which sought to anticipate every possible opening of the game by the Emperor, and to indicate the proper reply upon the ecclesiastical chessboard. A few extracts may indicate the character of these instructions.

‘When you are come into the parts of Greece, if the bishops come out to meet you, receive them with all due respect. If they prepare a lodging for you, do not refuse it, lest the laity should think that the hindrance to concord comes from you. But if they ask you to a meal decline with a gentle apology, saying, Pray that we may be permitted first to meet at the Mystic Table, and then this hospitality of yours will be all the sweeter.’ When by the favour of God you are come to Constantinople, lodge in the quarters assigned to you by the most clement Emperor, and allow nobody to visit you till you have had your first audience with him. Afterwards you may receive the visits of the orthodox, and of those who seem to have the cause of union at heart. Use caution in conversing with them, and you may obtain useful hints for your own guidance.

‘When you are presented to the Emperor, hold out our letter and say, “Your Father salutes you, daily entreating God and commending your kingdom to the intercessions of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, that God who has put this desire into your heart, to work for the happiness of the Church, may carry it on unto perfection.”

‘If he wishes to enter on the subject of the embassy before opening our letter, you shall use these words, “Command us to hand you the writings.” If he shall say, “What do the papers contain?” reply, “Salutations to your Piety and thanks to God for making you desire the unity of the Church. Read, and you will see.” Make no mention of the matter in hand till he has received the letters and read them.’

‘After he has done this, add, “Your servant Vitalian, having received, as he said, permission from your Piety, sent his messengers to your Father the holy Pope. To him also we have letters, but, as is fitting, have first directed our course to your Clemency, that we may receive your command to bear our message to him.” Should the Emperor ask to see our letters to Vitalian, you must answer, “Your holy father the Pope gave us no such commandment : we cannot do anything of the kind unbidden. Yet that you may know that they contain nothing but that which furthers your own desire for the unity of the Church, associate with us some person in whose presence the letters which we deliver to Vitalian may be read aloud”. If he says again that he ought to read them himself, answer again that the Holy Father did not so order you. If he says, “Is all your message contained in the letters? are there not perhaps some verbal communications beside?” you must answer, “Be that far from our conscience. That is not our custom. We come only in God’s service. The Holy Pope’s commission is a simple one, and his desire is known to all men, being only this, that the decrees of the fathers be not tampered with, and that heretics may be banished from the Church. Our legation relates to nothing else but this”.’

We need not closely follow the imaginary interview through all its succeeding stages, which are chiefly theological, not political. At a certain point, it was expected that the Emperor would say, ‘We have received and still hold the Synod of Chalcedon and the letters of Pope Leo’. At this confession of faith the legates were to kiss his breast, and to return thanks to God for giving him this conviction of the Catholic faith, preached by the Apostles, without which no man can be orthodox. If he was to try to throw the blame of the schism on the late Pope Symmachus, predecessor of Hormisdas, they were to reply that they had the letters of Symmachus in their hands, which contained nothing but exhortations to persevere in the faith of Chalcedon. They were then to have recourse to prayers and tears, saying, ‘Lord Emperor! think upon God: place before your eyes his coming judgment. The holy fathers who taught thus have but followed the Apostles’ faith, by which was builded up the Church of Christ.’

After a good deal more imaginary debate the legates were again to shed tears, and to allude in a humble and delicate way to the controversy which distracted the Church of Constantinople itself. The Emperor would perhaps say, ‘You are talking about Macedonius; I understand your finesse. He is a heretic: it is quite impossible that he should be recalled’. Then

the legates were to reply, 'We, Lord Emperor, mention no one by name. But let your Piety consider, from your own point of view, how much better it would be that there should be a discussion on this point, and that his heresy, if he be a heretic, should be judicially settled, rather than that the orthodox should think him to be unjustly deposed.'

This brought them to the question of the legitimacy of the consecration of Timotheus, whom the legates were immovably to refuse to recognise in any way as legitimate Patriarch of Constantinople. They were not to allow themselves to be presented by him to the Emperor, and if he was standing by the throne they were to ask for a secret interview, in which they would deliver the papal commission.

Finally, they were to announce to Anastasius that the terms upon which Hormisdas would consent to waive a point of personal dignity, and come to preside at a council held out of Rome, were, (1) public recognition of the Council of Chalcedon and the letters of Leo; (2) public anathematisation of the heretics Nestorius, Eutyches, and the like, who had, on one side or the other, deviated from Chalcedonian orthodoxy, and express inclusion of the name of Acacius among these heretics; (3) the recall of all bishops sent into exile for their fidelity to the Eoman see; and (4) the removal of the cases of all bishops banished for any ecclesiastical offence, to Rome, there to be tried by the Apostolic See. In fact these terms, however gently and persuasively and tearfully urged, involved a surrender at discretion of all the points at issue between Emperor and Pope.

How the actual interview between the aged Anastasius and the verbose Ennodius and his colleagues passed off we are unable to say, but, as they could not arrive in Constantinople till October, 515, it is easy to imagine that they found the Emperor in a mood little disposed for conciliation. The Pope's correspondent Vitalian had doubtless before that time met his crushing defeat at the hands of Justin. Now that he was a fugitive, and his wild Hunnish marauders were scattered to the winds, the bland excuses, the accurately measured tears, and the punctilious breast-kissings of the Roman envoys might even be found somewhat burdensome by the Byzantine Caesar.

Still, the negotiations were not wholly dropped, though the proposed Council faded more and more into oblivion. In a long letter sent back by the hands of Ennodius, Anastasius declared his adhesion to the teaching of Leo and Chalcedon, but suggested that it was hard that living men should be kept out of the Church on account of the dead, and that to anathematised Acacius would cause the effusion of much human blood.

In July of the following year he sent two high officers of his Court, Theopompus Count of the Domestics (an *Illustrius*) and Severianus Count of the Consistory (a *Clarissimus*), with letters both to the Pope and the Senate. The first letter was chiefly filled with excuses, somewhat hollow excuses, for his tardy action in the matter of the reunion of the Churches. The length of the journey and the unusual severity of the preceding winter are made to bear the burden of this delay. The other letter throws an interesting light on the difficult question of the relations existing between the Caesar of Byzantium, the Gothic King, and the Senate of Rome. It begins :—

28 July, 'The Emperor Caesar Flavius Anastasius, pious, fortunate, victorious, ever august, renowned conqueror of the Germans, of the Franks, of the Sarmatians, father of his country, says Hail! to the proconsuls, the consuls, the praetors, the tribunes of the commons, and to his Senate. If you and your children are in good health it is well. I and my army are in good health also.'

In using this well-known classical formula, the Emperor says 'I and my army' where Cicero would have said 'I and Terentia,' to indicate the close bond of union which in theory always existed between the Imperator and his dutiful soldiers. The use of the possessive

pronoun before Senate must, one would think, have jarred upon the ears of Theodoric, when he heard the document read in his *Comitatus* at Ravenna.

The rest of the letter was couched in terms which would not be displeasing to the Gothic King. The Emperor begged the Conscript Fathers to join their prayers with his, prayers which might reasonably be expected to avail 'both with the most glorious King and with the very blessed Pope of the fair city of Rome for the restoration glorious of peace. And again, near the close of the letter, they are asked to use their utmost efforts for this end, 'both with the exalted King to whom the power and the responsibility of ruling you is committed, and with the venerable Pope, to whom is entrusted the capacity to intercede for you with God.' It would be difficult to express more clearly that Constantinople recognised, as in some sense legitimate, the rule of Theodoric.

The Senate replied to the Emperor in a letter full of suitable quotations from Scripture on the beauty of peace and the blessings of charity. The sentiments which they express are excellent, and it is only when one sees the title at the beginning, and thinks of those grey old war-wolves who used to be the terror of Italy and the world, that one feels a slight sense of incongruity in the thought that this meritorious, if somewhat vapid, pastoral was addressed to a Roman Emperor by a Roman Senatus. They accept the designation of your Senate, and say that 'the mind of our lord and most unconquered King, your son Theodoric, who orders obedience to your commands,' tends in the same direction as that of Anastasius.

The real pivot of the negotiation however was, of course, neither King nor Senate, but Pope. Hormisdas, who was offended, somewhat unreasonably one would think, at the Emperor's having sent only laymen, though laymen of high rank, as his ambassadors, had come to the conclusion that the Greeks talked of peace with their lips, but did not care for it in their hearts, and while sending Ennodius on a second embassy to the Emperor, charged him with a letter, written in somewhat sharper tone than those which had preceded it, insisting on the absolutely indispensable damnation of Acacius. Acacius had rolled himself in all the mire of Peter the Stammerer, Dioscorus, and Eutyches. Acacius had spread the poison of Monophysite heresy, which before had only infected Alexandria, far and wide through the Churches. The wound of the Church could not be healed without his damnation. As for the angry feeling which such a proceeding might raise among the mob, sovereigns could bend their subjects to their will. Who heard anything about the wishes of the populace when Marcian, of religious memory, established the faith of Chalcedon? And so the letter ended with an earnest, almost imperious call to the Emperor to acquiesce in the monitions of his spiritual father.

Ennodius and his colleague Peregrinus reached Constantinople at the beginning of July. The Emperor, who for all his eighty-six summers was by this time thoroughly aroused by the obstinacy of the Pope, and who perhaps had ceased to care greatly about the question of reunion, entirely refused to accept the terms of Hormisdas, and forced the legates out of the city, charging the two Prefects with a band of Inland Revenue officers to accompany them on ship-board, and to see that they landed at no city of the Empire. Notwithstanding this pressure, however, they contrived to hand to their monkish partisans in the capital the copies of a protest which they had prepared for circulation through all the Eastern Churches.

To Hormisdas the Emperor addressed a short answer but dignified letter, which, after some rather commonplace reflections upon the mercy and long-suffering of the Most High, he thus concluded:— 'We think, therefore, that those who have themselves received mercy, ought not to show themselves merciless. But from henceforth we shall keep silence as to the request which we made of you, thinking it absurd to show the courtesy of prayers to men who stubbornly refuse all that is asked of them. We can bear insults and contempt, but we cannot allow ourselves to be commanded.'

So ended the correspondence between Anastasius and Hormisdas. In the following year the aged Emperor died. Strange portents, according to the ecclesiastical historians, marked his death. A terrible thunderstorm was raging, and Anastasius, to whom it had been foretold that he should die by such a storm, crept into an inner apartment and was there found by his servants dead; but whether struck by a flash of lightning, or slain only by his own fears, none could tell. On the same day Elias, the deposed Patriarch of Jerusalem, had a revelation that the Emperor was dead, and that he himself was to follow in ten days to bear witness against him before the throne of God. A short time before the death of the Emperor, according to the foolish story of some late writers, a man clothed in white raiment was seen by him in a vision, turning over the leaves of a book which he held in his hand. With a frown the supernatural visitor said, 'In punishment for thy impiety, behold I strike off fourteen', and therewith cancelled fourteen years of the Emperor's life, who, it seems, might otherwise have attained the age of a hundred and one.

All this stir in heaven and earth over the death of a sovereign who had entered his eighty-eighth year, may, at any rate, be taken as a proof that he had not sunk into dotage, but had still energy enough to inspire energetic hatred. We picture him to ourselves with his tall figure still unbowed by age, with his steel-blue eyes not dimmed, nor the vigour of his intellect abated. Two testimonies which we possess concerning him outweigh many of the fierce censures of his ecclesiastical opponents : the acclamation 'Reign as you have lived!' with which the populace hailed the news of his accession, and the phrase 'sweetest-tempered of sovereigns' which the notary Lydus, years after his death, when nothing was to be gained by praising him, dropped by his half-forgotten grave.

Yet, with many noble qualities, Anastasius hardly attained to greatness. He allowed himself to be forced from a position of calm impartiality between warring sects, into one of bitter partisanship on behalf of a single sect, and that the one which has eventually been judged heretical. And in his dealings both with the external and internal enemies of the Empire, he certainly showed himself more a Greek than a Roman in his lack of the kingly quality of truthfulness.

On the very day of the death of Anastasius, Justin, Captain of the Guard, and lately the conqueror of Vitalian, was raised to the throne, nominally by the Senate, but really by the household troops. The means by which this rough and illiterate Thracian soldier attained to the first place in the civilised world were simple, if not in the highest degree praiseworthy. Amantius, an eunuch and Grand Chamberlain, who had been allpowerful in the later years of Anastasius, desired to maintain his hold of power by placing on the throne a certain Theocritus, whom he deemed to be entirely devoted to his interests. For this purpose he deposited a large sum in the hands of Justin, to be distributed as a donative to the soldiers of the guard, who were under his orders. Justin, however, who was an adherent of the faith as formulated at Chalcedon, perceived that he would better serve the interests of orthodoxy, and his own, by seating himself upon the vacant throne rather than Theocritus, and used the gold of Amantius for that purpose.

It was an unusual sight to see in the palace of the emperors a peasant-born soldier who could neither read nor write, and who, like Theodoric the Goth (if indeed the story be true of Theodoric), must needs affix his sign-manual to the state-papers by drawing the stylus dipped in purple ink through four holes for letters prepared in a metal plate. His wife Lupicina also, who took the name Euphemia, was not of illustrious origin, being a barbarian slave whom her future husband bought as his concubine. All, however, in the eyes of the populace was condoned by the undoubted orthodoxy of the new Emperor, by the delight of having again a ruler who adhered to the Council of Chalcedon.

On the first Sunday after Justin's elevation the crowded into the Great Church, and when the Patriarch John—the successor of Timotheus and believed to be in sympathy with

Chalcedon— appeared at the Ambo, they shouted out, ‘Longlife to the Emperor! Long life to the Patriarch! Anathema to Severus [Monophysite Patriarch of Antioch]. Why do we remain excommunicated? Carry out the bones of the Manicheans. He who does not shout is a Manichean. Mary the mother of God is worthy of the throne. Bishop! speak or leave the church. Proclaim the faith of Chalcedon. The Emperor is a Catholic : what are you afraid of? Long life to the new Constantine! To the new Helena! *Justine Auguste tu vincas.*’ This official formula of salutation to a new Emperor was uttered in the Latin tongue, all the rest of the excited utterances of the crowd being in their vernacular Greek. With difficulty the Patriarch persuaded them to hold their peace till he should have kissed the altar and celebrated mass. This done, the shouters resumed their self-imposed toils. At length the Patriarch mounted the Ambo and said, ‘You know, brethren, how many labours I have undergone in past years for the faith. There is no need for disturbance. We all receive the four great Councils, including that of Chalcedon’. ‘No,’ said the shouting crowd, ‘that is not enough. Anathematise Severus : proclaim a feast in honour of the Council of Chalcedon. We will stay here all night if you do not. You shall not depart till you have anathematised Severus.’

At length, with an appearance of yielding to the wishes of the mob, but probably with a consciousness of having prepared the whole scene himself in concert with his master, the Patriarch announced that it should be as they wished. In unison with a large number of bishops from neighbouring dioceses, present in the basilica, he formally anathematised Severus, and announced that on the following day (16th July) there should be a solemn ceremony in honour of the Holy Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon.

On the morrow, when this rite was ended, there was a renewal of the same disorderly cries ‘Anathema to the Nestorians. I do not know who is a Nestorian. Anathema to the Eutychians. Dig up their bones. Cast the bones of the Manicheans out of doors. *Justine Auguste tu vincas.*’ Mingled with these shouts were heard ominous growls at Amantius the Manichean, which indicate pretty plainly who had been tuning the voices of these tumultuary theologians. In fact, the Eunuch, whose gold had been so adroitly used against him, was very shortly after these days of clamour put out of the way by the new Emperor.

There was a moment of real sublimity in the ceremony of the 16th of July. This was when the Patriarch ascended the Ambo, with the diptychs in his hands, and read from them, amid the deep silence which had fallen upon the shouting crowd, the names of the four Councils which the Church of Constantinople held in highest reverence, Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. Then followed the names of the bishops who had departed this life in the faith and fear of God, and with whom the Church still maintained her mystic and invisible communion. Towards the close of this mighty roll of names came Leo, Pontiff of Rome, and Euphemius and Macedonius, Archbishops of the kingly city of Constantinople. At this sound, which announced to their ears the termination of the controversy of a life-time, the populace burst into a loud and joyful shout, ‘Glory be to Thee, O Lord’. So, after nearly forty years of imperfect acquiescence or actual opposition, did the Church of Constantinople return to unhesitating allegiance to the faith as formulated at Chalcedon.

Not yet, however, was Rome fully appeased, nor could she yet welcome the Eastern Church as wholly purged from her error. The theological question was settled, but the more important personal question remained open. Nay, even the recent triumph of the orthodox populace was stained with some disrespect to the chair of St. Peter, since Rome could not admit that even Euphemius and Macedonius, however manfully they might have struggled against a Manichean Emperor, could rightly have their names recited in the Church’s diptychs.

Letter Communications were soon opened between Constantinople and Rome. The new Emperor wrote a short letter to the Pope in which he announced that, by the favour of the indivisible Trinity, of the nobles of the palace and the most holy Senate, and by the choice of

his brave army, he had been elected to the Empire; and he dared to add that he had been most unwilling to accept the honour. Hormisdas replied, and letters passed backwards and forwards for some months between the two capitals. The chief part in the correspondence on the side of Byzantium was played, not by the illiterate Justin, but by his nephew, a man in early middle life, holding the high office of Count Domestic, and who showed already great talents for theological disputation. This literary assessor of Justin was Justinian.

In the letters sent from Constantinople a faint-hearted attempt was made to save Acacius from damnation. Hormisdas saw that the Emperor really desired reunion; and firmly, but with more gentleness than he had used towards the heretical Anastasius, insisted that those who were sincere in anathematising Eutyches must also anathematise Acacius. The real stress of the contest probably bore, not so much on the name of Acacius, whom both Emperor and people were willing to surrender to damnation, as on the names of the beloved and venerated Euphemius and Macedonius, whom the Pope insisted, not indeed on formally branding with his anathema, but on silently omitting from the diptychs.

At length affairs were ripe for the reception of an embassy from the Pope, and eight months after Justin's elevation to the throne the papal legates arrived at Constantinople. They were charged with letters to the Emperor, the Empress, the Patriarch, the Archdeacon and clergy of Constantinople, to Count Justinian and other courtiers, and to two noble ladies—perhaps members of the family of Anastasius—who were named Anastasia and Palmatia, and who had apparently, in the evil days of the preceding reign, signalised themselves by their zeal for the faith of Chalcedon. The legates had also an *Indiculus* for their own private use, telling them how far to go and where to stand firm in their debate with the Emperor, and a *Libellus* or formula of submission and profession of faith to be signed by all those who wished to re-enter into communion with the Holy See.

The Pope's messengers had no reason to complain of want of cordiality in their reception at Constantinople. At the tenth milestone from the city they were met by a brilliant throng of courtiers and nobles. At the head of the procession were Vitalian, the little eager soldier who had borne arms for the faith of Chalcedon, Pompeius the nephew of the late Emperor, and Justinian the nephew of the reigning Emperor. Thus did the evening and morning stars of the monarchy meet to do them reverence.

On the next day they stood in the presence of Justin and the Senate. The Patriarch of Constantinople, though favourable to reunion, would not compromise his dignity by appearing in person, but was represented by four of his suffragan bishops. To an invitation from the Emperor that they should argue the matters recently in debate between the two sees, the legates replied that they had no instructions to argue, but only to produce the Pope's letters and the *Libellus*, which must be signed by all bishops who desired to be reconciled to the Apostolic see. The *Libellus* was read; the representatives of the Patriarch pronounced it to be consistent with the truth. The Emperor and the other Senators burst out into impatient exclamations, 'If it be true, sign it at once, and make an end of the matter.' A day, however, had to elapse, and then the *Libellus* was put before the Patriarch, who was now present in the palace. He, even in accepting it, dexterously contrived to save some shreds of the dignity of his see. A *Libellus* was generally subscribed by those who had fallen from the faith, and was thus an admission of guilt. He wrote a clever prologue, turning it into a letter of friendship, addressed 'to his most blessed brother and fellow-servant Hormisdas.' He declared that he held the two Churches of the old Rome and the new to be one Church, and one seat of the Apostle Peter; and then, after these precautionary words and a statement of his acceptance of the four great Councils, he adopted uncompromisingly the whole of the *Libellus*, with its strong assertion of the office of Peter and the Apostolic see as guardians of the Catholic religion, and its condemnation of the usual string of heretics, beginning with Nestorius and ending with Timothy the Weasel and

Peter the Stammerer. Then came the clause of special interest, the key of the whole battle-field. 'Similarly we anathematise Acacius, formerly Bishop of Constantinople, who made himself accomplice and follower of these heretics, together with all who persevered in their fellowship and communion'. In these last words lay a covert if not an express anathema for all the recent bishops of Constantinople.

Next came the solemn act of erasing from the diptychs, and thus striking out of the communion of the Church the names of Zeno and Anastasius the emperors, as well as of Acacius and his four successors in the see of Constantinople, including those two honoured names which had so recently been replaced there, the names of Euphemius and Macedonius. This was done, not only in the Patriarchal Basilica but in all the churches of Constantinople. The legates recorded with wonder and gratitude to God and St. Peter that none of the evil consequences which had been threatened, neither tumult nor shedding of blood, followed this act, which must, one would think, have torn the hearts of many thousands of the people of Constantinople who had loved and well-nigh worshipped the excommunicated prelates.

After such an immense surrender as this, the rest of the work of reunion all over the East, except at Monophysite Alexandria, was comparatively easy, nor need we trouble ourselves with any further details of what had now become a mere matter of formal negotiation. Thus then ended the first great schism between the Eastern and Western Churches. Followed as it has been in later ages by other and more enduring divisions, which have produced results of world-historical importance, this schism will hardly be deemed unworthy of the space which has here been devoted to it. While it lasted, it secured fair play, at least, for the young kingdom of Theodoric. Its termination was an event of evil augury for the Ostrogothic power; and the peace of the Church, by no very remote chain of causes and effects, involved war for Italy.

Looked at merely as a question of spiritual strategy, and without any reference to the spirit and maxims of Christianity, the action of the Popes during the forty years of the struggle must be pronounced most masterly. It was necessary to show to all the world that no act of importance could take place in any of the Churches of Christendom without their consent. Acacius had presumed to endeavour to carry through Zeno's scheme of comprehension without the sanction of the Pope, and therefore, though personally orthodox, Acacius must suffer eternal torment. That end was now attained as far as ecclesiastical censures could secure it; and it might be expected that it would be long before another Patriarch of Constantinople would incur the same tremendous penalty. It is a new warfare in which the Popes are engaged, those venerable men whose faces in almost endless series look down on the visitor to Rome from the walls of S. Paolo. Legates are their proconsuls, monks their legionaries, the Churches of foreign lands their provinces, the sentence of eternal damnation the pilum with which those provinces shall be won. They plan their campaigns with the skill of a Scipio, and they fight them through with the fortune as well as with the relentlessness of a Sulla. This at least is their general character; but in their career of conquest, as in that of the Republic which preceded them, there are occasional vicissitudes of defeat. We have just been tracing the history of the Acacian war, crowned by the victory of Constantinople. Thirty years later we shall have to witness the defeat and surrender of Vigilius at the same place; a calamity for the pontifical arms as great and as bitterly resented as that which befell the Roman legions on the disastrous day of Caudium.

CHAPTER XI.

THEODORIC'S RELATIONS WITH THE CHURCH.

It was a singular coincidence that for nearly thirty years at the close of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century, the three greatest monarchies sovereigns of the civilised world were ruled by sovereigns whose religious opinions differed from those of their subjects.

We have seen the troubles which befell Anastasius, because the mob of Constantinople could never be satisfied that he held the right opinion as to the union of the Divine and the Human in the person of Jesus Christ.

Across the Euphrates, Kobad had to atone for his acceptance of the reformed Zoroastrianism of Mazdak by three years of imprisonment in 'the Castle of Oblivion.' He regained the kingdom only by the arms of the White Huns, and when once again seated on the throne and wearing the diadem of the King of kings, he found it prudent to effect a compromise between his personal and his official consciences. As a man he still held the wild communistic faith of Mazdak, but as king he ruled upon the old lines and respected the rights of property both in jewels and in wives.

In Italy, Theodoric, unshaken in the Arianism which had been, probably for a century, the faith of his forefathers, ruled over a people the vast and at majority of whom were Trinitarians, but ruled so justly that, as we have seen, even orthodox bishops loudly praised his fairness and moderation. So thoroughly was it understood that the Catholic had at least an equal chance with the Arian of obtaining the royal favour that, in a story which was current not long after his death, he was even represented as putting to death a Catholic deacon who had embraced the creed of the court in order to ingratiate himself with his sovereign. Historians are probably right in rejecting this story, which would indeed have been a striking example of 'an intolerant love of toleration', but the fact that it should have obtained currency, is a striking proof that his subjects recognised the earnest desire of their sovereign to keep a perfectly even balance between the two warring creeds. In this respect Theodoric stands out in marked contrast to most of the other Teutonic rulers. While the barbarian Gaiseric and his son plunge with blind zeal into the theological fray, cut out the tongues and rack the limbs of Catholic bishops, while the hypocrite Clovis makes his pretended zeal for the Catholic faith an excuse for invading the fair lands of his kinsman and ally, Theodoric with this noble sentence on his lips, 'We cannot command the religion of our subjects, since no one can be forced to believe against his will,' pursues, perhaps unconsciously, the truly statesmanlike, truly reverent, policy of Valentinian I, and, leaving each man to answer to his Maker for his thoughts concerning Him, uses the power of the State only for the punishment of those deeds whereby the State is endangered.

This absolute impartiality in matters of religion extended even to the Jews; and herein is one of the strongest proofs that it was not a mere counsel of convenience, but that it sprang from conviction deeply rooted in the sovereign's mind. It would have been easy, for him, as an Arian, to curry favour with the orthodox party by showing that he could be as bitter as any of them against the Jewish enemies of the faith. Instead of this, any offence against Civilitas was punished with equal severity, whether Jew or Christian complained of its perpetration. At Rome, at Milan, at Ravenna, the Jews were at various times attacked by furious mobs, their Synagogues burned, and their persons ill-treated. Of course, there was the usual crop of stories to justify the popular fury, stories like those which three centuries before had stirred up the

same kind of mobs to do violence to the impious Nazarenes. The Jews in the Trastevere had beaten their Christian servants, the Jews at Ravenna had performed some insulting parody of Christian baptism. But the decision of Theodoric was firm. The order of the State should be upheld, and those who transgressed it, whether Jews or Christians, should be punished. The Synagogues were to be rebuilt at the cost of the persons by whom they had been destroyed, and the authors of the tumult were to be severely punished.

True, the Gothic King, or his Secretary for him, in one of the letters announcing these decisions, made a pathetic appeal to the Jews to escape from , the future punishment of their misbelief—an appeal which would hardly appear at the end of a similar state-paper issued in our own times. “But why, oh Jew! dost thou seek by thy supplications to us for temporal quietness, if thou art not able to find the rest which is eternal?”- But the long oppressed nation did not resent a word or two of disapprobation for their theology, while their material rights were safe-guarded by so firm a hand. They gave their strong, hearty, and unwavering loyalty to the Gothic rule in Italy : and, when we come to the story of the final contest between King and Emperor, we shall find that, as certainly as the Catholic priest is on the side of Justinian, so certainly is the Jewish merchant on that of Witigis or Totila.

From the impartial, almost friendly attitude which Theodoric assumed towards the Catholic Church through the greater part of his reign, he naturally exercised a great moral influence in addition to the political rights which belonged to him as head of the State, at that time of trouble and anxiety, both for Church and State, a contested Papal election.

In tracing the history of the schism between the Eastern and Western Churches, we have come down to the pontificate of Hormisdas. Remounting the stream of Papal history, we find that the occupant of St. Peter’s chair at the accession of Theodoric was the vigorous and uncompromising Gelasius. In the pontificate of Gelasius the controversy with Constantinople was conducted with at least as much vigour and asperity as had marked the spiritual war under the generalship of Felix. Happily, however, we may now turn from this monotonous controversy to behold the Pope trampling out the dying, but not quite dead, embers of Paganism. There was still a party at Rome, with the Senator Andromachus at their head, who wished to keep up the old heathen orgies of the Lupercalia, that strange rite made memorable by Mark Antony’s share in it, on the day when, after running naked through the Forum, he knelt down and offered the diadem to Caesar. This custom had not been suppressed along with the other heathen observances, and now Andromachus and his party wished to perpetuate it.

They pleaded that none of the earlier Popes had objected to the rite. It used to be thought that the touch of the Lupercalian’s thong falling on the shoulders of the Roman matrons brought with it a peculiar good fortune. It could, at any rate, do no harm to keep alive so ancient a custom. Gelasius replied, with bitter scorn, that though earlier pontiffs might not have been strong enough to suppress the heathen observance, he was, and would exercise his power. If Andromachus and his party really believed the Lupercalia to be a religious act, let them take the shame of it on themselves, themselves rush about like naked madmen through the streets, and not, as was now the custom, put off the shame of it upon others, their inferiors in rank. The observance of the Lupercalia had not brought luck to Rome in past times, had not saved her from the sword of Alaric or the ships of Gaiseric. Nay, even in later days, the terrible scenes which marked the strife between Anthemius and Ricimer had not been averted by this silly and licentious rite. He could not lay down the law for Pagans, but to Christians he spoke in a voice to which they must hearken. No baptized person, no Christian, should dare to take part in the impious orgy: if he did, he should be without hesitation cut off from the communion of the faithful. We know not the result, but it cannot be doubted that such a mandate, coming from such lips, was sufficient to destroy the Lupercalian festival.

Gelasius was succeeded by the gentle Anastasius and, on the death of this conciliatory Pontiff, Festus the ambassador who had just visited Constantinople with a commission both from the Pope and the King, and who had succeeded in making peace on behalf of the latter for his 'pre-assumption of the kingdom,' endeavoured to further the cause of unity by procuring the election of a Pope who would look favourably on the Henoticon of Zeno. Both at Old and New Rome, symptoms may be discerned of a disposition on the part of the aristocrats to press this creation of statesmen, this politically concocted 'end of controversy', on the rulers of the Church; while the lower classes and the monks, seeing perhaps less of the necessities of the position, stood immutably faithful to the Tome of Leo and the Council of Chalcedon.

The candidate whom Festus, in the interests of his scheme of church union, desired to see made Pope, was the Arch-Presbyter Laurentius, who was elected a few days after the death of Anastasius in the great Liberian Basilica. On Laurentius same day, however, a larger body of clergy, assembled in the Lateran Church, had elected as Pope the deacon Symmachus, a native of Sardinia, whose consecration was accomplished before that of his rival.

Here then was the city plunged anew into all the miseries and the turmoil of a contest for the chair of St. Peter. Blood had already begun to flow in the streets of Rome, when the wise resolution was taken, to refer the whole matter in dispute to the arbitration of Theodoric. The rival candidates appeared accordingly in his palace at Ravenna, and claimed his award. Political reasons would probably have inclined him to support the candidate of Festus, who had so successfully served him at the court of Anastasius, but his instinctive love of justice prevailed. 'The candidate first elected, if also the candidate elected by most voices, ought to be Pope'. He who fulfilled these conditions was Symmachus.

A council, the first of many on this business, was called at St. Peter's on the 1st of March in the following year (499). Symmachus, who had convened the council, was recognised as regularly elected Pope; and decrees were made against the practice of canvassing for votes in anticipation of a vacancy in the Holy See, and for the regulation of future contested elections in the case of the Pope's dying suddenly without having been able to arrange for the election of his successor.

The victory of Symmachus, however, was only apparent. Though Laurentius, who seems to have been a man of peaceable disposition, was willing to acquiesce in his defeat, and even accepted the bishopric of Nocera from his rival, his partisans, who perhaps constituted the majority of the Senate, could not brook their defeat by the popular party. We hear no more of the Henoticon, the original cause of the quarrel : everything seems merged in the passionate determination of the Senators, by fair means or foul, to depose Symmachus from the Papacy. It seems probable that the means used were foul rather than fair, when, in addition to the ordinary charge of alienation of church-property (doubtless in order to meet the expenses of the election) and a singular one of celebrating Easter apart from the multitude of believers, an accusation of gross immorality was also brought against Symmachus by Festus and his fellow-worker Probinus. The vagueness of these charges, the illegal means by which it was sought to support them, and the earnest denial of their truth by Ennodius (an honest man, though an intolerably tedious writer), all seem to justify the belief that this was one of those cruel attacks on private character which are made, only because the high position of the victim causes accusation and condemnation to be one, in the charitable judgment of the crowd.

Again disturbances broke out, again there was bloodshed in the streets and squares of Rome. We are not able to fix the precise date of this recrudescence of the strife, but it seems probable that it was in the later months of 500, just after the sojourn of the King in Rome, during which undoubtedly both parties kept truce in the presence of that stalwart maintainer of *civilitas*.

The King, who during that visit had probably been in frequent intercourse with the leaders of the Senatorial party, may have imbibed some of their prejudices against Symmachus, who was formally accused before him of immorality. At any rate he summoned him to Rimini, and the Pope, who seems to have understood that only the trifling question about his manner of keeping Easter would be examined into by Theodoric, obeyed the summons. One evening, however, as he wandered by the sea-shore, he saw some travellers ride by along the Flaminian Way. Among them were the Roman women whom he was accused of having seduced. The truth flashed upon his mind. They were going to the King's Comitatus, and he was to stand his trial before it for adultery. Terrified at the prospect, he stole away secretly in the dead of night, with one attendant, to Rome, to his old refuge at the Basilica of St. Peter.

Offended by the Pope's flight, and rendered yet more suspicious of his guilt, Theodoric now took the bold step of appointing a 'Visitor' to summon a council, to hear thereat the charges against Symmachus, and meanwhile to undertake the government of the Church in his stead. This was undoubtedly a high-handed proceeding; one which, in the distracted state of the Church, success, and the maintenance of strict impartiality by the King's delegate, might have excused, but which otherwise it would be difficult to justify. The Visitor, Bishop Peter of Altino, preserved no semblance of judicial impartiality, and consequently his mission was doomed to failure. Instead of visiting the Pope at the shrine of St. Peter's, he at once threw himself into the arms of the Senatorial party, turned several of the clerical adherents of Symmachus out of their churches and intruded Laurentians in their room.

This strong partisanship, exhibited by the nominee of an Arian king at the bidding of the laymen of the Senate, touched the hierarchical spirit of the bishops who were summoned to the Council, and caused a certain reaction in favour of Symmachus, who hitherto had perhaps had only the lower clergy and the populace of Rome in his favour. Some of the bishops on their way to Rome had an interview with Theodoric, in which they frankly told him—so say the Acts of a later Council, which undoubtedly represent the high ecclesiastical view of the question—'that he, the accused Pope, and not the King, was the person who ought of right to convene the Council, since by God's command this was the peculiar privilege of the Pope, derived from the dignity of Peter's primacy, that he could not be judged by those of lower degree.'

This was in fact the position taken up by Symmachus, when at length, soon after Easter in 501, the Council which was to try his case assembled in the Julian Basilica. Yet, he intimated, he might be willing to waive his right, and appear before the Council to answer the charges against him, but only on condition that Peter the Visitor should be disavowed, and the churches which he had taken from the adherents of Symmachus should be restored to them. The Council, which was composed chiefly of elderly men, did not dare thus to reverse the acts of Theodoric. Nor did they, on the other hand, though partially reassured by a letter which the King had shown the bishops at Ravenna, proving that Symmachus himself had expressed a desire for the assembling of the Council, dare to sit in judgment on the successor of St. Peter without his consent. After fumbling at the question for some time with feeble trembling hands, they gave it up, and requested the king to convoke a council at Ravenna. The Council then broke up, and several of its members left Rome.

This futile result disgusted the King, who was not perhaps greatly interested in the question whether Symmachus or Laurentius should win, but earnestly desirous that the strife should be ended somehow, and peace restored to Rome. He wrote to the bishops who remained at Rome, praising their patience, but complaining with some acerbity of their faint-hearted colleagues. He entirely refused to have the matter referred to him at Ravenna. "Had it been his wish to interfere in the dispute", he said, "he doubted not that he and the great officers of his household would have been able to find a solution of the difficulty, which would have been

approved by posterity. But as it concerns God and the clergy he had decided to summon the bishops; and they must settle it". Three letters were written by Theodoric in this strain, urging the bishops to do their duty and not to leave undecided a controversy which was daily imperilling the peace of 'the Royal City'. "If you like to decide it without enquiry, on account of the rank of the accused person, do so; though I must remind you of that saying of Aspar's" (and here Theodoric indulged in a remembrance of his Byzantine days) "when he was recommended by the Senate to make himself Emperor: "I fear", said he, "lest by me this thing should be drawn into a custom in the Empire". Even so I fear lest if you leave this matter unenquired into, immorality should become common among priests. Still, on you be the responsibility; only decide the case".

At the same time, Theodoric sent three stout Goths, Arigern the count and the chamberlains Gudila and Bedewulf, to Symmachus, to protect him on his passage through the city, and probably also to remind the Sardinian priest that the King of the Goths and Romans was not accustomed to have his orders disobeyed by any subject, however exalted. The persuasion, of whatever kind it may have been, was effectual; the protection, as it turned out, was really needed. The Pope set forth on the morning of the 1st of September to meet the Council of his judges assembled in the church of Santa Croce, hard by that Sessorian palace in which, a year before, the head of Odoin the traitor had rolled on the marble pavement. To reach the place of judgment Symmachus must needs traverse the whole breadth of Rome, from the north-western Janiculum hill to the southeastern Coelian. The sight of the Pope going forth on this humiliating errand touched the hearts of his plebeian supporters. A multitude gathered in his train, who followed him weeping and lamenting. These evidences of the popularity of their hated antagonist kindled the rage of the Senators of the opposite party. To them the question between Laurentius and Symmachus was probably no more than as one of those disputes in the circus between the Blues and Greens, in which the victory of a charioteer favoured by the mob goaded the dainty Senator to madness. Whatever the cause, the party of Laurentius, including some priests as well as Senators, fell upon the mournful procession of Symmachus, dealing such cruel blows that many fell wounded to the earth, and only the energy of the three Gothic henchmen succeeded in winning for their protégé a way back through the crowd to his asylum at St. Peter's shrine.

This street-brawl secured the victory to Symmachus. With good reason could he now entrench himself behind his sacred prerogative, and say, "I Peter's, am in God's hands and the King's. Let them do with me what they will. I appear not before the Council". The sympathies of Theodoric, which had been for a time turned against Symmachus, by what looked like an evasion from justice, were now heartily restored to him by this gross breach of civilitas on the part of his accusers; an outrage which was made personally insulting to himself by the fact that it was committed on a man who was under the *tuitio regii nominis* and escorted by three Gothic officers. Henceforward nothing more was heard from the King about compelling the Pope to answer his accusers. He only pressed upon the Council (which now willingly pronounced a verdict clearing the Pope of the charges brought against him) that they should not merely decide this theoretical question, but practically end the dispute by assigning the churches and other ecclesiastical buildings in Rome to the persons who were canonically entitled to them, and compel the obedience of all the clergy to Symmachus, now the undoubtedly lawful Pope. All this difficult but necessary work the feeble old bishops would gladly have thrust off upon him, but he answered with truth and spirit, "That is your affair, not mine. Had it been my business, I and my good chiefs would have settled it long ago".

The final decision of the whole controversy was attained in the Council called the Synodus Palmaris, which was held 'in the Portico of St. Peter's, which is called Palmaria.' This Council, which was called by its enemies, 'The Synod of the Incongruous Absolution,' was

fiercely attacked by them on divers grounds, both of substance and of form. It was defended by Ennodius in a long apology, in which, through a thick veil of almost unmeaning rhetoric, and amidst a profusion of Scripture texts pelted forth at random upon his antagonists, it is just possible to discern some of the main outlines of the controversy. According to the taste of the age the Apology closes with three long imaginary addresses from St. Peter, St. Paul, and the city of Rome. In these addresses the good bishop reaches a higher level than in the rest of his composition, and the rhetorician once or twice speaks like an orator. His warm praises of Theodoric's rule impress us more in this tractate than in the panegyric which was composed to be recited before him. We understand also more fully the feeling of depression with which a Christian Roman of that day looked back upon the past history of his country, when we hear Rome lamenting that all her greatest sons, the Curii, the Torquati, and the Camilli had been borne by her only to languish for ever in Tartarus because the Church had not regenerated them, that the Fabii and Decii who had saved others could not be saved themselves; that Scipio, who was ever a fervent lover of the right, was joined with the greatest criminals in the world to come because he was ignorant of Christ.

It took some time for the troubled waters to subside. We hear that Laurentius, who had come back to Rome, continued the strife for four years; but Symmachus was now strong in the approbation of councils, and the support of Theodoric, and, as far as we can see, his opponents, playing faintheartedly a losing game, did not again venture on any actual breach of the public peace.

The whole controversy has, it will at once be seen, an important bearing on events of a much later date. Some of the questions mooted are the same as those which came up for solution at the Council of Constance. In so thorny a controversy it is hardly possible to frame any proposition which may not be attacked from one side or the other; but perhaps we shall be safe in asserting these :—

I. The right of the King, as head of the State, to convene a Council by his own authority was asserted on the one side and denied on the other.

II. But the tacit assent of the Pope cured the informality of the Council, even in the eyes of ecclesiastics.

III. It was not formally denied that the Pope, like other subjects of the King, was subject to his jurisdiction for such an offence as adultery. But—

IV. It was strenuously denied that a Council (consisting as it did of his ecclesiastical inferiors) could sit in judgment on a Pope. And in the end this contention practically prevailed.

We can see at once the great difference between the third and fourth points. To subject a pope to the jurisdiction of the bishops in his obedience was like bringing a captain to trial before the soldiers of his company—a proceeding necessarily subversive of all discipline. But that was not saying that the Pope, who was still no temporal sovereign but a subject,—either of the Emperor or the King—need give no account to the Head of the State, for acts which he had committed in defiance of its laws. The successor of St. Peter was responsible for the exercise of his spiritual authority to no man. But if Symmachus committed adultery or murder, he must answer for the deed to our lord Theodoric in his palace at Ravenna.

The history of the strife exhibits in a favourable light the sound sense and statesmanship of the Ostrogothic King. He has no desire to meddle in matters ecclesiastical. His one anxiety is to see that *civilitas* be maintained and its assailants punished. A free Church in a free—or at all events in a well-ordered—State is practically his maxim. He makes one or two mistakes, but shows his statesmanship in this more than anything, that he knows how to retrieve his mistakes, and is not, by a foolish craving after consistency or blind self-love, enticed into the common blunder of letting the first error drag him on into a series of other errors each greater than its predecessor.

The only other act of the Pontificate of Symmachus which need be noticed here is his in the proceedings of another council, the fifth, which was held at St. Peters on the 6th of November, 502. Addressing the assembled fathers of the Church, he recommended that the authors of the recent schism, who had been led away by love of dominion and had cast off the yoke of the Church, should be left to the mercy of God if they were not too hardened to accept of it. After proclaiming this somewhat dubious amnesty, he brought before the notice of the Council the encroachment on the rights of the Church of which Odovacar had been guilty twenty years before. In order to bring the matter more vividly before them, the deacon Hormisdas a man who was himself one day to be Pope, read the decree once issued by the illustrious Basilius in the name of the most excellent King Odovacar. The particulars of that certainly somewhat daring piece of legislation have been already detailed. The holy fathers gasped with indignation when they heard once more the language of a layman, though a king, arrogating to himself the absolute nomination of a successor to the Papal throne, and, what was even more audacious, inflicting the penalty of anathema on the alienators of ecclesiastical property. Speaker after speaker interrupted the reader, pointing out successive violations of the canons by this decree: and when each one had finished, again the calm voice of the deacon Hormisdas was heard, perhaps indicating by sarcastic emphasis his own dislike of the document of which he was the unwilling expositor. After heartily condemning the decree and declaring that, as wanting the Papal sanction, it was utterly invalid, the Council proceeded to re-enact, in a regular manner, the really valuable portion of it,—that which forbade the alienation of the property of the Church; making, however, an exception on behalf of houses in Rome, which the clergy, if they found themselves unable to bear the expense of keeping them up, were at liberty to sell, accounting scrupulously for the proceeds of the sale.

After sixteen years, the eventful pontificate of Symmachus came to an end. When he died, Cassiodorus was in Rome, delecting in the shadowy glories of his year of office as Consul. He was admirably adapted for the task which naturally devolved upon him, of allaying the bitter spirit of contending factions, of soothing the wounded self-love of the Senate which had probably never been heartily reconciled to the victory of Symmachus, and inducing it to co-operate peaceably with the popular leaders among the clergy in the election of a new pope.

The scandals of a contested election were avoided, and, after an unusually short vacancy of seven days, the Papal seat was again filled; the new occupant being Hormisdas the Campanian, the reader of the obnoxious decree of Odovacar: a man who, as the event showed, was to be not only himself a pope, but also the father of a pope.

The chief events of the pontificate of Hormisdas have already been told in the chapter describing Theodoric's relations with Constantinople. He was well fitted to conduct such a struggle as that in which he was engaged with Anastasius, and to reap, with cold complacency, the uttermost fruits of the victory which was offered him by Justin.

There was again a short vacancy and an undisputed succession. On the 13th of August, 523, John, a Tuscan, first of the long line of Popes who have borne the name, if they have not all imitated the saintliness, of the beloved Disciple, sat in the chair of St. Peter.

The new Pope came to his dignity at a difficult and anxious time. Four years had now elapsed towards since the close of the schism, and during those the years, while Justin's relations with the Roman Church had been excellent, his relations with the Italian King appear to have been growing steadily worse. How the chasm began to yawn between Romans and Goths, and how Theodoric, challenged to decide, declared himself on the side of his own nation, will be told in the next chapter. It is sufficient here to note that the year of John's accession to the Papacy is also the year when, by Theodoric's orders, Boethius was shut up in prison.

The next year, honoured by the Emperor Justin's assuming for the second time the consular title, was marked by a decided step taken by that Emperor in the direction of intolerance. Hitherto Justin, while persecuting severely the Manicheans and all heretics of that class, had left the Arians untouched, and seems even to have alleged, as a reason for his tolerance, that they professed the same religion as Theodoric. Now, however, this exception in their favour was suddenly and harshly terminated. Everywhere the churches of the Arians were reconsecrated with Catholic rites, and they themselves were made to understand that the time had gone by when they could be allowed to continue to disbelieve in the Homoousion.

Theodoric, irritated by the insult to himself, and disgusted by such an ungrateful return for policy of his impartial tolerance, now began to lose his temper, and under the influence of ill-temper not only departed from the principles of a life-time, but committed one of the greatest mistakes in policy which it was possible to perpetrate. He, whose one great glory it had been to make no distinction between creed and creed, began to entertain the idea of a persecution of the Catholics in Italy, by way of reprisal for the persecution of Arians in Thrace. And, in order to change the purpose of the Emperor, he committed the astounding folly of sending the Pope to Constantinople. No two pieces on the political chess-board ought, for the safety of his kingdom, to have been kept further apart from one another than the Pope and the Emperor: and now, by his own act, he brings these pieces close together. Summoning Pope John to Ravenna, he signified his pleasure that the head of the Catholic Church should visit Constantinople as his ambassador, and should inform Justin that, unless he restored their churches to the Arians, the sword of Theodoric would ravage the whole of Italy. The Pope, sick and infirm, besought with tears to be excused from so degrading and unsuitable a mission, but the King, in whom the blood of all his Amal ancestors was now boiling, would take no denial, and the unhappy priest, cowed into submission, consented to set forth. The mission was in outward show a brilliant one. Three exconsuls, Theodorus, Importunus, and Agapetus, and one patrician, a second Agapetus, went in the train of the Pontiff. Miracles marked their course. At Corinth, a nobleman's horse which had been lent for the Pope's use, absolutely refused thenceforward to be ridden by a woman, the owner's wife, whose tractable steed it had been till that day. The nobleman, making a merit of necessity, sent the creature, possessed of such nice spiritual discernment, to the Pope, and besought him, with many prayers, to regard it as his own. At the entrance into Constantinople, a blind man imploring his aid, and touched by the Pontiff's hand, received his sight.

Everywhere there were joyous excitement and expectation at the arrival of the successor of St. Peter in the New Rome; an event, men said, which had never happened since Silvester came to visit its founder Constantine. Justin, with all his Court, and, so it seemed, the whole city of Constantinople, streamed forth with crosses and candles to meet the ambassadors at the twelfth milestone. Prone on the ground the Emperor, whom all other men adored, adored the weary Pontiff. Sick and anxious as he was, it was impossible for John not to feel that it was a great day for the Papacy. When Easter-day came the Pope, taking the place of honour at the right hand of the Patriarch of Constantinople, celebrated Mass according to the Latin use in the great Cathedral. Nay, so far, according to one rather doubtful story, did Justin carry his devotion to his distinguished guest, that, though now in the eighth year of his reign, and once crowned already by the Patriarch of Constantinople, he solicited and obtained the honour of a second coronation from his papal visitor.

As to the success of John's intercession with Justin it is not easy to speak positively. The authorities who are most nearly contemporary assert very clearly that the prayers and tears of the Pope and his colleagues prevailed, and that the Emperor granted all their requests except that for the reconversion to Arianism of the new-made Catholics, which was deemed a thing impossible. Thus, they say, was Italy liberated from the fear of the vengeance of Theodoric.

Modern papal historians like Baronius, eager to vindicate the Pope from the stain of advocating religious toleration, vehemently contend against this statement, and ask with some force, "Why then the rage of Theodoric on the Pope's return, if he had done, with one inconsiderable exception, all that he was ordered to do". Perhaps we may fairly conclude that the Pope deserved the anger of both parties; of the Catholics for asking for and obtaining things which were in his view unlawful, and of the King for throwing out hints and commencing negotiations inconsistent with his loyalty as a subject. The maxim—

‘ To thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man,’

was one the spirit of which had been disregarded by Pope John, and he paid the penalty.

On his return to Ravenna, early in 526, the Pope found the King in no friendly mood, broken probably in health and sore against all the supposed ‘abettors of Boethius and Symmachus in their treasonable practices with Constantinople. John himself and his three ex-consular colleagues were thrown into prison, and there lingered several months. The hardships of the prison life were too much for the already enfeebled health of the Pontiff, and he died in confinement on the 25th of May, 526, ninety-seven days before the death of the King himself.

Thus did Theodoric, whose whole reign had been pervaded by the attempt to harmonise Goth and Roman, and to rule without partiality over Catholic and Arian, cruelly wound the feelings of his Roman subjects by degrading the person of the Pope, and end his career by making the one man to whom the eyes of all Catholics turned with reverence—a martyr. Toleration is a noble principle, but it cannot be taken up and laid down at pleasure. He who would earn the glory of a tolerant king must be tolerant even in the presence of intolerance : tolerant even to the end. If we may take a simile from horsemanship, it is of no use for the rider to keep his temper with a timid, shying horse through ten vagaries, if at the eleventh he loses patience and brings the whip down in heavy wrath. All his previous self-restraint goes for nothing, and his ill-temper spoils the temper of his steed.

CHAPTER XII.

BOETHIUS AND SYMMACHUS.

THE greatest mistake, if not the greatest crime, which sullied the fame of Theodoric, was the order given by him for the execution of Boethius and Symmachus. Coming as these executions did so near in time to the imprisonment and death in prison of Pope John, they easily acquired an ecclesiastical colour which did not of right belong to them: and thus these two noble, if somewhat mistaken men, who really perished as martyrs to the great name of Rome and the memory of the world-conquering Republic, have been surrounded by a halo of fictitious sanctity as martyrs to the cause of Christian orthodoxy.

To clear the ground, it will be well first of all to suffer our previous guide, the *Anonymus Valesii*, to tell us the tragic story, as it was recounted in ecclesiastical circles at Ravenna about a generation after the event.

After describing Theodoric's residence at Verona, the resort thither of the Jews of Ravenna with their complaint about their ruined synagogue and the stern order for restitution made by the King, the Anonymus thus continues :—

‘From this event the devil found occasion to subvert the man [Theodoric] who had been [up to this time] governing the republic well and without cause for complaint. For he presently ordered that the oratory and altar of St. Stephen, at the fountains in the suburb of Verona, should be overthrown. Then he commanded that no Roman should bear any arms, not even allowing them to carry a knife.

‘Also a poor woman, of the Gothic nation, lying under a porch not far from the palace of Ravenna, gave birth to four dragons : two were seen by the people to be carried along in the clouds from the west to the east, and then to be cast into the sea : two were captured, having one head between them. There appeared a star with a torch, which is called a comet, shining for fifteen days, and there were frequent earthquakes.

After these things the king began, upon the least occasion that he could find, to flame out in wrath against the Romans. Cyprian, who was then Reporter to the High Court of Justice, afterwards Count of the Sacred Largesses and Master [of the Offices], urged by cupidity, laid an information against Albinus the Patrician, that he had sent letters to the Emperor Justin hostile to the rule of Theodoric. This accusation he, upon being summoned, denied, and thereupon Boetius the Patrician, who was Master of the Offices, said in the King's presence: “False is the information of Cyprian, but if Albinus did it, both I and the whole Senate did it with one accord. It is false, my lord oh King!” Then Cyprian, with hesitation, brought forward false witnesses not only against Albinus, but also against his champion Boetius. But the King laid snares for the Romans, and sought how he might slay them : he put more confidence in the false witnesses than in the Senators. Then were Albinus and Boetius taken in custody at the baptistery of the church (at Ticinum?). But the King called for Eusebius, Prefect of the city of Ticinum, and passed sentence against Boetius unheard : and soon after sent and ordered him to be killed on the Calventian property. A cord was twisted for a very long time round his forehead, so that his eyes started from his head: and then at last in the midst of his torments he was slain with a club.

The King's return in high wrath to Ravenna, and his ill-conceived scheme of sending the Pope to Constantinople to plead for toleration to the Arians, are next described.

The Anonymus then continues: ‘But while these things are going on, Symmachus the Head of the Senate, whose daughter Boetius had to wife, is led from Rome to Ravenna. But the King, fearing lest through grief for the loss of his son-in-law he should attempt anything against his kingdom, caused him to be accused and ordered him to be slain. Then Pope John returning from Justin was badly received by Theodoric and ordered to consider himself in disgrace. After a few days he died, and as the people were going in procession before his corpse, suddenly one of the crowd fell down, stricken by a demon, and when they had come with the bier to the place where he was, suddenly he stood up whole, and walked before them in the procession. Which when the people and senators saw, they began to cut off relics from the garment [of the Pope]. Thus, amid the extreme joy of the people, was his corpse led out beyond the gates of the city.

‘Then [another] Symmachus, a Jew, and an official in the royal scholae, at the bidding, not of the king, but of the tyrant, issued orders on the fourth day of the week, the seventh before the kalends of September [26 August], on the fourth indiction, in the consulship of Olybrius, that on the following Lord’s Day the Arians should take possession of the Catholic basilicas. But He who suffers not his faithful worshippers to be oppressed by the aliens, soon inflicted on him the same sentence as on Arius the author of his religion. The king was attacked with diarrhoea, and after three days of incessant purgings, on the same day on which he promised himself to invade the churches, he himself lost both kingdom and life. Before he drew his last breath he appointed his grandson Athalaric to the kingdom. During his lifetime he made for himself a monument of squared stone, a work of wonderful bigness, and sought for a gigantic stone, which he placed as the crowning of the edifice’.

(Here the Anonymus Valesii abruptly ends.)

The information here given us may be illustrated, if not greatly increased, by the hints as to the life and character of Boethius, which we obtain from his own writings and those of his contemporaries.

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born at Rome probably in, or very soon after, the year 480. His family was one of the most illustrious in Rome. He belonged to the gens Anicia, which, originally sprung from Praeneste, first emerges to notice in Roman history in the third century B.C., played a respectable, though not important, part in the times of the Republic, and, simply by living on through the wars, proscriptions, and massacres of the Empire, became a large and mighty kinship in the fourth century after Christ, when so many of the great names of the Republic had gone out for ever. To this clan belonged Probus, Olybrius, Symmachus, whose names have come under our notice in connection with the history of the later empire. Possibly also both Faustus and Festus, the two rival ministers of Theodoric, styled themselves Anicii.

Thus his name Anicius indicated a real and genuine connection with one of the noblest families of the Lower Empire. Manlius was meant to carry back his lineage to the Manlii Torquati of the Republic; but here the connection was probably of that vague and shadowy kind which is met with in manufactured genealogies. Severinus was no doubt given to him in honour of one of the holiest names of the fifth century, the saintly hermit of Noricum.

A Boethius, probably the grandfather of Severinus Boethius, was, as we have already seen, murdered side by side with his friend Aetius, on that disastrous day when ‘the last of Romans’ fell, by the orders of the last Theodosian princeling Valentinian III. In the next generation Aurelius Manlius Boethius, after being twice Praefectus Urbi, and once Praetorian Prefect, attained the dignity of Consul in 487, during the domination of Odovacar. As this nobleman died in early middle life, his son, the one who was to immortalise the name, was left an orphan while still a boy. Powerful relations, however, undertook his guardianship, the most

noteworthy of them being Symmachus, who, when Boethius reached manhood, gave him Rusticiana his daughter to wife.

The names of Symmachus and Boethius are so inextricably intertwined by the fate which made their deaths part of the same dark tragedy, that it will be well to interrupt here the story of Boethius in order to give the main facts of the life of his father-in-law.

Quintus Aurelius Memmius Symmachus, was sprung, like his younger contemporary, from the great Anician house. The most conspicuous of his ancestors was Symmachus the orator, consul under the great Theodosius in 391, leader of the senatorial party at that day, and one of the last great names of Rome's slowly dying Paganism. The story might well have been told in the earlier volumes of this history, of his eloquent remonstrance with the young and uncompromising Gratian, against the removal of the altar of Victory from the Senate-house, and of his earnest entreaties to Theodosius and his colleagues to undo the impious work and restore the altar to its place.

A hundred years had wrought great changes in the attitude of the Roman nobles towards the unseen world. The Symmachus with whom we have now to deal—a man in many respects resembling his great ancestor, like him head of the Senate and enthusiastic for its glory—has become an earnest member of the Christian Church, and shows his fidelity to Rome by upholding the standard of Catholic orthodoxy against the Arian Theodoric.

Not, however, that we have any reason to suppose that, during the greater part of his life, Symmachus occupied an unfriendly position to the Ostrogothic government. He supported his namesake, Pope Symmachus, in his controversy with Laurentius, and, during the greater part of that struggle, was no doubt fighting on the same side as the King. He had held the dignity of Consul in 485 under Odovacar. He became *Praefeditis Urbi* under Theodoric, thus attaining the rank of an *Illustis*; and he also received the proud title of *Patricius*. By right of seniority he had risen by the year 524 to the venerable position of Head of the Senate, corresponding pretty closely with the high, but unofficial pre-eminence enjoyed in England by 'the Father of the House of Commons'. A man of correct and stately eloquence, of irreproachable character; the Cato of his age, but with the old Stoic virtues softened and refined by his Christian faith; a diligent student, and the author of a Roman history in seven books, a man also full of fine local patriotism for the great city which was his home, and willing to spend some of his vast wealth freely in the repair of her public buildings—such is the Symmachus of the age of Theodoric as he is represented to us by his admiring contemporaries.

The friendship of the elder and younger nobleman, crowned at length by the union which made Boethius the son-in-law of Symmachus, is a pleasing picture in an age in which we meet with little else than the rottenness of civilisation and the roughness of barbarism.

To the career of the younger Senator we now return. Boethius was an ardent student of Greek philosophy, but we have no evidence that he ever visited Greece. The notion that he actually studied at Athens seems to have been chiefly derived from the misunderstanding of a figurative expression of Cassiodorus as to his familiarity with Greek science. He early attained high rank in the State. Consul at about the age of thirty, and apparently even before that time dignified with the honour of the *Patriciate*, he was evidently, in those years of adolescence and early middle age, in high favour with the Ostrogothic King. His heart, however, was not in the stately presence-chamber of king or prefect, not with the shouting and excited crowd who lined the dusty hippodrome, but in the delightful retirement of his library. Here, in this temple of philosophy, adorned as its walls were with ivory and glass, did he hold converse deep into the night with the heavenly visitant, who was to come to him again in far other environment and cheer the squalid solitude of his dungeon.

The chief literary object of Boethius was to familiarise his countrymen with what he deemed best in Greek speculation; carrying on the work which had been commenced by

Cicero, and applying it to some writers whom it was harder to treat in a popular manner than those whom Cicero had expanded. He translated, Cassiodorus tells us, Pythagoras for the theory of music, Ptolemy for astronomy, Nicomachus for arithmetic, Euclid for geometry. But the chief work of these prosperous days, and that by which he most profoundly influenced the thoughts of after-times, was his commentaries on the logical treatises of Aristotle. The Categories, the Syllogism, the Analytics, and the Topics, with some minor treatises, thirty books in all, were translated by this indefatigable scholar, heir to one of the greatest names and one of the finest fortunes in Rome, but intent on placing philosophical truth within the reach of his fellow-countrymen. It seems to have been in great measure through the translations and commentaries of Boethius that the mediaeval Schoolmen made their acquaintance with the philosopher of Stagira. From him, at least in part, they derived the materials for the long war of words between the Nominalists and Realists; though Boethius himself, 'rushing into the battle at once with the valour of his race and his own personal intrepidity, gravely and peremptorily decides a question in which the doctors of Europe for centuries were to engage', by avowing himself a Realist. Boethius's own belief in the absolute existence of the Aristotelian conception, Genus, Species, Difference, Property, and Accident is firm and immutable, and the ardour of his conviction impressed itself on many generations of his readers.

On the whole the encyclopaedic labours of Boethius, though in the very highest degree honourable to the worker, have perhaps been of somewhat doubtful benefit to the world. It has been admirably said, by one well fitted to understand his intellectual position, 'Qualities, quantities, magnitudes, multitudes—who does not see that these names were building a prison for Boethius, of which the walls were far higher and more impenetrable than those of the one to which Theodoric consigned him? There was positively no escape, above, below, through ceiling or pavement, for one confined within this word-fortress: scarcely an aperture, one would have thought, for air or light to enter in'. And great as the authority of Boethius was for many centuries on the science of music as known to the ancient world, it seems to be thought, by those best qualified to judge, that his own knowledge of the subject was somewhat inaccurate, and that by going back to the Pythagorean scale he really retarded the scientific development of the art.

But Boethius was more than a mere student, however laborious; more than a populariser of the work of other men, however successful. He was also a highly skilled mechanic—a character which since the days of Archimedes had not been greatly affected even by the philosophers of Greece, and which a mere Roman noble might have been in danger of despising as beneath his dignity. Whenever Theodoric and his ministers were in want of advice on a mechanical, or (to use the modern term) on a chemical question, Boethius was the person to whom they naturally had recourse. If Gundobad the Burgundian was to be flattered and awed by an exhibition of Italian skill, Boethius must construct the wonderful water-clock which was to mark out the length of each successive solar day, the orrery (as we should call it) which was to imitate the movement of the solar system. If a skilful player on the cithara was to be sent to the court of Clovis the Frank, Boethius must select the performer. If the life-guards complained that the paymaster was putting them off with coins of inferior weight and fineness, Boethius was called upon, as Archimedes in a similar case by Hiero of Syracuse, to detect the fraud. That these friendly and familiar relations between the subject and his King should terminate in the dungeon, the cord, and the bludgeon, is one of the saddest pages in the history of courts.

In addition to his other occupations, Boethius entered the thorny labyrinth of theological controversy. A debate, which was carried on for many generations, as to the identity of Boethius the philosopher with Boethius the theologian, is now finally settled by the language

of the fragment so often referred to which asserts that 'he wrote a book concerning the holy Trinity, and some dogmatic chapters and a book against Nestorius. He also wrote a bucolic poem'.

A nobleman with these various endowments, philosopher, musician, astronomer, mechanic, poet, theologian, and the best writer of Latin prose of his century, was certainly a considerable figure on the stage of history. We have now to consider him in his character of politician—a character which one is disposed to think it would have been well both for him and for Italy that he had never assumed. He tells us, in a review of his past career, that it was in obedience to the teachings of Plato that he entered the domain of politics. Plato had said that states would be happy if either philosophers were kings or kings philosophers. He had also declared that the wise ought to take a share in political affairs, in order to prevent the disaster and ruin which would fall upon the good if the helm of the State were to be left in the hands of dishonest and immoral men.

'Guided by this authority', says he in his colloquy with Philosophy, 'I sought to translate into practical and public life the lessons which I had learned from thee in the secrecy of the study. Thou, and the God who breathed thee into the souls of the wise, are my witnesses, that nought moved me to the acceptance of office but the desire to promote the general welfare of my fellow-citizens. Hence came those bitter and implacable discords with scoundrels, and hereby was I strengthened to do what all must do who would keep a clear conscience, despite the anger of the great when I knew that I was championing the right.

'How often have I met the rush of Cunigast when coming on open-mouthed to devour the property of the poor! How often have I baffled Triguilla the royal chamberlain in some course of injustice which he had begun and all but completed! How often have I interposed my influence to protect the poor creatures whom the unbridled avarice of the barbarians was for ever worrying with false accusations!

'Never did any one turn me aside from right to wrong-doing. When I saw the fortunes of the Provincials being ruined at once by private robbery and by the public taxes, I grieved as much as the sufferers themselves. At a time of severe famine, when a rigorous and unaccountable order of 'coemption' was like to strike the whole province of Campania with poverty, I commenced in the public interest, and with the knowledge of the King, a struggle against the Praetorian Prefect, which was crowned with success, and led to the abandonment of the coemption'.

The reader will notice that in the above Boethius fairly enough attributes to Theodoric knowledge and approval of his attempts to preserve the Provincials of Campania from oppression. And indeed, on comparing this passage with those letters of Cassiodorus, which describe the disgrace of Faustus, we can hardly doubt that the latter nobleman is the Praetorian Prefect here referred to, and that Boethius co-operated with Cassiodorus to obtain at least a temporary suspension of the powers of so grasping and tyrannical a governor.

Boethius then mentions the case of 'Paulinus, a man of consular rank, for whose wealth the dogs of the palace were hungering and had in fancy already devoured it, but who was rescued by me from their hungry jaws'.

So far we have heard nothing that is not in entire conformity with the uniform tenour of the Various Letters of Cassiodorus, nothing as to which we may not believe that the conduct of Boethius was wise, statesmanlike, and in perfect accord with the wishes of Theodoric and his great minister. Both Goths like Triguilla, and Romans like Faustus, were continually, with Pacha-like voracity, scenting the prey of the subject Provincials, and it needed all the watchfulness and all the courage of the central government at Ravenna to detect and to punish their crimes.

It was no doubt partly in reward of such services, and in order to mark the King's appreciation of the character and attainments of his distinguished courtier, that honours and

offices were bestowed on Boethius and his family. His own consulship made the year 510 illustrious. In 522 his two sons, Symmachus and Boethius, one bearing his own name, and the other that of his honoured father-in-law, notwithstanding their extreme youth, were arrayed in the consular robes. The proud father, little dreaming of the ruin which was already nigh at hand, addressed Theodoric from his place in the Senate in a brilliant speech of panegyric. Afterwards, probably on the 1st of September in the same year, Boethius was promoted to the highly important and confidential post of Master of the Offices, which dignity he held when the storm of the royal displeasure burst upon him.

We thus come to the case of Albinus. Again Boethius himself shall describe it to us, and while reading his words, it will be well to compare them with the shorter but generally harmonious account given by the Anonymus Valesii.

‘That Albinus the Consular might not undergo punishment upon a foregone conclusion of his guilt, I set myself against the wrath of the informer Cyprian. Great indeed were the animosities which I thereby sharpened against myself [namely, of Cyprian’s party]; but I ought to have been all the safer with the rest [of the Senators], who knew that from my love of justice I had left myself no place of safety with the courtiers. But, on the contrary, who were the informers by whom I was struck down? [They were Senators themselves.] Basilius, long ago turned out of the King’s service, was driven by pressure of debt to calumniate my name. Opilio and Gaudentius, when, on account of their numberless and varied frauds, they had been ordered by a royal decree to quit the country, not choosing to obey, sought the shelter of the sanctuary. This came to the King’s ears, and he ordered that, unless by a given day they had left Ravenna, they should be driven forth with a brand of infamy on their foreheads. What more stringent measure could have been adopted? Yet on that very day they laid their information against me, and that information was accepted. Was that a fitting reward for my services? Did the foregone conclusion to condemn me turn those accusers into honest men? Had Fortune no shame, if not for the innocence of the accused, at least for the villainy of the accusers?’

But perhaps you ask in fine, of what crime is it that I am Accused. *I am said to have desired the safety of the Senate.* “In what way?” you ask. I am accused of having prevented an informer from producing certain documents in order to prove the Senate guilty of high treason. What is your advice then, oh my teacher? Shall I deny the charge in order that I may not bring disgrace upon you? But I did wish for the safety of the Senate, and shall never cease to wish for it. Shall I confess? That would be to play into the hands of the informer. Shall I call it a crime to have desired the safety of that venerable order? I can only think of their decrees concerning me as a reason why that should be a crime. But imprudence, though ever untrue to itself, cannot alter the nature of things, and, influenced as I am by the teachings of Socrates, I do not think it right either to conceal the truth or to admit a falsehood.

‘How this may be [what may be my duty to the Senate now that it has deserted me,] I leave to be settled by thy judgment and that of the sages. In order that the truth and the real connection of the whole affair may not be hidden from posterity, I have drawn up a written memorandum concerning it. For, as for those forged letters, by which I am accused of having hoped for Roman freedom, why should I say anything about them? Their falsity would have been manifest if I had been allowed to use the confession of the informers themselves, which is always considered of the greatest weight. For what chance of freedom, pray, is still left to us? Would, indeed, that there were any such chance. [Had I been examined in the King’s presence] I would have answered in the words of Canius, who, when accused by Caius [Caligula] of being privy to the conspiracy against him, answered, “If I had known of it, thou shouldst have never known”.’

Boethius then expresses his wonder that a good God can suffer the wicked thus to triumph over the righteous. As an earlier philosopher had said, "If there be a God, whence comes evil hither? And if there be none, whence comes good?"

'But let it be granted that it was natural for evil-minded men, who were thirsting for the blood of the Senate and of all good citizens, to seek to compass my ruin, because they saw in me the champion of both classes. But did I deserve this treatment at the hands of the Senate also? Since you [O Philosophy] ever present beside me, directed all my sayings and doings, you will remember, I think, that day at Verona, when the King, eager for a general slaughter, laboured to transfer the charge of treason brought against Albinus, to all the Senate. At what great peril to myself did I defend the innocence of the whole order! You know that in all this I am putting forth nothing but the truth, and am indulging in no vain boastings. My innocence has been more hardly dealt with than confessed guilt. Scarcely would an avowed criminal find all his judges unanimous against him, nor one disposed to make allowance for the frailty of the human mind, or to remember the inconstancy of Fortune. If I had been accused of wishing to burn the sacred edifices, to slay the priests with impious sword, to plot the murder of all good citizens, I should at least have been confronted with my accusers, and have either confessed my guilt or been convicted before I was punished. But now, at a distance of about 500 miles from my judges, dumb and undefended, I have been condemned to death and the forfeiture of my estate. For what? For too earnest love towards the Senate [my judges]. Assuredly they deserve that no one should ever again suffer on such a charge : a charge which even they who made it, saw to be so far from dishonourable that they were obliged to darken it with the admixture of some wickedness.

'They therefore falsely alleged that, in my pursuit of office, I had stained my conscience with sacrilege. Whereas thou, present in my breast, hadst driven base cupidity from thence, and under thy holy eyes there was no room for sacrilege. Thou hadst daily instilled into mine ears and thoughts the great Pythagorean maxim, "Follow God". How could I, whom thou hadst thus been fashioning into the divine likeness, seek to gain the favour of the baser spirits [of the under-world]? Moreover the innocent retirement of my home, the companionship of my honoured friends, the very presence of my father-in-law, a man holy and reverend as thou art, should have defended me from the suspicion of such crimes. But, alas! my very friendship with thee lent colour to the charge, and it was for this cause that I seemed likely to have practised divination, because I was known to be imbued with the teachings of Philosophy.'

It will not be needful to repeat to the reader any more of the sad ejaculations of Boethius. Failing that memorandum as to his defence, which Boethius he composed, and the loss of which leaves a lamentable gap in our knowledge of his case, we may take these few paragraphs as his plea against his accusers at the bar of history. With all its passionate declamation it does make some points of the story clearer.

(1) It is plain that Boethius was in no sense a martyr to orthodoxy. He was a Catholic, and Theodoric was an Arian, but that difference of creed had evidently no direct connection with the disgrace and death of the philosopher.

(2) Nor was it directly a case of Goth against Roman. The names of Gothic enemies which he mentions—Trigguilla, Cunigast, perhaps 'the dogs of the palace'—are all connected with his earlier life. In this latest act of the drama the 'delatores' against him are all Romans, Cyprian, Basilius, Gaudentius, Opilio. And this agrees with the hints of the Anonymus Valesii, who says that the informer was moved by cupidity; and with the language of Procopius, who declares that the wealth, the philosophic pursuits, the charity and the renown of Symmachus and Boethius, had stirred up envy in the breasts of spiteful men who laid a false charge against them before Theodoric, that they were plotting a revolution. Though the government is equally

responsible on either hypothesis, it was Roman fraud, not Gothic force, which set the powers of government in motion.

(3) It was by the Senate that Boethius was condemned to death and proscription. Here, too, the ultimate responsibility is not removed from the king, before whose frown the slavish Senate trembled. As we do not accept it as any apology for the sanguinary deeds of a Tudor prince, that his Parliament was found willing to invest them with the forms of law, so too the condemnation of Boethius, if unjust, stains the memory of Theodoric equally, whether passed by the Conscript Fathers in Rome or by his own *Comitatus* at Ravenna. But how shall we think of the case if evidence were laid before them which the Senate, with all their good-will to the prisoner, could not ignore? At any rate the interposition of the Senate shows that we have not to do with a mere outbreak of lawless savagery on the part of the Gothic King.

(4) The case was strangely complicated by an accusation against Boethius, that he practised forbidden arts and sought to familiar spirits. Ridiculous as this accusation seems to us, we can easily see how the pursuits of so clever a mechanician as Boethius would in the eyes of the ignorant multitude give plausibility to the charge. The Theodosian code teemed with enactments against *Mathematici*, meaning, of course, primarily the impostors who calculated nativities and cast horoscopes. From many allusions in the 'Consolation' we infer that astronomy was to Boethius the most attractive of all the sciences. He would have been centuries in advance of his age if he had been able to divest his study of the heavenly bodies of all taint of astrological superstition. The insinuation that a profound mathematician must needs possess unlawful means of prying into the future, was of course absurd; but it is not the barbarous ignorance of the Goth, but the superstitious legislation of generations of Christian Emperors, that must bear the blame of this miscarriage of justice.

There is one more witness, (a sad and unwilling witness,) who must be examined, and then the evidence in this mysterious case will be all before the reader. Cassiodorus, in all the twelve books of his letters, makes, I believe, no reference, direct or indirect, to the death of Boethius and Symmachus. This silence tells against Theodoric. Had the execution of the two statesmen been a righteous and necessary act, it is hardly likely that Cassiodorus would have so studiously avoided all allusion to the act itself, and to the share which he, the chief counsellor of Theodoric, may have had in the doing of it. As it is, we may almost imagine, though we cannot prove, that the minister, finding his master bent upon hot and revengeful deeds, such as could only mar the good work of their joint lifetimes, retired from active co-operation in the work of government, and left his master to do or undo at his pleasure, unchecked by a word from him.

Yet the evidence of Cassiodorus tells also somewhat against Boethius. The reader has seen in what tints of unrelieved blackness the philosopher paints all those who were concerned in his downfall. The letters of Cassiodorus, written after Theodoric's death, collected and published when their author was retiring from politics, give a very different impression of these men.

Cyprian, the accuser of Albinus, who was forced to become the accuser of Boethius also, appears, to have been a Roman of noble birth, son of a consul, to have been appointed *referendarius* in the king's court of appeal, and in that capacity to have had the duty of stating the cases of the litigants, first from one point of view, then from the other. The fairness with which he did this, the nimbleness of mind with which he succeeded in presenting the best points of each case without doing injustice to the other, often excited the admiration of the suitors themselves. Then, when Theodoric was weary of sitting in his court, he would often mount his horse and order Cyprian to accompany him in a ride through the whispering pine-wood of Ravenna. As they went, Cyprian would often, by the King's command, describe the main features of a case which was to come before the *Comitatus*. In his hands, the dull details

of litigation became interesting to the Gothic King, who, even when Cyprian was putting a hopelessly bad case before him, moderated his anger at the impudence of the litigant, in deference to the charm of his counsellor's narration.

Cyprian, after some years' service as Referendarius, was sent on an important embassy to Constantinople, in which he successfully upheld his master's interests at the Imperial Court. He was afterwards, apparently after the execution of Boethius, appointed to the high office of chief Finance Minister of the kingdom.

One would have said that this was the record of a fair and honourable official career, and that he who pursued it was not likely to be a base and perjured informer. Rather does it suggest to the mind the painful position of a statesman who, Roman himself, knew that many other Romans were not dealing faithfully by his Gothic King, but, by underhand intrigues at Constantinople, were seeking to prepare a counter revolution. His situation would thus be like that of a minister of Dutch William or Hanoverian George; bound in honesty to the king whose bread he is eating to denounce the treasons of the Jacobite conspirators around him, even though they be his countrymen and the king a foreigner. He names Albinus, whose guilt he is certain of. Boethius, the all-honoured and all-envied, steps forward, and thinks, by throwing the shelter of his great name over the defendant, to quash the accusation. With regret, but of necessity, Cyprian enlarges his charge, saying, 'Well, if you will have it so—and Boethius too.'

Let us turn to the characters of the other accusers. It is true that Basilius, 'long ago turned out of the King's service,' may be the same as the Basilius who was accused along with Praetextatus of being addicted to magical arts and whose case was handed over to the Prefect of the city for trial. Basilius, however, is a somewhat common name, and we must not be too certain of this identification. But as to Opilio, we have strong evidence from Cassiodorus, which makes it almost impossible that the passionate invective of Boethius can be absolutely true. Opilio was evidently the brother of Cyprian, and probably grandson of the consul of 453, who was also called Opilio. In 527, four years after these events, he was raised by Amalasantha, probably on the advice of Cassiodorus, to the responsible office of Count of the Sacred Largesses, which had been previously held by his brother. In the letters announcing his promotion to this office, the loyalty and truth of character, both of Opilio and Cyprian, are enthusiastically praised. 'Why should I describe the merits of his ancestors when he shines so conspicuously by the less remote light of his brother? They are near relations, but yet nearer friends. He has so associated himself with that brother's virtues that one is uncertain which of the two one should praise the more highly. Cyprian is a most faithful friend, but Opilio shows unshaken constancy in the observance of his promises. Cyprian is devoid of avarice, and Opilio shows himself a stranger to cupidity. Hence it comes that they have known how to keep faith with their sovereigns, because they know not how to act perfidiously towards their equals. It is in this unfettered intercourse that the character is best shown. How can such men help serving their lords honourably, when they have no thought of taking an unfair advantage of their colleagues?'

Doubtless these official encomiums are to be received with caution, but, after making all due abatement, it is impossible to suppose that Cassiodorus would have deliberately republished letters, full of such high praises of men, whom all his contemporaries knew to be, in truth, the base scoundrels described by Boethius.

In connection with this subject we must take also some words of the philosopher with reference to one of his colleagues in office. When he is musing on the vanity of human wishes, and showing why the honours of the State cannot satisfy man's aspirations after happiness, he says, or rather Philosophy says to him, 'Was it really worth while to undergo so many perils in order that thou mightest wear the honours of the magistracy with Decoratus, though thou

sawest in him the mind of abase informer and buffoon?'. Now Decoratus—the name is too uncommon to make it probable that there were two contemporaries bearing it—was a young nobleman of Spoleto, a man of some eminence as an orator, loyal, faithful, and generous. He died in the prime of life, and the King, who deeply regretted him, sought to repay some part of the debt owing to Decoratus by advancing in the career of office his younger brother Honoratus. Such is the picture of his character which we collect, not only from two letters of Cassiodorus, but also from one of Ennodius, and from the more doubtful evidence of his epitaph. Are all these men's characters to be blasted, because of the passionate words of Boethius in his dungeon? Do not these words rather return upon himself, and can we not now see something more of his true character? To me they indicate the faults of a student-statesman, brilliant as a man of letters, unrivalled as a man of science, irreproachable so as he remained in the seclusion of his library; but utterly unfit for affairs; passionate and ungenerous; incapable of recognising the fact that there might be other points of view beside his own; persuaded that every one who wounded his vanity must be a scoundrel, or at best a buffoon;—in short, an impracticable colleague, and, with all his honourable aspirations, an unscrupulous enemy.

The reader has now before him all the evidence that is forthcoming with reference to this most important but most perplexing State-trial. A historian shrinks from pronouncing his own verdict in such a case. His admiration and sympathy are due in different ways both to the author of the sentence and to its victim; and he can only extenuate the fault of Theodoric by magnifying, perhaps unduly, the fault of Boethius. But, after all the analysis that we have been engaged in, some short synthetical statement seems needful for the sake of clearness.

It was probably some time in the year 523 that Theodoric was first informed that some of the leading Senators were in secret correspondence with the Emperor. The tidings came at a critical time. In the previous year the great Ostrogoth had heard of his grandson Segeric's death, inflicted by order of his father, the Catholic King of Burgundy. In May or June of this year came the news that his own sister, the stately Queen of the Vandals, Amalafriada, was shut up in prison by the Catholic Hilderic. Must then 'the aspiring blood of Amala sink in the ground?' Was there a 'conspiracy everywhere among these lesser lords of the Germans, both against the creed of their forefathers, and against the great Ostrogothic house which had been the pillar of the new European State-system? Such were the suggestions that goaded the old hero almost to madness. He had now just reached the seventh decade of life; and the temper so well kept in curb all through his middle years, since the day when he slew Odovacar, was beginning to throw off the control of the feebler brain of age.

Then came the scene of the denunciation of Albinus. It happened apparently at Verona, most likely in the High Court of Justice (*Comitatus*) of the King. Boethius generously steps forward to shield Albinus. Cyprian, driven into a corner, reluctantly accuses Boethius also. Of what was it that Albinus and Boethius were accused? This, which should be the plainest part of the whole transaction, is in fact the darkest. None of our authorities really enable us to reconstruct the indictment against the Senators. Boethius shrilly vociferates that he was accused of nothing but 'desiring the safety of the Senate', which, taken literally, is absurd. But we have seen abundantly how indefinite and anomalous was the tie which bound both the Senate, and in some sort Theodoric himself, to the Empire. Is it possible that the letters which were sent by the senatorial party urged Justin to turn this shadowy senior-partnership into real supremacy, and especially *claimed for the members of the Senate that they should be judged only by the tribunals of the Empire, not by those of Theodoric?* Some such demand as this would explain the words of Boethius about 'desiring the safety of the Senate'. At the same time it was a proposal which, in the actual circumstances of both realms, meant really treason to Theodoric.

It seems probable that some letters of this similar purport were actually signed by Boethius as well as by Albinus and forwarded to Constantinople. Boethius says that the letters which were produced against him were forged. Perhaps, in reality, they were tampered with, rather than forged from beginning to end. It was a case in which the alteration of a few words might make all the difference between that which was and that which was not consistent with a good subject's duty to Theodoric. If any such vile work were done, the author of it may have been Gaudentius, the chief object of the vituperations of the philosopher for whom we can produce no rebutting evidence from the pages of Cassiodorus.

Whatever the accusation, and whatever the proofs, they appear to have been all forwarded to Rome, where the Senate, with base cowardice and injustice, trembling before the wrath of the King, unanimously found Boethius guilty of treason, and perhaps of sacrilege also. He was never confronted with his accusers, but was all the time lying in prison at Pavia or Calvenzano. Albinus disappears from the narrative, but was probably condemned along with Boethius.

For some reason which is not explained to us Boethius was kept in confinement for a considerable time, probably for the latter half of 523 and the earlier half of 524. The King was evidently greatly enraged against him. Probably the recent consulships bestowed on the sons of the conspirator and the flowery panegyric which he had then pronounced on Theodoric quickened the resentment of the King by the stings of ingratitude and, as it seemed, successful deception. It is possible that the reason for this long delay may have been a desire to wring from Boethius the names of his fellow-conspirators; and if so, we dare not altogether reject the story told by the Anonymus Valesii of the tortures applied to him in the prison. In itself this writer's narrative is not of a kind that commands implicit faith, and one is disposed to set down the story of the twisted cord and the protruding eyes as a fit companion to that told a few lines before of the woman who gave birth to the dragons, and of their airy passage to the sea. The author is evidently misinformed as to some circumstances of the trial, since he makes the King, not the Senate, pass sentence on Boethius, and represents the sentence as soon carried out, whereas the philosopher undoubtedly languished for a considerable time in prison after his condemnation.

The death of Boethius occurred probably about the middle of 524. We have no means of ascertaining the date more accurately. Then came the ill-judged mission of the Pope to Constantinople; and before his return, apparently early in 525, the citation of the venerable Symmachus to Ravenna, and his execution. From the whole tenor of the narrative it is safe to infer that this was much more the personal act of Theodoric than the condemnation of Boethius had been. The evidence, if evidence there was, of conspiracy was probably far slighter. Fear was the King's chief counsellor, and, as ever, an evil counsellor. The course of argument was like that of Henry VIII in his later years, or the Committee of Public Safety in the French Revolution. 'Symmachus has lost his son-in-law; Symmachus must be disaffected to the monarchy; let Symmachus be prevented from conspiring—by the executioner.' It is clear, from the stories which were floating about in the next generation, that this act was the one which was most severely blamed by contemporaries, and the one which lay heaviest on the King's own conscience.

In short, from such information as we can collect, it seems right to conclude,—

(1) That the death of Boethius, though a grievous blunder, was, according to the principles of self-preservation acted upon by all rulers, not a crime.

(2) That if torture were employed, which is too probable but not proved, such a proceeding was an infamy.

(3) That the death of Symmachus was both a blunder and a crime.

But while condemning the conduct of Theodoric we may also lament the error of judgment which led the high-minded but visionary Boethius into the field of politics. He had

doubtless noble dreams for the future of a reorganized and imperial Italy; dreams which entitle him to reach over eight centuries and clasp the hand of the Florentine poet, the author of the *De Monarchia*. But in that near future to which politicians must confine their gaze, the restoration of the Empire meant the carnival of the tax-collectors of Byzantium; the ascendancy of the Church meant the inroads of the fierce and faithless Frank. These evils would have been avoided and centuries of horror would have been spared to Italy, if the inglorious policy of Cassiodorus, the statesman of the hour, might have prevailed over the brilliant dreams of Boethius, the student and the seer.

I have purposely reserved to the last, till these matters of political debate were disposed of, the mention of the great work which has made the imprisonment of Boethius for ever memorable—his ‘Consolation of Philosophy’. The title of the book is ambiguous; but it need hardly be said that Philosophy is not the consoled one but the consoler. She indeed, at the end of the dismal tragedy, might well seem to need comfort for the loss of her favourite disciple. But in this book he, still living, describes how she braced and cheered him in his dungeon, when he was tempted to repine at his unmerited downfall, and to murmur at the triumph of the bad, at the apparent forgetfulness of the just Ruler of the world.

The scheme of the book is on this wise. The ‘author of the bucolic poem’, sick and in prison, employs his lonely hours in writing verses, and thus he sings :—

‘I, who once touched the lyre with joyful hand,
Now, in my grief, do tread sad ways of song.
Lo! at my side the tearful Muses stand
To guide my heartfelt elegy of wrong.

No tyrant’s wrath deters these guests sublime
From journeying with me all my downward way;
These, the bright comrades of my joyous Prime,
And now, my weary Age’s only stay.

Yes: weary Age. For Youth with Joy has fled,
And Sadness brings her hoar companion.
Untimely honours silver o’er my head,
Untimely wrinkles score my visage wan.

Oh! happy they from whose delightful years
Death carries far, to come, when called, with speed.
But deaf is Death to me, though called with tears :
These tearful eyes he will not close at need.

While still my bark sped on with favouring breeze,
Me, Death unlooked-for all but swept away.
Now, when all round me roar the angry seas,
Life, cruel Life, protracts her tedious stay.

How oft you named me happy, oh my friends.
Not happy he, whose bliss such ruin ends.’

Scarce has the mourning philosopher thus uttered his grief in song, when he lifts up his eyes and sees a mysterious form standing beside him. A woman, she seems, of venerable face,

with gleaming eyes, with every sign of youthful vigour about her, and yet with something in her countenance which tells of life protracted through untold centuries. Her very stature is mysterious and indefinite. Now her head seems to touch the skies, and now she is only of the ordinary height of men. The raiment which she wears was woven by her own hands of finest gossamer thread, and is dark with age. On the lower hem of her robe is embroidered the letter P, on the upper one T. (These letters, as we afterwards learn, stand for Practical and Theoretical Wisdom.) Upon the robe is embroidered the likeness of steps leading up from the lower letter to the higher. In her right hand she bears some rolls of parchment; in her left a sceptre.

This is Philosophy, come to reprove and to comfort her downcast disciple. With sublime wrath she dismisses the Muses from the bed-side of the patient, pouring upon them names of infamy, and declaring that they are aggravating the disease which they pretend to heal. Boethius is her disciple, nourished on the doctrine of Eleia and the Academy, and by her Muses, not by their Siren voices shall his soul be cured. The Muses venture no reply, but with downcast looks and blushing faces silently depart.

Then Philosophy, sitting on the edge of his bed and looking into his face with sad eyes, sings a song of pity and reproof. 'Alas!' she says, 'for the darkness which comes over the mind of man. Is this he whose glance roved freely through the heavenly labyrinth, who watched the rosy light of dawn, the changes of the chilly moon, who marked the course of the winds, the return of flowery spring and fruitful autumn, and who knew the reason of all these things? Yet now here he lies, with his mind all bedimmed, with heavy chains upon his neck, casting downward his gloomy countenance, and forced to contemplate only the stolid earth beneath him.'

'The time is come,' she continues, 'for the healing art of the physician. Look fixedly at me, and tell me, dost thou know me?' A deadly lethargy oppresses Boethius, and he makes no reply. Then she wipes his streaming eyes: the touch of her hand revives him; he gazes earnestly into her face; he recognizes his own and oldest friend, his Muse, his teacher, Philosophy. But why has she come to visit him in this his low estate? She assures him that she never leaves her votaries in their distress, and reminds him by the example of Socrates, Anaxagoras, Zeno, and many more, that to be misunderstood, to be hated, to be brought into prison, and even to death itself by the oppressor, is the customary portion of those who love her. She is come to heal him, but, that she may practise her skill, it is needful that he shall show her all his wound. Then Boethius, in a few pages of autobiography, gives that narrative of his fall from the sovereign's favour which has been already put before the reader. The remembrance of all his wrongs, the reflection that even the people condemn him and that his good name is trodden under foot of men, forces from him a cry of anguish, and in a song, well-nigh of rebellion against the Most High, he says, 'O God, wherefore dost thou, who rulest the spheres, let man alone of all thy creatures go upon his wicked way, heedless of thy control?'

Philosophy, with face sadder than before, hears this outburst. 'I knew,' she says, 'when I first saw thee that thou wast an exile from thy home, but how far thou hadst wandered from the City of Truth I knew not till now. Tell me, dost thou believe in an all-wise and all-good Governor of the world?'. 'I do', he answered, 'and will never cast away this faith'. 'But what is the manner of his governing?' Boethius shakes his head, and cannot understand the question. 'Poor clouded intellect!' says Philosophy to herself. 'Nevertheless his persuasion that there is a righteous Ruler is the one point of hope. From that little spark we will yet reanimate his vital heat. But the cure will need time.'

'I see,' said Philosophy, 'that it is the sudden change of Fortune that has wrought this ruin in thy intellect. But it is of the very essence of Fortune to be ever changing. If she could speak for herself she would say, "All those things which you now mourn the loss of were my possessions, not yours. Far from groaning over their departure, you should be thankful to me

for having let you enjoy them so long". Think what extraordinary good fortune you have had in life; friends to protect your boyhood, an honoured father-in-law, a noble wife, a marriage-bed blessed with male offspring. Remember that proud day when you went from your home with a son, a consul, on either side of you, begirt by crowds of senators. Remember your oration in the Senate-house in praise of the King, and the glory won by your eloquence. Remember the shouting multitudes in the circus, who acclaimed your lavish gifts'. 'Ah, but that is the very pity of it,' says Boethius : 'the remembrance of these past delights is the sharpest sting of all my sorrows'. 'Courage!' replies his heavenly visitor : 'all is not yet lost. Symmachus, that wise and holy man, whose life ou would gladly purchase with your own, still lives, and though he groans over your injuries has none to fear for himself. Rusticiana, whose character is the very image of her father's, lives, and her intense sympathy with your suffering is the only thing which I can consent to call a calamity for you. Your sons, the young Consulars, live too, and at every turn reflect the mind either of their father or their grandfather. After all, even in your present low estate there are many who would gladly change with you. Some secret grief or care preys on almost every heart, even of those who seem most prosperous'.

Then the gifts of Fortune are passed rapidly under review. Money, jewels, land, fine raiment, troops of servants, power, fame, are all subjected to that searching analysis, by which at any time for the last 2500 years philosophers have been able to prove their absolute worthlessness, that analysis in spite of which still, after so many centuries, the multitude of men still persist in deeming them of value.

The cure now begins to work in the soul of Boethius, and Philosophy feels that she may apply stronger remedies than the mere palliatives which she has used hitherto. She therefore leads him into a discussion of the *Summum Bonum*, the supreme good, which all men, more or less consciously, are searching after and longing to possess. There are many things apparently good, which cannot be this one highest good. Wealth cannot be the *Summum Bonum*, for it is not self-sufficing. Nor office, since it only brings out in stronger relief the wickedness of bad men; since it confers no honour among alien peoples, and the estimation in which it is held is constantly changing even in the same country. Nor can friendship with kings and the great ones of the earth be the *Summum Bonum*, since those persons themselves lack it. Glory, popularity, noble birth, all are found wanting. The pleasures of the flesh, yea and even family joys, cannot be the *Summum Bonum*. At this point a certain religious awe comes over the interlocutors. Philosophy sings a hymn of invocation to the Supreme Being, and then leads Boethius up to the conclusion that the *Summum Bonum*, or Happiness in the highest sense, can be none other than God himself, and that men, in so far as they attain to any real participation therein, are themselves divine. In a somewhat Pantheistic strain, Philosophy argues that all things tend towards God, and that evil, which appears to resist him, is itself only an appearance.

'Still,' cries the prisoner in agony, 'my difficulty has not really vanished. I see that the bad do prosper here, and the good are often cruelly oppressed. How can I reconcile these facts with the faith, which I will not abandon, that the world has a Just and Almighty Ruler?' Philosophy, one must admit, answers but feebly this eternal question. She repeats the Stoical commonplaces, that the wise man (or the good man) alone is free, alone is strong; that the evil man, though he sit upon a tyrant's throne, is in truth a slave, that liberty to work wickedness is the direst of all punishments, and that if wicked men could only, as it were, through a little chink of light see the real nature of things, they would cry out for the sorest chastisement, for anything to cleanse them from their intolerable corruption. The thought of a world to come in which the wicked, triumphant in this world, shall receive the just reward of their deeds, is somewhat timorously put forward, and does not become, as in the Christian Theodicy, the central point of the reply to the impugner of God's ways

Philosophy is perhaps nearer to grasping the key of the position, when she enters into a long disquisition on the distinction between Providence and Fate. Providence is the supreme, all-ruling, all-directing Intelligence, whose ways will be manifestly justified in the end : Fate, the instrument in the hand of Providence, more closely resembles what we understand by the Laws of Nature. To Fate belongs that undeviating order, that rigid binding together of Cause and Effect, which produces what to men seems sometimes hardness or even injustice in the ways of their Creator. Philosophy argues, therefore, that every fortune is, in truth, good fortune, since it comes to us by the will of God. The wise man, when he finds that what men call evil fortune is coming upon him, should feel like the warrior who hears the trumpet sound for battle. Now is the day come for him to go forth, and prove, in conflict with adverse Fate, the strength of that armour with which years of philosophic training have endowed him.

Rested and strengthened, Boethius now invites his heavenly guest to cheer him with one of those discussions in which of old he delighted, and to explain to him how she reconciles the divine foreknowledge of all future events with the freedom of human actions. God's knowledge of the future cannot be a mere opinion or conjecture : it must be absolute, certain and scientific. 'Yet, if He thus foresees my actions for this day, they are fixed, and my power of changing them is only apparent. Thus Necessity is introduced, Free-Will goes, and with it Moral Responsibility. It is useless to utter prayer to God, since the order of all things is already fixed, and we cannot change it. The thought of Divine Grace, touching and moulding the hearts of men, and bringing them into communion with their Maker, goes likewise. All is rigid, mechanical, immutable'.

Philosophy's answer to this question is long and subtil, but in the end brings us nearly to the same conclusion which is probably reached, more or less consciously, by the ordinary Theist of today. In all acts of perception, she says, the perceiver himself contributes something from the quality of his own mind : and thus perceptions differ according to the rank held by the perceiver in the intellectual universe. Animals see material things around them, but they do not see in them all that man sees. Where the horse sees only the quartem-measure in which his oats are brought to him, the trained intellect of man sees a circle, roughly representing the ideal circle of mathematics, and is conscious of all the properties inherent in that figure. As our manner of seeing is superior to that of the brutes, so we must train ourselves to think of God's manner of seeing as superior to ours. He can see all future events, both necessary and contingent, and yet not, by seeing them, impart to all the same necessity. Before him, as the Eternal Being, Past, Present and Future lie all outstretched at the same moment. He sees all events which have happened and which shall happen, as if now happening; and thus his foreseeing no more necessitates the actions foreseen than my looking at a man ploughing on yonder hill compels him to plough, or prevents him from ceasing his occupation.

'And yet, in a certain sense, there is a necessity laid upon men, from the very thought that they are thus doing all in the sight and presence of God : a necessity to lead nobler lives, to avoid vice, to raise their hearts to the true and higher hope, to lift up their humble prayers on high'.

Here, abruptly, the Consolation of Philosophy ends. We must suppose that when Boethius has reached this point, the step of the brutal gaoler is heard at his dungeon-door, the key turns in the lock, the executioner enters, and the Consolations of Philosophy end with the life of her illustrious disciple.

Such is an outline of the argument of the work upon which Boethius employed the enforced leisure of his prison hours. It will at once be seen that it deals with subjects which have ever been of primary interest to the human race. Sometimes the argument reminds us of the book of Job, sometimes of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, sometimes of Pope's 'Essay on Man'. The author's Latin prose is, upon the whole, pure, correct, and intelligible, a delightful

contrast to the verbosity of Cassiodorus and the turgid ineptitudes of Ennodius. The snatches of song, in a vast variety of metres, with which the discourse is pleasantly enlivened, show an intimate acquaintance with the tragedies of Seneca, from whom sometimes a poetical phrase, sometimes the central idea of a whole canzonet, is borrowed. The extent of this indebtedness, however, has been sometimes overstated. The poems belong to Boethius himself, though he has written them with the echoes of Seneca's lyre vividly in his ear; and some of the most beautiful thoughts are entirely his own.

In the argument of the book Boethius shows himself, as we should have expected, a persistent eclectic. Though Aristotle is his great master, he draws in this book largely from Plato; and often we come upon passages which remind us of the Stoic doctrines which were the favourite subject of ridicule to Horace.

The religious position of the author has always been a subject of perplexity, and is not less so, now that we know that he is the same person who wrote tractates on subtle points of Christian controversy. He speaks throughout as a Theist, a Theist unshaken and unwavering, notwithstanding all the things that seem to make for Atheism in the world, but hardly as a Christian. There is no hint of opposition to any Christian doctrine; but on the other hand there is no sign of a willingness to accept the special Christian explanation of the central difficulty of the world. Instead of subtle arguments about the nature of the *Summum Bonum*, or a proof that bad men cannot be said truly to be at all and therefore it is idle to trouble ourselves about their prosperity, a Christian martyr would inevitably have turned to the remembrance of the Crucifixion, the mocking soldiery, the cursing Jews, and would have said, at the sorest of his distress, 'He has suffered more for me.' And the same thought would naturally have comforted any man, who, though not a martyr yet holding the same faith, was assailed by any of the lesser miseries of life, and troubled by seeing the apparent ascendancy of evil. By him who accepts the fact which the Christian witnesses proclaim it may surely be said with boldness, 'The true Theodicy is the Theopathy.' The Son of God suffering for sin, admits the difficulty of the apparent triumph of evil, but suggests an explanation, which Faith leans upon, though Reason cannot put it into words.

Of all this we have in Boethius not a hint. Perhaps it was precisely because he was something of a scientific theologian, and knew the shoals and currents of that difficult sea in which it was so hard to avoid making shipwreck, one side or another, on the rocks of heresy, that he preferred to sail the wide ocean of abstract Theism. More likely, the feeling of a certain incompatibility between Christianity and polite literature, a feeling which not all the literary eminence of Jerome and Augustine had been able entirely to dispel, a feeling which threw so many of the later historians, Ammianus, Zosimus, Procopius, on the side of heathenism, prevented Boethius from more distinctly alluding than he has done to the Christian solution of his difficulties.

Whatever the cause, the undogmatic character of the 'Consolation' had probably something to do with its marvellous success in the immediately following centuries. The Middle Ages were at hand, that era of wild and apparently aimless struggle between all that is noblest and all that is basest in our common humanity. Many refined and beautiful natures were to go through that strife, to feel the misery of that chaos, in which they were involved. Some, far the larger part, clinging to the religious hope alone as their salvation from the storm, would retire from the evil world around them into the shelter of the convent.

But there were some, few perhaps in number in each generation, but many in the course of the centuries, who would elect not to quit the world but to battle with it, not to fly the evil but to overcome it. To such souls the 'Consolation' of Boethius sounded like a trumpet-call to the conflict. It was not the less welcome, may be, because it did not recall the familiar tones of

monk and priest. The wisdom of all the dead pagan ages was in it, and nerved those strong, rather than devout, hearts to victory.

To trace with anything like completeness the influence of Boethius on the mind of the Middle Ages would require another chapter as long as the present. The mere list of editions and translations of his works, chiefly of his greatest work, in our national library, occupies fifty pages of the British Museum Catalogue. Two names, however, of his English translators, a king and a poet, claim a notice here. King Alfred, probably in the years of peace which followed the Treaty of Wedmore, found or made leisure to interpret the 'Consolation' to his countrymen. 'Sometimes¹,' as he himself tells us, 'he set word by word, sometimes meaning for meaning, as he the most plainly and most clearly could explain it, for the various and manifold worldly occupations which often busied him both in mind and in body. The occupations are very difficult to be numbered which in his days came upon the kingdom which he had undertaken; and yet when he had learned this book and turned it from Latin into the English language, he afterwards composed it in verse, as it is now done'. The King then explains to his subjects how 'the Goths made war against the Empire of the Romans, and with their kings, who were called Rhadgast and Alaric, sacked the Roman city and brought to subjection all the kingdom of Italy. Then, after the before-mentioned kings, Theodoric obtained possession of that same kingdom. He was of the race of the Amali, and was a Christian, but persisted in the Arian heresy. He promised to the Romans his friendship, so that they might enjoy their ancient rights. But he very ill performed that promise, and speedily ended with much wickedness; which was that in addition to other unnumbered crimes, he gave order to slay John the Pope. Then there was a certain consul, that we call *heretoga*, who was named Boethius. He was in book learning and in worldly affairs the most wise. Observing the manifold evil which the King Theodoric did against Christendom and against the Roman Senators, he called to mind the famous and the ancient rights which they had under the Caesars, their ancient lords. Then began he to enquire and study in himself how he might take the kingdom from the unrighteous King, and bring it under the power of the faithful and righteous men. He therefore privately sent letters to the Caesar at Constantinople, which is the chief city of the Greeks and their king's dwelling-place, because the Caesar was of the kin of their ancient lords: they prayed him that he would succour them with respect to their Christianity and their ancient rights. When the cruel King Theodoric discovered this, he gave orders to take him to prison and therein lock him up'.

After this prelude the royal translator proceeds to describe the sorrow of Boethius and the manner in which it was soothed. It is perhaps a concession to the monastic depreciation of women that the heavenly comforter is introduced as a *man* who is called Wisdom (sometimes Wisdom and Reason), instead of the noble matron Philosophy.

Few men would have had more sympathy with all that was great in Theodoric than Alfred his fellow-Teuton, had he known the true character of the Amal King, and the nature of the task that he had to grapple with. But three centuries of ecclesiastical tradition had produced so distorting an effect on the image reflected, that, as will be seen, the Theodoric whom Alfred beheld, resembled in scarcely a single feature the Theodoric known to his contemporaries. But notwithstanding this blemish, Alfred's translation of Boethius is a marvellous work. Few things seem to bring us so near to the very mind and soul of the founder of England's greatness as these pages, in which (not always understanding his author and sometimes endeavouring to improve upon him) the King follows the guidance of the philosopher through the mazes of the eternal controversy concerning Fate, Foreknowledge, and Free-will.

Travelling over five centuries, we find the illustrious and venerable name of Geoffrey Chaucer among the translators of Boethius. In the note prefixed to the work he says, 'In this book are handled high and hard obscure points, viz. the purveyance of God, the force of

Destiny, the Freedom of our Wills, and the infallible Prescience of the Almighty; also that the Contemplation of God himself is our Sum mum Bonum.' Chaucer's notion of the duty of a translator seems to be stricter than King Alfred's; but it may be doubtful whether he has not presented the book in a less attractive guise than the royal translator.

With the revival of learning in the fifteenth century it was inevitable that the surpassing lustre, of the fame of Boethius should suffer some eclipse. When learned men were studying Aristotle and Plato for themselves, the translator and populariser of their philosophies became necessarily a person of diminished importance. Still, however, so fine a scholar as Sir Thomas More cherished the teachings of the Consolation of Philosophy, and was cheered by them in the dungeon to which he was consigned by a more tyrannical master than Theodoric.

In the following century a Jesuit priest by an imaginary life of Boethius, somewhat revived his fame, and as a statesman who resisted a heretical sovereign to the death, he was held up as a model for the imitation of English and German Catholics.

In later days the writings of Boethius have ceased to live, except for a few curious students. Yet, whoso would understand the thoughts that were working in the noblest minds of mediaeval Europe would do well to give a few hours of study to the once world-renowned 'Consolation of Philosophy.'

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ACCESSION OF ATHALARIC.

THE sun of Theodoric, which for thirty years had shone in mild splendour over the Italian land, set in lurid storm-clouds. Boethius slain, Symmachus slain, Pope John dead in prison, these were the events which every tongue at Rome and Ravenna was discussing with fear, with anger, or with lawless hope; and assuredly the dying King, though he might say few words concerning them, thought of little else : and all his thoughts about them were bitter. According to a story which was told to Procopius (perhaps by one of the lacqueys of the Court whom he may have met at Ravenna), one day at the banquet a large fish's head was set before Theodoric. To the King's excited fancy, the object in the dish assumed the semblance of the pallid face and hoary head of Symmachus, newly slain. Then, as he thought, the teeth began to gnaw the lower lip, the eyes rolled askance and shot glances of fury and menace at his murderer. Theodoric, who, if there be any truth in the story at all, was evidently already delirious, was seized with a violent shivering-fit, and hurried to his bed, where the chamberlains could hardly heap clothes enough upon him to restore his warmth. At length he slept, and when he woke he told the whole circumstance to Elpidius his physician, bewailing with many tears his unrighteous deed to Symmachus and Boethius. In this agony of mind, says Procopius, 'he died not long after, this being the first and last act of injustice which he had committed against any of his subjects : and the cause of it was that he had not sufficiently examined into the proofs, before he pronounced judgment upon these men.'

The ecclesiastical tradition as to the death of Theodoric, preserved for us by the Anonymus Valesii, makes the cause of it dysentery; a form of disease which, ever since the opportune death of the arch-heretic Arius, seemed peculiarly appropriate for heterodox disturbers of the Church. For the secular historian it is enough to remember that Theodoric was now seventy-two years of age and broken-hearted. They may leave him alone, the orthodox Romans, the righteously indignant friends of Senator and Pope. For that noble heart, Hell itself could scarcely reserve any sorer punishment than the consciousness of a life's labour wasted by one fierce outbreak of Berserker revenge.

The body of the dead King was laid in the mighty mausoleum which he had built for himself outside the north-eastern corner of Ravenna. There the structure still stands, massive if not magnificent, no longer now the Tomb of Theodoric, but the deserted Church of S. Maria della Rotonda. It is built of white marble, and consists of two stories, the lower ten-sided, the upper circular. The whole is crowned with an enormous monolith weighing two hundred tons and brought from the quarries of Istria. It is hard even for the scientific imagination to conjecture the means by which, in the infancy of the engineering art, so huge a mass of stone can have been raised to its place. In the centre of the upper story of the building stood, in all probability, the porphyry vase which held the body of the great Gothic King. The name Gothic must not lead the visitor to expect to see anything of what is technically called Gothic architecture in the building. The whole structure is Roman in spirit; square pilasters, round massive arches, a cupola, somewhat like that of Agrippa's Pantheon. The edifice, however, of which upon the whole it most reminds us is the great Mausoleum of Hadrian, such as it must have appeared in the centuries when it was still an imperial tomb and before it became a Papal fortress. And probably this was the example which hovered before the mind of Theodoric, whose work was not undertaken in a spirit of mere vainglory. Believing that he was founding a

dynasty which would rule Italy for centuries, he would construct, as Hadrian had constructed, a massive edifice in which might be laid the bones of many generations of his successors.

As it turned out, the great Mausoleum became a Cenotaph. Theodoric himself was buried there, but when Agnellus, three hundred years after his death, wrote the story of the Bishops of Ravenna, it was matter of public notoriety that the tomb had long been empty; and the belief of the chronicler himself was that the royal remains had been cast forth contemptuously out of the Mausoleum, and the porphyry urn in which they were enclosed, a vessel of wonderful workmanship, placed at the door of the neighbouring monastery.

Why should there have been this mystery about the disposal of the body of the great Ostrogoth? Thereto is attached a little history, which, if the reader has patience to listen to it, links together in curious fashion the name of the Pope who sent St. Augustine to convert the Saxons, and that of the Pope who in our own day wielded and lost the power of a king both at Rome and at Ravenna.

To begin with Pope Gregory the Great. In his Dialogues, written sixty-eight years after the death of Theodoric, he informs us that 'a certain Defensor of the Roman Church named Julian married a wife whose grandfather was employed after under King Theodoric in the collection of the land-tax in Sicily. This tax-collector was once returning to Italy and touched at the island of Lipari, where dwelt a holy hermit to whose prayers he wished to commend himself. The hermit said, "Know ye, that King Theodoric is dead". "God forbid," replied the tax-gatherer and his friends. "We left him in good health and have heard no such tidings". "For all that," said the hermit, "he is dead: for yesterday, at three in the afternoon, I saw him between John the Pope and Symmachus the Patrician. All ungirded and unshod, and with bound hands, he was dragged between them and cast into yon cauldron of Vulcan" [the crater of Lipari]. When they heard it, they carefully noted the day and the hour : and found, on their return to Ravenna, that at that very time Theodoric breathed his last'.

So wrote Pope Gregory. We overleap 1260 years and find ourselves in 1854 in 'the Legation of Ravenna,' which province is sullen and discontented at being replaced under the Papal sway by the arms of Austria after the revolutions of 1848-49. Works of industry, however, are progressing, and at Ravenna a party of 'navvies' are employed excavating a dock between the railway station and the Canale Corsini, one or two hundred yards from the Mausoleum of Theodoric. There are indications that they are on the site of an old cemetery; and the Papal Governor, together with the Municipality, appoints a Commission to watch over the excavation in the interests of archæology : but the Commission, like some other parts of the ecclesiastical government of the Legations, is not likely to be worn out by excess of energy.

One day rumours are heard of some important discovery made by the workmen and not reported to the Commission. Enquiries are commenced: two workmen are arrested: by coaxing and threatening, the whole grievous history is elicited from them. A few days previously the navvies had come suddenly upon a skeleton, not in but near one of the tombs. The skeleton was armed with a golden cuirass : a sword was by its side and a golden helmet on its head. In the hilt of the sword and in the helmet large jewels were blazing. The men at once covered up the treasure, and returned at nightfall to dig it up again and to divide the spoil. At the time when the slow-moving Commission set its enquiries on foot the greater part of the booty had already found its way to the melting-pot of the goldsmith or had been sent away out of the country. By keeping the prisoners in custody, their share of the spoil, a few pieces of the cuirass, was recovered from their relatives in the mountains. These pieces, all that remains of the whole magnificent 'find,' are now in the Museum at Ravenna. Great precautions were taken afterwards by the Commission: a trusted representative was always present at the excavations by day; the city police tramped past the diggings at night. But the lost opportunity came not

back again: no such second prize revealed itself either to the labourers or the members of the Commission.

Now, to whom did all this splendid armour belong in life? and whose heart was once beating within that skeleton? Of course the answer must be conjectural. It was given by the archaeologists of the day in favour of Odovacar; and the bits of the golden cuirass in the Museum at Ravenna are accordingly assigned to him in the Catalogue. But Dr. Ricci, an earnest and learned archaeologist of Ravenna, argues with much force that the scene of Odovacar's assassination took place too far from the Rotonda to render this probable, and that there but more has never been a dweller in Ravenna to whom the longed to skeleton and the armour can with more likelihood be assigned than Theodoric himself.

We may imagine the course of events to be something like this. During the reign of his grandson the body of the great King in its costly armour remains in the royal Mausoleum, guarded perhaps by some of his old comrades-in-arms, or by their sons. Troubles begin to darken round the nation of Theodoric; the Roman population of Ravenna stir uneasily against their Arian lords; monks and hermits begin to manufacture or to imagine such stories as that told to Gregory concerning the soul of the oppressor being cast into the crater of Lipari. The inmates of the monastery of S. Mary, close to the Rotonda, hear and would fain help this growth of legend, so fatal to the memory of the Ostrogothic King. Suddenly the body with its golden cuirass and golden helmet disappears mysteriously from the Mausoleum. No one can explain its vanishing; but the judgment of charity will naturally be that the same divine vengeance which threw the soul of the King down the volcano of Lipari has permitted the powers of darkness to remove his mortal remains. The monks of Santa Maria, if they know anything about the matter, keep their secret; but some dim tradition of the truth causes the cautious Agnellus, writing three centuries after the event, to say, 'as it seems to me he was cast forth from the tomb.' So the matter rests till, thirteen centuries after the deed was done, the pick-axe of a dishonest Italian 'navvy' reveals the bones of Theodoric.

All this is of course mere conjecture, and is not put before the reader as anything but a somewhat romantic possibility. The bitterness, the undeserved bitterness with which the Catholic Church has taught the Italians to regard the memory of Theodoric, is but too certain a fact, and some curious traces of it remain even to this day. On the western front of the beautiful church of S. Zenone at Verona is a bas-relief representing a king hunting stags, and being himself on the point of capture by a demon with horns and hoofs, who, with a cruel grin on his face, stands waiting for his prey. Some lines underneath showed that this kingly victim of the evil one was meant for Theodoric. For generations the urchins of Verona have been accustomed to rub the two figures of king and demon, imagining that there is thus obtained a sulphurous smell, which bears witness to their present abode.

From these idle tales of religious rancour we turn to consider the fortunes of the kingdom when bereft of its mighty founder. Shortly before his death Theodoric presented his grandson Athalaric, son of Eutharic and Amalasantha, to the leaders of the Gothic people, and declared that he was their future king. The declaration was made specially to the Gothic nobles; but in the speech which the old King made on that occasion, and which was listened to as if it were his last will and testament, there was an earnest exhortation to the Goths to show not only loyalty to the new sovereign, but kindly feelings towards the Senate and people of Rome, and to cultivate friendly relations with the Eastern Emperor.

The presentation to the Gothic warriors was a sort of recognition of their slumbering right to choose the successor to the throne. But in fact, limited as that choice was to the family of the King, there could be no doubt how it would be exercised on this occasion. It is true that Athalaric was but ten years old, and his nominal kingship necessarily implied a woman's regency. But Amalaric, the only other grandson of Theodoric, though he had now probably

attained his majority, must needs dwell in Spain or Narbonnensian Gaul as ruler of his father's Visigoths. The only other male of the Amal line, the late king's nephew Theodahad, was too profoundly hated and despised for any one to press his claims, even against the child-king his cousin.

Athalaric then succeeded to his grandfather's throne; and the succession of Athalaric meant, as has been said, the rule of Amalasu(n)tha. She was a woman in whom a strength of character almost masculine was joined to rich gifts of the intellect and a remarkable power of appreciating Roman culture. Her earnest desire was to rule the young kingdom righteously; and had she only been able to carry her Gothic countrymen with her, she might have made for herself one of the noblest names in history. As it was, the deep-seated discordance between her thoughts and theirs revealed itself at length in acts of tyranny on her side and of rebellion on theirs, which caused the ruin of the Gothic monarchy. But of these open dissensions between the Regent and her subjects the time is not yet come to speak.

As the sympathies of Amalasu(n)tha were all on the side of Roman literature and civilisation, it is reasonable to suppose that Cassiodorus, the most distinguished representative of that rich inheritance, would have great influence in her government. It is possible that he may have directed her studies while she was still but a princess; it is certain that he was the chief minister of her policy when she was a sovereign. There was no necessary breach of continuity between the policy of the father and that of the daughter. Cassiodorus was the trusted minister of both. But we can perceive, from the tone of his correspondence, that the anti-Roman turn which had been given to the policy of Theodoric during his last three years of suspicion and resentment, was reversed, and that something of a new impulse away from barbarian freedom and towards Roman absolutism was given to the vessel of the State.

Cassiodorus at the time of the death of Theodoric held the rank of Master of the Offices. How long he may have retained it we do not know, but it is pretty clear from his own statement that his power and influence at the Court were not strictly limited by the terms of his official commission. Other Quaestors were appointed; Cassiodorus drew up the letters assigning to them their duties : but he was himself the one permanent and irremovable Quaestor, equipped with an inexhaustible supply of sonorous phrases and philosophical platitudes, 'ready', as was said of the younger Pitt, 'to speak a State-paper off-hand.' After having for eight years, in one capacity or another, guided the counsels of Amalasu(n)tha, he was promoted to the great place of Praetorian Prefect, and thus assumed the semblance as well as the form of power. That dignity he appears to have held for four or five stormy years, until his final retirement from public life.

From the official correspondence of Cassiodorus we infer that some anxiety was felt by the loyal subjects of the Amal dynasty as to the acceptance by the Goths of so young a sovereign as Athalaric. The emphasis with which the minister dwells on the alacrity of the Goths in taking the oath of allegiance implies that Amalasu(n)tha and her friends breathed more freely when that ceremony Tuium. was accomplished. And the honours and compliments showered on the veteran Tulum, who was introduced to the Senate with the splendid rank of a Patrician, suggest the idea that he was looked upon by some of his old companions in battle as a more fitting occupant of the throne than a lad of ten years old. A mysterious allusion made by the courtly scribe to the warrior Gensemund of a by-gone age, a man whose praises the whole world sang, and who apparently might have been king, but preferred to guide the suffrages of his countrymen to the heir of the Amal house, makes this conjecture almost a certainty.

One of the first difficulties as to which the advice of Cassiodorus was needed by Amalasu(n)tha arose out of the news which reached her from Africa. A slight allusion was made in the last chapter to the troubles which had fallen on Amalafri(da), sister of Theodoric. Her husband Thrasamund, one of the best of the Vandal kings, died in 523, and was succeeded by his cousin the elderly Hilderic. This man, though a son of Huneric, the most rancorous of all

the persecutors of the Catholic Church, shared not his father's animosity against the orthodox. It was generally believed that his mother Eudoxia had influenced him in favour of her form of faith; and Thrasamund on his death-bed had exacted from him an oath that he would never use his kingly power for the restoration of their churches to the Catholics. The oath was given; but Hilderic, who could say with Euripides' hero

'My lips have sworn, my mind unsworn remains,'

devised a clever scheme for escaping from its obligation. The promise had been that he would not use his kingly power for the forbidden purposes. Therefore after Thrasamund's death, but before Hilderic had put on the Vandal crown or been proclaimed king in the streets of Carthage, he issued his orders for the return of all the Catholic bishops from exile; he opened the churches, which for more than two generations had never echoed to the words 'being of one substance with the Father'; and he made Boniface, a strenuous asserter of orthodoxy, bishop of the African Church.

Hilderic's entire reversal of the policy of his predecessor brought him speedily into collision with that predecessor's widow. The stately and somewhat imperious Amalafriada, who had been probably for twenty years Queen of the Vandals, was not going tamely to submit to see all her husband's friends driven away and his whole system of government subverted. She headed a party of revolt; she called in the assistance of the Moors, ever restless and ever willing to make war upon the actual ruler of Carthage; and battle was joined at Capsa, about three hundred miles to the south of the capital, on the edge of the Libyan desert. Amalafriada's party were beaten, and she herself was taken captive. So long as her brother Theodoric lived she was kept a close prisoner. Now the great head of the Amal line was laid low, the Vandal king had the meanness and the cruelty to put his venerable prisoner to death.

The insult was keenly felt at the Court of Ravenna, and produced a fatal alienation between the two kingdoms. A letter of angry complaint was written by Cassiodorus, and ambassadors were sent to demand an explanation. No satisfactory explanation could be given; for the story which Hilderic endeavoured to circulate, that Amalafriada's death was natural, seems to have borne falsehood upon its face. What followed we are not able to say. Probably there was a threat of war, replied to by menaces of reprisal from the still powerful Vandal fleet against the Italian coast. At least we know of no other opportunity to which we can so suitably refer Cassiodorus' own account of his services to the kingdom at a time when it was threatened by foreign invasion. 'When the care of our shores,' he makes his young sovereign say, occupied our royal meditations, he [Cassiodorus] suddenly emerged from the seclusion of his cabinet, and boldly, like his ancestors, assumed the character of a general. He maintained the Gothic warriors at his own charges, preventing the impoverishment of our exchequer on the one hand, and the oppression of the Provincials on the other. When the work of victualling the ships was over, and the war was laid aside, he again distinguished himself as an administrator by his peaceful settlement of the various suits which had grown out of the sudden termination of the contracts for the commissariat.'

We seem to read in this passage of a threatened Vandal invasion of Bruttii and Lucania, of Cassiodorus' preparations for defending his native province, and of the sudden collapse of hostilities about which neither nation was really in earnest. It was not from the Ostrogothic nation that the impending ruin of the dynasty of Gaiseric was to proceed.

Five years after these events another of the Arian and Teutonic monarchies of Europe received its death-blow. The reader may remember that, after the defeat and captivity of Sigismund, his brother Godomar raised from the dust the torn banner of the Burgundians, and maintained the independence of his native land against the Frankish invaders. Now Godomar's

turn also was come. Chlotochar and Childebert again entered the land. They besieged Autun. Godomar, after one or perhaps two campaigns, took to flight. Theudibert, the remaining brother of the Frankish partnership, was persuaded to forget his relationship to the family of Sigismund when the invasion seemed likely to prove successful. In the year 534 the kingdom of Burgundy, which had lasted for all but a hundred years since its settlement in Savoy, was finally swallowed up in the vast nebulous mass of the Frankish monarchy, Theudibert, Chlotochar, and Childebert dividing the spoils between them.

This is all that needs to be said about the affairs of Western Europe during the reign of Athalaric. With the Papacy the relations of the Gothic monarchy seem to have been outwardly amicable. The 'martyred' John was succeeded by Felix III; he by Boniface II, a man of Gothic extraction ; and he by another John, the second of the name. There is nothing in the short reigns of these pontiffs, at peace with Constantinople and outwardly at peace with Ravenna, which need occupy our attention.

Only, the election of the first of the series, Felix III, should be noticed, since it seems to have been ordered by the dying Theodoric and confirmed by his grandson. This we learn from a letter addressed by Cassiodorus to the Roman Senate. There had evidently been at least the threat of a contested election, but the minister, speaking in the name of Athalaric, exhorts all parties to forget the bitterness of the past debate. He thinks that the beaten party may yield without humiliation, since it is the King's power which has helped the winning side. The letter suggests the idea of a contest, the decision of which has been voluntarily referred to Theodoric, and the whole tone of it is extremely difficult to reconcile with any story of the death of Pope John I which represents him as a martyr, wilfully allowed by a persecuting king to perish in a dungeon. Had this been the version of the story generally accepted at Rome, it is hard to believe that in a very few months the relations between King and Pope would have been so friendly as we find them in this letter

From this short sketch it will be seen that few events of great importance occurred in Italy during the eight years of the reign of Athalaric. Constantinople, not Ravenna, was now once more the place to which the chief action of the great drama was transferred, and already all Roman souls were aflame with the reports of the splendour, the reforms, and the victories of Justinian.

CHAPTER XIV.

JUSTINIAN.

SOME time after his accession to the Empire, the elderly Anastasius was troubled with a restless curiosity to know who should be his successor. He had three nephews, Hypatius son of one of his sisters, and the brothers Probus and Pompeius, who were possibly children of his brother. Inviting them one day to dine with him at the palace, he caused three couches to be spread upon which his nephews might take their siesta. Under the pillow of one of the couches he had secretly slipped a paper with the word REGNUM written upon it. 'Whichsoever of my nephews,' thought he, 'chooses that couch, he shall reign after me.' Unfortunately when the time for the noontide slumber came, Hypatius chose one couch, the two brothers in their love for one another chose to occupy the second together, and the pillow that had 'regnum' beneath it was left undimpled. Then Anastasius knew that none of his nephews should wear the diadem after him.

It was not one of the three delicately nurtured princes, but a man who had begun life in very different fashion, who was to be clothed with the out-worn purple of Anastasius. In the reign of Leo, three young peasants from the central highlands of Macedonia, tired of the constant struggle for existence in their poverty-stricken homes, strode down the valley of the Axios (Vardar) to Thessalonica, determined to better their lot by taking service in the army. They had each a sheep-skin wallet over his shoulder, in which was stored a sufficient supply of home-baked biscuit to last them till they reached the capital: no other possessions had they in the world. Being tall and handsome young men, Zimarchus, Ditybistus, and Justin—so the peasant-lads were named—had no difficulty in entering the army: nay, they soon found places in the ranks of the guards of the palace, an almost certain avenue to yet higher promotion. Once indeed Justin had a narrow escape from death. For some offence—probably against military discipline—which he had committed, he was ordered into arrest and condemned to death by his captain John the Hunchback, under whose orders he had been sent upon the Isaurian campaign. But a figure of majestic size appeared to the Hunchback in his dreams and threatened him with sore punishment if he did not release the prisoner, who was fated to do good service to the Church in days to come. After this vision had been seen for three successive nights, the general thought it must be from above and dismissed Justin unharmed.

Now, in the aged Emperor's perplexity, when with fasting and prayer he had besought from Heaven an indication as to who should be his successor, it was revealed to him that the destined one was he who should be first announced to him in the sacred bed-chamber on the morrow morning. The first person to arrive was Justin, who had now attained the high rank of Count of the Guardsmen; come to report the execution of some orders given to him on the previous night. The aged Emperor bowed his head and recognised his destined successor. So firmly was this belief implanted in his mind that when, at some great ceremonial in the palace, Justin, eager to set right some mistake in the procession in front of the Emperor, brushed too hastily past him and trod upon the skirts of the purple mantle, the Emperor uttered no hasty word, but mildly said, 'Why such haste?' which men understood to mean, 'Canst thou not wait till thy turn comes to wear it? It will come before long'

These are the legendary half-poetical adornments of the prosaic story which was told in a previous chapter, concerning the elevation of the orthodox Justin, by means of the

misappropriated gold of Amantius, on the death of the Monophysite Anastasius. Whatever the precise chain of causes and effects which brought it to pass, the result was that an elderly Macedonian peasant, unable to read or write, but strictly orthodox as regards the subtle controversy between Leo and Eutyches, was seated on the throne of the Eastern Caesars. The difficulty arising from the presence of an unlettered emperor on the throne was evaded by making a wooden tablet containing the needful perforations through which the imperial scribe drawing his pen dipped in purple ink might trace the first four letters of his name. Proclus, the Quaestor, composed his speeches and acted as his prompter on all state-occasions. Upon the whole, the elderly Emperor, good-tempered, clownish, and of tall stature, seems to have played this last scene in his strangely varied life without discredit, if also without any brilliant success.

It was seen, however, in the negotiations with the Roman See as to the close of the schism, and it became more and more visible to all men as time went on, that the real wielder of all power in the new administration was the Emperor's sister's son Justinian. More than thirty years of age at his uncle's accession, and having, probably through that uncle's influence, already filled some post in the civil service of the Empire; a man always eager for work and a lover of the details of administration; such a nephew was an invaluable assistant to the rustic soldier who had to preside over the highly cultured and polished staff of officials through whom he must seem to govern the Empire.

The influence of Proclus the Quaestor gradually paled before that of the all-powerful nephew, whose servant he willingly became. A more formidable rival was the stout soldier Vitalian, who had upheld the standard of orthodoxy in the evil days of Anastasius, and whose restoration to office was an indispensable part of the reconciliation with the See of Rome. He probably looked for the reversion of the imperial dignity after the death of its aged possessor, and when he found himself raised to the rank of Magister Militum and created Consul (for the year 520), he might almost seem set forth to the people as Emperor Elect. To prevent any such mistake for the future, Justinian, or some one of his friends, caused him, in the seventh month of his consulship, to be attacked in the palace by a band of assassins. He fell, pierced by sixteen wounds: his henchmen, Paulus and Celerianus, fell with him, and the triumph of the party of Justinian was secure.

In the correspondence with Rome, Justinian had called Vitalian 'his most glorious brother', and the fact that the two men had solemnly partaken together of the Holy Communion should, according to the feelings of the age, have secured for the Master of the Soldiery an especial immunity from all murderous thoughts in the heart of his younger rival. The dark deed was not in accordance with the general character of Justinian, who showed himself in the course of his reign averse to taking the lives even of declared enemies: but there seems little reason to doubt that in this case he at least sanctioned, if he did not directly instigate, the murder of a dangerous competitor.

In the following year (521) Justinian celebrated his own consulship with a splendour to which, under the reign of the frugal Anastasius, the Byzantine populace had long been strangers. A sum of 280,000 solidi (£168,000) was spent on the machinery for the shows or distributed as largesse to the people. Twenty lions, thirty panthers, and a multitude of other beasts, appeared at the same time in the Amphitheatre. Horses in great numbers, and equipped in magnificent trappings, were driven by the most highly skilled charioteers of the Empire round the Circus. Already, however, even in the midst of the general rejoicing a note of discord was struck between the future Emperor and his subjects. So great was the excitement of the people, raised no doubt by the victory of one or other of the rival factions in the Circus, that the Consul found it necessary to strike out of the programme the last race which should have been exhibited.

A successor thus announced to the people before-hand was almost certain of the diadem. In fact Justinian was associated in the Empire four months before the death of his uncle, and appears to have succeeded to sole and supreme power without difficulty.

Delivered by the death of Justin from one associate in the Empire, Justinian lost no time in providing himself with another, of a kind such as Augustus would indeed have marvelled to behold using his name and wielding his decorously veiled supremacy.

During the reign of Anastasius a certain Acacius, who had charge of the wild beasts of the Amphitheatre for the Green party, died, and, as he had saved nothing out of his small salary, his widow and three daughters were left nearly destitute. The widow became the wife or the paramour of another menagerie-keeper, for whom she tried to retain her late husband's situation. But though the three little girls, Comito, Theodora, and Anastasia, appeared like sacrificial victims with fillets on their heads, and stretched out their little hands beseechingly to the spectators, the Greens, who were entirely guided by their manager Asterius, took away the place from their stepfather and gave it to another man. The Blues, the rival faction, were more accommodating, and having lately lost their keeper by death, gave his post to the husband of the widow of Acacius. In one of those little fillet-crowned heads was born on that day an undying resentment against the Green party, and an undying attachment to the Blue.

The child Theodora grew up into a lovely woman, rather too short of stature, but with a delicate red-and-white complexion, and with brilliant quickly-glancing eyes, which told of the keen, restless, nimble intellect within. She evidently had something of the charm which belongs to a clever and beautiful Frenchwoman. Unfortunately, however, she was utterly destitute of womanly virtue or womanly shame. The least moral performer of the opera bouffe in Paris or Vienna is a chaste matron by comparison with the life of unutterable degradation which Theodora is said to have led in girlhood and early womanhood, as a prostitute and a dancer on the stage at Cyrene, at Alexandria, and throughout the cities of the East.

Returned to Constantinople, this bright and fascinating though abandoned woman kindled an irrepressible passion in the breast of the decorous and middle-aged student Justinian. His aunt Lupicina, who had taken the more stately name of Euphemia, and who had been first the slave and then the wedded wife of Justin, firmly and, for the time, successfully opposed his scheme of marrying Theodora. Though lowly born herself, she would not consent that her husband's heir should be the instrument by which the unspeakable degradation of hailing such a woman as Augusta should be inflicted on the Roman Empire. Before long, however, the Empress Euphemia died, and then Justinian, whose passion had but grown stronger by delay, at once married the daughter of the menagerie-keeper. Laws which had come down from the old days of the Republic, forbidding the union of a Senator with a woman of notoriously bad character, were abrogated by the feeble old Emperor on the imperious request of his nephew. Theodora was raised to the dignity of a Patrician, and when at length Justinian wore the imperial diadem he insisted on sharing it with her, not as Empress-Consort, to borrow the terms of a later day, but as Empress-Regnant must Theodora sit upon the throne of the Roman world. All ranks in Church and State crouched low before the omnipotent prostitute. The people, who had once acclaimed her indecent dances on the stage, now greeted her name with shouts of loyal veneration, and with outspread hands implored her protection as if she were divine. The clergy grovelled before her, calling her Mistress and Sovereign Lady, and not one Christian priest with honest indignation protested against this degrading adulation.

Raised to the throne of the world, Theodora assumed a demeanour in some degree corresponding to her elevation. Though not absolutely faithful to her husband, she disgraced his choice by no such acts of open licentiousness as those by which Messalina had insulted the Emperor Claudius. It would seem as if her own nature underwent a change, and as if Pride now took possession of the character which hitherto had been swayed only by Lust. Heartless she

had always been, in the midst of her wild riot of debauchery; and heartless she remained in the stupendous egotism which made Justinian and all the ranks of the well-ordered hierarchy of the Empire the ministers of her insatiable pride.

In all things it seems to have been her fancy to play a part unlike that of her husband. He was strictly orthodox and Chalcedonian, she was a vehement Monophysite. He was simple and frugal in his personal habits, however extravagant as a ruler; she carried the luxury of the bath and the banquet to the highest point to which an opulent Roman could attain. He seldom slept more than four hours out of the twenty-four; she prolonged her siesta till sunset and her night's sleep till long after sunrise. He was merciful by temperament; she delighted in the power of being cruel. He showed himself easy of access to all his subjects, and would often hold long and confidential conversations with persons of undistinguished rank; she surrounded herself with an atmosphere of unapproachable magnificence, and while rigorously insisting that her subjects should present themselves in her audience-chamber, made the ceremony of audience as short, as contemptuous, and as galling to every feeling of self-respect as it was possible to make it. A pitiable sight it was to see the consuls, the senators, the captains and high functionaries of that which still called itself the Roman Republic waiting, a servile crowd, in this harlot's ante-chamber. The room was small and stifling, but they dared, not be absent. Her long slumbers ended, and the ceremonies of the bath and the toilette accomplished, an eunuch would open the door of the hall of audience. The wretched nobles pressed forward, or, if behind, stood on tip-toe to attract the menial's notice. He singled out one and another with contemptuous patronage. The favoured one crept in behind the eunuch into the presence-chamber, his heart in his mouth for fear. He prostrated himself before the haughty Augusta; he kissed reverently the feet which he had once seen briskly moving in lascivious dance on the public stage; he looked up with awe, not daring to speak till spoken to by the supreme disposer of all men's lives and fortunes.

Such is the miserable picture presented to us by Procopius of the degradation of the great Roman commonwealth under its Byzantine rulers. Alas, for the day when the Senate, that assembly of kings, received with majestic gravity the over-awed ambassador of King Pyrrhus! Alas, for the selfish corruption of the *optimates*, and yet more for the misguided patriotism of a Caius Gracchus or a Livius Drusus, which had turned the old and noble Republic into an Empire, foul itself and breeding foulness!

Let it be said for Justinian, who had brought this shame upon the State, that he gave his days and nights freely to what he deemed to be its service. If he was insatiable in drawing all power into his own hand, he at least shrank not from the labour, even the drudgery, which the position of a conscientious autocrat involves. Especially, at the very beginning of his reign, did he devote himself to that which his experience as a high officer of state under his uncle had shown him to be necessary, the reform of the laws of the Empire. Speaking without technical precision, one may say that the jurisprudence of Rome at this period consisted, like our own, of two great divisions, Statute Law and Case Law. The Statutes as contained in the Theodosian Code were insufficient, and the Cases contained in the *Responsa Prudentum*, the Institutions and the Sentences of great jurists such as Glaius, Paullus, and Ulpian, were redundant, bewildering, and often contradictory. Before Justinian had been a year on the throne he had appointed a commission, consisting of nine officials of high rank, to inquire into and codify the Statute Law. The leading spirit in this Commission and the chief mover in all the legal reforms of Justinian was the far-famed Tribonian, who was raised successively to the dignities of Quaestor and Master of the Offices; a man whose love of money and far from spotless integrity could not avail to dim the splendour of a reputation acquired by his vast learning, and made bearable by his gentle courtesy to all with whom he came in contact.

After little more than a year of labour the Commissioners had completed the first part of their duties, and the Code of Justinian in twelve books was issued by the sovereign authority, expanding and superseding the Code of Theodosius and all previous collections of imperial rescripts.

The next piece of work was a harder one. Tribonian and his fellow Commissioners were directed to arrange in one systematic treatise, called the *Digest*, all that Roman lawyers of eminence had said concerning the principles of the law, as the varying circumstances of civil society had brought point after point under their attention. In fact their duty was similar to that which would be laid upon an English lawyer if he was called upon to codify the 'judge-made law' of England, incorporating with it all that is of importance and authority in the text-books, and where there is a conflict of opinion deciding which opinion is to prevail. This immense work, which 'condensed the wisdom of nearly two thousand treatises into fifty books, and recast three million "verses" from older writers into one hundred and fifty thousand,' was accomplished in three years by Tribonian and his colleagues. Work done in such fierce haste as this could hardly be all accurate, but probably no injustice which it could cause was so great as that which it removed by letting day-light into the thick jungle of those three millions of legal sentences.

The Digest, which was divided into fifty books, is not arranged in any scientific order, but follows apparently more or less closely the order of that which had for centuries been the great programme of Roman jurisprudence, the so-called Perpetual Edict of the Praetors.

The Code and the Digest being finished, Tribonian and his two most eminent colleagues were directed to prepare a short scientific treatise on the amended law of Rome, for the benefit of students. Thus came into being the Four Books of the *Institutes*, that book by which the fame of Justinian has been most widely spread over the civilised world in the two hemispheres. The far-reaching relations in time of such a book as this are vividly apprehended when we remember that as it rests on the treatise of Gaius—which Niebuhr discovered in palimpsest in the Cathedral Library of Verona—it is itself rested upon by our own eighteenth century Blackstone, who of course had the name and the arrangement of this book in his mind when he composed his *Institutes of English Law*. Justinian's name and titles head the majestic manual. Of course Tribonian and the two professors, his colleagues, are really responsible for the literary execution of the work. Still, the historical student is never so well disposed to take a lenient view of the faults of the great Emperor as when he finds Caesar Flavius Justinianus, Alamannicus, Gothicus, Vandalicus, and so forth, crowned with names of victory over many barbarous races, but cheering the young student to the commencement of his task, and promising not to encumber his mind at first with details, lest he should disgust him at the outset, and cause him to abandon his studies in despair.

Notwithstanding his attempt to put the stamp of finality on his two great works, the Code and the Digest, neither Justinian himself nor his indefatigable Quaestor could keep their hands from all further law-making. The *Novellae Constitutiones*, generally spoken of under a title which has since acquired such a strangely different meaning, that of *Novels*, were promulgated at intervals for nearly thirty years (535-664), and in some respects seriously altered the unalterable Code.

Except for some over-activity in issuing fresh laws after the publication of his Code, the fame of Justinian as a legislator is unassailable. The hour had come for clearing broad and traversable highways through the stately but sky-hiding forest of Roman jurisprudence. With Tribonian for his engineer-in-chief, Justinian undertook this necessary work, and did it nobly. Rightly and justly therefore is the name of the peasant's son from the valley of the Yardar mentioned with reverence, wherever, from the Mississippi to the Ganges, teachers of the law expound the greatest of Rome's legacies to the nations, the *Corpus Juris Civilis*.

But it is a trite axiom in politics and in every-day life, that good legislation does not necessarily imply good administration. Many a man whose journal records the most excellent maxims for the conduct of his life, has been a torment to his family and friends. Many a public company, with admirably-framed Articles of Association, has chosen the pleasant road to an early bankruptcy. Many an Oriental state has proclaimed, and is proclaiming at the present day, the most excellent principles of government, not one of which it ever dreams of reducing into practice.

As an administrator Justinian does not occupy nearly so high a position as that to which his legislative triumphs entitle him. He certainly had one of the most necessary qualifications for a ruler, the power of selecting fitting instruments for his work. The man who chose Tribonian for his legal adviser, Belisarius and Narses for his generals, the designers of Saint Sophia for his architects, can assuredly have been no mean judge of human character. He had also the power of forming truly grand conceptions, and is superior herein to two monarchs, with each of whom some points in his character tempt us to compare him—Louis XIV of France and Philip II of Spain. These merits, however, were more than counterbalanced by two great faults—intense egotism and financial extravagance. Coming as he did from the lower ranks of society to the administration of an old and highly-organized state, he was determined to leave his mark on every city of the Empire, on every department of the State. Some changes, like those involved in the codification of the Roman law, required to be made, and here the imperial egotist's passion for change worked well for the State. But besides this, many old and useful institutions were swept away, simply in order that the name of Justinian might be magnified. Local self-government received from him some of its severest blows.

The postal service, one of the best legacies from the great days of the Empire, he allowed to be ruined by greedy and shortsighted ministers, who sold the post-horses and divided the proceeds between their master and themselves. The venerable institution of the consulship, which still linked the fortunes of New Rome with the dim remembrance of the republican virtues of Brutus and Publicola, must be swept away. The schools of philosophy at Athens, touched certainly with the feebleness of age, but still showing an unbroken descent from Socrates, and deserving to be spared, if only for the sake of their late illustrious pupil Boethius, were closed by imperial decree, and the seven last Platonists were driven forth into exile, obtaining at length by the intercession of the King of Persia permission to exist, but no longer to teach, in that which had once been the mother city of all philosophy.

The mania of the empurpled Nihilist for destroying every institution which could not show cause for its existence by ministering to the imperial vanity, would have been less disastrous if it had not been coupled with an utter indifference to expense. Whatever dispute there may be as to other parts of the character of Justinian, there can be none as to his having been one of the worst of the many bad financiers who wore the diadem of the Caesars.

In reading the two histories in which Procopius records the vast operations of this monarch, both in peace and war, we are inclined to ask, 'Did the question once in his whole reign occur to the mind of Justinian, whether he was justified in spending the money of his subjects on this campaign which he meditated, or on that palace or basilica for which the architect had furnished him with plans?' Certainly the results of his financial administration speak for themselves : the carefully and wisely hoarded treasure of Anastasius all spent, the very wars themselves starved, and in some cases protracted to three or four times their necessary length by the emptiness of the exchequer, and the people of his realms left at Justinian's death in a state of exhaustion and misery greater, if that be possible, than the subjects of Louis XIV of France after that monarch's seventy years' quest of glory.

The treasure of Anastasius had perhaps been melting away during the nine years of the reign of Justin. During this time the war with Persia War was begun, a war about which

something will be said in the following chapter. Before Justinian had been five years on the throne the financial oppression of his subjects, particularly in the country districts, was becoming intolerable. Owing to changes in the mode of collecting the land-revenue and the abolition of the *cursus publicus*, the inhabitants were impoverished by the oppressive rights of pre-emption claimed by the government, and worn out with forced labour in moving produce from the interior of the country to the sea. Women with babes at their breasts were forced to take part in this cruel toil, and often did they, their husbands, and brothers fall dead by the road-side, where they were left, unpitied and unburied. There was no time for funeral rites; the Emperor's corn must be delivered in so many days at the sea-port, where, without fail, some venal officer or some slave of one of the palace slaves stood ready to take his tithe of the tithes collected at the cost of so much agony.

The very names of the new taxes imposed on various pretexts, about twenty in number, were terrible to the bewildered people. And this was what they had earned by those delirious shouts of joy which hailed the accession of Justin and the death of Anastasius, the tender-hearted Anastasius, who with such infinite trouble had rooted out one obnoxious tax, the Chrysargyron, in the room of which Justinian had planted a score.

Despairing of earning a subsistence in the country, the dispirited peasantry nocked into the towns, above all into the capital city. In Constantinople there was at least food to be had, for the corn-rations were still distributed to the people; and in Constantinople there was the delicious excitement for an absolutely idle populace, of the races in the Hippodrome. We have already made some little acquaintance with the contending colours of these circus-factions. Once four in number, they had now, by the disuse or obscurity of the Red and the White, become practically reduced to two, the Blue and the Green. And such was the excitement produced among the favourers of these two colours, by the victory or defeat of their respective champions, that the contemporary Byzantine historian can call it nothing less than a madness, a curse, and a disease of the soul. They would pour out their money; they would expose themselves to blows and the most contemptuous insults, yea, even to death itself; they would rush into the thickest of a fray, well knowing that in a few minutes the city-guards would be upon them, and would drag them off to the dungeon and to death. All this they heeded not if only the Blues might take their revenge on the bodies of their antagonists for the victory of a Green charioteer, if only the Greens might pay off a long score of insults by breaking the heads of a mob of presumptuous Blues. Murder was of course the frequent consequence of these faction-fights; and it was perhaps not always murder in hot blood, but sometimes secret and premeditated. Even women, though not allowed to visit the theatre, were bitten with the madness of the strife; and brothers, friends, the companions of a life-time were turned into irreconcilable enemies by these absolutely senseless quarrels. Certainly of all the strange exhibitions of his character which Man has given since he first appeared upon our planet, few have been more unutterably absurd than the fights of Blues and Greens in the Hippodrome of Constantinople.

It was evident, soon after his accession, that the husband of Theodora meant to favour the Blue party, and in a few years, a long list of grievances was recorded in the hearts of the opposite faction against him. Such was the state of feeling in the multitude—the Blues jubilant with imperial favour, the Greens sore at heart and indignant against their oppressor, a multitude of the country-folk, having not as yet taken sides definitely with either colour, but remembering and cursing the tyrannical acts which had driven them from their immemorial homes—when on the morning of the Ides of January, 532, the august Emperor took his seat in the podium and commanded the races to begin. Race after race, till twenty-two races had been run, was disturbed by the clamours of the angry Green faction. Their fury was chiefly directed against the Grand Chamberlain and Captain of the Guard, Calopodius, to whom they attributed

their ill-treatment. At length Justinian, worried out of his usual self-control, began to argue with the interrupters; and so the following extraordinary debate took place, in shrill shouts to and from the Imperial podium.

The Green party. ‘Many years mayest thou live, Justinianus Augustus. *Tu vincas.* O only good one, I am oppressed. God knows it, but I dare not mention the oppressor’s name lest I suffer it’.

The Emperor’s answer to the people came back from the lips of a stalwart *Mandator* who stood, beside his throne, while a busy short-hand writer (*Exceptor*) at once began to take down all the words of this strange dialogue, that they might be enrolled in the official Acta of the Empire.

Mandator. ‘Whom you mean, I know not.’

The Greens. ‘O thrice August one, he who oppresses me will be found at the shoemakers’ shops’.

Mandator. ‘I know not whom you are speaking of’.

The Greens. ‘Calopodius the Guardsman oppresses me, O Lord of all.’

Mandator. ‘Calopodius has no public charge.’

The Greens. ‘Whatever he may be, he will suffer the fate of Judas. God will reward him according to his works.’

Mandator. ‘Did you come hither to see the games, or only to rail at your rulers?’

The Greens. ‘If any one oppresses me, I hope he will die like Judas.’

Mandator. ‘Hold your peace, ye Jews, ye Manicheans, ye Samaritans.’

The Greens. ‘Do you call us Jews and Samaritans? We all invoke the Virgin, the Mother of God.’

Some sentences of scarcely intelligible religious abuse between the two parties to the dialogue follow. Then says the Mandator—‘In truth, if you are not quiet I will cut off your heads’

The Greens. ‘Be not enraged at the cry of the afflicted. God himself bears all patiently. [How can I appeal to you in your palace?] I cannot venture thither, scarcely even into the city except by one street when I am riding on my mule.’

Mandator. ‘Every one can move freely about in this city, without danger.’

The Greens. ‘You talk of freedom, but I do not find that I can get it. Let a man be ever so free, if he is suspected of being a Green, he is taken and beaten in public.’

Mandator. ‘Gallows-birds! have you no care for your own lives, that you thus speak?’

The Greens. ‘Take off that colour [the emblem of the Blues] and do not let justice seem to take sides. I wish Sabbatius [the father of Justinian] had never been born. Then would he never have begotten a murderous son. It is twenty years since [one of our party] was murdered at the Yoking-place. In the morning he was looking on at the games, and in the evening twilight, O Lord of all, he had his throat cut.’

The Blues here interposed with angry denial.

‘All the murders on the race-course have been committed by you alone.’

The Greens. ‘Sometimes you murder and run away’

The Blues. ‘You murder and throw everything into confusion. All the murders on the race-course are your work alone.’

The Greens. ‘Lord Justinian! They stir us up to strife, but no one kills them. Remember, even if you do not wish to do so, who slew the wood-seller at the Yoking-place, O Emperor!’

Mandator. ‘You slew him.’

The Greens. ‘Who slew the son of Epagathus, O Emperor?’

Mandator. ‘Him too you slew, and then tried to throw the blame on the Blues.’

The Greens. ‘Again! and again! Lord have mercy on us! Truth is trodden under foot by a tyrant. I should like to throw these things in the teeth of those who say that God governs the world. Whence then this villainy?’

Mandator. ‘God cannot be tempted with evil.’

The Greens. ‘“God cannot be tempted with evil.” Then who is it that allows me to be oppressed? Let any one, whether Philosopher or Hermit, read me this riddle.’

Mandator. ‘Blasphemers and accursed ones! when will ye be quiet?’

The Greens. ‘If your Majesty will fawn upon that party, I hold my peace, though unwillingly. OThrice August one, I know all, all: but I am silent. Farewell, Justice : you have no more business here. I shall depart hence, and then I will turn Jew. It is better to become a Heathen than a Blue, God knows!’

The Blues. ‘We hate the very sight of you. Your petty spite exasperates us.’

The Greens. ‘Dig up the bones of the [murdered] spectators.’

With that the whole faction of the Greens streamed out of the Hippodrome, leaving the Emperor and the Blue party sole occupants of the long rows of stone *subsellia*.

The day was drawing towards a close when this multitude of enraged Orientals poured forth into the streets of Constantinople. Soon it was evident that the tumults which had embittered the later days of Anastasius were to be renewed, on a larger scale, and with more appalling circumstances, by reason of the crowds of hungry, idle, and exasperated rustics who had flocked into the town. Fire began to be applied to the buildings round the Hippodrome, and to the porticoes of the Palace in which the household troops were lodged. All through the earlier stages of the sedition Justinian kept quiet in his palace, with the nobles who had assembled there according to custom on the Ides of January, to offer their congratulations and to receive from his hands the tokens of their various promotions for the new year. Probably his expectation was, that the insurrection, if unopposed, would wear itself out; or that, at the worst, the fury of the attacked Blues would check the fury of the attacking Greens.

Soon, however, an ominous symptom appeared. The Blues began to sympathise with the Greens, and to join in the wild orgie in which their rivals were engaged. In a recent attempt to deal out even-handed justice between the two factions, the Prefect of the City had arrested seven notorious murderers, chosen indifferently from both parties. Four had been sentenced to death by beheading, three by hanging. The sword had done its work surely, but the gallows had broken under the weight of their victims, and two of the culprits, one a Blue, the other a Green, had thus escaped for a time the sentence of the law. The good monks of the neighbouring monastery of St. Conon had found them not quite dead, had put them on board ship, and had carried them to the church of St. Lawrence. The Prefect of the City insisted that the law should have its due, but popular sympathy was aroused on behalf of the wretches who had so narrowly escaped death. A common interest in the fate of their friends seems to have brought the two factions, hating one another with such deadly hatred, into momentary accord. As the old watch-words of party were suddenly become obsolete, they invented new ones. Not the loyal cry, ‘August Justinian, may you conquer!’ but ‘Long live the friendly Greens and Blues!’ was to be the battle-shout of the united factions, and ‘Nika’ (Victory) their secret pass-word.

With this reconciliation of the Circus-factions the sedition assumed a more important and a political character. The name of the chamberlain Calopodius drops out of the story, and those of the Quaestor Tribonian, of the Praetorian Prefect, John of Cappadocia, begin to be heard. Tribonian, with all his matchless knowledge of the law, was suspected, perhaps justly suspected, of sometimes framing the new laws so as to suit the convenience of those litigants who approached him with the heaviest purse in their hands. John of Cappadocia was undoubtedly a man absolutely devoid of principle, coarse, unlettered, vicious, but one whose

daemonic force of will and whose relentless heart were all put at the disposal of his master for the purpose of wringing the maximum of taxes out of a fainting and exhausted people.

When the cry for the removal of these ministers came, Justinian at once yielded to it, and replaced them by men who stood higher in favour with the people. But still the riot went on. The futile endeavours of the soldiers to cope with it only increased its fury; and, sure mark that all the lowest and most lawless elements of society had broken loose, Fire was the favourite weapon in the combat. The Senate-house, the Palace of the Praetorian Prefect, the Baths of Zeuxippus, the Baths of Alexander, were all burnt. At last, either because the mob had grown wild and desperate with destruction, or because the wind which had sprung up respected not the distinctions which they would have made, the sacred buildings themselves were given to the devouring flame. The great church of Saint Sophia, and its neighbour the church of Saint Irene, fell in blackened ruin. Between these two edifices, the dwellings of Divine Wisdom and Peace, the charity of a devout man of earlier time, Sampson by name, had reared a hospital for the reception of the sick and aged poor. This noble illustration of the spirit of Christianity shared the fate of its statelier neighbours, and, alas for the madness of the populace, all the sick folk who were lying in the wards of the hospital perished in the flames.

Thus for five days raged the demon Fire through the streets of Constantinople. Through the short January day thick clouds of smoke rolled round basilica and portico. At night two red and flaring lines mirrored themselves in the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. The ineffectual efforts of the soldiers to suppress the riot did but increase the mischief. The Octagon was set fire to by them in their endeavours to expel the rebels, and the flames thus kindled consumed the church of St. Theodore and the vestry adjoining it.

Still for some time the insurrection lacked an aim and a leader. Justinian was despised, but no name was suggested instead of his. On the first or second day, it is true, the rioters marched to the house of Probus (no doubt the nephew of Anastasius and brother of Pompeius), searched the house for arms, and shouted as they searched, 'Probus for Emperor of Romania!', but not succeeding in their quest, nor prevailing on Probus to accept the Probus will offered diadem, they cast fire into his house and the added it to the general destruction.

On Sunday, the fifth day of the insurrection, Justinian sought to propitiate the mob by following the example of Anastasius and making an appeal to their compassion. Taking his place in the seat of honour in the Circus, he held on high the roll of the Holy Gospels. The populace streamed once more into the Hippodrome, to hear what their sovereign would say to them. Laying his hand on the sacred books, he swore a solemn oath: 'By this power I swear that I forgive you all your offences, and will order the arrest of none of you, if only you will now return to your obedience. The blame is none of yours, but all mine. For the punishment of my sins I did not grant your requests when first you addressed me in this place'. The humiliation was as great as that of Anastasius, but not so efficacious in disarming the fury of the mob. Some shouted 'Justiniane Auguste, tu vincas!' but many were silent, and there was even heard the insulting cry, 'O ass, thou art swearing falsely!'

With his dignity ruffled and his easy temper disturbed Justinian returned to the palace. There, apparently, all the nobles who had assembled on the Ides of January were still mustered, not having dared to return to their homes through the raging populace. The Emperor's eye fell on Hypatius and Pompeius, the nephews of Anastasius, and in an angry voice he ordered them to leave the palace. Procopius doubts whether to refer this strange order to suspicion of a conspiracy on their part, or to the influence of a mysterious destiny. The humbler theory, that it was due to mere ill-temper and annoyance, may perhaps be deserving of consideration. The two cousins naturally suggested that it was unfair to throw them at such a critical moment in the very path of conspirators and rebels; but Justinian insisted, and forth they went, slinking under cover of the twilight to their homes.

Next day, when the news of their departure from the palace was noised abroad, the whole multitude flocked to the house of Hypatius, intent on proclaiming him Emperor. In the campaign against Vitalian, eighteen years before, Hypatius had held the highest command, and the course of events seems to have pointed him out as, upon the whole, the most eminent of the nephews of Anastasius. When the multitude announced their intention of proclaiming Hypatius in the Forum, his wife Mary, a woman of great ability and noble character, with tears and cries besought them not to lead her husband to certain death. Hypatius also earnestly pleaded that he had no desire for the dangerous honour. But the people were inexorable. Mary's entwining arms were thrust aside, and Hypatius was borne by the shouting multitude to the Forum of Constantine, where he appears to have been soon after joined by his cousin Pompeius. As no diadem was at hand, a collar of gold was placed on the head of Hypatius. He was raised high up on the steps of the statue of Constantine, clothed in the white *chlamys* which was to mark his military rank, and all the vast multitude shouted with one accord, 'Hypatie Auguste, tu vincas!'

There was a discussion among the adherents of the new Emperor whether they should at once march to the palace of Justinian and grapple with their foe. Had they done so, Justinian would probably have been faintly remembered in history as a sovereign who made some attempt to reform the Roman laws and perished in a tumult after a reign of five years. And in truth this was the view which he himself was prepared to take of the chances for and against him. In a council held in the palace his voice apparently was for flight by the sea-gate, outside of which his ships were moored. But then was heard the manly voice of Theodora, insisting on resistance to the death.

"When man has once come into the world, death sooner or later is his inevitable doom. But as for living, a royal fugitive, that is an intolerable thought. Never may I exist without this purple robe; never may the day dawn on me in which the voices of all who meet me shall not salute me as Sovereign Lady. If then, O Emperor, you wish to escape, there is no difficulty in the matter. Here is the sea: there are the ships. But just consider whether, when you have escaped, you will not every day wish that you were dead. For my part, I favour that ancient saying, "There is no grander sepulchre for any man than the Kingship".'

The stirring words of Theodora prevailed. Belisarius, a young officer who had acquired great renown in the Persian war, was commissioned to attack with his small but disciplined body of troops the vast mob of Constantinople; and at the same time a middle-aged Armenian named Narses, an eunuch who had attained the rank of Grand Chamberlain in the imperial household, stole out of the palace with a heavy purse of money in his hand, to persuade and bribe the leaders of the Blue faction back to their old allegiance.

While this council was resolving on resistance to the uttermost, that of Hypatius resolved on procrastination. The advice of a Senator named Origen had determined them to leave the palace of Justinian unattacked, trusting that its occupant would soon be a fugitive, and to make for the old palace, which still bore the name of Flaccilla, the wife of Theodosius. On their way to this building the whole multitude halted for a time in the Hippodrome. Hypatius, who was still a most unwilling of claimant of the purple, at this juncture sent one of the noble guard named Ephraemius to Justinian with this message: 'Thy enemies are all assembled in the Circus; thou canst do with them what thou wilt'. Unfortunately Ephraemius met the Emperor's physician and confidant Thomas, who had heard of the rumoured flight, but had not heard of the later resolution to defend the palace. 'Whither are you going?' said Thomas to the glittering Candidatus: 'there is no one in the palace; Justinian has fled'. This message, brought to Hypatius, seemed to show that there was nothing for him but to reign; and he accordingly accepted the situation, mounted to the podium, and probably harangued the Roman people assembled in the Circus as their lawful Emperor.

Better had it been for Hypatius to be crouching, as he crouched eighteen years before, by the Scythian shore, up to his neck in the water and only his head showing, 'like a sea-bird's,' above the waves. He was in less danger then from the savage Huns than now from the insulted Emperor whom he had failed to dethrone. Belisarius heard that the rebels were all in the Hippodrome. With the instinct of a born general he saw in a moment his one chance of victory. With his band of disciplined soldiers, most of them barbarians, he mounted the broad and stately *cochlea* (spiral staircase) which led from the palace to the Emperor's box in the Hippodrome. A barred door prevented his entrance. He shouted to the soldiers, some of his own veterans, who were in attendance on Hypatius, 'Open the door, that I may get to the usurper!'. The soldiers, who wished to commit themselves to neither side, feigned not to hear. Then did Belisarius well-nigh despair of success, and, returning to the palace, he told the Emperor that his cause was ruined. But there remained another gate called the Brazen Gate, on the side to which the populace had set fire, and to it, amid falling timbers and over smoking ruins, Belisarius and his soldiers forced their way. This entrance adjoined the portico of the Blues, and perhaps was for this reason better adapted to the purposes of Belisarius; for at the same time the leaders of the Blue party who had received the bribes of Narses were beginning to shout, 'Justiniane Auguste, tu vincas!'. Then was heard the war-cry of Belisarius; the flashing swords were seen; suspicions of treachery, which soon grew into panic fear, fell upon the multitude. The one desire of every citizen was to escape from the Hippodrome, a desire impossible of fulfilment; for, lo! at the same moment Mundus, another of Justinian's generals, hearing the uproar and rightly divining the manoeuvre of Belisarius, pressed in to the Circus by another gate, called, as if in prophecy, the Gate of the Dead. The two generals did their bloody work relentlessly, so that no civilian, either citizen of Constantinople or stranger, either partisan of the Blues or the Greens, who chanced that day to be in the Hippodrome, left it alive.

It was estimated that 35,000 persons fell in this tumult. Justinian announced his victory as it had been won over some foreign foe, in exulting letters to all the great cities of his Empire. The triumph was won by ruthless disregard of human life, by an utter refusal to attempt to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty: but it was not a wholly barren one for the State. After this terrible lesson, it was long before the populace of Constantinople attempted to renew the disturbances which had disgraced the later years of Anastasius.

Hypatius and his cousin Pompeius were dragged out of the imperial box in the Circus and brought into the presence of Justinian. They fell prostrate before him, and began to sue for pardon on the plea that it was by their persuasion that the enemies of Justinian had been collected in the Hippodrome. 'That was well done,' said the Emperor (who had not yet heard of the message sent by Hypatius), 'but if the multitude were so willing to obey your orders, could you not have done it before half the city was burnt down'. He ordered them away to close confinement, upon which Pompeius, a man with whom all things till then had gone smoothly, began with tears and groans to bewail his hard fate. The more rugged Hypatius sharply rebuked him: 'Courage, my cousin: do not thus demean thyself. We perish as innocent men: for we could not resist the pressure of the people, and it was out of no ill-will to the Emperor that we went into the Hippodrome'.

On the following day they were slain by the soldiers, their goods were confiscated, and their bodies were cast into the sea. After a few days, however, Justinian relented towards them, having heard the true story of the message of Hypatius. Thomas, the doctor who had so ill served the interests of his august patient, was ordered to be beheaded. The property of the two unfortunate Patricians was restored to their relatives, and commands were issued for the burial of their bodies. Only that of Hypatius, however, could be recovered from the keeping of the Bosphorus, and over this when buried, Justinian, with all his clemency, could not deny himself the pleasure of carving an insulting epitaph:

‘Here lies the Emperor of Luppā’. The insult is too subtle to reach the ears of posterity.

The blackened heaps representing the stately buildings of Constantinople reminded a spectator . who saw them of the masses of lava and cinders surrounding the cones of Vesuvius and Lipari. Soon however, by the command of the Emperor, troops of workmen were busily engaged in clearing away the rubbish and laying the foundations of new churches, baths, and porticoes. Thus was employment found for the ruined provincials who still swarmed in the city : and before long a new and fairer Constantinople rose from the ruins of the old.

So ended the celebrated sedition of the Nika. Its chief interest for us is that it brings us face to face with two men who gathered great fame in Italy, Belisarius and Narses.

CHAPTER XV.

BELISARIUS.

The peace between the Roman and the Persian Empires which was concluded in 505, after lasting for twenty-one years, was broken upon a strange cause of quarrel. The Persian king, Kobad, now far advanced in years, in order to secure the succession to the throne for his favourite son Chosroes, proposed to the Emperor Justin that that monarch should adopt him as his son. Justin was prepared to assent, but, listening to the dissuasions of the Quaestor Proclus, who feared that Chosroes might found on such an adoption a claim to the Roman as well as the Persian diadem, he eventually refused this act of courtesy. There were already some grievances against the Romans rankling in the mind of Kobad. They would not pay their promised quota towards the defence of the passes of the Caucasus from the Northern barbarians. They had built, contrary to agreement, the strong city of Daras close to the Persian frontier, almost overlooking the lost and bitterly-lamented city of Nisibis. When tidings came that the Macedonian peasant who called himself Augustus would not recognise the descendant of so many kings as his son, or would at most only confer upon him that military adoption as 'son-in-arms' which was a compliment paid to Gepid and Ostrogoth princes, the old monarch of Ctesiphon was furious. He must have war with Rome; and war accordingly was waged by him and his son after him, for five years, among the Mesopotamian highlands and on the fertile plains of Syria.

With the details of this war we have no concern except in so far as they are connected with the entrance upon the stage of history of the young hero-general, Belisarius. Born about the year 505, probably of noble parentage, in the same Macedonian mountain-country from which Justin and his nephew had descended to Thessalonica, Belisarius was serving in the body-guard of Justinian, and had the first manly down upon his lip when, in the year 526, he and another officer of his own age were entrusted with the command of the troops which were to invade the Persian (or Eastern) portion of Armenia. Fields were laid waste and many hapless Armenians were carried into captivity, but no successes in battle were earned by the young generals.

Soon after, Belisarius was made commandant of the newly-erected fort and city of Daras: and while in this command he made a selection which has had more to do with his subsequent renown than many victories. He chose 'Procopius of Caesarea who compiled this history' to be his Judge-Advocate. The office which I attempt to indicate by this suggested English equivalent was known among the Romans by names which we have borrowed from them, those of Counsellor and Assessor. For a Roman general like Belisarius, exercising by virtue of his office judicial power over civil as well as military persons, but having received himself no legal education, it was absolutely necessary to have a trained jurist ever by his side, who might so guide his decisions that they should be conformable to the laws of the Empire. Occasions would also often arise in connection with the diplomatic duties that Belisarius had to discharge towards the rulers of the lands invaded by him, in which the presence of a learned Byzantine official would be of great assistance to a comparatively unlettered soldier. Such an adviser, legal assessor and diplomatic counsellor, was Procopius: not the general's private secretary, but, it may be said, in a certain sense, his official colleague, though in a very subordinate capacity.

Whether Procopius held precisely this relation to Belisarius during all the fifteen years that they were campaigning together, in Mesopotamia, in Africa and in Italy, it is difficult to say. It is slightly more probable that the official tie may have been sundered, and that the learned civilian may have remained on as a visitor and trusted friend in the tent of his chief, by whom he was occasionally employed on semi-military enterprises which required especial tact and exercise of the diplomatic faculty. It seems clear that, during all the period above mentioned, something more than official relations existed between the two men; that the counsellor loved and admired the general, and that the general respected and liked the counsellor. We shall have hereafter to trace, or if we cannot trace, to conjecture, the disastrous influences by which a friendship so honourable to both parties, and cemented by so many years of common danger and hardships, was at last broken asunder; and owing to which Procopius in his old age became the passionate reviler of the hero whom in his youth and middle life he had so enthusiastically admired.

The position occupied by Procopius in the history of literature is interesting and almost unique. After so many generations of decline, here, at length, the intellect of Hellas produces a historian, who, though not equal doubtless to her greatest names, would certainly have been greeted by Herodotus and Thucydides as a true brother of their craft. Procopius has a very clear idea how history ought to be written. Each of his books, on the Persian, the Vandal, and the Gothic wars, is a work of art, symmetrical, well proportioned, and with a distinct unity of subject. His style is dignified but not pompous, his narrative vivid, his language pure, and the chief fault that we can attribute to it is a too great fondness for archaisms, especially for old Homeric words, which are somewhat out of place in the pages of a prose author. He exhibits a considerable amount of learning, but without pedantry: and resembles Herodotus in his eager, almost child-like interest in the strange customs and uncouth religions of barbarian nations. He picks up from hearsay all that he can as to a land like Thule (Iceland or the North of Norway) lying within the Arctic Circle, and only regrets that, though earnestly desirous of the journey, he has never been able to visit that land in person and be an eye-witness of its wonders:

In politics Procopius shows himself an ardent lover of the glory of the great Roman Empire, of which he feels himself still thoroughly a citizen. In his most important work (the *De Bellis*) he preserves a truly dignified tone towards the Emperor, whose great achievements he praises without servility: but he often contrives to introduce in the speech of a foreign ambassador or the letter of a hostile king some tolerably severe Opposition-criticism on the home or foreign policy of the omnipotent Justinian. Very different from the manly and moderate tone of this his standard work are the sickening adulation of the *De Aedificiis* and the venomous tirade of the *Anecdota*, both of which books must belong to the old age of Procopius, the former being apparently written to the Emperor's order and therefore crowded with insincere and extorted compliments, while the latter was never to leave the author's desk while he lived, and therefore received all the pent-up bitterness of his insulted and indignant soul.

The attitude of Procopius towards the religious questions which agitated the Eastern world is as peculiar as his literary position. While all, or nearly all of his contemporaries are taking sides in the bitter theological controversies of the day, he stands aloof and looks coldly on the whole shrill logomachy. That he can speak the language of the Christian faith, when Court etiquette requires him to do so, is proved by some passages in the *De Aedificiis* which have an entirely Christian sound. But, though he will not go to the stake for his faith, nor indeed forego any chance of Court favour for the sake of it, it is clear that his real convictions are not Christian, but that he is a philosophical Theist of the school of Socrates and Plato: and we may be almost certain that he derived his religious creed as well as his rhetorical style from those philosophers of the University of Athens, whom Justinian banished and silenced in his

lifetime. In his own writings he wavers in some degree between a devout Theism and a half sullen acquiescence in the decrees of a blind, impersonal destiny : but, upon the whole, Theism rules his mind, and he sometimes speaks, even with a reverent love, of the dealings of Providence with mankind. Probably the following passage from an early chapter of his Gothic history tells us as much as he himself knew about his innermost thoughts on religious subjects. After describing an embassy from the Pope to the Emperor ‘on account of the doctrine about which the different Churches of Christendom dispute among themselves’, he continues,—

‘ But upon the points in dispute. I, though well acquainted with them, shall say as little as possible, for I hold it to be proof of a madman’s folly to search out what the Nature of God is like. For, by man, not even the things of a man can in my opinion be accurately apprehended, far less those which pertain to the Nature of God. I shall therefore pass over these subjects in safe silence, only remarking that I do not disbelieve in those things which other men reverence. For I would never say anything else concerning God, except that He is altogether good and holds all things in His own power. But let every one else, whether priest or layman, speak on such subjects according to his own presumed knowledge’.

There have been times in, the history of the world, with reference to which an inquiry of this kind as to the religious opinions of their describer would be irrelevant and almost impertinent. No one who knows the spirit of the sixth century will say this of Procopius. His attitude of aloofness from special theological controversy secures his impartiality between warring sects. His philosophical Theism is the key to much that would otherwise be perplexing in his own writings. As a ‘Hellenising’ rather than a Christian historian he stands in a direct line of succession from authors with whose works we have already made considerable acquaintance, Ammianus, Eunapius, Priscus, and Zosimus: and it would be an interesting inquiry, had we space for it, to ascertain where his Heathenism agrees and where it differs from theirs. Upon the whole, in the age of change and transition in which he lived, Procopius would seem to have clung fast to two great facts in the World-History of the Past, the wisdom of Greece and the greatness of Rome, and not to have accepted that clue to the interpretation of the Present and the anticipation of the Future which was offered him by Augustine’s vision of the City of God.

From this sketch of the character of the biographer we return to survey the actions of his hero, the young imperial guardsman, Belisarius. The campaigns of the three years from 527 to 529 seem to have consisted of desultory and indecisive skirmishes: but in the last year Belisarius was appointed *Magister Militum per Orientem*; and this concentration of power in the hands most capable of wielding it was soon Persian followed by a brilliant victory. In 530, in the midst of negotiations for peace, the Persian Mirran or commander-in-chief, Perozes, made a dash at the new, much-hated fortress of Daras. In point of strategy he seems to have shown himself superior to the imperial general, since he was able to concentrate 40,000 men for the attack, while Belisarius could muster only 25,000 for the defence. Deeming the battle as good as won Perozes sent an arrogant message to the Soman commander: ‘Prepare me a bath in Daras, for I intend to repose there tomorrow.’ But when the Persian troops advanced to the attack they soon perceived that they were in the presence of a master of tactics and that their victory would not be an easy one. Under the walls of Daras Belisarius had ordered his troops to dig a long but not continuous trench, with two side-trenches sloping away from it at an obtuse angle at either end. His irregular troops, consisting chiefly of Huns, Heruli, and other barbarians, were stationed in the intervals which had been purposely left between the various parts of this line of defence. Behind them, ready to take advantage of any victory which might be won by the irregulars, lay the disciplined masses of the main body of the imperial army.

On the first day of the battle the Persians advanced, but retreated, seeing the imminent danger they were in of a flank attack if they threw themselves upon any point of the half--

hexagon. Again they advanced and won some slight advantage, but failed to maintain it. The sun was now near setting, and the attention of both armies was distracted by the brave deeds of Andreas, a gymnastic-master and the bathing attendant of a Roman general, who engaged two Persian champions in succession and slew them both. In the second encounter the spears of the two combatants were both shivered on the opposing breastplates; the horses met in full career and fell to the earth from the violence of onset. Then ensued a struggle which of the two champions should first rise from the ground; a struggle which the gymnastic skill of Andreas terminated in his favour. He struck the Persian who had risen on one knee, with another blow he felled him to the earth, and so slew him amid the tumultuous applause of the Roman soldiery.

That night was passed by both armies in their previous positions. In the early morning (while the Persian general was marching up 10,000 additional troops from the city of Nisibis), messages were interchanged between the generals. Belisarius, avowing that he held it to be the highest mark of generalship to obtain peace, invited the Mirran even now, at the eleventh hour, to relinquish an attack which, made as it was in the midst of negotiations for peace, had in it something of the nature of treachery, and to retire within the Persian frontier. The Mirran replied: 'If you were not Romans we would listen gladly to your arguments : but you belong to a nation which neither promises nor oaths can bind. We have met you now in open war, and will either die here or fight on till old age overtakes us, that we may force you to do us justice.' Said Belisarius: 'Calling us hard names alters not the truth of facts. God and justice are on our side.'

The Mirran answered: 'We too know that the gods are on our side, and with their help we shall tomorrow be in Daras. As I said before, let my bath and my breakfast be prepared within the fortress.' Belisarius put the letters on the point of his standards, as a symbol to all the army that he fought against men who were truce-breakers and perfidious.

Before beginning the action, the Mirran did his best to re-assure his soldiers as to the unexpected check of the previous day, and the strange new signs of cohesion and discipline exhibited by their Roman antagonists. His oration, as reported by Procopius, is, if we may rely on its genuineness, the most striking of all testimonies to the genius of the Roman general in turning a disorderly mass of discordant nationalities into a harmonious whole, animated by one spirit, and mighty either for onset or resistance. Belisarius, in his brief speech to his soldiers, insisted on the paramount necessity of order and discipline, the secret of their previous day's success and the means of securing on that day a far more splendid triumph. Especially he bade them not to be discouraged by the superior numbers of the enemy. The Persians possessed some brilliant *corps d'élite* (such as the troops known as the Immortals): but the great mass of the army, according to the Roman general's statement, consisted of squadrons of clumsy rustics, labourers rather than soldiers, good at undermining walls or plundering the bodies of the slain, but whose only notion of fighting consisted in covering themselves with their huge shields, keeping their own bodies safe for a time, but powerless to injure the enemy.

The battle began at noon, the Persians, who dined late, having purposely chosen this time for the attack, because they deemed that the Romans, debarred from their usual midday meal, would be faint with hunger. A cloud of arrows from both sides soon darkened the air. In number the missiles of the Persians greatly exceeded; but a favouring wind gave a deadly energy to the fewer darts of the Romans. The Mirran had drawn up his army in two divisions, intending continually to recruit his first line with drafts from the unwearied troops behind them. On the Roman side, the trench with its two flanking lines was still the framework of the position: but Pharas the Herulian, anxious to do great deeds, and not seeing his opportunity in the crowded lines at the left-hand angle of the trenches, asked and obtained leave to make a long flank march and to occupy an eminence in the rear of the Persian right.

Two generals, under the Mirran, commanded the Persian army, Pituzes on the left, Baresmanas on the right. The onset of Pituzes at first met with some success : perhaps the withdrawal of Pharas had unduly weakened the Roman line at the point assailed by him. Soon, however, the generals who were posted behind the main trench saw their opportunity to make a charge on the advancing Persians: and at the same time the appearance of Pharas on his hill in their rear turned the repulse into defeat. Belisarius, who saw that no further danger was to be apprehended from this quarter, withdrew Sunica, a Hunnish commander who had been stationed on the left of the main line, and swung him and his 600 Hunnish horsemen round to strengthen the Roman right, at this time sorely pressed by the advancing Persians. In fact, the Roman troops at the end of the main line were already in full flight. But the Huns on the flanking trench, under Simas and Ascan, joined by their brethren under Sunica and Aegan, now swooped down upon the pursuing Persians. Sunica himself, at the critical moment of the battle, struck down the standard-bearer of Baresmanas. The Persians found that they were being assailed both on the right and the left. They wavered a little in their headlong pursuit: the fugitive Romans finding themselves not followed, turned and faced them : they were soon hopelessly cut off from the rest of the Persian army. Sunica slew Baresmanas and dashed him from his horse to the ground. Great fear fell on all the Persians when they saw their standard fallen, their general's horse riderless. Five thousand of their soldiers, thus surrounded, were cut to pieces : and the rest of the Persians, seeing the slaughter, dashed down their great shields and fled in panic from the field.

Belisarius, mindful of his great inferiority in numbers and fearful of an ambuscade, forbade a distant pursuit of the enemy. The battle, which was a decisive one, had in truth been gained by tactics not unlike those which had in old times been practised by the Parthians against their enemies, namely, by taking advantage of the disorder into which the very fact of pursuit betrays an apparently successful squadron. We can see that the mode of fighting is as dissimilar as possible to the old steady advance of the heavy-armed legions of Rome. Belisarius's army, Roman only in name, consists largely of Huns, Herulians, and other stalwart barbarians drawn from along the northern frontier of the Empire. Courage they have in abundance : they need but discipline to make them irresistible, and that the subtle brain and commanding presence of Belisarius, a born general and king of men, supply in perfection.

How entirely the success of the imperial arms was due to the personal ascendancy of Belisarius over his troops was clearly shown in the campaign of 531, when, for want of proper subordination on their part, the battle of Sura was lost by the Romans. In the deliberations in the Persian Court at the beginning of that year, Perozes, the late Mirran, appeared shorn of his dignity, and no longer wearing the circlet of gold and pearls which had before wreathed his brows. This was the punishment inflicted by the King of Kings on the general who had lost the battle of Daras. While Advice of the King and his counsellors were discussing the possible routes for invading the Empire by the old battle-fields of Armenia and Upper Mesopotamia, Alamundar, king of the Saracens, who had been all his life waging a guerrilla war against the Empire on its Arabian frontier, proposed a new plan of campaign. He would avoid the strong border fortresses on the Upper Euphrates and its affluents, cross the river lower down, traverse the wide desert north of Palmyra, and so, reaching that frontier of the Empire upon which there were no fortresses, because the desert was supposed to be its bulwark, strike boldly at Antioch itself. The plan thus proposed, coming from the lips of the king of the Saracens, was a too fatal forecast of the woes which should fall upon the Empire from that very quarter, when the sons of the desert should no longer be serving as vassals of the Persian king, but should be overthrowing empires on their own account, and fighting under the standard of the Prophet.

The counsel of Alamundar pleased Kobad and his nobles, and accordingly 15,000 men were ordered to cross the Middle Euphrates at Circesium, their new general being a Persian

noble named Azareth, and Alamundar himself being their guide across the desert. The expedition at first obtained some successes, and the citizens of Antioch, fearing for the safety of their city, streamed down the valley of the Orontes to the coast of the Mediterranean. But tidings of the invasion having reached Belisarius, he ventured to leave the upper frontier comparatively undefended and to make a forced march with an army of 20,000 men to the little lake of Gabbula, about sixty miles east of Antioch, where the enemy were mustered. On hearing of his approach they abandoned the enterprise in despair, and began to retreat towards the Persian frontier. Belisarius followed, slowly pushing them down the western bank of the Euphrates, avoiding a pitched invading battle, and each night encamping in the quarters retreat, which the enemy had occupied the night before. He had in this way reached the little town of Sura, nearly opposite the city of Callinicus. The latter, though on the other side of the Euphrates, was a Roman city, for down to this point both banks of the great river were still included in the Empire. Here the invaders were intending to cross the Euphrates and make their way back across the desert to their own land. Nor was Belisarius minded to stop them. True, they still carried with them some of the spoil which they had gathered in the plains of Chalcis, but the shame of a thwarted enterprise more than outweighed this advantage.

But now arose a strange delusion in the Roman army, shared alike by the most experienced officers and by the rawest recruits just drawn from following the plough in the valleys of Lycaonia, to face, for the first time, the realities of war. They all thought that they could read the fortunes of the game better than the general: and they dared to impute to that dauntless spirit the greatest of all sins in a soldier's code of morality—cowardice. In vain did Belisarius remonstrate against this infatuated determination to jeopard the substantial fruits of the campaign for the sake of the mere name of victory. In vain did he remind them that they were exhausted by the rigour of their Paschal fast:—it was the day before Easter Sunday, and no orthodox Byzantine would touch any food from daybreak to nightfall. All was in vain. The soldiers only shouted more loudly what they had before murmured in secret, 'Belisarius is a coward! Belisarius hinders us from beating the enemy!'. Seeing that the troops were getting out of hand, and knowing that some of their officers were openly siding with the men, Belisarius with a heavy heart yielded to their clamour, pretended that he had only opposed, in order to test, their eagerness, and made his arrangements for the coming battle.

The Romans, with their faces to the south, touched the shore of the Euphrates with their left, and at this end of their line was stationed the bulk of the Roman infantry. In the centre, Belisarius himself commanded the cavalry, at that time the most important portion of the army. On the right, the Roman position was strengthened by the steepness of the ground. Here fought those Saracen tribes who were friendly to the Empire, and mingled with them were some soldiers who bore the name of Isaurians. In reality, however, they were the Lycaonian rustics to whom reference has already been made. Like the name of Switzer after the great battles of Granson and Morat, so was Isaurian in the armies of the Empire, a title of honour sometimes claimed by men who had little right to it.

On the other side, Azareth and his Persians by the Euphrates faced the Roman left and centre: while the Saracens under Alamundar faced their countrymen on the Roman right.

For some time the battle hung in suspense. Both armies were fighting with missile weapons, and the Roman archers, though less numerous, drew a stronger bow and did more deadly execution than the Persian. After two-thirds of the day had thus elapsed, an impetuous charge of Alamundar caused the Roman right to waver. Ascan the Hun, by the prodigies of valour which he performed, checked for some time the rout of this portion of the army, but after he and the 800 braves who were with him had fallen, there was no longer a show of resistance in this part of the field. The Lycaonian rustics, who were lately so loud in teaching lessons of valour to Belisarius, fell like sheep before the knife, scarcely lifting a weapon in

self-defence. The Saracens, pursued by their brother Saracens and the mighty Alamundar, streamed in disorder across the plain.

Belisarius, when he saw the death of Ascan, was forced to flee with his cavalry to the infantry beside the Euphrates. Dismounting from his horse, he fought as a foot-soldier in the ranks, and bade his companions do the same. Turning their backs to the river, the little band of Romans with tightly-locked shields formed a solid wedge, against which the masses of Persian cavalry dashed themselves in vain. Again and again the unavailing charge was attempted. At length night fell, and under its friendly shelter Belisarius and the brave remnant of his army escaped across the river to Callinicus, where they were safe from the Persian pursuit. When Easter Sunday dawned, the Persians as masters of the field buried the bodies of the slain, and found to their dismay that as many of their own countrymen as of the Romans lay upon the plain.

The event of the battle, though abundantly vindicating the wisdom of Belisarius in desiring to decline it, did not greatly alter the course of the campaign. The Persian generals continued their retreat: and when they appeared in the presence of Kobad, the aged monarch asked them what Roman city they had added to his dominions, or whether they had brought him any of the spoil of Antioch. 'Not so, O King of Kings,' answered Azareth, 'but we return from winning a victory over Belisarius and the Roman army'. 'At what cost?' said Kobad. 'Let the arrows be counted'. It was an ancient custom in the Persian state that the army, when about to start for a campaign, should defile before the king, and that each soldier should cast an arrow into a basket at his feet. The baskets were sealed with the king's seal, and kept in a place of safety till the return of the host. They then again marched in order past the king, each soldier as he passed-drawing forth an arrow from the basket. The arrows undrawn told the tale of the soldiers who returned not from the enemy's land. Now, after the day of Sura so numerous were these, the arrows of the dead, that Kobad taunted the triumphant general with his too dear-bought victory; and never after was Azareth entrusted with any high command.

Four months after the battle of Sura, Kobad died; his long and eventful life being ended by a rapid attack of paralysis. His third son, the celebrated Chosroes or Nushirwan, succeeded to the throne, though not without a struggle, in which he put to death every male of his father's house. Possibly these domestic troubles made him the more ready to end the war with the Roman Emperor. After some little diplomatic wrangling a peace, proudly called 'The Endless Peace' was arranged between the two Empires. The fortresses taken on either side were to be restored; Daras was not to be occupied as a military post; and Justinian was to pay Chosroes 11,000 pounds' weight of gold (£440,000) as a contribution towards the expenses of guarding the Caucasus frontier from the barbarians. Upon the whole, the terms were a confession on each side that the game was drawn.

Meanwhile, shortly after the battle of Sura, Belisarius had been recalled to Constantinople by his master, who already meditated employing the talents of this brilliant officer in an entirely new field. It was probably at this time that the young general met and married the woman who was thenceforward to exercise so mighty an influence over his fortunes. Antonina, whose father and grandfather had been charioteers, and whose mother had been a woman of loose character connected with the theatre, could not be considered on the score of birth an equal mate for the young guards-man. In years also she had the disadvantage, being according to Procopius twenty-two years, and certainly not less than twelve years, her husband's senior. She was a widow, and had two grown-up children, when Belisarius married her. The strong and abiding affection which bound the great general to this strangely chosen wife, his deference for her clear and manly judgment, his toleration of her strange vagaries, and even of the stain which she more than once brought upon his honour, all seemed like a reflection of his imperial master's passion for Theodora. At present, however, the two great ladies, the comic

dancer and the actress's daughter, were not on friendly terms with one another. At a later period, the friendship of Theodora for Antonina was to be a factor strongly influencing the fortunes of Belisarius both for good and for evil.

The service upon which Justinian meditated employing Belisarius was to lie in the lands of the West, as far from Constantinople in that direction as the plains of Mesopotamia were in the other. He was to renew the attempt, in which Basiliscus had failed so disastrously sixty-five years before—the attempt to pull down the great Vandal kingdom and restore the provinces of Africa to the sway of the Emperor.

Two months after the battle of Sura a revolution took place at Carthage which furnished Justinian with an admirable pretext for such an enterprise. We have seen that Thrasamund was succeeded by Hilderic, the elderly grandson of Gaiseric, with Catholic sympathies derived from his mother Eudocia, daughter of Valentinian III. Not only by his religious divergence from the ancestral creed was Hilderic ill-fitted for the Vandal throne. His subjects, though they had lost much of their old warlike impetuosity, still loved at least to talk of battle and the camp: while Hilderic, in the exceeding softness and tenderness of his nature, could not bear that any one should even speak of warlike matters in his presence. For eight years the Vandal nation and the family of Gaiseric bore, with increasing impatience, the rule of such a king. At length, in June, 531, his cousin Gelimer, the great-grand-son of Gaiseric, a man who had himself almost passed middle life, a warrior and head of a brotherhood of warriors, unwilling to wait any longer, thrust the feeble Hilderic from the throne and mounted it himself, with the full consent of the Vandal nobility. The two nephews of Hilderic, one of whom, Hoamer, had been called, on rather slight martial cause, the Achilles of the Vandals, shared his captivity.

On hearing these tidings Justinian, who had commenced a friendly correspondence with Hilderic before his own accession to the throne, wrote to remonstrate with Gelimer, and to insist that the aged monarch should continue to wear at least the title, if not to wield the power, of a king. Throughout the correspondence the Emperor assumed the attitude of one who watched over the execution of the testament of Gaiseric, Gaiseric once the irreconcilable enemy of Rome, but now, by a constitutional fiction, her traditional friend and ally.

To the remonstrances of Justinian, Gelimer replied by blinding the Vandal Achilles and by subjecting Hilderic and his other nephew to a yet closer captivity. A letter of stronger remonstrance from Constantinople was answered by a brief and insolent note, in which 'King Gelimer informed King Justinian that nothing was more desirable than that a monarch should mind his own business'. Irritated by this reply, Justinian began seriously to meditate an expedition to chastise the insolence of the Vandal. Negotiations were commenced with Chosroes which resulted in 'the Endless Peace' with Persia, and a pretext was made for recalling Belisarius to Constantinople that the plan of the coming campaign might be discussed with him.

All these schemes were for a time cut short by the terrible insurrection of the Nika, in which the timely presence of Belisarius at the capital saved the throne of Justinian. That chapter closed, the Emperor began again to discuss with his counsellors his designs of African conquest. The proposed war was universally unpopular. The terrible loss of treasure and life in the unsuccessful expedition of Basiliscus was in every one's mouth. Each general dreaded the responsibility of so distant and uncertain an enterprise. The soldiers, who seemed to themselves to have come from the uttermost ends of the earth toward the sun-rising, murmured at the thought of visiting the equally distant lands of the sunset, before they had had time to taste any of the pleasures of the capital. The great civil officers groaned over the prospect of the toil they would have to undergo and the odium they must incur in collecting money and stores for so remote an expedition.

The chief of these civil officers, the ablest, the most illiterate, and the most unscrupulous man among them, the Praetorian Prefect, John of Cappadocia, delivered an oration in full consistory, earnestly dissuading the Emperor from his enterprise. 'You wish, O Augustus, to reach with your arms the city of Carthage. That city lies at a distance from us of 140 days' journey if you go by land. If you sail to it you must cross a wide waste of waters and reach the utmost limits of the sea. Should misfortune overtake your army, it will be a whole year before we hear the tidings of it. And even if you conquer Africa, O Emperor, never will you be able to hold it while Italy and Sicily own the sway of the Ostrogoth. In a word, success in my opinion will bring you no lasting gain, and disaster will involve the ruin of your flourishing Empire.'

For the time Justinian was shaken by the unanimous opposition of his counsellors, and was willing to relinquish the project. But the insulting words of Gelimer rankled in his breast; the glory of restoring the province of Africa to the Empire and her Church to the Catholic communion was too alluring to be abandoned : and when a Bishop from a distant Eastern diocese announced that he had come to Constantinople, commissioned by the Almighty in a dream, to rebuke the slackness of Justinian and to say, 'Thus saith the Lord, I myself will be his partner in the war and I will subdue Libya under him, the ardour of the Emperor could no longer be restrained : soldiers and ships were collected, and Belisarius was ordered to be in readiness to take the command of the expedition on the earliest possible day. He was invested, for the second time, with the rank of *Magister Militum per Orientem*: he was surrounded by a brilliant staff, and Archelaus the Patrician, formerly Praetorian Prefect, was attached to the expedition as Paymaster of the Forces.

Belisarius was accompanied by his two trusty counsellors, Antonina and Procopius. The latter tells us honestly that he had shared the general dread and dislike of the enterprise, but he too had had his favourable dream which had put him in better heart and caused him to enter upon the service with eagerness.

The army consisted of 10,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, and was composed of regular Roman soldiers and *foederati*, the latter probably preponderating. Huns and Heruli occupied prominent positions, not only in the ranks but in the general's tent. The fleet conveying this army comprised 500 ships, the largest of which was of 750 tons burden, and the smallest 45. The large number of 20,000 sailors (forty to each ship, great and small) manned this fleet. There were besides ninety-two fast war-ships, of the kind called dromones, rowed by 2000 Byzantines. These ships had only one bank of oars, and were roofed over to protect the rowers from the enemy's darts. We may perhaps consider that they occupied a similar position in the Byzantine fleet to that held by the torpedo-boats of today in a modern navy.

About Midsummer-day, in the year 533, the armament, the subject of so many hopes and fears, sailed from the quay in front of the Imperial Palace at Constantinople. Epiphanius the Patriarch came on board the general's ship, offered the accustomed prayers, and, for greater good-fortune, left a newly-baptized soldier, a convert to Christianity, under the flag of Belisarius. Calms detained the fleet for some days in the Hellespont, and, while there, two drunken Hunnish soldiers slew a man with whom they had quarrelled. Belisarius hung them up at once in sight of the whole army on a hill overlooking Abydos. Their comrades murmured; but the general, in a short, vigorous speech, reminded them that their only hope of success in the enterprise which they had undertaken lay in the observance of strict justice, without which neither God's favour nor man's could be looked for by them. And as for the plea of drunkenness, no man, whether Roman or barbarian, should be allowed to plead that as an excuse for his crime, which was rather its aggravation. The soldiers heard the general's words, looked upon the gallows from which their comrades were hanging, and conceived a salutary fear of offending against the laws which found so prompt a defender.

The winds were not favourable, and at Methone there was another long detention of the fleet. The misery of sickness was added to the misery of inaction, and that sickness was caused by the dishonest cupidity of a Byzantine official. John of Cappadocia, who had contracted to supply the fleet with a certain number of pounds' weight of biscuit, had sent the dough to be baked at the furnace which heated one of the public baths at Constantinople. He had thus economised baker's wages and fuel, and he had prevented the shrinking in volume which resulted from a proper application of the process. But the so-called twice-baked bread, only once baked and that imperfectly, was a loathsome and corrupting mass when the sacks containing it were opened at Methone. The commissaries at first insisted on supplying it to the men. A pestilence was the natural result, from which five hundred soldiers died. As soon as the matter came to the ears of Belisarius, he at once reported the Prefect's dishonesty to Justinian, stopped the issue of the unsound stores to the troops, and purchased the bread of the district for distribution among them.

At length the fleet reached Zante and there took in water. Still so idly flapped their sails that it took them sixteen days to cross from Zante to Catania in Sicily, and during this passage many of the ships' crews suffered severely from want of water. On board the general's ship, however, there was abundance; for the provident Antonina had stored a large quantity of the precious fluid in some glass amphorae, which she had then deposited in an improvised wooden cellar, constructed in the hold of the ship and carefully covered over with sand. Thus the general and his staff, including the grateful Procopius, had always plenty of cool draughts of water, while their comrades on board the other ships were parched with thirst.

About two months had probably elapsed from the time of the fleet's departure from Constantinople before it reached Sicily. Owing to the unhealed quarrel between the Vandals and Ostrogoths, resulting from the death of Amalafriada, and owing also to the relations of intimate alliance which the Romanising Amalasantha had established with Justinian, Sicily afforded the imperial troops not only a safe but a friendly resting-place, where they could refit and revictual their ships at pleasure. Without this advantage, which the madness of the Vandals had thrown in their way, it may be doubted if the Byzantine expedition could possibly have succeeded.

Belisarius, however, notwithstanding this point in his favour, was racked with doubts and fears as to the issue of the campaign. His absolute ignorance of the numbers and position of the Vandal army, his want of all information as to the best points for landing, or the condition of the roads, were most unsatisfactory to a general who, with all his splendid personal courage, looked upon war as a science and knew what the postulates of that science demanded. And then, he knew not whether he should be allowed to join battle with the Vandals by land. They had a powerful fleet and might attack him, as they had attacked Basiliscus, by sea. Ominous murmurs were being uttered by the disheartened soldiery—and some of them reached his ears—that, though they would do their duty in an engagement on land and would show themselves brave men there, if they were attacked at sea by the ships of the enemy they would at once seek safety in flight.

Oppressed by these cares, Belisarius sought the quarters of his counsellor Procopius. He wished that the secretary should visit the city of Syracuse, ostensibly in order to buy stores for the army, but really to obtain all possible information as to the doings of the Vandals, the near neighbours of Sicily. Procopius gladly accepted the mission, and after some days presented himself at the general's quarters at Caucana, the meeting-place of the troops on the south coast of the island, about fifty miles from Syracuse. The Secretary's face showed that he brought good tidings, and he had a living voucher for their truth. Almost immediately on his arrival at Syracuse he had met with a person who had been a friend of his from childhood, but who, on account of his interest in some shipping property, had quitted the East and was now settled in

the Sicilian capital. When Procopius cautiously propounded his questions about Carthage, his friend replied, 'I have the very man who can give you the needed information. This servant of mine returned but three days ago from Carthage: ask him'. The servant declared that no preparations worth speaking of were being made by the Vandals to meet the Byzantine armament. They did not even know that it had left Constantinople. Gelimer was at an inland place called Hermione, a considerable distance from Carthage. And, most important of all, by a piece of rare good-fortune for the Romans, all the best Vandal soldiers had sailed away to Sardinia, under the command of Tzazo, Gelimer's brother, to put down the rebellion of one Godas, a Goth who had been sent thither by the Vandal King to collect tribute, but who was now trying to open communications with the Emperor on his own account, and affected the airs of an independent sovereign.

All this was better news than Procopius had dared to hope for. That Belisarius might be satisfied of its truth, he took his friend's slave down with him to the port, which was still called 'the Harbour of Arethusa,' continued an eager conversation with the man till they were on board ship, and then gave a sign to the captain to weigh anchor and leave the harbour with all speed. The owner of the kidnapped slave, Procopius's friend from childhood, stood on the shore bewildered and inclined towards anger: but his old schoolfellow shouted out to him that he must not be grieved, for that it was absolutely necessary that the man should be brought into the general's presence; but after he had shown the Roman army the way to Carthage he should soon be sent back to Syracuse bringing a large reward,

Cheered by the tidings brought by this messenger Belisarius ordered the mariners to hoist sail. They passed the islands of Malta and Gozo, and the next day, a brisk east wind having sprung up, they reached the coast of Africa. It was now about the beginning of September, and nearly three months since they had sailed forth from the harbour of Constantinople.

The point of the African coast which the fleet had made was called Caputvada, and was about 130 miles in a straight line south by east of Carthage. The coast of Africa here runs nearly due north and south, and the corner where it turns from its usual east and west direction, the very conspicuous promontory of Cape Bon (called by the Greeks and Romans Hermaeum), lies 130 miles due north of Caputvada, and about thirty east of Carthage.

Before landing, Belisarius called a council of war on board his ship. The Patrician Archelaus, his civil Assessor and Paymaster-General, was earnest in his advice that they should not land there, but sail round to the great pool close to the harbour of Carthage, where there would be shelter and ample berthing-room for all the ships, and where they would be quite close to the scene of operations. There was much to be said on behalf of this view, and it was well said by Archelaus, who, as master of the commissariat department, especially insisted on the difficulties that would beset the provisioning of the troops upon a land-march if the fleet, their base of supply, should be dashed to pieces against the Libyan coast. Belisarius, however, who felt that he could trust his troops by land and could not trust them by sea, refused to give the Vandals another chance of bringing on a naval engagement, and gave his decisive voice in favour of disembarking at Caputvada and proceeding from thence to Carthage by land. The soldiers were ordered at once to fortify the position at Caputvada with the usual fosse and vallum of a Roman camp. In doing so they discovered a copious spring of excellent water, welcome for its own sake, but doubly welcome because it was looked upon as something supernatural and a token of Divine favour on the enterprise.

As it proved, this *fossatum* or entrenched camp was not needed by the Romans. The extraordinary apathy, or panic, or over-confidence of the Vandals still left the imperial army free from attack. The neighbouring city of Syllectum, at the persuasion of the Catholic bishop and the leading citizens—men doubtless of Roman nationality—gladly opened her gates to the Emperor's generals. An even more important defection was that of the Vandal Postmaster of

the Province, who placed all the post-horses of his district at the general's disposal. One of the king's messengers (*veredarii*) was captured, and Belisarius sought to make use of him to circulate Justinian's proclamation, which, in the usual style of such documents, stated that the invading army came, not to make war on people of the land, but only on the tyrant and usurper Gelimer. The *veredarius* handed copies of the proclamation to some of his friends, but not much came of his proceedings. Sovereigns and statesmen generally overrate the importance of such manifestoes.

For eleven days Belisarius and his army moved steadily northwards, covering a distance of about thirteen miles a day. A force of 300 men under the command of his steward, John the Armenian, preceded the main body of the army at a distance of about three miles. The Huns rode at the same distance to the left. Thus, if danger threatened from either quarter, the general was sure to have early notice of it. His right wing was of course sufficiently protected by the sea, where his ships slowly accompanied the march of the land forces. Belisarius sternly repressed the slightest disposition on the part of his soldiers to plunder, and insisted on every article of food required being punctually paid for. He was rewarded for this exercise of discipline by the hearty good-will of the provincials, who evidently gave no information of his movements to the enemy. The soldiers, too, had their reward for their painful self-denial when, about sixty miles from Carthage, they reached the 'Paradise' which surrounded the beautiful palace of the Vandal kings at Grassé. Here were springing fountains, a great depth of shade, and fruit-trees in overpowering abundance. Into these lovely gardens poured the dusty, travel-worn Byzantines, and found them indeed a Paradise. Each soldier made himself a little hut under the boughs of some fruit-tree and ate his fill of its luscious produce: yet, strange to say, when the bugle sounded and the army had to leave the too brief delights of Grassé, it seemed as if there was still the same wealth of fruit upon the trees that hung there when the first soldier entered.

Now at length, on the 13th of September, four days after leaving Grassé, when the army reached Ad Decimum, came the shock of grim war to interrupt this pleasant promenade through the enemy's land. When Gelimer heard the tidings of the enemy's landing, his first step was to send orders to Carthage that Hilderic and his surviving relatives and friends should be put to death: his next, to desire his brother Ammatas, who commanded at Carthage, to arm all the Vandal soldiers and prepare for a combined attack on the invaders. The place chosen for this combined attack was a point ten miles from Carthage (Ad Decimum), where the road went between steep hills, and it seemed possible to catch the enemy as in a trap. Three divisions were to co-operate in the movement. While Ammatas, sallying forth from Carthage, attacked the Roman van, King Gelimer himself with the main body of the army was to fall upon their rear, and at the same hour his nephew Gibamund, moving over the hills from the west, was to fall upon their left flank.

The plan was skilfully conceived, and Procopius himself expresses his astonishment that the Roman host should have escaped destruction. Some part of the credit of their deliverance was due to the arrangements made by Belisarius for obtaining early information of what was going on in front of him and on his left flank, but more to the Chance or Fate or Providence (Procopius scarcely knows which to style it) that caused Ammatas to issue too early from Carthage and deliver his attack too soon. He came about noonday, and dashed impetuously, with only a few of his followers, against the Roman vanguard, led by John the Armenian. Ammatas slew with his own hand twelve of the bravest of the imperial soldiers, but he then fell mortally wounded, and his death changed the whole fortune of the day. His men fled, and John's pursuing soldiers wrought grievous havoc among the Vandals issuing from Carthage, who, in no regular order, were scattered along the road from the city to the battle-field. Pro-

copius says that lookers-on conjectured that 20,000 Vandals were thus slain, but the estimate was probably an exaggerated one.

Equally unsuccessful was Gibamund's attack on the left flank of the Roman army. According to the arrangement of Belisarius above described, the troops that he fell in with were the covering squadron of Huns. The Vandals had often heard of the headlong bravery of these old enemies of the Gothic nations, but had not before met them in battle. Now, a Hun belonging to a noble family, which had by long usage a prescriptive right to draw first blood in every battle, rode alone close up to the Vandal ranks. These, surprised or terrified, did not assail the solitary champion, who returned to his comrades, shouting loudly that God had given these aliens to them as food for their swords. The Hunnish squadron advanced, and the Vandal detachment, two thousand men in number, fled panic-stricken from the field.

Very different at first was the fortune of the main body of their army led by Gelimer himself. Procopius's description of this part of the action is somewhat confused; but it seems clear that the hilly nature of the ground hid the movements of Belisarius and Gelimer from one another. The Roman general had inadvertently drawn out his line too wide; and the Vandal King, equally by accident, slipped in between Belisarius and the centre of his army. He was thus enabled to make a most dangerous flank attack on the Roman centre, and in fact to gain the victory, if he had known how to keep it. If after his defeat of the infantry he had moved to the left against the small body of cavalry that surrounded Belisarius, he might easily have overwhelmed them. If he had pushed forward he would have annihilated John's forces still scattered in all the disorder of pursuit, and saved Carthage. He did neither. As he was leisurely descending a hill, his possession of which had given him the victory over the Roman centre, he came upon the dead body of Ammatas, still unburied and gashed with honourable wounds. Grief at this sight drove every thought of battle from the mind of Gelimer. He burst out into loud bewailings, and would not stir from the place till he had given his brother befitting burial. Meanwhile Belisarius was rallying his fugitive soldiers; was learning the true story of the vanguard's encounter with Ammatas; put heart into his beaten army, and before nightfall had got together day a large body of men with whom he dashed at full speed against the unprepared and unmarshalled Vandals. Now at length the battle was really won. Gelimer's soldiers fled westwards from the field in wild disorder, and the Romans of all three divisions encamped that night among the hills of Ad Decimum, victorious.

Gelimer's ill-timed display of sorrow for his brother was attributed by Procopius to a Heavensent infatuation. A modern historian is probably more disposed to turn it into ridicule. But after all, there is a touch of Northern chivalry and tenderness even in the absurdity of the proceeding. Hardly would any rhetoric-loving Greek or materialistic Roman have been tempted to lose a battle in order to take the last farewell fittingly of the relics of a brother.

On the next day Antonina and the rearguard of the troops came up, and the whole army moved on over the ten miles which separated them from Carthage, and encamped at nightfall at the gates of the capital. The whole city gave itself up to merriment: lights were lit in every chamber, and the night shone like the day. The Vandals, hopelessly outnumbered and recognising that the sceptre had departed from their nation, clustered as timid suppliants round the altars; but Belisarius sent orders into the city that the lives of all of that people who peaceably submitted themselves were to be spared. Meanwhile, still fearing some stratagem of the enemy, and doubtful also of the self-restraint of his soldiers, he refused for that night to enter the illuminated city. Next day, having Carthage satisfied himself that the enemy had indeed vanished, and having harangued his soldiers on the duty of scrupulously respecting the lives and property of the Carthaginian citizens, fellow-subjects with themselves of the Roman Emperor, and men whom they had come to deliver from the degrading yoke of the barbarian, he at length marched into the city, where he was received with shouts of welcome by the

inhabitants. The hundred years of Vandal domination were at an end. The Emperor, Senate, and People of Rome were again supreme in the great colony which Caius Gracchus had founded on the ruins of her mighty antagonist. And yet, strange contradiction, suggestive of future labours and dangers for the great commander, at that very time Rome herself, her Senate and her People, obeyed the orders of the Gothic princess, Amalasantha.

The exhortations of Belisarius to his troops bore memorable fruit. Never did soldiers march into a the troops, conquered town in more friendly guise. Although it was notorious that generally even a little handful of imperial soldiers marching into one of the cities of the Empire would fill the air with their boisterous clamour, and would terrify the peaceful inhabitants with their military braggadocio, now the whole army entered in perfect order and without an unnecessary sound. No threats were heard, no deed of insolence was done. The secretaries of the army, gliding about from rank to rank, distributed to each man his billet, and he departed tranquilly to his appointed lodging. In the workshops, the handicraftsmen plied their accustomed tasks; in the agora, the buyer and the seller bargained as of old. No one would have dreamed from the appearance of the city that a mighty revolution had that very day been consummated in the midst thereof.

On the morning of this eventful day many Byzantine merchants whom Gelimer in his rage had arrested, and whom he meant to have put to death on the very day of the battle of Ad Decimum, were cowering in a dark dungeon in the King's palace, expecting every moment to be ordered forth to execution. The gaoler entered and asked them what price they were willing to pay for their safety.

'My whole fortune,' each one gladly answered.

'You may keep your money,' said he. 'I ask for nothing but that you should help me if I too should be in danger of my life'. With that he removed a plank from before their prison window. With blinking eyes they looked forth to the blinding sky over the blue Mediterranean, and saw the imperial fleet drawing near to the city of their captivity. The chain which had stretched across the harbour was broken by the citizens' own hands, and they were crowding down to the port to welcome their deliverers. At that sight the prisoners knew that their chains also were broken. The gaoler opened the prison doors and went down into the streets in their company.

When noon was come, Belisarius, who had already entered the palace and seated himself on the throne of Gelimer, commanded that the mid-day meal should be served to him and to his officers in the Delphic chamber, the great banqueting-hall of the palace. Among the generals and officers sat the secretary Procopius, and mused on the instability of Fortune, as he found himself and his comrades waited upon by the royal pages, and eating, from the gold and silver plate of the Vandal, the very same luxurious meats and drinking the same costly wines which had been prepared for the repast of Gelimer himself.

A similar example of sowing without reaping was furnished by the cathedral church of Carthage, named after her great martyred bishop, St. Cyprian. Many a time, says Procopius, during the stress of the Vandal persecution, had the saint appeared in visions to his disciples and told them that they need not distress themselves, since he himself in time would avenge their wrongs. On the eve of his great yearly festival, which, as it chanced, was the very day that Ammatas rode forth from Carthage to fall among the hills of Ad. Decimum, the Arian priests, who had of course the sole right to minister in the cathedral, made great preparations, sweeping out the church, making ready the lights, bringing their costliest treasures out of the sacristy. Then came the decisive victory, by which African Arianism was for ever overthrown. The orthodox Christians flocked to the church, lighted the lamps, displayed the treasures, and rejoiced that they had at length received the long-delayed fulfilment of the promise of Saint Cyprian.

Gelimer, after the defeat of Ad Decimum, formed a camp at Bulla Regia, in the province of Numidia, and about a hundred miles west of Carthage. Here were collected the remains of the Vandal army, a still formidable host, and here were stored the vast treasures of the kingdom, those treasures which ninety-five years of sovereignty in the rich and fertile province of Africa had enabled the family of Gaiseric to accumulate.

While he was in this camp, meditating how best to recover possession of his capital, a letter was despatched from his brother Tzazo, the commander of the expedition to Sardinia. Tzazo, who had as yet heard nothing of the disasters of his people, wrote in a cheerful tone, announcing the easy victory which he had gained over the rebels, and prognosticating that even so would all the other enemies of the Vandals fall before them. By the irony of Fate, the messengers brought this letter to Carthage and had to deliver it to the hands of Belisarius, who read it and dismissed them unharmed.

Meanwhile Gelimer, who had perhaps gained information of the contents of the letter, wrote to his brother. 'Not Godas, but some cruel decree of destiny wrenched Sardinia from us. While you, with all our bravest, have been recovering that island, Justinian has been making himself master of Africa. With few men did Belisarius come against us, but all the ancient valour of the Vandals seemed to have departed, and with it all our old good-fortune. They turned faint-hearted when they saw Ammatas and Gibamund slain, and fleeing, left horses and ships and the province of Africa, and, worst of all, Carthage itself, a prey to our enemies. Here then we sit encamped in the plain of Bulla. Our only hope is in you. Leave Sardinia to take care of itself, and come and help us. It will be at least some comfort in our calamities to feel that we are bearing them together.'

When Tzazo and his Vandals received these grievous tidings in Sardinia, they broke forth into lamentations, all the more bitter because they had to be repressed whenever any of the subject islanders were near. Then, with all speed, they set sail, reached the point of the African coast where the Numidian and Mauritanian frontiers joined, and marched on foot to the plain of Bulla, where they met the rest of the army. The two brothers, Gelimer and Tzazo, fell on one another's necks and of the two remained for long locked in a silent embrace, neither of them able to speak for tears, but clasping one another's hands. Their followers did the same, and for a space no word was uttered. Neither the victory in Sardinia nor the defeat at Ad Decimum was spoken of by either host. The lonely and desolate spot where they met, and which was all that they could now call home, told with sad and sufficient emphasis all the tale of the last fatal month.

After the battle of Ad Decimum active hostilities on both sides had ceased for a time. Belisarius had been busily engaged in the superintendence of a great number of workmen whom he had engaged to repair the numerous breaches caused by time and neglect in the walls of Carthage, to dig a fosse around it, and plant stakes upon the vallum formed of the earth thrown up out of the fosse. Gelimer had attempted nothing beyond a guerrilla war, conducted by some of the African peasants, with whom he was personally popular, and stimulated by a bounty for the head of every Roman brought into his camp.

Now that, by his junction with Tzazo, he found himself at the head of forces considerably outnumbering the Roman army, Gelimer took a bolder line; marched to Carthage; broke down the aqueduct, an exceedingly fine one, which supplied the city; and encamped at Tricameron, a place about twenty miles distant from the capital, from whence he could block more than one of the roads leading thither. The secret negotiations which he set on foot with the Arians in Carthage and in the army of Belisarius were discovered by the general, who at once hung Laurus the chief traitor, on a hill overlooking the city. With the fierce and ungovernable Huns, who had listened to Gelimer's proposals, it was not possible to take such severe measures. In

the battle which all men knew to be now impending they had determined to take no active part till Fortune should have declared herself, and then to join the victorious side.

At length, about the middle of December, Belisarius marched forth from Carthage to fight the battle of Tricameron. Gelimer, who had placed the Vandal women and children in the middle of his camp, in order that their cries might stimulate their husbands and fathers to a desperate defence, harangued his troops, adjuring them to choose death rather than defeat, which involved slavery and the loss of all that made life delightful both for themselves and for these dear ones. Tzazo added a few words, specially addressed to the army of Sardinia, exhorting them, who had yet suffered no defeat, to prove themselves the deliverers of the Vandal name. The battle began stubbornly. Twice was the desperate charge of the Roman cavalry, under John the Armenian, beaten back; and the third charge, though more successful, led to a fierce hand-to-hand encounter, in which for some time neither side could get the better of its antagonists. But then, in the crisis of the battle, Tzazo fell. Gelimer, again unmanned by a brother's death, forgot his own valour-breathing words and hurried swiftly from the field. The Huns now struck in on the side of the Romans. The rout of the Vandals was complete, and they fled headlong from the field, leaving camp, treasure, children and wives, all at the mercy of the enemy.

The utter demoralisation which spread throughout the conquering army at the sight of this splendid prize would have ensured their overthrow, had Gelimer and a few faithful followers hovered near to take advantage of it. Intent on stripping off the golden armour of the Vandal officers, enraptured at finding themselves the possessors of money, of jewels, of comely and noble-looking slaves, the host of barbarians who bore the name of a Roman army abandoned all thought of military obedience, forgot even the commonest maxims of prudence in the presence of a beaten foe, and were intent upon one only aim, to convey themselves and their spoil back within the walls of the city as soon as possible. Murder went as ever hand in hand with lust and greed. Not one of the Vandal warriors who was captured was admitted to quarter. When day dawned, Belisarius, standing on a neighbouring hill to survey the scene, succeeded by his shouted adjurations in restoring some degree of order, first among: the soldiers of his own household, and then, through their means, in the rest of the army. So were all the soldiers with their captives and spoils at length safely marched back to Carthage. The numerous Vandal suppliants in the churches of the district were admitted to quarter, and preparations were made for shipping off the greater number of them as prisoners to Constantinople. Experienced officers were sent to Sardinia, to Corsica, to the Balearic Isles, to Ceuta and other Mauritanian towns, and easily brought all these recent possessions of the Vandals into the obedience of the Emperor. At Lilybaeum only in Sicily (now Marsala) were they unsuccessful. Here the Goths, though friendly to the Romans, entirely refused to recognise that conquest gave Justinian any right to claim Amalafriada's dowry, and declined to surrender the city.

When Gelimer escaped from the field of Tricameron, Belisarius ordered John the Armenian to follow after him night and day, and not to rest till he had taken him prisoner. For five days did this pursuit continue, and on the following day it would probably have been successful but for a strange misadventure. There was among John's soldiers a barbarian named Uliaris, a brave soldier, but flighty, impetuous, and a drunkard. On the morning of the sixth day, at sunrise, Uliaris, who was already intoxicated, saw a bird sitting on a tree and tried to shoot it. He aimed so clumsily that his arrow, missing the bird, pierced his general from behind in the nape of his neck. John Armenian languished a few hours in great pain and then expired, desiring that the offence of his unwilling murderer might be forgiven. Belisarius, who was at once sent for, wept bitterly at the grave of his friend, whose character and achievements had seemed to mark him out for a high career; and fulfilled his dying wishes by pardoning Uliaris.

But meanwhile the hard-pressed Gelimer had succeeded in escaping from his pursuers to a steep mountain called Pappua, on the very verge of the Numidian province. Here he with his nephews and cousins, the remnant of the proud family of Gaiseric, dwelt for three months, dependent on the hospitality and loyalty of the half-savage Moors who inhabited this district. A terrible change it was for the dainty Vandals, the most luxurious of all the races that overran the Roman Empire, to have to live cooped up in the fetid huts of these sons of the desert. The Vandal was accustomed to sumptuous meals, for which earth and sea were ransacked to supply new delicacies. The Moor did not even bake his bread, but subsisted upon uncooked flour. The Vandal dressed in silken robes, wore golden ornaments, and daily indulged in all the luxury of the Roman bath. The squalid Moor, swarming with vermin, wore both in winter and summer the same rough tunic and heavy cloak; he never washed himself, and his only couch was the floor of his hut, upon which, it is true, the wealthy Mauritanian spread a sheep-skin before he laid him down to rest. In the delights of the chase, the theatre, and the hippodrome had passed the pleasure-tinted days of the Vandal lords of Africa. Now, instead of this ceaseless round of pleasure, there was only the dull and sordid monotony of a Moorish hamlet on a bleak mountain.

After the death of John, Pharas the Herulian with a band of hardy followers had been told off for the pursuit of Gelimer, and had followed him as far as the foot of the mountain. His attempt to carry the position by storm had failed. The Moors were still faithful to the exile, and the steep cliffs could not be climbed without their consent. Pharas therefore was obliged to turn his siege into a blockade; and during the three winter months at the beginning of 534 he carefully watched the mountain, suffering none to approach and none to leave it. At length, knowing what hardships the Vandal King must be enduring, he wrote him a skilful and friendly letter, asking him why, for the sake of the mere name of freedom, he persisted in depriving himself of all that made life worth living. He concluded thus : ‘Justinian, I have heard, is willing to promote you to great honour, to confer upon you the rank of a Patrician, and to give you houses and lands. Surely to be fellow-servant with Belisarius of so mighty an Emperor is better than to be playing the king in Pappua, really serving the caprices of a few squalid Moors, and that in the midst of hunger and every kind of hardship not only for yourself but for your unhappy kindred.’

Gelimer’s answer was characteristic. ‘I thank you for your counsel, but I will not be the slave of a man who has attacked me without cause and upon whom I yet hope to wreak a terrible revenge. He has brought me, who had done him no wrong, to this depth of ruin, by sending Belisarius against me, I know not whence. But let him beware. Some change which he will not like may be impending over him also. I can write no more: my calamities take from me the power of thought. But be gracious to me, dear Pharas, and send me a lyre, and one loaf of bread and a sponge.’

The end of this singular letter was a hopeless puzzle to the Herulian general, till the messenger who brought it explained that Gelimer wished once more to experience the taste of baked bread, which he had not eaten for many weeks, that one of his eyes was inflamed owing to his inability to wash it, and that having composed an ode on his misfortunes he wished to hear how it sounded on the lyre.

After all, a trifling incident broke down the stubborn resolution of Gelimer. A Moorish woman had scraped together a little flour, kneaded it into dough, and put it on the coals to bake. Two boys, one of them her son and the other a Vandal prince, nephew of Gelimer, looked at the process of cooking with hungry eyes, and each determined to possess himself of the food. The Vandal was first to snatch it from the fire and thrust it, burning hot and gritty with ashes, into his mouth. At that the Moor caught him by the hair of his head, slapped him on the cheek, pulled the half-eaten morsel out of his mouth, and thrust it into his own. Gelimer,

who had been watching the whole scene from beginning to end, was so touched by the thought of the misery which his obstinacy was bringing upon all belonging to him, that he wrote to Pharas, retracting his former refusal, and offering to surrender if he could be assured that the terms mentioned in the previous letter were still open to him.

Pharas sent the whole of the correspondence to Belisarius, who received it with great delight, and sent a guard of foederati named Cyprian to swear that the terms of surrender named by Pharas should be kept. Gelimer came down from his hill; the mutual promises were exchanged, and in a few days the Vandal King was introduced into the presence of his captor at a suburb of Carthage named Aclae.

When Gelimer met Belisarius, to the surprise of all the bystanders, he burst into a loud peal of laughter. Some thought that the sudden reverse in his fortunes, the hardships, and the insufficient food of the last few months had touched his brain; and to a matter-of-fact historian this will perhaps still seem the most probable reason for his conduct. Procopius, however, assigns a more subtle cause. The Vandal King, suddenly, at the end of a long and prosperous life, cast down from the height of human happiness, perceived that all the prizes for which men contend here so earnestly are worthless. They are making all this coil about absolute nothingness, and whatever happens to them here is really worthy only to be laughed at. The story, as told by Procopius, and some other passages in the life of Gelimer, suggest that the character of the Vandal King might be so studied as to throw some light on that most enticing yet most difficult problem, Shakespeare's conception of the character of Hamlet.

Meanwhile the conqueror—as well as the conquered—was feeling some f
'The stings and arrows of outrageous Fortune.'

Some of his subordinates, envious of his glory, sent secret messages to the Emperor that Belisarius was aiming at the diadem. No doubt his having seated himself on the throne of Gelimer on that day when he entered the palace of the Vandal King lent some probability to the utterly baseless charge. The general, by good fortune, obtained a duplicate of the letter written by his enemies : and thus, when a message came back from Justinian, 'The Vandal captives are to be sent to Constantinople : choose whether you will accompany them or remain at Carthage,' he knew what answer was desired. To return was by his own act to dispel the accusation of disloyalty: to stay would have been at once to take up the position which his enemies would fain assign to him of a pretender to the crown. He wisely and as a good citizen chose the former course.

On his return to the capital, Belisarius was rewarded for his splendid services to the Senate and People of Rome by the honours of a triumph, which, says Procopius, had for near six hundred years never been enjoyed by any but an Emperor. Even now he had not quite the full honours of an ancient Roman triumph. He walked from his palace, whereas a Scipio or a Fabius would have ridden in his chariot. But before him walked the throng of Vandal captives, ending with Gelimer and his kinsmen, all that remained of the mighty Asding name. When the Byzantine populace saw those strong and stately forms, they marvelled the more at the skill of the general who had brought all their power down into the dust. Gelimer himself, as he passed through the streets, and when he came into the Hippodrome and saw Justinian sitting on his throne and the ranks and orders of the Roman people standing on either side of him, neither laughed nor wept, but simply repeated again and again the words of the kingly Hebrew preacher, 'Vanity of vanities: all is vanity.'

When he reached the throne of Justinian, the attendants took off the purple robe which floated from his shoulders and compelled him to fall prostrate before the peasant's son who bore the great name of Augustus. It may have been some mitigation of his abasement that his conqueror, the triumphant Belisarius, grovelled with him at Justinian's feet. When the triumph was ended, Gelimer was admitted probably to a private audience of the Emperor. The rank of

Patrician which had been promised him could only be his on his renouncing the Arian heresy, and this he steadily refused to do. He received, however, large estates in the Galatian province, and lived there in peace and of the with his exiled kinsfolk. The children and grand-children of Hilderic, who had the blood of Valentinian and Theodosius in their veins, and who also no doubt professed the Catholic faith, were especially welcomed and honoured by Justinian and Theodora, received large sums of money, and seem to have been invited to remain at the Byzantine Court.

Besides the other magnificent spoils which were exhibited at this triumph, the thrones and sceptres, the costly raiment, the pearls and golden drinking-cups, many of which had formed part of Gaiseric's spoil of Rome eighty years before, there were also carried in the procession the vessels of the Temple at Jerusalem which had once adorned the triumph of Titus. But, as has been already described a Jew who was acquainted with a friend of the Emperor said : 'If those vessels are brought into the Palace they will cause the ruin of this Empire. They have already brought the Vandal to Rome, and Belisarius to Carthage : nor will Constantinople long wait for her conqueror if they remain here.' The superstitious side of Justinian's nature was affected by this suggestion, and he sent the sacred vessels away to Jerusalem to be stored up in one of the Christian churches.

The next year, when Belisarius entered upon his consulship, he had a kind of second triumph, which was in some respects more like the antique ceremony. He was borne on the shoulders of the captives: then he rode in his triumphal car and scattered gifts to the crowd from out of the Vandal spoils. Silver vessels and golden girdles and money from the great Vandal hoard were scattered by the new Consul among that Byzantine populace which claimed the title of the Roman People.

The fall of the Vandal monarchy was an event full of meaning: for the future history of Africa. There can be little doubt that in destroying it Justinian was unconsciously removing the most powerful barrier which might in the next century have arrested the progress of Mohammedanism : and thus, in the secular contest between the Aryan and Semitic peoples, the fall of the throne of Gaiseric was a heavy blow to the cause of Europe and a great gain to the spirit of Asia.

The reasons which produced this overthrow cannot here be enumerated at length. It is clear, however, that in the Vandal monarchy there was less approach towards amalgamation between the Teuton invaders and the Roman provincials than in any of the other kingdoms founded by the Northern invaders. The arrogance of Gaiseric and his nobles and the ferocity of their persecution of the Catholics had opened a chasm between the two nations, which could perhaps never have been bridged over. Then upon this state of affairs supervened the weakening of the fibre of the conquering race and its loss of martial prowess, through the progress of luxury and through the increase of something which was perhaps not wholly undeserving of the name of culture. The quarrel with the Ostrogoths deprived the Vandals of their natural allies, and gave to Belisarius the best possible base for his invasion of Africa. The character of Gelimer, impulsive, sentimental, unstable, additionally weighted the scale against his subjects. And finally, that which some would be disposed to call mere accident, the invasion of Sardinia, the absence of storms while the Roman fleet was voyaging along the coast, the failure of the concerted operations at Ad Decimum, all combined to turn the doubtful enterprise of Justinian and his general into an assured and splendid victory.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ERRORS OF AMALASUNTHA.

The imperial conquest of Africa foreboded at no very distant date trouble for the Gothic lords of Italy. Truly had John of Cappadocia advised the Emperor that he could not expect long to retain the lands which owned Carthage as their capital while the intervening lands of Italy and Sicily were in alien, possibly hostile, hands. Already the grievance of the unsundered fortress of Lilybaeum was an indication of the coming estrangement between the hitherto friendly monarchies; a hint to any reflecting Gothic statesman that his nation had not done wisely in so immensely facilitating the imperial triumph over its old Vandal ally.

Ambassadors were speedily sent by Justinian to bring his grievances—which related not to Lilybaeum alone—before the Court of Ravenna: but these ambassadors were also charged with private messages to the Ostrogothic princess more important than their formal demand for the surrender of the Sicilian fortress. These private messages related to the increasingly strained relations between Amalasuatha and her own subjects, relations which had already caused her, a Gothic ruler, to utter strange cries for help to the Roman Emperor.

The daughter of Theodoric was a woman endowed with many splendid gifts, but she was placed in a difficult, one is inclined to say in a hopelessly false, position, and the very splendour of her gifts only made her failure to fill that position more notorious. The mere fact that she was a woman made it almost impossible that she should command the hearty loyalty of her Gothic subjects. That which John Knox inveighed against as ‘the monstrous regiment of a woman’ though common among the Celtic nationalities, was almost unknown to the Teutons. Tacitus, near the close of the ‘Germania’, speaks of the remote tribe of the Sitones as differing from other German races in that they were governed by a woman: ‘so far had they degenerated not only from liberty but even from slavery’. That peculiar development of the Teutonic spirit of honour to women which we call chivalry, and which was to make the stalwart knights of the Middle Ages proud to serve under a Lady Paramount, and the counsellors of Elizabeth support her throne with an enthusiastic loyalty of devotion such as few of the kings her predecessors had experienced,—all this was yet in the far future. For the present the Gothic warriors felt themselves distinctly degraded by having to obey the commands of a woman, though nominally only a Regent, and though she was the mother of their King.

It probably availed little against this disparaging view of a woman ruler, that she was possessed of great intellectual accomplishments, that she could speak Latin and Greek as fluently as the ambassadors who came to discourse with her in either tongue, and yet had not lost the full use of the rich Gothic vocabulary of her ancestors. The sensibility to the culture of the vanquished lords of Italy, which Amalasuatha showed in her friendships, in her speech, in her daily occupations, was all, matter for distrust and suspicion to those of her Gothic countrymen who wished to stand fast by the old ways. Still this might have been borne with as a woman’s whim; but when they perceived that she was bringing up the King of the Goths, the descendant of all the Amal warriors, to the same studious habits, their dislike deepened into indignation. The great Theodoric had said, in his proclamation to the Goths, even when Cassiodorus held the pen, ‘What is not learned in youth is unknown in riper years. Bring forth your young men and train them in martial discipline’. A young Amal hero should be learning (like the Persian lads of old) ‘to ride and to draw the bow, and to speak the truth’. He should be out daily with the young nobles, his equals in age, practising every kind of manly exercise.

Instead of this, the unhappy Athalaric had daily to visit the school of a grammarian, to learn what Priscian had just written about the eight parts of speech, or what Boethius (that traitor Boethius) had translated from the Greeks about the science of arithmetic. His only companions were three old men, of Gothic blood it is true, but whom the princess had selected because 'she perceived them to be more intelligent and reasonable than the rest of their countrymen', a doubtful recommendation in the eyes of their more impetuous and younger fellow-nobles.

At length, a chance event brought matters to a crisis, and emancipated Athalaric from female rule. For some act of disobedience Amalasantha flogged her royal son, who came forth from the bed-chamber into the apartment of the men, sobbing bitterly. A Gothic king, flogged by a woman and crying over the chastisement; that was too much for the warriors to endure. They clustered together, and some voices were heard openly proclaiming the cruel calumny that Amalasantha wished to kill her boy that she might marry a second husband, and with him lord it over both Goths and Italians. Soon a deputation, composed of men of such high rank that the princess could not refuse to listen to them, sought an interview with Amalasantha. In a formal harangue the chief speaker represented that the young King's education was not being conducted in a way that was either suitable for himself or just towards his subjects. 'For letters,' said they, 'are very different from valour : and the teachings of aged men generally lead only to cowardice and meanness. A lad, therefore, who is one day to dare great deeds, and to win high renown, ought to be at once liberated from the fear of schoolmasters and to practise the use of arms. Theodoric, who was himself devoid of literature, and yet so mighty a king, would never permit the children of the Gothic warriors to be sent to a grammarian's to study: for he always said "If they once learn to fear the tutor's strap, they will never look unblenching on sword and spear." Therefore, O Lady, let the pedagogues and the old courtiers take their leave, and give to your son suitable companions of his own age, who may stir him up to manly exercises, so that when he comes to man's estate he may know how to rule after the fashion of the barbarians'.

Amalasantha turned pale with anger as she listened to this bold harangue : but, with all her gifts of oratory, she knew when to be silent and when to feign acquiescence in the dictates of a power that was too strong for her. Such a time was now come. She professed to listen to the counsels of the nobles with pleasure, and promised to comply with their request. Athalaric was relieved from his lessons and from his gray-headed companions, whose place was taken by a band of Gothic striplings. Possibly his mother, irritated at the overthrow of her schemes for his education, ceased to take any further interest in the formation of his character, and used no care in the selection of these young comrades. It is certain that Athalaric's training went at one rebound from the extreme of strictness to the extreme of laxity. We do not hear of the martial exercises in which he was to be practised, but we do hear that his young companions soon initiated him into habits of intoxication and other forms of vice. His health, perhaps undermined by the too severe application which had been demanded of him as a child, soon began to give way under his unbridled licentiousness, and before he was sixteen years of age it was manifest to all, and even to Amalasantha herself, that the young King of the Goths would never attain to man's estate.

Meanwhile the movement of disaffection towards the princess, once begun, had not been stayed by her concessions. The old Gothic party were now in declared hostility to the Regent, and at length audaciously ordered her to quit the royal palace. Athalaric, who was now of an age at which he might have exerted some influence on public affairs, was aware of the painful position in which his mother was placed; but, mindful of her former severity and caring more for his vicious pleasures than for any thought of filial duty, he refused to take her part in any way, and rather seemed to take pleasure in showing how lightly he regarded her counsels. That

little golden circlet which, since the world began, has sundered so many hearts bound together by the ties of natural affection, had fatally and finally severed this woman from her son.

Still the daughter of Theodoric did not quail before her enemies, though they were every day growing more clamorous, and every day her position as ruler in her son's name was growing weaker by his more evident hostility. She singled out the three nobles who were most eminent in the party opposed to her authority and ordered them to leave the court and betake themselves to separate places of abode as widely parted from one another as the length and breadth of Italy would allow. The historian unfortunately does not give us the names of these dismissed nobles, but we can hardly be wrong in supposing that if Tulum was alive he was one of them. The chief among the Gothic generals, a man who had only just passed the prime of life, and a kinsman by marriage of the family of the Amals, he must, if still living, have played an important part in all the discussions as to the education of the young King; and from what we know of his character we may infer that his influence would not be exerted on Amalasantha's side.

The dismissed nobles kept up communications with one another and were now, almost in their own despite, converted into conspirators against the princess. Being informed of this she prepared to strike a bolder stroke. She sent messengers to Justinian to inquire if he would be willing to receive her in case of her departure from Italy. The Emperor promised her a warm, an eager welcome, and ordered that a palace at Dyrrhachium should be prepared for her reception. The national royal treasure, amounting to the enormous sum of 40,000 pounds's weight of gold, was placed on board a ship which was sent by the princess, under the charge of some of her trustiest adherents, to anchor in the harbour of Dyrrhachium. That she should have been able, in the precarious condition of her authority as Regent, thus to deal with what was really the national reserve of gold, shows how absolute was the power transmitted by Theodoric to his successors.

Having thus provided herself with a refuge in case of the failure of any of her plans, Amalasantha gave secret orders to some of her Gothic courtiers, daring men and entirely devoted to her interests, to seek out the three disgraced nobles in their various places of retirement and put them to death. There was no pretence of judicial process: it was but a triple murder committed under the shadow of the royal authority.

The plans of the unscrupulous princess succeeded better than they deserved. In each case the assassin's blow was fatal; and Amalasantha, now deeming herself secure, ordered the treasure-ship back from Dyrrhachium, and no longer thought of fleeing across the Hadriatic. Such was the state of affairs when the ambassadors of Justinian arrived in Italy to discuss the question of Lilybaeum. An irreconcilable breach had been made between Amalasantha and the patriotic party among the Goths. The son in whose name she exercised the regal authority was visibly sinking into a drunkard's grave. The nobles, perhaps startled by the sudden display of ruthless energy on the part of one whom they had despised both as a woman and as a pedant, were pausing to consider what step should next be taken, and waiting till the death of the nominal king should make the situation clearer, by compelling Amalasantha to ask from the nation a formal sanction of her right to reign.

Ostensibly, the mission of the Senator Alexander, who now arrived at Ravenna on an embassy from Constantinople, was to set forth the various grievances which Justinian had sustained from the Goths. Lilybaeum, which had belonged to Gelimer, now by the fortune of war the slave of the Emperor, was clearly that Emperor's property, but was detained from him by Gothic officers. Ten Hunnish deserters from the army of Africa who had escaped to Campania had been received into the Gothic service by Uliaris, the commandant of the garrison of Naples. In some renewed border-wars with the Gepidae, the army of Sirmium had taken and sacked the city of Gratiana, which was in the imperial province of Moesia, and with

which they had no business to meddle. The letter brought by Alexander rehearsed all these grievances and concluded with a growl of menace: 'Pray consider what is the necessary end of proceedings such as these'. Amalasantha, or Cassiodorus under her dictation, prepared a suitable reply. She suggested that it was unfair in a great prince like Justinian to try to fasten a quarrel upon a boyish sovereign unversed in public affairs; and dwelt on the services which the Goths had performed to the Empire at the time of the Vandal expedition, by giving the troops a free market in Sicily and supplying the cavalry, who had really been the winners of the imperial victories, with the horses which were essential to their success. As for Lilybaeum, it was a mere rock of no pecuniary value, which had once belonged to the Goths and ought to belong to them again.

This was apparently all that passed on this occasion between the Emperor and the Regent-mother. The real purport of the embassy was very different. In a secret interview Alexander enquired if Amalasantha still purposed throwing herself on the protection of Justinian, and received in return a formal proposal, made under the seal of absolute secrecy, to surrender the Gothic kingdom in Italy to the Emperor. Seldom has even diplomacy itself veiled a sharper contrast between the real and the apparent, than when this princess, in public proudly refusing to surrender one rocky promontory in Sicily, was in the secretum, of the palace bargaining away, for a promise of personal safety, the whole of Sicily, Italy, and Illyricum to the stranger.

But even below this intrigue lay another which was being carried on under cover of zeal for the welfare of the Church. With Alexander had started two ecclesiastics, Hypatius Bishop of Ephesus, and Demetrius Bishop of Philippi, who had been sent ostensibly to discuss some point of church doctrine with Pope John II. Their real mission was to enter into conversation on affairs of state with an important personage who was then in or near Rome, the heir presumptive of the Gothic crown, Theodoric's nephew, Theodahad.

It has been already hinted that this man, the son of Amalafriada and the nearest male heir to Theodoric after Athalaric, was not by virtue of his own qualities an eligible candidate for the throne. On the contrary, he, like the bulk of the Merovingian kings, is an illustration of the way in which a degenerate Romanised Goth might unite the vices of the two contrasted nations and the virtues of neither. Greedy and cowardly, with a varnish of philosophic culture over the laziness and dulness of the barbarian, a student of Plato and a practitioner of every kind of low chicanery, fond of Latin literature, but with no trace of the old Roman valour, devoid of gratitude and destitute of honour; such was the man who would now in, a very short time be the sole male representative of the great Amal dynasty. By the favour of his uncle he had received, probably from the confiscated estates of the friends of Odovacar, broad lands in the province of Tuscia, and was already by far the largest proprietor in that part of Italy. But to Theodahad, as Procopius satirically observes, to have neighbours of any kind seemed a sad misfortune. The whole fair province of Tuscia, the broad valley of Arno in the north, the villages which lie within sight of cloudy Badicofani in the centre, the Campagna lands in the south beyond the Ciminian mount, extending within sight of the towers of Rome, all must be one vast latifundium belonging to the Gothic prince. While he was sitting in the portico of his palace, apparently immersed in the study of Plato or reading the lines in which Horace described himself as

'Happy enough with his one Sabine farm',

he was all the while scheming how, by a judicious mixture of fraud and force, to extrude some Gothic soldier or Roman provincial from the nearest 'Naboth's vineyard' that had not yet been grasped by his all-compassing cupidity. Twice in his uncle's lifetime had he been sharply rebuked for these over-reaching practices. 'Avarice,' as Cassiodorus was commissioned to tell

him, 'was a vulgar vice, which the kinsman of Theodoric, a man of the noble Amal blood, was especially bound to avoid.' If Theodahad should not at once yield to the king's mandate, a stout Saio was to be despatched to compel restitution to the rightful owners. Undeterred by the disgrace of having to listen to such reproofs as these, perhaps presuming on the minority of his young cousin and the weakness of a female reign, Theodahad had been of late years pursuing even more eagerly his course of chicanery and violence; and at the time which we have now reached a large deputation of the inhabitants of Tuscia was at the court of Ravenna declaring 'that Theodahad was oppressing all the inhabitants of that country, taking away their lands on no pretence, and was not only thus offending against private individuals, but was even trenching largely on the royal *patrimonium*.'

The knowledge of his own unpopularity, and the estrangement which these acts had produced between himself and his royal relatives, gave to Theodahad a feeling of insecurity which was no doubt increased by the wonderful and unexpected victories of the Empire in Africa. The downfall of the Vandal throne probably gave to all persons connected with the new barbaric royalties a sense of the precariousness of their splendid positions; a presentiment that their power was but for a little time, and that soon the Roman Emperor would be again, what he had been for so many centuries, the unquestioned lord of civilised Europe. Whatever may have been the cause, when the ecclesiastical deputies from Constantinople, Hypatius and Demetrius, obtained their secret interview with Theodahad they found him willing, even eager, to enter into negotiations with their master. Let a large sum of money be paid down, and let the rank of Senator be conferred upon him, and he would hand over the whole of Tuscia to the Emperor, and spend the remainder of his days as a courtier at Constantinople.

When the ambassadors returned to make report of their mission, it might reasonably seem to Justinian that the whole kingdom of Italy was about, to fall into his hands without toil or bloodshed, only by a little judicious expenditure of treasure. All that was needed appeared to be to continue the negotiations which had been commenced with Amalasantha and Theodahad, to keep the two intrigues from being entangled with one another, and at the right moment to make bold and liberal drafts on the Count of the Sacred Largesses at Constantinople. For this purpose a rhetorician of Byzantium, named Peter, a Thessalonian by birth, and one of the ablest diplomatists in the imperial service, was chosen. Peter, who had been Consul eighteen years before, was at this time in full middle life, a man of good diplomatic address, subtle, gentle, and persuasive. He knew, however, as was shown by his conduct of these negotiations, when to make felt the iron hand which at this time was always present within the velvet glove of Byzantine diplomacy!

The appointment of Peter as ambassador, nominally to renew the demand for Lilybaeum, really to carry these secret negotiations to a successful issue, probably took place in the autumn of 534. When he arrived upon the scene some months later, he found that events had marched with terrible rapidity, and a totally different state of affairs awaited him from that which had been contemplated by the Emperor in his instructions.

In the first place, the enquiry into the acts of Theodahad demanded by his Tuscan neighbours had taken place. The prince had been found clearly guilty of the charges brought against him, and had been condemned to make restitution of all the lands that he had wrongfully appropriated either from private individuals or from the royal domain. Theodahad, smarting under the shame of this sentence and powerless henceforward to remove his neighbour's landmark, had become the bitter enemy of the Regent.

Almost immediately after the termination of this affair came the event, so long looked for, yet so bewildering when it came, the death of the hapless, young king-Athalaric, in the eighteenth year of his age, worn out with drunkenness and deincreased bauchery. All the schemes of Amalasantha were thus threatened with immediate overthrow. The success which

had hitherto attended them was probably due to the fact that, so long as she could use the king's name, the whole army of functionaries who worked the machinery of the State, inherited from the Western Emperors, were at her service and ready to obey her bidding. But now, to get that name of royalty without which no Roman official was safe in obeying her orders, she must face her Gothic subjects, and at least go through the form of being freely chosen by them. So much, notwithstanding all the centralising and despotic tendencies of Theodoric's system, the instinct of a German nationality still required. Without this election, even her scheme of resigning the sceptre to Justinian could not be realised: and yet to obtain it she must face an assembly of those free Gothic warriors whom for the last eight years she had been persistently thwarting and humiliating; nay, she must see the clouded countenances of the relatives of those three nobles whom she had murdered, and whose death, according to old Teutonic notions, still called for vengeance at the hands of their kinsmen.

It must have been the pressure of necessities such as these that drove the princess to an act so extraordinary that Procopius could only account for it by the explanation, which is no explanation, that Amalasantha was 'fated to perish'. She determined to share the throne with Theodahad, trusting to his sense of gratitude for this elevation to leave her still virtually sole sovereign. Sending for him, she assured him with a winning smile that she had long looked upon her son's early death as inevitable, and had felt that all the hopes of the house of Theodoric must be centred in him. Seeing, however, with regret that he was not popular either with the Goths or Italians, she had devoted herself to the task of putting him straight with his future subjects, in order that there might be no obstacle to his accession to the throne. This had been the object of the late judicial investigation; and, painful as the process might have been to himself, this result was now accomplished. She therefore now invited him to ascend the throne with her; but he must first bind himself by an awful oath that he would be satisfied with the name of kingship, and would leave her as much of the actual substance of power as she possessed at that moment.

Theodahad listened, professed entire acquiescence in all that the Regent had done in the past, and promised that the sole direction of affairs should remain in her hands for the future. The scheme was then made public: some sort of assent was probably obtained from the Comitatus or from an armed assembly of the Goths; and Amalasantha and Theodahad were hailed as joint sovereigns of the Goths and Romans in Italy.

As to the main outlines of this transaction there can be no difference of view. Amalasantha associated Theodahad with herself in the kingdom as a brother, not as a husband. The new King was already married, and the letters written for his wife Gudelina by Cassiodorus to the sovereigns of Byzantium give us the idea that she was a woman of eager and ambitious temperament, who possibly urged on her husband to labours and to crimes from which his more sluggish nature would have shrunk. A point as to which there may reasonably be some divergence of opinion is, how far the popular assent was needed, even in form, for the new bestowal of the crown. It may be observed that I have abstained from speaking of Amalasantha as Queen before the death of her son; and my conjecture is that there was some formality of popular election after, the death of Athalaric, in compliance with which his mother and her colleague ascended the throne. There is something to be said, however, for a more strictly monarchical view of the transaction, according to which Amalasantha may have become Queen in her own right as heiress to her son, and then, by a mere exercise of her sovereign power, may have associated Theodahad with her in the kingdom.

The facile pen of Cassiodorus was at once called into requisition to write the epistles which etiquette required from the new sovereigns. In two letters to Justinian, Amalasantha and Theodahad announced the beginning of their joint reign, and recommended themselves to the favour of a sovereign the maxim of whose Empire had always been friendship with the Amals.

In two letters to the Senate, the sister praised the noble birth, the patience and moderation, the prudence and the literary talent of her brother (not even the pen of Cassiodorus could write the words 'the courage of Theodahad'): and the brother exalted the serene wisdom of his sister, who, after causing him to make acquaintance with her justice, had weighed him in the scale of her accurate judgment and found him worthy to share her throne. As the Divine Wisdom has allotted to man two hands, two ears, two eyes, so was the Gothic kingdom to be thenceforward administered by two sovereigns, who, partaking of all one another's counsels, would rule the land in perfect harmony.

Words, vain words, with no trace of reality behind them! We seem to perceive the influence of Cassiodorus on the mind of his pupil, in Amalasintha's over-estimate of the power of mere words, not only to veil unpleasant facts, but to smooth them away out of existence, and by the magic of a well-turned period to breathe noble instincts into a base and greedy soul. The Queen soon found that in trusting to the generosity or the gratitude of Theodahad she was leaning on a broken reed. In fairness to her partner it must be confessed that she had brought the affairs of her kingdom into such a state of almost hopeless bewilderment, that only a very brave, zealous, and loyal colleague could have extricated her from her difficulties : and Theodahad was none of these. The kinsmen of the three murdered nobles, already a powerful party, and including some of the noblest of the Goths, now found themselves reinforced by one who bore the title of King. They, or he—it is not easy to assign the exact share of responsibility for these deeds—broke out into open violence and slew some of the chief adherents of the Queen. Amalasintha herself was hurried away from Ravenna to one of the two lonely islands which rise out of the waters of the lake of Bolsena. This lake, named from the ancient Etrurian city of Vulturni, is now the picture of desolation. Malaria rules upon its shores, and scarcely a sign of human habitation appears upon them outside of the villages of Bolsena at its head, Montefiascone and Marta at its foot. The handiwork of Nature is beautiful, the blue lake lying under its forest of oak, and the hills to the north of it stretching up to dark, volcanic, Monte Amiata on the horizon: but man has done nothing to improve it. A strange awe seizes one as one looks down upon the white rocks of the little islet of Marta, now entirely uninhabited, but with a few steps cut in the rock which are said to have led to the prison of Amalasintha. One seems to see the boat rowed by Theodahad's servants bearing the hapless Queen who had so lately ruled from Sicily to the Danube : one feels how her weary eyes rested on the hills around, the Tuscan hills, all owned by the hateful traitor Theodahad: and one knows that her clear and manly intelligence must have at once perceived that she was brought to this desolate rock only to die.

For the moment Theodahad spared the life of his victim. It perhaps suited him to have a hostage for his own safety in the negotiations which he was about to recommence with Byzantium. He despatched an embassy, at the head of which were two Senators, Liberius and Opilio (the latter of whom had been Consul eleven years before with the Emperor Justin), to report the imprisonment of Amalasintha, to deprecate the Emperor's anger, and to promise that she should receive no injury. An accusation against her that she had plotted against her partner's life was made the excuse for the violence used towards her, and was apparently supported by a letter of confession and self-reproach extorted from the helpless Queen.

When the ambassadors arrived at Constantinople, all, with one exception, described the recent deeds of Theodahad in such terms as they deserved, Liberius especially, who was a man of high and honourable character, vindicating the conduct of Amalasintha from all blame. Opilio alone (who was probably father of Cyprian the accuser of Boethius) insisted that reasons of state had justified all that had been done by Theodahad.

Meanwhile the ambassador Peter, travelling in the opposite direction, had been gradually learning the events which changed the whole object of his journey. Soon after starting, he met

the ambassadors who told of Athalaric's death and the elevation of Theodahad. When he came in sight of the Hadriatic he met Liberius and Opilio, from whom he heard of the Queen's imprisonment. He prudently went no further westward, but communicated the tidings to the Emperor and waited for fresh orders. When those orders arrived they were, to hand to the Queen a letter in which Justinian assured her that he would exert himself to the utmost for her safety. Peter was directed to make no secret of this letter, but to exhibit it to Theodahad and all the Gothic nobles, among whom the Emperor calculated that it would sow dissensions which might further his schemes of conquest.

Before Peter arrived at Ravenna the tragedy of Amalasantha's fate was ended. The party of the three nobles found it an easy task to work upon Theodahad's fears and to persuade him that there was no safety for him or for them so long as the Queen lived. He consented to their murderous counsels; they repaired to Vulsinii, crossed the lake, climbed the white cliffs, and murdered the unhappy daughter of Theodoric in her bath. Theodahad loudly protested that the deed was done without his knowledge or approval, but as he loaded the murderers with honours and rewards, none heeded his denial.

Peter at once sought an audience with Theodahad and informed him that, after the deed of wickedness which had been done, there must be war without truce or treaty between him and the Emperor. Contrary, however, to the custom war usual both in ancient and modern times, he seems after this declaration to have remained still at the Gothic Court, evidently intending to see what diplomatic advantage he might yet obtain from the fears of the guilty King.

So perished Amalasantha, Queen of the Goths and Romans, a woman worthy not only of a less tragic death, but of a more successful life, had she only possessed, in addition to her rare intellectual gifts, the humbler qualities of tact, insight into the minds of others, and some power of sympathising even with the unreasonable prejudices of those around her. She led a pure life, had a high and queenly spirit, and was earnest in the pursuit of wisdom, seeming as it were a kind of Gothic Minerva, sprung from the Gothic Jove. But half of her splendid qualities might have been wisely exchanged for the gift of reading the thoughts of the rough barbarians who guarded her throne, and above all, for sufficient remembrance of what is in the heart of a child, and sufficient imagination of what is in the heart of a boy, to keep her from the alternate errors of over-strictness and over-laxity by which she ruined the health and character of her son Athalaric.

BOOK IV
THE IMPERIAL RESTORATION
535—553

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR

It was a 'truceless war' which Justinian's ambassador had denounced against the cringing Theodahad when he heard of the murder of Amalasantha. And in truth all the schemings and machinations of the Byzantine Court had been rewarded beyond their deservings by as fair and honorable an excuse for war as ever prince could allege. Lilybaeum and Gratiana, Sicilian forts and Hunnish deserters, had all faded into the background. The great Emperor now appeared upon the scene in his proper character as Earthly Providence, preparing to avenge, on an ungrateful and cowardly tyrant, the murder of the noble daughter of Theodoric. The pretext was better than that put forth for the Vandal War, the foe infinitely baser. At the same time it might perhaps be discovered that, notwithstanding the ambassador's brave words about a truceless war, the Earthly Providence was not unwilling to arrange terms with the murderer if it could secure any advantage for itself by doing so.

In the summer of 535, nine years after Justinian's accession to the throne, the armies were sent forth from Constantinople, and the Gothic War began.

Troops, the number of whom is not stated, but probably not more than 3000 or 4000, were sent by land to invade the great Gothic province of Dalmatia, on the east of the Adriatic. This province was larger than the old kingdom of Dalmatia, since it included also a good deal of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its capital was still Salona, that great city close to which rose the vast palace of Diocletian (now represented by half of the modern town of Spalato), the city where Nepos reigned after he had been driven from the halls of the Palatine, where his rival Glycerius chanted mass in the basilica, where Odovacar avenged his murder by the death of Ovida and Viator.

The commander of the Dalmatian army was himself a barbarian by birth, a Gepid of the name of Mundus; a man whose fiery valor was not chilled by age, and who was heartily loyal to the Emperor. It was Mundus who, during the sedition of the Nika, when the throne of Justinian seemed rocking to its overthrow, had penetrated with a band of Heruli to the Hippodrome, where Hypatius at that moment was being saluted as Emperor, and had, in cooperation with Belisarius, by a ruthless massacre of the insurgents, succeeded in stamping out the rebellion. At the outlet of the present campaign his operations were completely successful. The Goths who met his invading army were defeated, and he marched on to Salona, which he entered unopposed.

The chief interest, however, was excited by the Italian expedition, commanded by Belisarius, the successful combatant with Persia, the conqueror of Africa—Belisarius who had been drawn a few months before in his triumphal car through the streets of Constantinople, and who now, sole Consul for the year, was setting forth to gather fresh laurels in the country where the Marcelli and the Fabii gathered theirs eight centuries ago.

The chief generals under Belisarius were Constantine, Bessas, and Peranius.

Constantine was a native of Thrace, a brave and strenuous lieutenant of the great commander, but rapacious, fierce, and not imbued with the soldierly instinct of subordination, as was eventually proved by the strange events which ended his career. Bessas also came from

Thrace, but was of Gothic descent, and we are expressly told that he was one of the race who had of old dwelt in Thrace, but did not follow Theodoric. He too, though brave and warlike, showed on a critical occasion a selfish and grasping nature, which preferred its own ignoble gains to military duty and the most obvious interests of the Empire.

Peranius came from the far east of the Empire. He was the eldest son of Gurgenes, king of Iberia, part of that province between Caucasus and Ararat which we now call Georgia. In the course of the endless tussle between the Roman Emperor and the Persian King, Iberia was invaded by the Persian army; and Gurgenes, finding himself unable to defend his dominions, and disappointed of the expected help from Justinian, fled to the mountains which divided his country from Colchis, and there seems to have maintained a straitened but honorable independence. As the dynasty was Christian, its princes naturally inclined to Constantinople rather than to Ctesiphon. Thus it was that Peranius entered the service of the Emperor, in which he soon rose to all but the highest position.

The subordinate officers were—of the cavalry, Valentine, Magnus, and Innocentius; of the infantry, Herodian, Paulus, Demetrius, and Ursicinus; none of whom require at present any special notice on our part. The commander of the Isaurian contingent was named Eunes. Belisarius was attended by a large body-guard of tried and daring soldiers; and, in a capacity perhaps resembling that of a modern aide-de-camp, Photius, Antonina's son by a former marriage, accompanied his renowned stepfather.

The total number of the army which was setting forth to reconquer Italy was only 7500 men, scarcely more than the equivalent of one legion out of the thirty which followed Caesar's footsteps. How it figured on the muster-rolls of the Empire it is not easy to say. We are told that there were 4000 soldiers 'of the Catalogues and the *Foederati*', 3000 Isaurians, 200 confederate Huns, and 300 Moors. The 'Catalogues' must in some way represent the dwindled Legions; as the *Foederati*, drawn perhaps from the medley of Teutonic and Slavonic peoples who roamed along the banks of the Lower Danube, represent the *Socii* of the early days of Rome. It will be observed by the reader how large a proportion the gallant Isaurian highlanders, those Swiss of the Byzantine empire, bore to the whole army, and we shall have frequent occasion in the course of the war to notice the service rendered to Belisarius by their mountaineering skill and headlong bravery.

After all, the armament, though it gloried in the title of Roman, and was sometimes called Greek in derision by its enemies, was Roman or Greek only in name. It was essentially a barbarian band. Every great exploit which we hear of in connection with it was performed, as a rule, by some Gepid, or Herul, or Isaurian. But the barbaric strength and stolid stalwart courage of the soldiers were directed by generals who still cherished some of the traditions of scientific warfare which had been elaborated in the twelve centuries of the Roman Republic and Empire; and at the centre of the whole machine was the busy brain of Belisarius, a man of infinite resource and patience as well as courage, and certainly one of the greatest strategists that the world has ever seen.

The student who remembers how the battles of Republican Rome were generally won, namely, by the disciplined valor of the heavy-armed foot-soldiers of the Legion, experiences some surprise when he finds that the victories of Belisarius were chiefly won by his cavalry, armed with the bow and arrow, a force which, as has been already observed, may perhaps be compared to the mounted rifles of a modern army, but which certainly five centuries before was more celebrated in the tactics of Parthia than in those of Rome.

At the outset of the first campaign it may be interesting to quote from a later page of Procopius the reasons which Belisarius himself, in conversation with his friends, assigned for the long series of victories which he had then achieved over the Goths.

In public the Romans naturally expressed their wonder at the genius of Belisarius which had achieved such a victory, but in private his friends [no doubt including Procopius himself] enquired of him what was the token which, in the first day of successful engagement with the enemy, had led him to conclude that in this war he should be uniformly victorious. Then he told them that, at the beginning, when the engagement had been limited to a few men on each side, he had studied what were the characteristic differences of each army, in order that when the battles commenced on a larger scale he might not see his small army overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers. The chief difference which he noted was that all the Romans and their Hunnish allies were good *archers on horseback*. The Goths, on the other hand, had none of them practiced this art. Their cavalry fought only with javelins and swords, and their archers were drawn up for battle as infantry, and covered by the cavalry. Thus the horsemen, unless the battle became a hand-to-hand encounter, having no means of replying to a discharge of weapons from a distance, were easily thrown into confusion and cut to pieces, while the foot-soldiers, though able to reply to a volley of arrows from a distance, could not stand against sudden charges of horse. For this reason Belisarius maintained that the Goths in these encounters would always be worsted by the Romans.

As yet, however, there was little opportunity for the display of military skill on the part of Belisarius, for his first laurels were all easily gathered, in the region of politics rather than of war. His instructions were to land in Sicily, nominally again making of that island only a house of call on his way to Carthage: if he found that he could occupy the island with little trouble he was to do so, but if there was likely to be tough opposition he was to leave it for the present and proceed to Africa. The former alternative was that which he adopted. He found the Sicilians all ready and eager to become subjects of the Emperor. Catania, Syracuse, and every other city in Sicily, opened her gates to him. Only in Panormus (Palermo) was there a Gothic garrison strong enough to oppose the wishes of the inhabitants; and to the siege of Palermo he now addressed himself.

This eager defection of the islanders from the Gothic rule was a deep disappointment to their late lords, and was long and bitterly remembered by them. Sicily was still rich in the wealth that had been stored up there since the days of Gelon, rich in all manner of fruits, above all rich in corn, of which it sent large exports every year to Rome. For this reason the Roman inhabitants had prayed Theodoric that they might be left to themselves, and not vexed by the presence of large bodies of Gothic troops. Their request had been listened to; they had been left for the most part to their own sense of honor to defend the connection which had benefited them so greatly and had imposed such light burdens upon them. And this was their return. Not a city defended, not a skirmish fought, no pretence of overwhelming necessity forthcoming; but as soon as the insignificant armament of Belisarius hove in sight, every emblem of Gothic domination torn down and the islanders vying with one another in demonstrations of servility towards Belisarius and his master. So keenly was this ingratitude felt by the Goths that, as we shall see, twelve years afterwards, when there was a talk of peace between them and the Empire, and the Gothic King seemed to be in a position to dictate its terms, one of his indispensable conditions was that there should be no interference with the revenge of his nation on ungrateful Sicily.

Belisarius, having reconnoitered Palermo, decided that the fortifications on the landward side were too strong to be attacked with any hope of success. Of these fortifications no vestige now remains, and indeed the very site of the ancient city, successively Carthaginian, Greek, and Roman, is hopelessly obliterated by the busy prosperity of the modern capital of Sicily. Three features of the landscape only can we indisputably claim as identical with those which met the eyes of Belisarius. They are (1) the beautiful, almost land-locked bay (reminding the traveler of the bay of Naples), from which the city derived its Greek name, *All-Anchorage*; (2)

the rich plain stretching inland, and now known as The Golden Shell (Concha d'Oro); (3) the grand natural fortress of Monte Pellegrino, 2000 feet high, a few miles out of the city, rising, like the Rock of Gibraltar, square and steep out of the sea to northward of the bay. Here Hamilcar Barca maintained for three years a sturdy opposition to Rome near the close of the First Punic War. But the Gothic garrison of Sicily resorted to no such desperate measure of defence against the army of Belisarius. Trusting in the strength of their walls, they refused to surrender the city and bade him begone with all speed.

The line of wall skirting the harbor was that which attracted the attention of the Byzantine general. It was detached from the ordinary line of circumvallation, it was left altogether bare of soldiers, and, high as it was, when he had collected his navy in the harbor he found that their masts overtopped the battlements. With his usual fertility of resource he at once hoisted the ships' boats filled with soldiers up to the yard-arms of the vessels, and told his men to clamber from the boats out on to the parapet. The maneuver, though somewhat resembling that tried by the Venetians at the Latin siege of Constantinople (AD 1204) would have been too perilous to be executed in the face of an active foe. As it was, practiced against an unguarded wall, it was completely successful. Soon the Byzantine soldiers, from their position of vantage on the high sea-wall, were shooting their arrows down into the ranks of the enemy in the city. The Goths were cowed by the unexpected sight, and offered terms of capitulation which Belisarius at once accepted.

Thus was all Sicily now subject to the Emperor's rule, and soon found itself paying heavy tax and toll to the imperial exchequer. The conquest of Sicily, peaceful comparatively as was its character, had occupied about seven months. On the last day of the year the Consul Belisarius, who had commenced his year of office while his victories over the Vandals were fresh in every one's mouth, closed it by a solemn procession through the streets of Syracuse, greeted by the loud and genuine applause of his soldiers and the Sicilians, upon whom his lavish hands scattered a welcome largesse of Justinian's *aurei*.

Meanwhile, the tidings which were coming from Sicily to Rome, cleverly enlarged upon at repeated audiences by the ambassador Peter, threw the wretched Theodahad into an agony of terror. Already in imagination he saw himself walking, as Gelimer had walked, a captive before his conqueror Belisarius, and heard the well-deserved cry, 'Death to the murderer of Amalasantha!' thundered forth by the populace of Byzantium. In a private conference with Peter he consented to make peace with Justinian on the following humiliating conditions : (1) Sicily was to be abandoned to the Emperor; (2) Theodahad was to send to Justinian every year a golden crown weighing not less than 300 pounds; (3) he was to furnish 3000 warlike Goths whenever Justinian should require their services; (4) except with the Emperor's leave, the Gothic King was not to sentence any senator or any priest [Catholic priests, of course, were here meant] either to death or confiscation of goods; (5) he was not to confer the dignity of Patrician, or any office involving senatorial rank, upon any of his subjects without the same gracious permission; (6) at the Hippodrome, the Theatre, and all places of public resort the people were always to shout 'Vivat Justinianus!' before they shouted 'Vivat Theodatus'; (7) never was a statue of bronze or any other material to be raised to Theodahad alone, but wherever he stood Justinian must stand beside him on his right side.

The conditions were degrading enough and well exemplified the Byzantine habit of making the subjection of an inferior as galling and as wounding to his self-love as possible. That undefined relation of dependence on the Empire which Odovacar and Theodoric had ignored rather than contradicted, and into which Amalasantha had been gradually sinking, was here proclaimed as offensively as possible by the Augustus, and admitted as abjectly as possible by the *Thiudans*. Though the word belongs to a later century, Theodahad would have become by this compact virtually the vassal of Justinian. Still, even this relationship, though

marking a great fall from the proud 'moral hegemony' of Theodoric, might in the course of centuries have worked not unfavorably for the happiness of Italy. Leaning on the arm of her elder sister of Byzantium, the new Romano-Gothic state might have gradually reconciled Teutonic force with classical culture. In the convulsions which shook the Eastern world in the seventh century, her loyalty might have been a stay and staff to the Eastern Caesar. Greece and Italy united, and occupying their natural place at the head of European civilization, might have formed front against the Saracen in the East, against the Frank in the West. At the least, had such a confederacy been possible, the Hesperian land would have escaped the extortions of Byzantine blood-suckers on the one hand, the ravages of half-savage Lombards on the other.

But it is useless to speculate on what might have been. The portentous cowardice of Theodahad rendered him unable even to wait for an interchange of embassies with Constantinople to know whether his terms were accepted or rejected. He had not yet dispatched his own ambassador, when he sent for Peter, who on his leisurely journey had now reached Albano, the second station on the Appian Way, that delightful little town which, nestling under the high volcanic cone of Monte Cavo, looks down on the one side over its own peaceful little Alban Lake, and on the other over the broad Campagna to the faintly-seen towers of Rome. Peter came, when summoned, to yet another private audience with the King. The following strange dialogue then passed between them:

Theodahad. Do you think, Ambassador, that the Emperor will be pleased with the compact into which we have entered?

Peter. I conjecture that he will.

Theod. But if he should chance to quarrel with the terms, what will happen then?

Peter. Then, noble sir, the next thing will be that you will have to fight.

Theod. Is that fair, dear Ambassador?

Peter. Where is the unfairness, my good friend, in each of you following the bent of his own genius?

Theod. What do you mean by that?

Peter. I mean this. All your pleasure is in acting the part of a philosopher; but Justinian finds his, in acting as beseems a noble Roman Emperor. For a man who practices the precepts of philosophy to devise the death of his fellow-creatures, especially on so large a scale as this war involves, is quite unbecoming; and for a Platonist, it is preeminently necessary to keep his hands clean from human blood. But for the Emperor to vindicate his rights to a land which once formed part of his Empire is in no way unbecoming.

The result of this dialogue (in which it suited both King and Ambassador to ignore the fact that the hands of the former were already stained with the blood of his benefactress) was, that Theodahad swore to the Ambassador to sell his crown to Justinian if he should be required to do so; and for some reason which is not expressly stated, but probably because of her admitted ascendancy over the mind of Theodahad, his Queen Gudelina was made a partner in the oath. Peter on his part was made to swear that he would not disclose the last and highest offer till he had fairly put the lower offer before the Emperor, and found that it was hopeless to press it. What prudent man would thus bid against himself even in the purchase of a field? With such utter fatuity did these children of the barbarians play their little bungling game against the veteran diplomatists of Constantinople.

Peter was accompanied on the return embassy by Rusticus, a Roman, a priest (probably of the orthodox Church), and an intimate friend of Theodahad. They arrived at Constantinople; they stood in the presence of the Emperor; they set forth the first offer of Theodahad. Had Peter sent a private messenger to his master, or did he now, by ever so slight and scarcely perceptible a gesture, imply that, were he in Justinian's place, he would not accept the offered vassalage? We know not, but it is certain that Justinian declared that the terms, abject as was their

humbleness of surrender, did not at all please him. Then Rusticus produced the Gothic King's letter, which had been reserved for this stage of the negotiations. It was a strange letter to be written by a member of the race whose forefathers swept like night over the shores of the Aegean, by a grandson and great-nephew of the brave Amal kings who stood unflinching by the side of Attila "in that world-earthquake" on the Catalaunian plains.

"I am not, O Emperor, a new comer into the halls of kings. It was my fortune to be born a king's nephew and to be reared in a manner worthy of my race: but I am not altogether well versed in war and its confusions. From the first I have been passionately fond of literature and have spent my time in the study thereof, and thus it has been till now my lot to be always far from the clash of arms. It seems therefore unwise of me to continue to lead a life full of danger for the sake of the royal dignity, when neither danger nor dignity is a thing that I enjoy. No danger, since that new and strange sensation perturbs my thoughts; not the royal dignity, since possession of it has, according to the general law, brought satiety.

"Therefore, if some landed property could be secured to me, bringing in a yearly income of not less than twelve cwt. of gold, I should consider that more valuable to me than my kingship: and I am willing on those terms to hand over to thee the sovereignty of the Goths and Italians. I think that I shall thus be happier as a peaceful tiller of the soil than as a king immersed in kingly cares, no sooner out of one danger than into another. Send me then as speedily as possible a commissioner to whom I may hand over Italy and all that pertains to my kingship".

The letter gave supreme delight to the Emperor, and obtained the following reply.

"I heard long ago by common fame that you were a man of high intelligence, and now I find by experience that this is true. You show your wisdom in declining to await the arbitrament of war, which has plunged some men who staked their all upon it into terrible disasters. You will never have occasion to repent having turned us from an enemy into a friend. You shall receive all the property that you ask for, and, in addition, your name shall be inscribed in the highest rank of Roman nobility.

"I now send Athanasius and Peter to exchange the needful ratifications, and in a very short time Belisarius will come to complete the transaction thus settled between us".

Athanasius was the brother of Alexander who was sent the year before as ambassador to Athalaric. The duties entrusted to him and to Peter were mainly to settle the boundaries of the new *Patrimonium* which was to be assigned to Theodahad, to put the compact in writing, and to secure it by oaths given and taken; Belisarius was sent for in all speed from Sicily to receive charge of the fortresses, arsenals, and all the machinery of government from the royal trafficker. These arrangements were probably made towards the end of the year 535.

When the ambassadors arrived at the Gothic Court they found the mood of Theodahad strangely altered. To understand the reason of the change we must look again at the affairs of Dalmatia. We left Mundus the Gepid there, holding the retaken capital, Salona, for Justinian. A large Gothic army under the command of Asinarius and Grippas entered the province, apparently about the middle of autumn, and approached Salona. Maurice the son of Mundus, on a reconnoitering expedition, approached too near the main body of the Gothic army and was slain. Maddened with grief, the old barbarian, his father, fell upon the Gothic host. Though he attacked in too loose order he was at first successful, and broke the ranks of the foe, but pressing on too hotly in pursuit, he was pierced by the spear of one of the fugitives and fell dead. His fall stopped the onward movement of his troops. Both armies dispersed, and neither dared to appropriate the prize of war, the city of Salona; the Romans having got altogether out of hand since the death of their general, and the Goths misdoubting both the strength of the walls and the loyalty of the citizens.

It was some slight consolation to the Romans that these reverses robbed of its terrors an old Sibylline prophecy which had been much of late in the mouths of men. This prophecy, couched in mysterious characters, which are a marvel upon the page of Procopius, had been thus interpreted:

First Rome reconquers Afric. Then the World
Is with its progeny to ruin hurled.

Belisarius' capture of Carthage had seemed to bring the end of the world alarmingly near. But now the battle of Salona reassured men's minds. It was not the world and all its inhabitants, but only *Mundus* and his too daring son, with whose fate the oracle was full.

The fortune of the Roman arms in Dalmatia was soon retrieved. Constantian, who held the office of *Comes Stabuli* in the imperial household, was sent with a well-equipped army to recover Salona, which had been entered by the Goths. Having apparently the entire command of the sea, he sailed northwards from Epidamnus (Durazzo), and was soon to be seen in the offing from the coast of Epidaurus (a little south of the modern Cattaro). The panic-stricken Gothic general Grippas, who was informed by his scouts that myriads of Romans were approaching by sea, evacuated Salona and pitched his camp a little to the west of that city. Constantian sailed some hundred miles or so up the gulf and anchored at the island of Lissa, memorable to this generation for the naval battle fought there between the Italians and Austrians in 1866. Finding from his scouts that Salona was deserted he landed his troops, occupied it in force, repaired its ruinous walls, and posted 500 men to occupy the narrow pass by which it was approached from the west. After seven days of tarrance, the two Gothic generals, with that feebleness and absence of resource which mark the barbarian strategy in the earlier stages of this war, simply marched back again to Ravenna.

Dalmatia and Liburnia (or the *province* of Illyricum), which had for the most part followed the fortunes of Italy for a century and a half since the death of Theodosius, were thus permanently recovered by the State, which we must in this connection call the *Eastern* Empire, although it was, to a loyal Roman, simply the Empire, one and undivided. From this time forward the eastern coast of the Adriatic, though subject to Avar invasions, Slavonic migrations, Bosnian kingships, maintained a more or less intimate political connection with Constantinople, till the conquests of the Venetians in the tenth century brought it back once more into the world of Italian domination.

But these were the far-reaching results of the expedition of Mundus. We have to do with the more immediate effects of the early disasters of the imperial forces on that feeble and futile thing, the mind of King Theodahad. That royal student, if versed in the 'Republic' of Plato, had not laid equally to heart the more popular philosophy of Horace. At least he conspicuously disobeyed the precepts of that familiar ode in which 'the mortal Dellius' is exhorted to preserve a temper 'serene in arduous and reasonable in prosperous' circumstances. As pusillanimous as he had shown himself at the news of the successes of Belisarius, so intolerably arrogant did he become when the tidings reached him of the death of Mundus and his son. When the ambassadors who arrived about the same time as the news (probably somewhere about December 535) ventured to claim the fulfillment of his solemn promise to surrender the kingdom, he flatly refused. Peter spoke somewhat plainly as to the royal faithlessness. Theodahad petulantly answered, "The privilege of ambassadors is a holy thing, but it is conceded on the supposition that it be not abused. It is admitted that the person of an ambassador who seduces the wife of a citizen of the country to which he is accredited is not sacrosanct; and I shall not scruple to apply the same principle to an ambassador who insults the King". Peter and Athanasius made a spirited reply: "O ruler of the Goths, you are seeking by flimsy pretexts to cover unholy deeds. An ambassador may be watched as strictly as his entertainer pleases, and therefore the talk about injury to female honor is altogether beside the

mark. But as for what the ambassador says, be it good or bad, the praise or blame for it rests solely on him who sent him. The ambassador is a mere mouthpiece, and to him attaches no responsibility for his words. We shall therefore say all that we heard from the lips of the Emperor: and do you listen patiently, for if you become excited you will perhaps commit some outrage on our sacred character. We declare then that the time is come for you loyally to fulfill your compact with the Emperor. Here is the letter which he wrote to you. The notes which he has addressed to the chief men among the Goths we shall hand to no one but themselves only.”

However, the Gothic nobles who were present authorized the ambassadors to hand over their letters to Theodahad. These dispatches congratulated the Goths on the near prospect of their absorption in the great polity of Rome, a state with whose laws and customs they had long ago become acquainted [in their capacity of *Foederati*]; and Justinian promised that they should find their dignity and credit increased, not diminished, by the change.

This was not, however, the view which the Gothic nobles took of the situation. Whatever their secret contempt for the weakly truculent character of their King, they were ready to second him heartily in his present mood of defiance to the Empire. Both sides therefore prepared for that which was now to be really “a truceless war”.

In these preparations the winter of 535-536 wore away, and the second year of the great Gothic War commenced.

CHAPTER II.

BELISARIUS AT CARTHAGE AND AT NAPLES.

When the news of the double-dyed treachery of Theodahad reached the Court of Constantinople orders were dispatched to Belisarius to proceed with all speed to Italy and push the war against the Goths to the uttermost. He was, however, hindered for some weeks from obeying these orders, by a sudden call to another post of danger; a call which well illustrates the precarious and unenduring character of Justinian's conquests and the inherent vices of Byzantine domination.

It was a few days after Easter, in the year 536, probably therefore about the 30th or 31st of March, when a single ship rounded the headland of Plemmyrium, passed the fountain of Arethusa, and reached the landing-place of Syracuse. A few fugitives leaped on land and hastened to the presence of Belisarius. Chief among them was the Eunuch Solomon, in whose keeping, two years before, he had left the fortress and city of Carthage guarded by a triumphant Roman army. What causes had brought a man placed in such height of power, and a brave and prudent soldier, into so great disaster?

Not his wars with the declared enemies of the Empire, though it is worth our while to notice even here how Justinian's conquests really paved the way for the barbarians. The Vandals had reared a kingdom in North Africa, semi-civilized, it is true, but which, if left to itself, would have become wholly civilized, and which meanwhile was strong enough to keep the wild sons of the desert in check. Now, the Vandals overthrown, the Moors came on. They pushed their forays far into the African province; in hosts of 30,000 and 50,000 at a time they invaded Numidia and Byzacene; they loudly complained that the promises by which they had been lured into the Roman alliance had been left unfulfilled; and when Solomon ventured to remind the chiefs that he held their children as hostages for their good behavior they replied, "You monogamist Romans may fret about the loss of your children. We who may have fifty wives apiece if it so pleases us, feel no fear that we shall ever have a deficiency of sons".

In two battles the Eunuch-Governor had defeated his Moorish antagonists. But still the Moorish chief Iabdus remained encamped on the high and fruitful table-land of Mount Auras, thirteen days' journey from Carthage, and from thence at every favorable opportunity swept down into the plain, pillaging, slaying, leading into captivity; nor had Solomon, though he led one expedition against him, yet been able to dislodge him thence.

Thus had events passed till the Easter of 536, and then the real, the tremendous danger of the Eunuch's position was suddenly revealed to him, in the shape of an almost universal mutiny of the Roman soldiers. We call them Roman in accordance with the usage of the times, because they served that peculiar political organization at Constantinople which still called itself the Roman Republic, and because the banners under which they marched to battle still bore the world-known letters S.P.Q.R. But, as has been already hinted, probably not one soldier out of a hundred in the imperial army could speak Latin, and many of them may have hardly known sufficient Greek to find their way about the streets of Constantinople. They were Heruli from the Danube, Isaurians from the Asiatic highlands, Huns from the steppes of Scythia, Armenians from under the shadow of Ararat, anything and everything but true scions—of the old Oscan and Hellenic stocks whose deeds are commemorated by Livy and Thucydides.

These men, Teutons many of them by birth, and Arians by religious profession, having been permitted to marry the Vandal widows whose husbands they had slain, had expected to settle in comfort upon the Vandal lands, and live thenceforward in peace, under some loose bond of allegiance to the Emperor, as the new lords of Africa. Not such, however, was the intention of the bureaucracy of Constantinople. The usual! swarm of *Logothetae*, of *Agentes in rebus*, of *Scriniarii*, settled down upon the province, intent upon sucking the last available *aureus* out of it for the public treasury. The lands of the conquered Vandals were all deemed to have reverted to the state, and if the husband of a Vandal widow, whether he were soldier or civilian, cultivated them, it must be under the burden of a land-tax revised every fifteen years, so strictly as to make him virtually tenant at a rack-rent under the tax-gatherer. In many cases, not even on these unfavorable terms was the occupancy of the land assigned to the soldiers. Here, then, were plentiful materials for a quarrel. On the one hand, a number of hot-blooded, stalwart men, flushed with the pride of conquest, each one with a remembrancer of his wrongs for ever at his ear, reminding him, "Such an estate or such a villa belonged to me when I was the wife of a Vandal warrior, yet thou who hast conquered Vandals art thyself landless". On the other side, the Eunuch-Governor and the official hierarchy, pleading the law of the State, the custom of the Empire. "It was reasonable that the slaves, the ornaments, the portable property, should be the spoil of the soldiers. But the land, which once belonged to the Roman Empire, must revert to the Emperor and the Commonwealth of Rome, who called you forth as soldiers, trained you, armed you, paid you, not in order that you should conquer these lands for yourselves, but that they might become public property and furnish rations not for you only, but for all the soldiers of the Empire". Thus was the African land-question raised. But there was also a religious difficulty. Many of the soldiers in the late army of Belisarius, especially the martial Heruli, were Arians. The Vandal priests who still remained in Africa found access to these men, and inflamed their minds with a recital of the religious disabilities to which they, the conquerors as much as the conquered, were subject. The prohibition of Justinian was positive. No baptism nor any other religious rite was to be performed by or upon any man not holding the full, orthodox, Athanasian faith. The time of Easter was drawing nigh, at which it was usual to baptize all the children who had been born in the preceding year. No child of a Herulian would be admitted to the holy font, no Herulian himself would be permitted to share in the solemnities of Easter, unless he first renounced the creed of his forefathers, the creed which had perhaps been brought to his rude dwelling on the Danubian shore by some Arian bishop, disciple or successor of the sainted Ulfilas.

As the evil genius of the Empire would have it, there was yet a third element of disaffection cast into the African cauldron. The Vandals whom Belisarius carried captive to Byzantium had been enrolled in five regiments of cavalry, had received the honorable name of "Justinian's Vandals" and had been ordered to garrison the cities of Syria against the Persians. The greater part proceeded to their appointed stations and faithfully served the Empire which had robbed them of their country. But four hundred of them, finding themselves at Lesbos with a favoring wind, hoisted their sails, forced the mariners to obey their orders, and started for Peloponnesus first and then for Africa. Arrived at the well-remembered shore, they ran their ships aground, landed, and marched off for the uncaptured stronghold of Mount Aurasius. Here they received a message from the soldiers at Carthage who contemplated mutiny, soliciting their assistance, which, after solemn oaths and promises given and received, they agreed to furnish to the mutineers. So, when Easter drew on, all was ripe for revolt.

The mutineers agreed among themselves that Solomon should be slain in the great Basilica of Carthage on Good Friday, and that this crime should be the signal for the insurrection to break out. They took little care about secrecy: the guards, the shield-bearers, many even of the household servants of the Eunuch, were in the plot, but none betrayed it, so

great was the longing of all for the Vandal lands. So, unsuspecting evil, sat Solomon in the great Basilica, while the ceremonies went forward which commemorated the death of Christ, and which were meant to be signaled by his own. The conspirators gathered round him. Each man, with frowns and gestures of impatience, motioned to his neighbor to do the deed of blood, but none could bring himself with his own arm to strike the blow. Either the sanctity of the place, or old loyalty to their general, or else the still unstifled voice of conscience, prevented any from volunteering for the service; and they had not taken the precaution of selecting the arch-murderer before they entered the sacred building. When the words '*Ite, jam missa est*' came from the lips of the officiating prelate, they hastened from the Basilica, each cursing the other for his cowardice and softness of heart. "Tomorrow", said they, "in the same place the deed shall be done". On the morrow Solomon again sat in the great Basilica; again his would-be murderers assembled round him, again the same invisible influence stayed their hands. When the service was over they foamed out into the Forum, a disappointed and angry crowd. The epithets 'Traitor', 'Coward', 'Faint-heart' were freely bandied about among them, so freely that, feeling sure that their design must now be generally known, the chief of the plot left the city and began freebooting in the country districts.

When Solomon discovered the danger with which he had to deal, he went round to the soldiers' quarters and exhorted those who were still remaining in the city to abide faithful to the Emperor. For five days the mutiny seemed to have been checked, but at the end of that time, when the soldiers within the city saw that their revolted comrades were pursuing their career of ravage outside unchecked, it burst out with fresh fury. The soldiers collected in the Hippodrome, and shouted out the names of Solomon and the other chief authorities in the state, loading them with every kind of coarse abuse. Theodore the Cappadocian, apparently the most popular of Solomon's officers, was sent by him to harangue them in soothing terms. Not a word of his soft eloquence was listened to; but believing him to be secretly opposed to Solomon and his policy, the mutineers with loud shouts acclaimed him as their leader. Theodore appears to have been a man of staunch loyalty, but he humored the whim of the rebels for a few hours, in order to favor Solomon's escape. With loud and tumultuous shouts the mutineers, self-constituted guards of Theodore, escorted him to the palace of the Prefect. There they found another Theodore, captain of the guards, a man of noble character and a skilled soldier, but for the moment unpopular with these rebels. Him they slew, and having thus tasted blood, they dispersed themselves through the city, killing every man whom they met, Roman or Provincial, who was suspected of being a friend of Solomon, or who had money enough about him to make murder profitable. They entered all the houses which were not guarded by the few still loyal soldiers, and carried off all the portable plunder that they found there. At length night came on, and the mutineers, stretched in drunken sleep in the streets and forums of the city, rested from their orgie of rapine. Then Solomon and his next in command, Martin, who had been cowering for refuge all day in the chapel of the Governor's palace, stole forth to the house of Theodore the Cappadocian. He pressed them to take food, though sadness and fear had well-nigh deprived them of appetite, and then had them conveyed to the harbor. A little company of eight persons embarked in a boat belonging to one of the ships under Martin's command. These eight persons were Solomon, Martin, five officers of the Eunuch's household, and—most important of all in our eyes—the Councilor Procopius, to whom we owe the whole of this narrative. After rowing in an open boat for nearly forty miles, the fugitive Governor and his suite reached Missua, on the opposite (eastward) shore of the bay of Tunis, a place which was apparently used as a kind of supplemental port, owing to the original harbor of Carthage having become too small for its trade.

At Missua they felt themselves in comparative safety, and from hence the Eunuch dispatched Martin to Valerian and the other generals commanding in Numidia, on the west of

the Carthaginian province, to warn them of the mutiny, and to endeavor, under the shelter of their forces, to win back by gold or favor as many as possible of the mutineers to their old loyalty. He also wrote to Theodore, giving him a general commission to act for the imperial interests in Carthage as might seem best at the time, and then Solomon himself, probably taking some ship of war out of the roadstead at Missua, set sail for Syracuse with Procopius in his train, and, as we have seen, arrived there in safety to claim the assistance of Belisarius.

Meanwhile the insurgents, who had by this time found that Theodore the Cappadocian would not lend himself to their seditious designs, assembled on the plains of Bulla, a short distance to the south of Carthage, and there chose out Stutza, one of the body-guard of Martin, and acclaimed him as their king. Stutza, if not endowed with any great strategic talents, was a man of robustness and hardihood. He found under his standards no fewer than 8000 revolted soldiers. These were soon joined by 1000 Vandals, partly the recent fugitives from Constantinople, partly those who had escaped the notice of the conquering host two years before. They were further joined by that usual result of anarchy in the Roman state, a large number of slaves. The united host aimed at nothing less than driving out the imperial generals and making themselves lords of the whole northern coast of Africa. They at once marched to Carthage (which it is hard to understand why they should ever have quitted), and called upon Theodore to surrender the city. Josephus, one of the literary attendants of Belisarius, who happened to have just arrived at the capital, was sent to persuade them not to resort to any further acts of violence; but Stutza showed the soldier's disdain of the scribe and the mutineer's contempt of the rules of civilized warfare by at once putting him to death. Despair at this ruthless deed filled the hearts of the scanty defenders of Carthage, and they were on the point of surrendering the city to the insurgents.

Such was the state of affairs when in an hour all was changed by the arrival of Belisarius. He sailed from Syracuse with one ship, probably the same which had brought the Eunuch, and with one hundred picked men of his body-guard on board. It was twilight when he arrived. The mutineers were encamped round the city, confident that on the morrow it would be theirs. Day dawned: they heard that Belisarius was inside the walls: awed by the mere name of the mighty commander, they broke up their camp and commenced a disorderly retreat, or rather flight, never halting till they reached the city of Membressa on the Bagradas, fifty-one miles southwest from the capital. Here they at length ventured to encamp; and here the terrible Belisarius came up with them, having only 2000 men under his standards, whom by gifts and promises he had persuaded to return to their former loyalty. As Membressa itself was unwall'd, neither army dared to occupy it. Belisarius seems to have crossed the Bagradas, which is not a rapid though a pretty copious stream, without opposition, and encamped near to its banks. The mutineers, whose army must have been five times as large as his, pitched their camp on an elevated spot, difficult of access. Both commanders, according to classic custom, harangued their men, or at least the Thucydidean historian whom we are following thinks proper to represent them as thus encouraging their troops. Belisarius, while deploring the hard necessity which compelled him to take up arms against the men who had once echoed his own password, declared that they had brought their ruin on themselves by their unholy deeds, and that the devastated fields of Africa, and the corpses of the comrades slain by them, men whose only crime was their loyalty, demanded vengeance. He was persuaded that the newly-raised tyrant Stutza would want that confidence in himself and in the prompt obedience of his troops which alone ensures success. And he ended with a maxim of which his own career was to afford a signal verification: "It is not by the mass of combatants but by their disciplined courage that victories are won".

Stutza enlarged on the ingratitude which, after *they* had undergone the toils of war, had given to idle non-combatants the fruits of victory. After the one gleam of freedom which they

had enjoyed during the last few weeks, a return to slavery would be ten times bitterer than their previous condition. If indeed even to live as slaves would be granted them,—but after the dangerous example which they had set, they must expect, if vanquished, to suffer unutterable punishments, perhaps to expire in torment. They could die but once: let them die, if need were, free warriors on that battlefield. Nay, rather, let them conquer, as they must do, a foe so greatly their inferior in numbers, and whose troops in their secret hearts were only longing to share their freedom.

After all this eloquence the battle was hardly a battle. The mutineers, finding that the wind blew strongly in their faces, and fearing that their spears would thus fail to penetrate, endeavored to make a flank movement, and so to get to windward of the enemy. Belisarius did not give them time to execute this maneuver, but ordered his men to come to close quarters at once while the mutineers were still in disorder. This unexpected attack threw them into utter confusion. They fled in headlong rout, and did not draw bridle till they reached Numidia. The Vandals, less demoralized than the disloyal soldiers, for the most part refused to fly, and died upon the field of battle. Belisarius' army was too small to venture with safety upon a long pursuit, but the camp of the enemy was given up to be plundered by them. They found it richly furnished with gold and silver, the spoil of Carthage; utterly deserted by the men, but full of women, the original abettors of the war, who had now, probably in obedience to the laws of Mars, to contract a third marriage, with their new conquerors. The rebellion appeared sufficiently crushed to justify Belisarius in returning to Sicily, especially as there was a danger that the example set by the Carthaginian insurgents might be followed by the army stationed there. Accordingly, leaving his son-in-law Ildiger and Theodore of Cappadocia in charge of the African capital, he sailed away to Syracuse.

The interest which the mutiny at Carthage possesses for us consists in the light which it throws on the character of Belisarius, and the ascendancy which he exercised over a greedy and licentious soldiery. Its course after he disappears from the scene must be described as briefly as possible.

The Roman generals in Numidia, five in number, finding Stutza with his band close to their frontier, marched hastily against him, thinking to crush him before he could reform his scattered army. He advanced, however, into the space between the hostile ranks, and delivered a short and spirited harangue, the result of which was that the generals found themselves deserted by their troops, who went over in a body to the insurgents. The generals took shelter in a neighboring church, surrendered on the promise of their lives being spared, and were all slain by Stutza, a man without pity and without faith.

The mutiny having thus become more formidable than ever, Justinian took a step which he would have done well to take sooner. He sent his nephew, the best of the nobles of the imperial house, the gentle and statesman-like Germanus, with a sufficient supply of treasure to discharge the soldiers' arrears of pay, which had evidently been accumulating for some time; and with instructions to pursue a policy of conciliation towards the insurgents, declaring that the Emperor only desired the good of his brave soldiers, and would severely punish all who had injured them. The man and the policy were so well matched that Germanus, who at first found under the imperial standard only a third of the troops entered on the African muster-rolls, had soon under his command a larger number of soldiers than followed the fortunes of Stutza. The rebels lost heart and fled again into Numidia. A battle ensued at a place called *Scalae Veteres*, the site of which does not appear to have been identified. The fight was desperate and confused. Rebels and loyalists were so like one another in outward appearance, that the troops of Germanus were obliged to be continually asking for the password, in order to distinguish friend from foe. The horse of Germanus was killed under him; but in the end his standards triumphed. Stutza fled: the rebel camp was sacked by the victorious imperialists, who in the

fury of plunder refused to listen even to the restraining voice of the general. A squadron of Moors who had been hovering on the outskirts of the battle, the professed allies of the insurgents, but waiting to see which side was favored by Fortune, now joined the Emperor's forces in a headlong chase of the defeated soldiers.

With the battle of *Scalae Veteres* the military rebellion was at an end. Stutza with some of the Vandals succeeded in escaping to Mauritania, where he married the daughter of one of the Moorish chiefs. Solomon, who on the departure of Germanus was sent to resume the government of Africa, expelled the Moors from Numidia as well as from the Carthaginian province, and for four years ruled these regions in peace and prosperity. In 543 some acts of ill faith on the part of the Romans roused the hitherto loyal Moors of Tripoli and Tunis into insurrection. The chief, Antalas, long a faithful ally of the Romans, headed the movement: and in one of the first battles of the war, the Eunuch Solomon, deserted by a large body of his troops, who accused him of parsimoniously withholding from them their share of the spoils, fell into the hands of the enemy and was slain. His nephew Sergius, a young man of swaggering demeanor, ignorant of the art of war, unpopular with the generals for his arrogance, with the soldiers for his cowardice and effeminacy, with the provincials for his avarice and lust, was entrusted with the government of the province, which under his sway went rapidly to ruin.

And now for a brief space Stutza reappeared on the scene, cooperating with Antalas, and laboring not altogether in vain to combine with the Moorish invasion a revival of the old military mutiny. Sergius prosecuted the war with feebleness and ill-success. John the son of Sisinniolus, his best subordinate, was so disgusted by the governor's arrogance that he ceased to exert himself in the imperial cause. And after every defeat which Sergius sustained, after every successful siege by the Moors, a number of soldiers joined the standards of Stutza, who doubtless still harangued as volubly as eight years ago on the grievances of the army and the rapacity of the officials.

At length Justinian, though by this time he was heartily weary of his Western conquests and the endless cares in which they involved him, sent a few soldiers and many generals to do their utmost towards finishing the war in Africa. Among the generals was Areobindus, a descendant probably of the great Aspar, all-powerful under Marcian and Leo in the middle of the previous century. He was himself allied to the imperial house, having married Justinian's niece. Under Areobindus, John the son of Sisinniolus was willing to fight, and not only willing but eager. There was only one man in the world whom he hated more than Sergius, and that was the upstart Stutza. The hatred was mutual, and each of these men had been heard to say, that if he could only kill the other he would himself cheerfully expire. The double prayer was, practically, granted. A slender army of the imperialists—for Sergius moodily refused his cooperation—met the Moorish king and the veteran mutineer on the plain below *Sicca Veneria*, on the confines of the African and Numidian provinces, about 100 miles south-west of Carthage. Before the battle commenced, John and Stutza, instinct with mutual hatred, rode forth between the two armies to try conclusions with one another in single combat. An arrow from the bow of the imperial general wounded Stutza in the groin. He fell to the earth mortally wounded, but not dead. The mutineers and the army of the Moors swept across the plain, and found him lying under a tree, gasping out the feeble remains of life. Full of rage they dashed on, overpowered the scanty numbers of the imperialists, and turned them to flight. John's horse stumbled as he was galloping down a steep incline: while he was vainly endeavoring to mount, the enemy surrounded and slew him. In a few minutes Stutza died, happy in hearing that his great enemy had fallen. In the first moment of the flight John had said, "Any death is sweet now, since my prayer that I might slay Stutza has been granted".

The events of this campaign induced Justinian at last to remove Sergius from the government of Africa and send him to prosecute the war in Italy. After murders, insurrections, changes of ruler which it is not necessary to relate here another John, distinguished as the brother of Pappus, was appointed *Magister Militum*, and sent to govern Africa (for some years after 546). Under his administration the province again enjoyed some years of tolerable tranquility, and the Moors were brought into order and subjection. But from decade to decade, the fine country which had once owned the sway of the Vandals sank deeper into ruin. Many of the provincials fled to Sicily and the other islands of the Mediterranean. The traveler, in passing through those regions which had once been most thickly peopled, now scarcely met a single wayfarer. Languishing under barbarian inroads, imperial misgovernment, and iniquitous taxation, the country was ripening fast for the time when even Saracen invasion should seem a relief from yet more intolerable evils.

Or rapid survey of events in Africa has carried us fully ten years beyond the point which we have reached in the history of Italy. We go back to Belisarius, landing at Syracuse, on his return voyage from Carthage in April or May 536. The fears which were entertained of a repetition in Sicily of the mutinies of Carthage proved groundless; or, if there had been disaffection, the soldiers at the mere sight of a born ruler like Belisarius at once returned to their accustomed obedience. He was able to administer the best antidote to mutiny, employment. Leaving sufficient garrisons in Syracuse and Palermo, he crossed from Messina to Reggio, and planting his standard on the Italian soil, was daily joined by large numbers of the inhabitants.

Belisarius was now in Magna Graecia, that region which, in the seventh century before the birth of Christ, was so thickly sown with Hellenic colonies that it seemed another Hellas. Down to the time of the wars of Rome with Pyrrhus and the Tarentines (*BC* 281-272) this Grecian influence had lasted unimpaired. How far it had in the succeeding eight centuries been obliterated by the march of Roman legions, by the foundation of Roman colonies, by the formation of the slave-tilled *latifundia* of Roman proprietors, there are perhaps not sufficient materials to enable us to decide. Certainly the Byzantine reconquest was both easier and more secure in Calabria and Apulia than in any other part of Italy. One cause of this was that there were fewer Goths in the south than in the north.

Possibly another cause may have been that still existing remembrances of the golden age of Magna Graecia took the sting out of the taunt, "They are but Greeklings", which was sometimes applied, not by Goths only, but by Italian provincials, to the invaders from Byzantium. To trace out the remains of this lingering Hellenic feeling, and to distinguish them from the undoubted and considerable influence exerted on Southern Italy by the Greeks of Constantinople from the sixth century to the twelfth, would be an interesting labor; but it is one which lies beyond our present province.

Belisarius received an accession to his ranks, which showed the weakness of the national feeling of the Goths. No less a personage than Evermud, the son-in-law of Theodahad, who had been entrusted with a detachment of troops to guard the Straits, came with all his retinue into the Roman camp, prostrated himself at the feet of Belisarius, and expressed his desire to be subject to the will of the Emperor. His unpatriotic subserviency was rewarded. He was at once sent to Constantinople, that haven of rest and luxury, which all Romanized Goths languished to behold, and there received the dignity of Patrician and many other rewards from the hand of Justinian.

The Roman army marched on unopposed and supported by the parallel movement of the fleet, through the province of Bruttii and Lucania. They crossed the wide bed of the Silarus; they entered the province of Campania. Still no Gothic army disputed the passage of any river, nor threatened them from any mountain height. At length they reached a strong city by the sea,

defended by a large Gothic garrison, the city of Neapolis, the modern Naples. Before this place Belisarius was to tarry many days.

Naples nd

The modern city of *Naples* is divided into twelve *quartieri*. It is built along a winding and beautifully irregular shore-line, of which it occupies four miles in length, varying in breadth from one mile to two and a-half, according to the nature of the ground. The *Neapolis* of the Roman Empire occupied a space only a little overlapping one of the twelve modern *quartieri*, that of S. Lorenzo. It formed an oblong about 1000 yards in length by 800 in breadth. Apparently we have no means of stating its exact population at any period of the Empire; but, if we conjecture it at a twelfth of the population of the modern city, we shall probably be exaggerating rather than depreciating the number of its inhabitants.

It is thus evident that the modern traveler must unclot himself of many of his remembrances of the existing city of Naples in order to form anything like an accurate idea of the place which Belisarius besieged. It may be well to proceed by the method of rejection, and to indicate the chief points, conspicuous in a modern panorama of Naples, which we must eliminate in order to obtain the true value of the ancient Neapolis. Starting, then, from the western extremity, from Posilippo and the Tomb of Virgil, we come first to the houses which look upon the long drives and shrubberies of the Riviera di Chiaia. We see at a glance that these are modern. They no more belong to the classical, or even the mediaeval, city than the Champs Elysées of the French capital belong to the Lutetia of Julian or the Paris of the Valois kings. But two natural strongholds arrest the eye as we move onwards towards the city: on the right the little fortress-crowned peninsula of Castello dell' Ovo, on the left the frowning ridge of the all-commanding Castle of St. Elmo. With the first we have already made acquaintance. The site of the villa of Lucullus, the luxurious gilded cage of the deposed Augustulus, the shrine of the sainted Severinus, it suggests interesting speculations as to who may have been its occupants when the trumpets of Belisarius sounded before its walls, but it is emphatically no part of the city of Neapolis.

Saint Elmo brings vividly before us the differences between ancient and modern warfare. From the fourteenth century onwards (at least till the most recent changes in the science of gunnery deprived it of its importance) it was emphatically the stronghold of Naples. He who held that, tyrannous crest of rock virtually held the town. And yet in the wars of the Romans and the Goths this magnificent natural fortress seems to have been absolutely unimportant. The nearest houses of Neapolis were about three-quarters of a mile distant from the base of Saint Elmo, and in those days of catapults and balistae this distance would seem to have been enough to rob even such an eminence of its terrors; otherwise we must surely have heard of its being occupied by Belisarius.

We move forwards to the east, still keeping tolerably near the shore. The far-famed Theatre of San Carlo, the Bourbon Palace with its rearing horses in bronze, the massive Castel Nuovo, and the two harbors below it, all these are outside of the ancient city. Outside of it too is the quaint and dingy Largo del Mercato, that most interesting spot to a lover of mediaeval Naples, where market-women chatter and chaffer over the stone once reddened with the blood of Conradin, where a poet's ear might still almost hear the gauntlet of the last of the Swabians ring upon the pavement, summoning his Aragonese kinsman to the age-long contest with the dynasty of Anjou. All this is Naples, but not Neapolis. Where then is the ancient city?

Turn back towards the north-west, strike the busy street of the Toledo about a third of the way up on its course from the sea. Here at limits of length we are, not at, but near, the site of the classical city, whose western wall once ran parallel to the Toledo at a distance of about 150 yards to the right. The Piazza Cavour (Largo delle Pigne) and Strada Carbonara lie a little outside of the northern boundary of Neapolis. Castel Capuano (near the modern railway

station) marks its extreme eastern point. The southern wall ran along a little range of higher ground (now nearly levelled with the plain below it), at a distance of some two or three hundred yards from the coastline, from the Church of the Annunziata to the University. One suburb on the west perhaps once extended about half-way from the western wall of the ancient city to the Toledo, and another on the south may probably have filled up in a similar way the interval between the city and the sea.

The block of ground thus indicated once stood out, difficult as it is now to believe it, somewhat abruptly above the surrounding plain. Even now, looking at it on the map, we can trace in it the handiwork of the Roman surveyors. Its three broad *Decuman* streets running from east to west (Strada Nilo, Strada dei Tribunali, and Strada Anticaglia) intersected by twenty-three *Cardines* running from north to south, still, notwithstanding the alterations made in them to gratify the Neapolitan passion for church building, exhibit an appearance of regularity and rectangularity conspicuously absent in the other part of the city, the haphazard growth of the Middle Ages. Roman remains have at various times been discovered under almost the whole of the space denoted above, but nothing is now left for the lover of Roman antiquity to gaze upon save two Corinthian columns of the Temple of the Dioscuri built into the church of S. Paolo Maggiore, and some faint traces of the ancient Theatre lingering in the yards and cellars of the Strada Anticaglia.

Fortunately we have an excellent aid to the imagination in endeavoring to bring before the mental vision the Neapolis which Procopius gazed upon. The neighboring town of Pompeii is very similar in dimensions and shape, and was probably very similar in character. Only we must suppose that nearly five centuries—centuries upon the whole rather of the decay of art than of its development—had passed over the *Tablina* and the *Triclinia* of the buried city to make it correspond with its surviving neighbor. The heathen temples must be imagined to have fallen somewhat into decay, and several Christian basilicas must be allowed to have grown up under their shadow. The fact that the four oldest parish churches in Naples—S. Giovanni Maggiore, Santi Apostoli, S. Giorgio Maggiore, and S. Maria Maggiore—all belong to the district whose confines we have traced, is an interesting confirmation of the truth of its antiquity.

Belisarius stationed his fleet in the harbor, where they were beyond the range of the projectiles of the enemy. A Gothic garrison stationed in the suburb (possibly the suburb between the city and the sea) at once surrendered to the invaders. Then a message was sent to the Roman general asking him if he would consent to receive a deputation of some of the principal inhabitants of the city, anxious to confer with him for the public welfare. He consented, and the deputation, with one Stephanus at its head, appeared before of him. Stephanus pleaded the hard case of the Roman citizens of Naples, summoned by a Roman army to surrender their town, and prevented from doing so by a Gothic garrison. Nor were even these Gothic soldiers free agents. Their wives and children were in the hands of Theodahad, who would assuredly visit upon them any fault which the garrison might commit towards him. In these cruel circumstances the citizens begged Belisarius not to press upon them his summons to surrender. After all, it was not there, but under the walls of Rome, that the decisive engagement would have to be fought. If Rome were reduced to the Emperor's obedience, Neapolis must inevitably follow its example. If the general were repulsed from Rome, the possession of a little city like Neapolis would avail him nothing.

Belisarius coldly thanked the orator for his of advice as to the course of the campaign, but announced his intention of conducting the war according to his own notions of military expediency. To the Roman inhabitants he offered the choice of freedom to be achieved by his arms; or slavery, they themselves fighting to keep the yoke upon their necks. He could hardly doubt what in such circumstances their choice would be, especially as the prosperous condition

of the loyal Sicilians showed that he was both able and willing to keep the promises which he made in the name of the Emperor. Even to the Goths he could offer honorable terms. Let them either enter his army and become the servants of the great Monarch whom the civilized world obeyed, or, if they refused this proposal, on the surrender of the city they should march out unharmed (it is to be presumed with the honors of war), and depart whither they would.

Stephanus, whose patriotism had been quickened by the promise of large rewards to himself if he could bring about the surrender of the city, strove earnestly to induce his fellow-citizens to accept the terms of Belisarius. He was seconded in these efforts by a Syrian merchant named Antiochus, long resident in Neapolis, a man of great wealth and high reputation. Two orators however, named Pastor and Asclepiodotus, also men of great influence in the city, stood forth as the advocates of an opposite policy, one of loyalty to the Goths and resistance to Byzantium. If we are perplexed at finding professed rhetoricians and men of letters (one of whom bears a Greek name) championing the cause of the barbarians, we may remember the life-long loyalty of Cassiodorus to the house of Theodoric, and may conjecture that other men of like training to his had been induced to enter the Gothic service. Some of these, like the two rhetoricians now before us, may have had statesmanship enough to see that the so-called 'Roman liberty' which was offered to the Italians would mean only a change of masters, and that change not necessarily one for the better.

By the advice of Pastor and Asclepiodotus, the offered demands of the Neapolitans were raised so high that in their opinion Belisarius would never grant them. A memorandum containing these demands was presented by Stephanus to the General, who accepted them and confirmed his acceptance by an oath. On the news of this favorable reply the pressure in favor of surrender became so strong that the Gothic garrison alone would not have ventured to resist it. The common people had begun to stream down towards the gates with the intention of opening them: but then the two orators 'whose sentence was for open war' gathered the Goths and the principal Neapolitans together and again harangued them in support of their views: "The mob have taken this thought of Pastor and surrender into their minds and are eager to execute it. But we, who deem that they are rushing headlong to ruin, are bound to consult you, the leaders of the state, and to put our thoughts before you, the last contribution that we can make to the welfare of our country. You think that, because you have the promise and the oath of Belisarius, you are now relieved from all further danger of the horrors of war. And if that were so, we should be the first to advise you to surrender. But how can Belisarius guarantee your future security? He is going to fight the nation of the Goths under the walls of Rome. Suppose that he does not gain the victory: you will have the Gothic warriors in a few days before your gates breathing vengeance against the cowardly betrayers of their trust. And on the other hand, if he wins, even on that most favorable supposition you will have to make up your minds to the permanent presence of an imperial garrison in your town. For the Emperor, though he may be much obliged to you for the moment for removing an obstacle out of his path, will not fail to make a note of the fact that the Neapolitans are a fickle and disloyal people, not safe to be trusted with the defence of their city. No: depend upon it, you will stand better both with friends and foes if you do not lightly surrender the trust committed to your hands. Belisarius cannot take the city: the magnitude of the promises which he makes to you is the plainest proof of that. You have strong walls and an abundant supply of provisions. Only stand firm for a few days and you will see the cloud of war roll away from your borders". With this the orators brought forward some Jews to vouch for the fact that Neapolis was well provisioned for a siege. The Israelite nation were always in favor of the tolerant rule of Theodoric and his successors as against the narrow bigotry of Byzantium. Apparently, in this instance, they were able to speak with authority, being the merchants by whose aid the needful stores of provision had been procured. The result of the harangue of the two orators, backed by

the assurances of the Hebrews, was that the party of surrender was outvoted, and Belisarius, sorely vexed at the delay, but unwilling to leave so strong a place untaken in his rear, had to set about the siege of Neapolis.

The citizens, having resolved in a stubborn defence appealed to Theodahad for assistance. But Theodahad, utterly unready for war, allowed the precious winter months to slip without making any preparation for war, and was now seeking to diviners and soothsayers for knowledge as to the future which he had done nothing to mould. The manner of divination concerted between him and a Jewish magician, was ridiculous enough to have been practiced by any Roman augur. Thirty hogs were shut in three different pens. One was labeled 'Troops of the Emperor', another 'Goths', and the 'last Romans'. The unfortunate animals were then left for a certain number of days without food. When the pens were opened. it was found that the Gothic hogs had all perished save two, that of the Roman animals half had died and the remaining half had lost all their bristles, while the Imperialists were nearly all alive and seemed to have suffered nothing from their captivity. The inference was obvious. The Gothic race was doomed to almost utter extermination; the provincials of Italy should suffer cruel hardships and the loss of all their property, but half of the nation should survive the war; while the Byzantine invaders alone should emerge from it fat and flourishing, after this augury of the hogs, Theodahad felt himself even less prepared than before to send effectual succor to the Neapolitans.

The citizens, however, were making so good a defence that it seemed as if they might be able to do without reinforcements. The steepness of the approaches to the walls, the narrow space between them and the sea, which left no room for the evolutions of troops, and possibly some defect in the harborage which made it difficult for the ships to approach near enough to hurl projectiles into the city, all made the task of Belisarius one of unusual difficulty. He had cut off the aqueduct which brought water from Serino, in the valley of the Samnite river Sabatus, into Neapolis; but there were so many excellent wells within the enclosure that the inhabitants scarcely perceived any diminution of their water-supply. As day passed on after day and still no breach was made in the walls, and many of his bravest soldiers were falling in the useless assaults, Belisarius, chafing at the delay, began bitterly to repent that he had ever undertaken the siege. It was still perhaps only June, but twenty days of the siege had already elapsed, and at this rate it would be winter before he met Theodahad and the great Gothic host under the walls of Rome.

At this crisis, when he was on the point of giving the order to the soldiers to collect their aqueduct. baggage and raise the siege, one of his body-guard, an Isaurian named Paucaris, brought him tidings which gave him a gleam of hope. One of his fellow-countrymen, a private soldier, clambering, as these Isaurian mountaineers were in the habit of doing, up every steep place that they could scale, had come to the end of the broken aqueduct. Curious to see the *specus* or channel along which the water had once flowed, he had entered through the aperture, which had been imperfectly closed by the defenders of the city, and crept for some distance along the now waterless conduit. At length he came to a part of its course where it was taken through the solid rock, and here, to save labor, the diameter of the *specus* was smaller, too small for a man in armor to creep through it. Yet he deemed that the hole might be widened sufficiently to remove this difficulty, and that it would then be possible to penetrate by this forgotten passage into the city itself. Belisarius at once perceived the importance of the discovery, and sent some Isaurians, with the utmost secrecy, under the guidance of their countryman to accomplish the desired excavation. They used no axe or hammer, that they might not alarm the enemy. Patiently, with sharp instruments of steel they filed away at the rock, and at length returned to the General, announcing that there was now a practicable passage through the aqueduct.

But before attempting by this means the assault of the city, Belisarius determined to make one more effort to persuade the inhabitants to surrender. Sending for Stephanus, he said to him (in words which remind us of a well-known utterance of our own Duke of Wellington), "Many are now the cities that I have seen taken, and I am perfectly familiar with all that goes on at such a time,—the grown men slain with the edge of the sword; the women suffering the last extremity of outrage, longing for death but unable to find one friendly destroyer; the children driven off into bondage, doomed to sink from an honorable condition into that of half-fed and ignorant boors, slaves of the very men whose hands are red with the blood of their parents: and besides all this, the leaping flames destroying in an hour all the comeliness of the city. I can see as in a mirror, my dear Stephanus, your fair city of Neapolis undergoing all these horrors which I have beheld in so many of the towns that I have taken; and my whole soul is stirred with pity for her and her inhabitants. She is a city of old renown. They are Romans and Christians, and I have many barbarians in my army, hard to restrain at any time, and now maddened by the loss of brethrens and comrades who have fallen in the siege. I will tell you honestly that you cannot escape me. he plans which I have made are such that the city must fall into my hands. Be advised by me, and accept an honorable capitulation while you can. If you refuse, blame not Fortune, but your own perversity for all the miseries that shall come upon you". With tears and lamentations Stephanus delivered to his fellow-citizens the message of Belisarius; but they, confident in the impregnability of their city, still abjured every thought of surrender.

As there was no possibility of avoiding the assault, Belisarius proceeded to make his plans for it as perfect as possible. At twilight he chose out four hundred men whom he placed under the command of Magnus, a cavalry officer, and Eunes, a leader of the Isaurians. Though we are not expressly told that it was so, there seems some reason to suppose that the half of this force commanded by Eunes was itself of Isaurian nationality; and no doubt both Paucaris and the original discoverer of the passage took part in the expedition. The men were fully armed with shield, breastplate, and sword, and two trumpeters went with them. The whole secret of the plan was then disclosed to Magnus and Eunes; the spot was indicated where they were to enter the aqueduct, and from whence with lighted torches they and their four hundred were to creep stealthily into the city. Meanwhile the Roman host was kept under arms ready for action, and the carpenters were set to work preparing ladders for the assault.

At first the General had to endure a disappointment. Fully one half of the aqueduct party—the non-Isaurian half if our conjecture be correct—when they had crept for some distance through the dark channel, declared that the deed was too dangerous, and marched back to the entrance, the reluctant and mortified Magnus at their head. Belisarius, who was still standing there surrounded by some of the bravest men in the army, had no difficulty in at once selecting two hundred volunteers to take the place of the recreants; and his gallant step-son Photius, claiming to be allowed to head the expedition, leapt eagerly into the aqueduct. The General thought of Antonina, and forbade her son to venture through the channel; but the example of his bravery and the bitter taunts of Belisarius so stung the waverers, that they too returned into the aqueduct, thus apparently raising the numbers of the storming party to six hundred.

Fearing that so large a detachment might make some noise which would be heard by the Gothic sentinels, the General ordered his lieutenant Bessas to draw near to the walls and engage their attention. Bessas harangued them accordingly in his and their native tongue, enlarging on the rich rewards of the imperial service, and advising them to enter it without delay. They replied with taunts and insults; but the object was gained. In the storm of the debate, amid all the crash of Teutonic gutturals, any muffled sounds from the region of the aqueduct passed unheeded.

The storming party were now within the circuit of the walls of Neapolis, but they found themselves penetrating further than they wished; and how to emerge into the city was as yet by no means apparent. A lofty vaulted roof of brick was over their heads. They seem to have been standing in what would have been a great reservoir had the aqueduct been still flowing. Despair seized the heart of those who had already entered the place, and the column of soldiers still pressing on from behind made their situation each moment more perilous. At length those in front saw a break in the vaulting above them, by the break the outlines of a cottage, by the cottage an olive-tree. It was hopeless for armed soldiers to climb up that steep reservoir-side; but one brave fellow, an Isaurian doubtless, laid aside helmet and shield, and with hands and feet scrambled up the wall. In the cottage he found one old woman in a state of abject poverty. He threatened her with death if she stirred or shrieked. She was mute. He fastened a strong strap which he had brought with him to the stem of the olive-tree. His comrades grasped the other end, and one by one all the six hundred mounted without accident.

By this time the fourth watch of the night had begun. The storming party rushed to the northern ramparts, beneath which they knew that Belisarius and Bessas would be stationed, slew two of the sentinels who were taken unawares, and then blew a long blast on their bugles. At once the Byzantine soldiers placed the ladders against the walls and began to mount. Destruction! The ladders, which had been hurriedly made in the darkness by the army-carpenters, were too short, and did not reach to the foot of the battlements. They were taken down again, and two of them were hastily but securely fastened together. Now the soldiers could mount. They poured over the battlements. On the north side at any rate the city was won.

On the south, between the sea and the wall, the task of the assailants was somewhat harder. There, not the Goths, but the Jews kept watch; the Jews ever embittered against the persecuting Government of Constantinople, and now fighting with the courage of despair, since they knew that the part which they had taken in opposing the surrender had marked them out for vengeance. But when day dawned, and they were attacked in their rear by assailants from the other part of the city, even the Jews were obliged to flee, and the southern gates were opened to the Byzantines.

The besiegers on the east side, where no serious assault had been contemplated, had no scaling ladders, and were obliged to burn the gates of the city before they could effect an entrance. By this time the whole troop of semi-barbarians called the Roman army was pouring through the town, murdering, ravishing, plundering, binding for slavery, even as Belisarius had prophetically described. The Huns who were serving under the banners of the Empire, and who were no doubt still heathens, did not respect even the sanctity of the churches, but slew those who had taken refuge at the altars.

Then Belisarius collected his troops together, probably in the great Forum of the city, and delivered a harangue in which he besought them not to tarnish the victory which God had given them by unholy deeds. The Neapolitans were now no longer enemies, but fellow-subjects: "let them not sow the seeds of irreconcilable hatred by a bloody butchery in the first city which they had taken". With these words, and with the assurance that all the wealth which they could lay hands upon should be theirs, as the fitting reward of their valor, he persuaded the soldiers to sheathe their swords, and even to unbind their captives and restore wives to their husbands, children to their parents. Thus, says the historian, did the Neapolitans—those at least of them who escaped the massacre—pass in a few hours from freedom to slavery, and back again from slavery to freedom, and even to a certain measure of comfort. For they had succeeded in burying their gold and all their most precious property; and after the storm of war had passed they were able to recover it.

Eight hundred Gothic warriors were taken prisoners in the city. Belisarius protected them from outrage at the hands of his soldiery and kept them in honorable captivity, treating them in all respects like soldiers of his own.

The unhappy leaders of the war-party attested by their end the sincerity of their advice. Pastor, who was previously in perfect health, when he saw that the city was taken, received so violent a shock that he had a stroke of apoplexy which proved immediately fatal. Asclepiodotus with some of the nobles of the city presented himself boldly before Belisarius. Stephanus, in his grief at the calamities which had befallen his native city, assailed with bitter reproaches "that betrayer of his country, that wickedest of men, who had sold his city in order to curry favor with the Goths. Had the cause of the barbarians triumphed, Asclepiodotus would have denounced the patriots as traitors and hounded them to the death. Only the valor of Belisarius had delivered them from this calamity". With some dignity Asclepiodotus replied that the invective of Stephanus was really his highest praise, since it showed that he had been firm in his duty to those whom he found set over him. Now that by the fortune of war Neapolis had passed under the power of the Emperor, Asclepiodotus would be found as faithful a servant of the Empire as he had been of the Goths, while Stephanus at the first whisper of ill-fortune would be found veering back again from his new to his old allegiance.

We are not told what part Belisarius took in this quarrel. The populace followed Asclepiodotus on his departure from the general's tent, assailed him with reproaches as author of all their miseries, and at length slew him and mangled his remains. Then seeking the house of Pastor, they would not for a long time believe his slaves who assured them of his death. Satisfied at last by the sight of his dead body, they dragged it forth from the city and hung it ignominiously on a gibbet. They then repaired to the quarters of Belisarius, told him what they had done, and craved pardon for the display of their righteous indignation, a pardon which was readily granted.

So ended the Byzantine siege of Naples. The only remembrance of it which, in the changed circumstances of the city, a modern traveler can obtain, is furnished by a few red arches which, under the name of *Ponti Rossi*, traverse one of the roads leading north-eastwards from the city, a little below the royal palace of *Capo di Monte*. At this point apparently the aqueduct which led into the city of Naples branched off from the main line which held on its course westwards to *Puteoli* and *Baiae*. Over these arches marched the hardy *Isaurians* on that perilous midnight adventure which resulted in the capture of *Neapolis*.

CHAPTER III.

THE ELEVATION OF WITIGIS.

The failure of the Gothic King to avert the fall of Neapolis exasperated beyond endurance the warlike subjects of Theodahad. His avarice and his ingratitude were known; his want of loyalty to the nation of his fathers was more than suspected. Rumors of his negotiations with Constantinople, even the most secret and the most discreditable of them, had reached the ears of his subjects, and now the worst of those rumors seemed to be confirmed by his desertion of the defenders of Neapolis, a desertion so extraordinary that mere incompetence seemed insufficient to account for it.

That which our ancestors would have called Assembly, a *Folc-mote*, an assembly of the whole gothic nation under arms, was convened, by what authority we know not, to deliberate on the perilous condition of the country. The place of meeting was forty-three miles from Rome. It has been hitherto impossible to discover any clue to the name given by Procopius, who says "The Romans call the place Regeta"; but the other indications afforded by him show that it was situated in the Pomptine Marshes, and in that part of them which the draining operations of Decius, who had apparently cleared out the old Decennovial Canal, had restored to productiveness, perhaps even to fertility.

Allusion has already been made to Theodoric's share in the promotion of this useful work, and to the palace bearing his name which crowned the heights of Terracina. If not that palace itself, yet at any rate the hill on which it stood, rose conspicuously on the southern horizon some fifteen miles from the Gothic meeting-place. The reason for choosing this spot was that, thanks to the draining operations just referred to, the vast plain furnished a plentiful supply of grass for the horses of the assembled warriors.

As soon as the nation met upon the plain of Regeta, it was clear that the deposition of Theodahad was inevitable, and that the only question was who should succeed him. The line of the great Theodoric was practically extinct (only a young girl, the sister of Athalaric, remained); and in the great necessity of the nation, they travelled beyond the circle not only of royal, but even of noble blood, to find a deliverer. A warrior named Witigis, not sprung from any illustrious house, but who had rendered himself illustrious by great deeds wrought against the Gepids in the war of Sirmium, was raised upon the buckler and acclaimed as king.

The pen of the veteran Cassiodorus was employed to draw up the document in which was announced to the Goths the elevation of a king, not chosen in the recesses of a royal bedchamber, but in the expanse of the boundless Campagna; of one who owed his dignity first to Divine grace, but secondly to the free judgment of the people; of one who knew the brave men in his army by comradeship, having stood shoulder to shoulder with them in the day of battle. His countrymen were exhorted to relinquish that attitude of fear and mutual suspicion which the rule of the craven Theodahad had only too naturally produced, and to work with one accord for the deliverance of their nation.

Witigis decided without hesitation that the dethroned monarch must die. He gave the word to a Goth named Optaris to follow Theodahad and bring him back, dead or alive. Optaris had the stimulus of revenge besides that of obedience to urge him to fulfill his bloody commission, since he had lost a bride rich and lovely, whose hand had been plighted to him, by Theodahad's venal interference on behalf of a rival suitor. Night and day he spurred on his

steed. He came up with the flying King before he had reached Ravenna, threw him to the ground, and cut his throat as a priest would slay a sheep for sacrifice.

So vanishes the Platonist Ostrogoth, the remover of land-marks, the perjurer and the coward, from the page of history. It is not often that the historian has to describe a character so thoroughly contemptible as that of Theodahad.

Witigis on his accession to the throne found an utter absence of effective preparation to meet the enemy. The two enemies, we should rather say, since the Franks, in fulfillment of a secret compact with Justinian, were in arms against the Goths, and a considerable part of the army of Theodahad was stationed in Provence and Dauphiné, endeavoring to defend that part of the kingdom against the sons of Clovis. In these circumstances Witigis determined to retire for a time to Ravenna, not indeed evacuating Rome, since the gallant veteran Leudaris was to be left in charge of that city with 4000 picked troops, but withdrawing the bulk of his army to the stronger capital, and there at his leisure preparing for the defence of the kingdom. In a speech to the army he set forth the reasons for this course, the necessity for getting the Frankish war off their hands and so of reducing the number of their invaders, the difference between a withdrawal dictated by motives of high policy and a cowardly flight, and so forth. The most important point of all, the effect of such a movement on the Roman population, was thus slightly handled: "If the Romans be well affected towards us, they will help to guard the city for the Goths, and will not put Fortune to the proof, knowing that we shall speedily return. But if they are meditating any intrigue against us, they will do us less harm by delivering the city to the enemy than by continuing in secret conspiracy; for we shall then know who are on our side, and shall be able to distinguish friends from foes".

With these and similar arguments Witigis persuaded his countrymen to retire with the bulk of the army into North Italy. It is easy to see now, and surely it should have been easy to see then, that this was a fatal blunder. The Franks, as the events of the next few months were to prove, were fighting only for their own hand, and might easily be bought off by territorial concessions in Gaul. The real and only inevitable enemy was Belisarius, the daring strategist who was now at Neapolis, and who had come to the Italian peninsula to conquer it, the whole of it, for his master or to die.

All-important in this struggle was the attitude of the Roman population, not in Rome only, but over the whole of Italy. They could still look back on the peace and plenty which had marked the just reign of Theodoric. Though by no means welded into one nation with their Gothic guests, there was not as yet, we have good reason to believe, any impassable chasm between the two races; and if they could be persuaded to cast in their lot with the Teutonic defenders of their land, if they could practice the lesson which they had been lately learning, of substituting the name 'Italy' for 'the Empire'; above all, if they could be induced to think of Belisarius and his troops as Greek intruders into their country, the new Romano-Gothic people and fatherland might yet be formed. The example of the resistance of Neapolis showed that this was not a mere idle dream. But all these hopes would be blasted, all the great work of Theodoric and Cassiodorus would be unraveled, and the Ostrogoths would sink into the position of a mere countryless horde, themselves invaders of Italy rather than the invaded, if the general of Justinian could once get within the walls of Rome, if the name of that venerable city with its thirteen centuries of glory could once be his to conjure with, if the head and the members being again joined together he could display himself to the world as the defender of the Roman Empire, in Rome, against the barbarians.

The chance, if chance there was, of so defending the Gothic kingdom was thrown away. The unwise counsel of Witigis—who, it may be, could not believe himself a king till he had actually sat in Theodoric's audience-chamber at Ravenna—prevailed, and the Gothic host marched off northwards, leaving only Leudaris and his 4000 braves to hold the capital against

Belisarius. Witigis took, indeed, some precautions, such as they were, to assure the fidelity of the citizens. He harangued Pope Silverius, the Senate, and the people of Rome, calling to their remembrance the great benefits which they had received from Theodoric; he bound them under most solemn oaths to be faithful to the Gothic rule; he took a large number of Senators with him as hostages for the loyalty of the rest. To force the subjects whom he was not defending to swear eternal allegiance to his rule was the work of a weak man; to hint that, if they did not, their innocent Mends should suffer for it, was the threat of a cruel one. This taking of hostages, though it might seem for the moment an easy expedient for securing the fidelity of an unguarded city, was essentially a bad security. If the bond were forfeited by the surrender of the city, to exact the penalty, namely, the death of the chief citizens of Rome, helpless and innocent, was to put an absolutely impassable barrier of hate between the Gothic King and the vast majority of the inhabitants of Italy.

On his arrival at Ravenna Witigis took part in a pageant which may have both amazed and amused his Gothic subjects. He, the elderly warrior, the husband of a wife probably of his own age, having divorced that companion of his humbler fortunes, proceeded to marry the young and blooming Matasuentha, sister of Athalaric and granddaughter of the great Theodoric. Reasons of state were of course alleged for these strange nuptials. An alliance with the royal house might cause men to forget the lowliness of the new King's origin; and the danger of his finding a rival to the crown in Matasuentha's husband, or even of her making over her rights, such as they might be, to the Emperor, was barred by her becoming the Lady of the Goths. But the marriage was against nature, and brought no blessing with it. The unfortunate girl, as weary of her elderly husband as Athalaric had been of his grey-headed tutors, chafed against the yoke, and made no secret of the fact that she loved not her consort; and he, divided between the pride of the low-born adventurer exalted to a splendid position, and the unhappiness of the husband who is unloved and who lives in an atmosphere of daily reproaches, lost any power which he may ever have possessed of devising measures for the deliverance of the Gothic nation from its peril.

Altogether, the elevation of Witigis was a mistake for the Gothic monarchy. It was the old and often repeated error of supposing that because a man till he has reached middle life has played a subordinate part with some credit, he will be able to rise to the sudden requirements of a great and difficult position; that respectability will serve instead of genius. Against a general, perhaps the greatest that the world has ever seen for fertility of resource and power of rapid combination, the Goths had given themselves for a leader a mere brave and honest blunderer, whose notions of strategy were like those which Demosthenes reproved in his Athenian countrymen, who, as unskillful pugilists, were always trying to parry a blow after it had been struck and always being surprised by its successor. Yet as, with all his incapacity, he was loyal to the nation, the nation was loyal to him, and during the three following years of his disastrous leadership they never seem to have entertained the thought of replacing him by a better commander.

Having now allied himself with the daughter of the murdered Amalasantha, Witigis sent an embassy to Constantinople, urging, with some reason, that the cause of quarrel between the Emperor and the Goths was at an end. The vile Theodahad had paid the penalty of his crimes, a penalty which Witigis himself had exacted from him. The daughter of Amalasantha sat on the Gothic throne. What more did Justinian require? Why should he not stop the effusion of blood and restore peace to Italy? This letter to the Emperor was supplemented by one to the orthodox bishops of Italy, calling upon them to pray for the success of the embassy; to the Prefect of Thessalonica, praying him to speed the two ambassadors on their way; and to the Master of the Offices at Constantinople, beseeching him to use his influence in favor of peace.

The letters relating to this embassy were prepared by Cassiodorus, and were perhaps among the latest documents which proceeded from his pen. Though he did not yet apparently retire formally from public affairs, he seems to have perceived at this point that the dream of his life was a hopeless one, that fusion between Goth and Roman was impossible, and consequently to have retired from all active participation in the conflict which must now be fought out to the bitter end, but in which nevertheless he could pray for the success of neither party.

The letters written in reply to Witigis have not been preserved; but there can be no doubt that such letters were received by the Gothic king, probably in the late autumn of 536, and they must have been to the intent that the war must now proceed, since nothing but unqualified submission would satisfy the demand of Justinian.

One of the first acts of the reign of Witigis was to buy off the opposition of the Franks by the cession of the Ostrogothic possessions in Gaul (Provence and part of Dauphiné) and by the payment of twenty hundredweight of gold. Negotiations for this purpose had been commenced by Theodahad, but were interrupted by his death. Childebert, Theudibert, and Chlotochar now divided among them the treasure and the towns ceded by the Goths, and concluded a secret alliance with them, promising to send some of their horde of subject nations to assist in the defence of Italy. More they durst not do, being desirous still to keep up the appearance of friendship with Byzantium.

In thus resuming the pacific policy of Theodahad towards the Franks,—a policy which enabled him to recall the general Marcias and many thousands of the bravest of the Goths to the south of the Alps, Witigis seems to have been only recognizing an inevitable necessity. His great error was in not making this concession earlier. If he could thus purchase the friendship of the Franks, and secure his northern frontier from their attacks, he ought to have done so at once, and thus to have avoided the necessity for the fatal abandonment of Rome.

CHAPTER IV

BELISARIUS IN ROME

The events described in the preceding chapter occupied the summer and autumn of 536. How Belisarius was occupied during this interval it is not easy to say. The notes of time given us by Procopius in this part of his narrative are indistinct; nor have we between the siege of Neapolis and the siege of Rome any of those little personal touches which indicate the presence of an eyewitness. Possibly the historian was still at Carthage, attached to the staff of the African army. If in Italy, he was perhaps engaged in administrative work in some one of the towns of Southern Italy, such as Beneventum, of which he gives at this point of his narrative a short account full of archaeological information. The name of the place, at first Maleventum, from the fierce winds which rage there as well as in Dalmatia, but afterwards changed to Beneventum, to avoid the ill sound of the other (for the Latins call wind *ventus* in their language)—the traditions of Diomed the founder of the city—the grinning tusks of the Calydonian boar slain by his uncle Meleager, still preserved down to the days of Procopius—the legend of the Palladium stolen by Diomed and Ulysses from the temple of Athené at Troy and handed on by the former to Aeneas—the doubt where this Palladium was then preserved, whether at Rome or Constantinople—all this archaeological gossip flows from the Herodotean pen of our historian with a fullness which suggests that to him the autumn of 536 was in after days chiefly memorable as the time of his sojourn at Beneventum.

It seems likely that Belisarius devoted the summer and autumn months of 536 to the consolidation of his conquests in Southern Italy. Cumae, that town by Lake Avernus of old Sibylline fame, which was the only fortress besides Neapolis in the province of Campania, was occupied by him with a sufficient garrison. Calabria and Apulia, as has been already said, offered themselves as willing subjects to the Byzantine Emperor. A hardy and martial people like the Goths, holding the central Apennine chain, might have given Belisarius some trouble by separating Apulia from Campania and intercepting the communications between the Adriatic and Tyrrhene seas; but this danger was removed by the convenient treachery of Pitzas the Goth, probably the same person as the Pitzias who was victor in the war of Sirmium. He now commanded in the province of Samnium, and brought over with him not only his personal followers, but at least half of the province, to the allegiance of the Emperor.

Thus, with scarcely a stroke struck, had nearly the whole of that fair territory which modern geography knows as the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies been lost to the Goths and recovered by the commonwealth of Rome. Belisarius might well pause for a few months to secure these conquests and to await the result of the negotiations which Witigis, evidently somewhat half-hearted about his resistance, had opened up with Constantinople. Besides, he had reason to expect that he would soon receive an important communication from the Bishop of Rome himself; and before the winter had fairly commenced that communication came. To understand its full importance we must rapidly turn over a few pages of Papal history.

It has been already said that, after the death of the unfortunate Pope John in the prison of Theodoric a succession of somewhat inconspicuous Popes filled the chair of St. Peter. Neither Felix III, Boniface II, nor John II did anything to recall the stirring times of the previous Felix or of Hormisdas: but the long duel with Constantinople had ended in the glorious triumph of Rome: and the hard fate of John I had warned the pontiffs that their time was not yet come for

an open rupture with 'Dominus Noster' the King of the Goths and Romans, in his palace by the Hadriatic. A cordial theological alliance therefore with Byzantium, and trembling lip-loyalty to Ravenna, was the attitude of the Popes during these years of transition. There were the customary disputes and disturbances at the election of each Pontiff, varied by stringent decrees of the Roman Senate against bribery, by attempts on the part of the King's counselors to magnify his share in the nomination to the vacant see, and by one yet stranger attempt on the part of Pope Boniface to acquire the power of nominating his successor to the Pontificate—a power such as a servile parliament of the sixteenth century conferred on Henry VIII with reference to the English crown. This scheme, however, was too audacious to succeed. Boniface was forced, probably by the pressure of public opinion, to revoke and even to burn the decree of nomination. The chief interest of this event for posterity lies in the fact that the person who was to have been benefited by the decree was the adroit but restless and unprincipled deacon Vigilius, of whose later intrigues for the acquisition of the Papal throne, and sorrows when he had obtained the coveted dignity, we shall hear abundantly in the future course of this history.

Theologically this uneventful period has a conspicuous interest of its own, as being one of the great battle-fields of the assertors and impugners of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. One of the usual childish logomachies of the East was imported into Rome by certain Scythian monks, who pressed, as a matter of life and death, the orthodoxy of the formula "One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh" as against the heretical "One *person* of the Trinity suffered in the flesh". Hormisdas, before whom the matter was at first brought, had showed the usual good sense of Rome by trying simply to crush out the unintelligible and unprofitable discussion. In doing so, however, he used words which certainly seemed to convey to the non-theological mind the idea that he regarded the phrase "One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh" as heretical. That phrase a later Pope, John II, under some pressure from Justinian that he might not seem to countenance Nestorianism, adopted, as agreeing with the apostolic teaching; and it has consequently ever since been considered strictly orthodox to use it. Here are obviously the materials for a discussion, very interesting to theologians. The literature of the Hormisdas controversy is already considerable, and it is quite possible that the last word has not yet been spoken regarding it.

The successor of John II, Pope Agapetus, during his short episcopate of ten months, saw, more of the world than many of his predecessors in much longer pontificates. After the mission of Peter and Rusticus had failed, through his own treachery and vacillation, King Theodahad determined to make one more attempt to assuage the just resentment of Justinian. Knowing the great influence which since the reunion of the Churches the Roman pontiff exerted over the Eastern Caesar, he decided that Agapetus should be sent to Constantinople on an embassy of peace. To overcome the natural reluctance of a person of advanced age, and in a position of such high dignity, to act as his letter-carrier on a long and toilsome winter journey, Theodahad sent a message to him and to the Roman Senate informing them that, unless they succeeded in making his peace with Justinian, the senators, their wives, their sons, and their daughters should all be put to the sword. Truly the instincts of self-preservation in the coward are cruel.

The Pope Agapetus entered Constantinople on the 20th February, 536, and was received with great demonstrations of respect by the Emperor and the citizens. In the fulfillment of Theodahad's commission, as we know, he met with no success. The Emperor replied,—and his reply is characteristic of the huckstering spirit in which he made war,—that after the great expenses to which his treasury had been put in preparing the expedition for Italy he could not now draw back, leaving its object unattained. But if Agapetus could not or would not effect anything on behalf of his Gothic sovereign he effected much for the advancement of his own and his successors' dignity; and this visit of his is a memorable step in the progress of the Papacy towards an Universal Patriarchate. The see of Constantinople was at this time filled by

Anthimus, recently translated thither from Trebizond by the influence of Theodora, and strongly suspected of sharing the Eutychian views of his patroness. Agapetus sternly refused to recognize Anthimus as lawful Patriarch of Constantinople, on the double ground of the ecclesiastical canon against translations and of his suspected heresy. Justinian tried the effect, so powerful on all others, of the thunder of the imperial voice and the frown on the imperial brow. "Either comply with my request or I will cause thee to be carried away into banishment". Quite unmoved, the noble old man replied in these memorable words : "I who am but a sinner came with eager longing to gaze upon the most Christian Emperor Justinian. In his place I find a Diocletian, whose threats do not one whit terrify me". It must be recorded, for the credit of Justinian, that this bold language moved his admiration rather than his anger. He allowed the Bishop of Rome to question the Patriarch of Constantinople whether he admitted the two natures in Christ; and when the faltering answers of Anthimus proclaimed him a secret Monophysite, Justinian, who always assumed in public the attitude of an opponent of his wife's heresy, at once drove him from the see and from the city. A new prelate, Mennas, of undoubted Chalcedonian orthodoxy was consecrated by Agapetus. Technically the rights of the see of Constantinople may have been saved, but there was certainly something in the whole proceeding which suggested the idea that, after all, the so-called Patriarch of New Rome was only a suffragan bishop in the presence of the successor of St. Peter.

Much had Agapetus done, and more was he doing, to repress the reviving Eutychianism of the East—encouraged though it was by the favor of Theodora—when death ended his career. He died on the 21st of April, 536 (when Belisarius was on the point of returning from Carthage to Sicily), and his body, enclosed in a leaden coffin, was brought from Constantinople to Rome and buried in the Basilica of St. Peter. The new Pope, Silverius, is said to have been intruded into the see by the mere will of "the tyrant Theodahad", who, moved himself by a bribe, brought terror to bear on the minds of the clergy to prevent any resistance to his will. It is, however, strongly suspected that this suggestion of an election vitiated by duress is a mere afterthought in order to excuse the highly irregular proceedings which, as we shall hereafter see, were connected with his deposition. One fact, rare if not unique in the history of the Papacy, distinguishes the personal history of Silverius. A Pope himself, he was also the son of a Pope. He was the offspring, born in lawful wedlock, of the sainted and strong-willed Hormisdas, who of course must have been a widower when he entered the service of the Church. We fail, however, to find in the gentle and peace-loving Silverius any trace of the adamant character of his dictatorial father. Not of a noble or independent nature, he appears to be pushed about by ruder men and women, Gothic and Roman, according to their own needs and caprices, and is at last hustled out of the way more ignominiously than any of his predecessors. Domineering fathers make not infrequently timorous and abject sons.

Such, then, was the Pope Silverius—for we now return to contemplate the progress of the imperial army—who, having sworn a solemn oath of fealty to Witigis, now, near the end of 536, sent messengers to Belisarius to offer the peaceful surrender of the city of Rome. It was not, however, with any chivalrous intention of throwing themselves into the breach, and doing battle for the commonwealth of Rome that this invitation was sent. Silverius and the citizens had heard, of course, full particulars of the siege and sack of Naples, and wished to avoid similar calamities falling upon them. Weighing one danger against another, they thought that they should run less risk from the wrath of the Goths than from that of the Byzantines, and therefore sent Fidelius, the late Quaestor of Athalaric, to invite Belisarius to Rome, and to promise that the City should be surrendered to him without a struggle. Belisarius gladly accepted the invitation, and leaving Herodian with a garrison of 300 foot-soldiers in charge of Naples, he marched by the Latin Way from Campania to Rome. While the Via Appia was the great sea-coast road to Rome, the Via Latina took a more inland course by the valley of the

Liris and along the base of the Volscian hilla, a course in fact very nearly coinciding with that of the modern railway between Rome and Naples. Belisarius and his army passed therefore through the town of Casinum, and immediately under its steep hill, upon the summit of which a man who was to attain even wider fame than Belisarius had reared, amid the ruins of Apollo's temple, the mother-edifice of a thousand European convents. It was Benedict of Nursia, who, little heeding the clash of opposing races, and scarce hearing the tramp of invading armies, was making for *Monte Cassino* an imperishable name in the history of humanity.

When the Gothic garrison of Rome learned that evacuate Belisarius was at hand, and that the Romans were disposed to surrender the City, they came to the conclusion that against such a general, aided by the good-will of the citizens, they should never be able to prevail, and that they would therefore withdraw peaceably from Rome. Leuderis alone, their brave old general, refused to quit the post which had been assigned to him, but was unable to command the obedience of his soldiers, or to recall them to some resolution more worthy of the Gothic name. They therefore marched quietly out by the Flaminian Gate (on the site of the modern Porta del Popolo), while Belisarius and his host entered by the Porta Asinaria, that stately gate flanked by two semi-circular towers which, though walled up, still stands near the Porta San Giovanni and behind the great Lateran Basilica. Leuderis was quietly taken prisoner, and sent with the keys of the city to Justinian. So much for the infallible precautions which Witigis assured the Goths he had taken against the surrender of the city, the "numerous men and highly intelligent officer who would never allow it to fall into the hands of Belisarius".

The entry of the Byzantine troops into Rome took place on the 9th of December, 536. Thus, as Procopius remarks, after sixty years of barbarian domination, was the city recovered for the Empire.

Belisarius seems not to have taken up his abode in any of the imperial residences on the Palatine Hill, where the representative of the Byzantine Caesar might naturally have been expected to dwell, but, prescient of the coming struggle, to have at once fixed his quarters on the Pincian Hill. This ridge on the north of Rome, so well-known by every visitor to the modern city, who, however short his stay, is sure to have seen the long train of carriages climbing to or returning from the fashionable drive, and who has probably stood upon its height in order to obtain the splendid view which it affords of the dome of St. Peters, was not one of the original seven hills of the city, nor formed, strictly speaking, a part even of imperial Rome. Known in earlier times as the *Collis Hortulorum*, or Hill of Gardens, it occupied too commanding a position to be safely left outside the defenses, and had therefore been included within the circuit of the walls of Honorius, some of the great retaining walls of the gardens of M. Q. Acilius Glabrio having been incorporated with the new defenses. Here then, in the *Domus Pinciana*, the imperial General took up his abode. Albeit probably somewhat dismantled, it was doubtless still a stately and spacious palace, though it has now disappeared and left no trace behind. It was admirably adapted for his purpose, being in fact a watch-tower commanding a view all-round the northern horizon, from the Vatican to the Mons Sacer. From this point a ride of a few minutes on his swift charger would bring him to the next great vantage-ground, the *Castra Praetoria*, whose square enclosure, projecting beyond the ordinary line of the Honorian walls, made a tempting object of attack, but also a splendid watch-tower for defence, carrying on the general's view to the Praenestine Gate (*Porta Maggiore*) on the south-east of the city. Thus, from these two points, about a third of the whole circuit of the walls, and nearly all of that part which was actually attacked by the Goths, was visible.

That the city would have to be defended, and that it would tax all his powers to defend it successfully, was a matter that was perfectly clear to the mind of Belisarius, though the Romans, dwelling in a fool's paradise of false security, deemed that all their troubles were over when the 4000 Goths marched forth by the Flaminian Gate. They thought that the war would

inevitably be decided elsewhere by some great pitched battle. It seemed to them obvious that so skillful a general as Belisarius would never consent to be besieged in a city so little defended by nature as was the wide circuit of imperial Rome, nor undertake the almost superhuman task of providing for the sustenance of that vast population in addition to his own army. Such, however, was the scheme of Belisarius, who knew that behind the walls of Rome his little army could offer a more effectual resistance to the enemy than in any pitched battle on the Campanian plains. Slowly and sadly the citizens awoke to the fact that their hasty defection from the Gothic cause was by no means to relieve them from the hardships of a siege. Possibly some of them, in the year of misery that lay before them, even envied the short and sharp agony of Neapolis.

The commissariat of the city was naturally one of the chief objects of the General's solicitude. From Sicily, still the granary of the State, his ships had brought and were daily bringing large supplies of grain. These were carried into the great warehouses (*horrea publica*), which were under the care of the *Praefectus Annonae*. At the same time the citizens, sorely grumbling, were set busily to work to bring into the city the corn and provisions of all kinds that were stored in the surrounding country.

Side by side with this great work went on the repair of the walls, which Belisarius found in many places somewhat ruinous. Two hundred and sixty years had elapsed since they were erected by Aurelian and Probus, one hundred and thirty since they were renewed by Honorius, and in the latter interval they may have suffered not only from the slow foot of time, but from the destroying hands of the soldiers of Alaric, of Gaiseric, and of Ricimer. Theodoric's steady and persevering labors had effected something, but much still remained to be done. Belisarius repaired the rents which still existed, drew a deep and wide fosse round the outer side of the wall, and supplied what he considered to be a deficiency in the battlements by adding a cross-wall to each, on the left hand, so that the soldier might dispense with the use of a shield, being guarded against arrows and javelins hurled against him from that quarter.

The walls and gates of imperial Rome, substantially the same walls which Belisarius defended, and many of the same gates at which the Goths battered, are still visible; and few historical monuments surpass them in interest. No survey of them has yet been made sufficiently minute to enable us to say with certainty to what date each portion of them belongs: but some general conclusions may be safely drawn even by the superficial observer. Here you may see the *opus reticulatum*, that cross-hatched brickwork which marks a building of the Julian or Flavian age; there the fine and regular brickwork of Aurelian; there again the poor debased work of the time of Honorius. A little further on, you come to a place where layers of bricks regularly laid cease altogether. Mere rubble-work thrust in anyhow, blocks of marble, fragments of columns; such is the material with which the fatal holes in the walls have been darned and patched; and here antiquaries are generally disposed to see the 'tumultuary' restorations of Belisarius working in hot haste to complete his repairs before Witigis or the later Totila should appear before the walls. In a few places the gap in the brickwork is supplied by different and more massive materials. Great square blocks of the black volcanic stone called *tufa*, of which the wall of Servius Tullius was composed, are the sign of this intrusive formation. Are these also due to the rapid restorations of Belisarius, or was it part of the original plan to make the now superseded wall of the King do duty, after nine centuries, in the rampart of the Emperor? We turn an angle of the walls, and we see the mighty arches of the interlacing aqueducts by which Rome was fed with water from the Tiburtine and the Alban hills, with admirable skill made available for the defence of the city.

We move onward, we come to Christian monograms, to mediaeval inscriptions, to the armorial bearings of Popes. At the south of the city we look upon the grand Bastion, which marks the restoring hand of the great Farnese Pope, Paul III, employing the genius of Sangallo.

We pass the great gate of Ostia, that gate through which St. Paul is believed to have been led forth to martyrdom, and which now bears his name. The wall runs down sharply to the Tiber, at the foot of that strange artificial hill the Monte Testaccio; for half a mile it lines the left bank of the stream; then at the gate of Porto it reappears on the opposite side of the Tiber. Here it changes its character, and the change is itself a compendium of mediaeval history. The wall which on the eastern shore was Imperial, with only some marks of Papal repair, now becomes purely Papal; the turrets give place to bastions; Urban VIII, as name-giver to the rampart, takes the place of Aurelian. We see at once how dear 'the Leonine city' was to the Pontifical heart; we discern that St. Peter's and the Vatican have taken the place which in imperial Rome was occupied by the Palatine, in Republican Rome by the Forum, the Capitol, and the Temple of Concord.

As everywhere in Rome, so pre-eminently in our circuit of the wall, the oldest and the newest ages are constantly jostling against one another. At the east of the city we were looking at the *tufa* blocks hewn by the masons of Servius Tullius. Now on the west we see the walls by the Porta Aurelia showing everywhere the dints of French bullets hurled against them when Oudinot in 1849 crushed out the little life of the Roman Republic of Mazzini. For yet more recent history we turn again to our northern starting-point, and there, almost under the palace of Belisarius, we see the stretch of absolutely new wall which marks the extent of the practicable breach through which the troops of Victor Emmanuel entered Rome in September, 1870.

A first and even a second perambulation of the walls of Rome, especially on the outside, may hardly give the observer an adequate conception of their original completeness as a work of defence. It has been well pointed out by one of our German authorities that Aurelian's object in constructing it cannot have been merely to furnish cover for the comparatively small numbers of the *cohortes urbanae*, the ordinary city-guard, but that he must have contemplated the necessity of a whole army garrisoning the city and defending his work. For this reason we have in Aurelian's original line of circumvallation, and to some extent, but less perfectly, in the Honorian restoration of it, a complete gallery or covered way carried all-round the inside of the wall. Nowhere can this original idea of the wall be better studied than on the south-east of the city, in the portion between the *Amphitheatrum Castrense* and the Porta Asinaria, or, in ecclesiastical language, between the Church of Santa Croce and that of St. John Lateran. Here, if we walk outside, we see the kind of work with which the rest of our tour of inspection has already made us familiar, that is, a wall from 50 to 60 feet high, with square towers some 20 feet higher than the rest of the work, projecting from the circuit of the wall at regular intervals of 33 yards. If we now pass in, not by the Porta Asinaria, which is closed, but by its representative the modern Porta San Giovanni, we find ourselves looking upon a structure greatly resembling one of the great Roman aqueducts, and probably often taken for such by travelers. We can see of course the backs of the square towers, but between every two of these there are seven tall arches about 33 feet high. A window through the wall near the bottom of each of these corresponds with an opening outside about half-way up the face of the wall, and thus lets us see that the level of the ground inside is from 20 to 30 feet higher than outside, the apparent height of the wall inside being of course reduced by the same amount. In the wall behind the arches we can see the holes marking the places where the ends of two sets of rafters, one above the other, have rested. Moreover, the piers which separate the arches are pierced by another set of tall thin arches at right angles to the others. A glance at the accompanying engravings will give a clearer idea of the construction of the walls than a page of description. The meaning of all these indications evidently is that a corridor or covered way ran round the whole inner circuit of the wall of Aurelian, where that was finished according to the design of the imperial builder. This gallery was two stories high between the towers; a third story would

be added where these gave the needful height. Besides these covered galleries, which were used for the rapid transfer of troops from one part of the circuit to another, there was the regular path at the top of the walls, partially protected by battlements, on which the defenders were doubtless mustered when actual fighting was going forward.

For our knowledge of the fortifications of the state of the city we are not entirely dependent on our present the eighth observation of the walls, battered as they have been by the storms of the Middle Ages, and still more grievously as they have suffered at the hands of restorers and modernizers in the last three centuries. The 'Pilgrim of Einsiedeln', as he is conventionally termed, a visitor to Rome in the eighth or ninth century, recorded the most noteworthy objects of the Eternal City in a MS. which is preserved in the monastery of Einsiedeln in Switzerland. Among other information, he gives us the precise number of the towers, the battlements, and the loopholes in each section of the wall, including even the sanitary arrangements rendered necessary by the permanent presence of a large body of troops. It has been generally supposed that the Einsiedeln Pilgrim himself counted the towers of the sacred city of St. Peter; but one of our best German authorities suggests, with great probability, that he is really transcribing some much earlier official document, possibly that drawn up by the architects of Honorius at the beginning of the fifth century.

While Belisarius is repairing the moldering walls and assigning to the rude cohorts of his many-nationed army their various duties in the anticipated siege, we may allow ourselves to cast a hasty glance over the city which he has set himself to defend. A hasty glance, for this is not the time nor the place for minute antiquarian discussion; yet a glance of some sad and earnest interest, since we know that this is the last time that Rome in her glory will be seen by mortal man. The things which have befallen her up to this time have been only slight and transitory shocks, which have left no lasting dint upon her armor—Alarics burning of the palace of Sallust, Gaiseric's half-accomplished spoliation of the golden roof of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, some havoc wrought in the insolence of their triumph by the *foederati* of Ricimer. More destructive, no doubt, was the slow process of denudation already commenced by the unpatriotic hands of the Romans themselves, and only partially checked by the decrees of Majorian and Theodoric. Still, as a whole, Rome the Golden City, the City of Consuls and Emperors, the City of Cicero's orations, of Horace's idle perambulations, of Trajan's magnificent constructions, yet stood when the Gothic war began. In the squalid, battered, depopulated, cluster of ruins, over which twenty-eight years later sounded the heralds' trumpets proclaiming that the Gothic war was ended, it would have been hard for Cicero, Horace, or Trajan to recognize his home. Classical Rome we are looking on for the last time; the Rome of the Middle Ages, the city of sacred shrines and relics and pilgrimages, is about to take her place.

It is impossible not to regret that Procopius has allowed himself to say so little as to the impression made on him by Rome. He must have entered the city soon after his chief, travelling by the Appian Way, the smooth and durable construction of which moved him to great admiration. But of the city itself, except of its gates and walls in so far as these require description in order to illustrate the siege, he has very little to say. It is easy to understand his silence. Most authors shrink from writing about the obvious and well-known. It would perhaps be easier to meet with ten vivid descriptions of the Island of Skye than one of the Strand or Cheapside. But not the less is it a loss for us that that quick and accurate observer, the Herodotus of the Post-Christian age, has not recorded more of his impressions of the streets, the buildings, and the people of Rome. Let us endeavor, however, to put ourselves in his place, and to reconstruct the city, at least in general outline, as he must have beheld it.

Journeying, as it is most probable that Procopius did, by the Appian Way, he would enter Rome by the gate then called the Porta Appia, but now the Porta di San Sebastiano, one of the

finest of the still remaining entrances through the wall of Aurelian, with two noble towers, square within and semicircular without, the upper part of which, according to a careful English observer, bears traces of the restoring hand of Theodoric. Immediately after entering the city, Procopius would find himself passing under the still-preserved Arch of Drusus; and those of Trajan and Verus, spanning the intra-mural portion of the Appian Way, would before long attract his notice. This portion of the city, now so desolate and empty of inhabitants, was then probably thickly sown with the houses of the lower order of citizens.

High on his left, when he had proceeded somewhat more than half-a-mile, rose the mighty pile known to the ancients as the *Thermae Antoninianae*, and to the moderns as the Baths of Caracalla. Even in its ruins this building gives to the spectator an almost overwhelming idea of vastness and solidity. But when Procopius first saw it, the 1600 marble seats for bathers were probably all occupied, the gigantic swimming-bath was filled with clear cold water from the Marcian aqueduct, the great circular *Caldarium*, 160 feet in diameter, showed dimly through the steam the forms of hundreds of bathing Romans. Men were wrestling in the Palaestra and walking up and down in the Peristyle connected with the baths. Polished marble and deftly wrought mosaics lined the walls and covered the floors. At every turn one came upon some priceless work of art, like the Farnese Bull, the Hercules, the Flora, those statues the remnants of which, dug out of these ruins as from an unfailing quarry, have immortalized the names of Papal Nephews and made the fortunes of the museums of Bourbon Kings.

And now, as the traveler moved on, there rose more and more proudly above him the hill which has become for all later ages synonymous with regal power and magnificence, the imperial Palatine. Not as now, with only a villa and a convent standing erect upon it, the rest, grass and wild-flowers, and ruins for the most part not rising above the level of the ground, the whole hill was crowded with vast palaces, in which each successive dynasty had endeavored to outshine its predecessor in magnificence. Here, first, rose the tall but perhaps somewhat barbarous edifice with which Severus had determined to arrest the attention of his fellow-provincials from Africa travelling along the Appian Way, in order that their first question about Rome might be answered by his name. Just below it was the mysterious Septizonium, the work of the same Emperor, the porch of his palace and the counterpart of his tomb, of whose seven sets of columns, rising tier above tier, three were yet remaining only three centuries ago, when the remorseless Sixtus V transported them to the Vatican. Behind the palace of Severus, on the summit of the Palatine, were visible the immense banqueting halls of the Flavian Emperors, Vespasian and Domitian; behind them again the more modest house of Tiberius, and the labyrinth of apartments reared by the crazy Caligula.

In what condition are we to suppose that all these imperial dwellings were maintained when the troops of the Eastern Caesar came to reclaim them for their lord? Certainly not with all that untarnished magnificence which they possessed before the troubles of the third century commenced; hardly even with the show of affluence which they may still have worn when Constantius visited Rome in 357. Two centuries had elapsed since then—two centuries of more evil than good fortune—centuries in which the struggle for mere existence had left the rulers of the State little money or time to spare for repairs or decorations. But nothing, it may fairly be argued, had yet occurred to bring these massive piles into an obviously ruinous condition. If the comparison may be allowed, these dwellings on the Palatine probably presented in the state apartments that dingy appearance of faded greatness which one sees in the country-house of a noble family long resident abroad, but externally they had lost nothing of the stateliness with which they were meant to impress the mind of the beholder.

If Procopius ascended to the summit of the Palatine he may perchance have seen from thence, in the valley of the Circus Maximus, between the Palatine and Aventine hills, a chariot-

race exhibited by the General to keep the populace in good-humor. Here the Byzantine official would feel himself to be at once at home. Whether he favored the Blue or the Green faction we know not (though his animosity against Theodora makes us inclined to suspect him of sympathy with the Greens), but to whichever he belonged he could see his own faction striving for victory, and would hear, from at any rate a large portion of the crowd, the shouts with which they hailed the triumph, or the groans with which they lamented the defeat, of their favorite color.

Continuing his journey, the historian passed under the eastern summit of the Palatine, and then beneath the Arch of Constantine, that Arch which stands at this day comparatively undefaced, showing how the first Christian emperor purloined the work of the holier heathen Trajan to commemorate his own less worthy victories. Emerging from the shadow of the Arch he stood before the Flavian Amphitheatre and looked up to the immense Colossus of Nero, that statue of the Sun-god 120 feet in height, towering almost as high as the mighty edifice itself, to which it gave its best-known name, the Colosseum. It is generally felt that the Colosseum is one of those buildings which has gained by ruin. The topmost story, consisting, not of arches like the three below it, but of mere blank wall-spaces divided by pilasters, must have had when unbroken a somewhat heavy appearance; while, on the other hand, no beholder of the still perfect building could derive that impression of massive strength which we gain by looking, through the very chasms and rents in its outer shell, at the gigantic circuit of its concentric ellipses, at the massive walls radiating upwards and outwards upon which the seats of its 87,000 spectators rested. Altogether there is a pathetic majesty in the ruined Colosseum which can hardly have belonged to it in its days of prosperity, and, as one is almost inclined to say, of vulgar self-assertion.

But if this be true of the Colosseum itself, it is not true of the surrounding objects. The great Colossus has already been referred to. It is now represented only by a shapeless and unsightly heap of stones which once formed part of its pedestal. The ugly conical mass of brickwork near the same spot, and known as the Meta Sudans, was a beautiful upspringing fountain thirty or forty feet high when Procopius passed that way.

Eastwards, on the Oppian hill, stretched the long line of the *Thermae Titi*, the baths reared by Titus above the vast ruins of the Golden House of Nero. Immediately in front of the Colosseum (on the north-west) was the double temple reared by Hadrian in honor of Venus and Rome, perhaps one of the most beautiful edifices in the whole enclosure of the city. It was composed of two temples placed back to back. In one was the statue of Venus the Prosperous (*Venus Felix*), looking towards the Colosseum, in the other *Roma Eterna* sat gazing towards her own Capitol. In the curvilinear pediment of the latter was a frieze, according to the opinion of some archaeologists representing Mars caressing *Rhea Sylvia*, and the wolf suckling their heroic offspring. Around the whole structure ran a low colonnade containing four hundred pillars.

The famous Sacred Way, where once Horace loitered, a well-marked street, not as now a mere track through the midst of desolation, led the historian up to the marble arch of Titus. Here he doubtless looked, as we may yet look, upon the representation of the seven-branched candlestick and the other spoils of Jerusalem, the strange story of whose wanderings he has himself recorded for us in his history of the Vandalic War.

Descending the slope of the *Via Sacra*, and having on his right the lofty Basilica of Constantine, whose gigantic arches (long but erroneously called the Temple of Peace) stand on their hill over against the Palatine, and seem to assert a predominance over its yet remaining ruins, Procopius now with each downward step saw the glories of the Roman Forum more fully revealed. On his left the temple of the Great Twin Brethren, three of whose graceful Corinthian columns still survive, a well-known object to all visitors to the Forum. Hard by, the fountain

from which the celestial horsemen gave their horses to drink after the battle of Lake Regillus. Further on, the long colonnades of the Basilica of Julius, four law-courts under the same roof. On his right, the tall columns of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina, perhaps already supporting the roof of a Christian shrine, though not the unsightly edifice which at present clings to and defaces them; the chapel of the great Julius, the magnificent Basilica of Emilius; and, lastly, those two venerable objects, centers for so many ages of all the political life of Rome, the Senate-house and the Rostra. The Senate was still a living body, though its limbs had long been shaken by the palsies of a timid old age; but the days when impassioned orators thundered to the Roman people from the lofty Rostra had long passed away. Yet we may be permitted to conjecture that Procopius, with that awe-struck admiration which he had for "the Romans of old time" gazed upon those weatherworn trophies of the sea and mused on the strange contradictoriness of Fate, which had used all the harangues of those impetuous orators as instruments to fashion the serene and silent despotism of Justinian.

At the end of the Forum, with an embarrassment of wealth which perplexes us even in their ruins, rise the Arch of Septimius Severus, the Temple of Concord, the Temple of Vespasian, the ill-restored Temple of Saturn. Between them penetrated the Clivus Capitolinus, up which once slowly mounted the car of many a triumphing general. Behind all stretched the magnificent background of the Capitoline Hill, on the left-hand summit of which stood the superb mass of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, robbed by Gaiseric of half its golden tiles, but still resplendent under the western sun. Then came the saddle-shaped depression faced by the long Tabularium: and then the right-hand summit of the Capitoline, crowned by the Temple of Juno Moneta.

We have supposed our historian to deviate a little from the straight path in order to explore to the uttermost the buildings of the Republican Forum; but as his business lies at the northern extremity of the city, he must retrace a few of his steps and avail himself of the line of communication between the Via Sacra and the Via Flaminia which was opened up by the beneficent despotism of the Emperors. That is to say, he must leave the Forum of the Republic and traverse the long line of the spacious and well-planned Fora of the Caesars. In no part is the contrast between ancient and modern Rome more humiliating than here. In our day, a complex of mean and irregular streets almost entirely destitute of classical interest or mediaeval picturesqueness, fills up the interval between the Capitoline and the Quirinal hills. The deeply cut entablature of the Temple of Minerva resting upon the two half-buried 'Colonnacce' in front of the baker's shop, the three pillars of the Temple of Mars Ultor, the great feudal fortress of the Tor de Conti, and that most precious historical monument the Column of Trajan, alone redeem this region from utter wearisomeness. But this space, now so crowded and so irregular, was once the finest bit of architectural landscape-gardening in Rome. The Forum of Vespasian, the Forum of Nerva, the Forum of Augustus, the Forum of Julius, the Forum of Trajan, a series of magnificent squares and arcades, opening one into the other, occupying a space some 600 yards long by 100 wide and terminating in the mighty granite pillars of the Temple of Trajan, produced on the mind of the beholder the same kind of effect, but on a far grander scale, which is wrought by Trafalgar Square in London or the Place de la Concorde in Paris. Let not the modern traveler, who, passing from the Corso to the Colosseum, is accosted by his driver with the glibly uttered words 'Foro Trajano' suppose that the little oblong space, with a few pillar-bases which he beholds at the foot of the memorable Column, is indeed even in ruin the entire Forum of the greatest of the Emperors. The column is Trajan's column doubtless, though

‘Apostolic statues climb
The imperial urn whose ashes slept sublime

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars’.

But the so-called 'Foro Trajano' is only a small transverse section of one member of the Trajanic series, the Basilica Ulpia. The column, as is known, measured the height of earth which had to be dug away from a spur of the Capitoline hill in order to form the Forum. Between it and the Basilica Ulpia rose the two celebrated libraries of Greek and Latin authors, and between these two buildings stood once, and probably yet stood in the days of Procopius, that everlasting statue of brass which by the Senate's orders was erected in honor of Sidonius, Poet-laureate and son-in-law of an Emperor. In those Libraries Procopius, in the intervals of the business and peril of the siege, may often have wandered in order to increase his acquaintance with the doings of the Romans of old. What treasures of knowledge, now for ever lost to the world, were still enshrined in those apartments! There all the rays of classical Art and Science were gathered into a focus. More important perhaps for us, all that the Greeks and Romans knew (and it was not a little, though carelessly recorded) concerning the Oriental civilization which preceded theirs, and concerning the Teutonic barbarism which encompassed it, was still contained in those magnificent literary collections. There was the Chaldean history of Berosus, there were the authentic Egyptian king-lists of Manetho, there was Livy's story of the last days of the Republic and the first days of the Empire, there was Tacitus's full history of the conquest of Britain, all that Ammianus could tell about the troubles of the third century and the conversion of Constantine, all that Cassiodorus had written about the royal Amals and the dim original of the Goths. All this perished, apparently in those twenty years of desolating war which now lie before us. It may be doubted whether for us the loss of the *Bibliothecae Ulpiae* is not even more to be regretted than that of the Library of Alexandria.

Ammianus tells us that when the Emperor Constantius visited Rome he gazed with admiration on the Capitol, the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the Theatre of Pompey, but still with admiration which could express itself in words. "But when", says the historian, "he came to the Forum of Trajan, that structure unique in all the world, and, as I cannot but think, marvelous in the eyes of the Divinity himself, he beheld with silent amazement those gigantic interfacings of stones which it is past the power of speech to describe, and which no mortal must in future hope to imitate. Hopeless of ever attempting any such work himself, he would only look at the horse of Trajan, placed in the middle of the vestibule and bearing the statue of the Emperor. 'That', said Constantius, 'I can imitate, and I will'. Hormisdas, a royal refugee from the court of Persia, replied, with his nation's quickness of repartee: 'But first, O Emperor, if you can do so, order a stable to be built as fair as that before us, that your horse may have as fine an exercising ground as the one we are now looking upon'."

Emerging from the imperial Fora, Procopius would now enter upon the Via Lata, broad as its name denotes, one of the longest streets, if not the longest, in Rome, and very nearly corresponding to the modern Corso. The Subura, which lay a little to the east of the Forum of Augustus, was once at any rate one of the most thickly peopled districts of Rome, and we shall perhaps not be wrong in assuming that in the regions east of the Via Lata, upon the Quirinal, Viminal, and Esquiline Hills, where the tall buildings of the Fourth Rome, the Rome of Victor Emmanuel and United Italy, are now arising, the humbler classes of the Second or Imperial Rome had chiefly fixed their abodes.

On the left side of the Via Lata, where the Third or Papal Rome has spun its web of streets thickest, all or nearly all was yet given up to pleasure. This was the true West End of Rome, the region in which her parks and theatres were chiefly placed. Here were the great open spaces of the Campus Martius and Campus Flaminius; here two racecourses, those of Flaminius and Domitian; here the great theatres of Pompey, of Balbus, and of Marcellus, and

the Porticoes of the Argonauts and of Octavia. Altogether it was a region devoted to pleasure and idleness by the side of the tawny Tiber, and most unlike the closely-built and somewhat dingy quarters of the city which now occupy it.

As Procopius moved along the straight course of the Via Lata his eye would probably be caught by the airy dome of the Pantheon of Agrippa, hovering over the buildings on his left. He would thread the Arch of Claudius, would stand at the foot of the Column of Marcus Aurelius, and then pass beneath that Emperors Arch of Triumph. Two mighty sepulchers could then arrest his attention: the Tomb of Hadrian seeming by its massive bulk almost close at hand, though on the other bank of the Tiber; and the Mausoleum of Augustus rising immediately on his left, a rotunda of white marble below, a green and shady pleasance above, recalling, by its wonderful admixture of Nature and Art, the far-famed Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

And now at length his never-to-be-forgotten first view of Rome was drawing to a close. The soon-sinking sun of late autumn warned him, perchance, to quicken his pace. He bore off to the right: by some steep steps where the receivers of the public alimony were wont to cluster, he climbed the high garden-decked Pincian. He entered the palace, bowed low before Belisarius, lower yet before the imperious Antonina, and received the General's orders as to the share of work that he was to undertake in connection with the provisionment of the city. Such is an account, imaginary indeed, but not improbable, of the circumstances in which the soldier-secretary first entered and first beheld Rome reunited to the Roman Empire.

It remains for us briefly to notice the rising Christian importance of the Christian buildings of Rome, of though we will here dispense with the imaginary companionship of Procopius, whose somewhat skeptical temper, well acquainted with the subjects in dispute among Christians, but determined to say as little as possible about them, holding it to be proof of a madman's folly to enquire into the nature of God, would make him an uncongenial guest at the sacred shrines. Of the five great patriarchal churches of Rome, three were beyond the walls of the city, and one was on its extreme verge. The last, and at the period that we have now reached still the foremost in dignity, is St. John Lateran, or the Basilica of Constantine, the so-called Mother-Church of Christendom. It stands near the Asinarian Gate, on the Property which Fausta, the unhappy wife of Constantine, inherited from her father Maximian, and which had once belonged to the senatorial family of the Laterani; and it formed the subject of that real and considerable donation of the first Christian Emperor to the Bishops of Rome which later ages distorted into a quasi-feudal investiture of the Imperial City.

Upon the Vatican Hill, outside the walls of St. Peters, Aurelian, looking down upon the Tiber and the Tomb of Hadrian, rose the five long aisles, the semicircular apse, and the nearly square entrance-Atrium of the Basilica of St. Peter. The region immediately surrounding it was perhaps still called the Gardens of Nero. It is certain that the reason for placing the Basilica on that spot was that there was the traditional site of the martyrdom of the Apostle, as well as of the sufferings of the nameless Christian crowd who, dressed in cloaks covered with pitch and set on fire, served as living torches to light that throned Satan to his revels and his chariot-races on the Vatican-mount.

Outside the gate of Ostia, and also near the traditional scene of the martyrdom of the Apostle to whom it was dedicated, stood the noble Basilica of St. Paul. This edifice, commenced by Theodosius, completed by Honorius, and having received the finishing touches to its decorations at the hand of Placidia under the guidance of Pope Leo, subsisted with but little change to the days of our fathers. The lamentable fire of 1823, by which the greater part of it was destroyed, took from us the most interesting relic of Christian Imperial Rome. Happily the restoration, though it cannot give us back the undiminished interest of the earlier building, has been carried on with admirable fidelity to the original design.

This cannot be said of the Liberian Basilica, the great church now known as S. Maria Maggiore, which, standing high on the Esquiline Hill, looked down westwards on the crowded Subura, and northwards towards the palatial Baths of Diocletian. The outside of the building has sustained the extremity of insult and wrong at the hands of the tasteless pseudo-classical restorers of the eighteenth century; and the inside, though not absolutely ruined by them, though its mosaics are still visible and much of its long colonnade still remains, shows too plainly how unsafe were the treasures of Christian antiquity in the hands of the conceited architects of the Renaissance.

The last of the great Basilicas, that of the martyred S. Lawrence, one mile outside the Tiburtine Gate, has suffered less ravage at the hands of restorers. It was in the thirteenth century singularly re-arranged and transformed, its apse being pulled down and turned into a nave, and its original vestibule being turned into a choir: still we have substantially before us the same church which was surrounded by the Gothic armies in their siege of Rome. With that blending of the old and of the very new which at once charms and bewilders the visitor to Rome, we have here again an inscription recording the work of 'the pious mind of Placidia' under the guidance of Attila's Pope Leo, and in the crypt the just erected tomb of Pio Nono. The latter is so placed as to command a view of the slab of marble dyed red with the blood of the deacon Laurentius, martyr for the faith under the Emperor Claudius Gothicus. This marble slab was a favorite relic with the late Pontiff.

Besides these live great patriarchal churches there were twenty-eight parish churches, known by the technical name of Tituli, from which the Cardinal-presbyters of a later age took their ecclesiastical designations. Some of these which have been preserved to this day are more interesting than the churches of greater dignity, having by reason of their comparative insignificance escaped the hand of the Renaissance destroyer.

The main features, which were evidently common to all the Christian edifices of Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries, were (1) a long line of columns, not by any means always uniform or of the same order of architecture, and generally taken from the outside of some heathen temple; (2) a semicircular apse at the eastern end, in which the bishop or presbyter sat surrounded by his inferior clergy, as the Roman magistrate in the original Basilica sat surrounded by the various members of his 'officium'; (3) an arch in front of the apse, the idea of which was probably borrowed from the triumphal arches of the Emperors; (4) upon the arch, upon the apse, on the flat wall-space above the arches, in fact wherever they could conveniently be introduced, a blaze of bright mosaics, like those still preserved to us at Ravenna and in a very few of these Roman churches. The subjects represented are the Savior, the symbols of the four Evangelists, the twelve Apostles under the guise of sheep, the mystic cities Jerusalem and Bethlehem, the Jordan and the four rivers of Paradise, and other emblems of the same character.

The fact that the columns of these churches were as a rule taken from heathen temples must of course qualify to some extent the statement that the splendor of the city was undiminished when Procopius entered it. Temples, not merely abandoned to silence and solitude, but rudely stripped of their pillared magnificence, must in many places have offended the eye of a beholder more sensitive to beauty than to religious enthusiasm. Still upon the whole, and with this abatement, we may repeat our proposition that it was the stately Rome of Consuls and Emperors which men then looked upon, and which after the middle of the sixth century they never beheld again.

'Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when
Rome was free.'

CHAPTER V.

THE LONG SIEGE BEGUN.

Vacillation and feebleness of purpose marked the counsels of Witigis, as the consequences of the fatal error which he had committed in abandoning Rome made themselves manifest to his mind. At first his chief desire was to wait till his forces should be strengthened by the return of Marcias with the considerable army which he had under his command for the defence of Gothic Gaul against the Franks. Then came tidings which showed that Belisarius felt his hold of Rome so secure that he might venture onwards into the Tuscan province. Bessas was sent to Narni, about fifty miles from Rome, the first strong position on the Flaminian Way. The inhabitants being well affected to the imperial cause, he occupied this post without difficulty. Constantine, the rival of Bessas in martial glory, was sent with some of the body guards of Belisarius, and other troops, among whom figured several Huns, in order to seize some positions yet further from the city. Spoleto, twenty-five miles further from Rome on the Flaminian Way, was occupied by a garrison. Etrurian Perugia on her lofty hill-top, some forty miles further north than Spoleto, but lying a little off the great Flaminian highway, was next taken possession of, and here Constantine fixed his headquarters. The troops which Witigis dispatched against Perugia were defeated, and their generals were sent as prisoners to Rome.

The tidings of these reverses roused Witigis to more vigorous action; but, strangely enough, after tarrying so long in order to be joined by the recalled troops from Gaul, he must now weaken himself still further by sending a division into Dalmatia. It is true that of the two generals dispatched on this errand, one, Asinarius, was sent round the head of the Adriatic Gulf, to gather round his standard the barbarians who dwelt in the districts which we now call Carniola and Croatia. But the other, Uligisal, who sailed straight to Dalmatia, must have taken with him some troops who could be ill-spared from the defence of Italy. It is not necessary to trouble the reader with the details of these ill-advised, and in the end resultless, operations on the east of the Adriatic. The Goths met with reverses, but succeeded for some time in closely investing Salona both by sea and land. The Dalmatian capital, however, fell not; and after a siege of uncertain duration, the Gothic soldiers probably recrossed the Adriatic to take part in the more urgent work of resisting Belisarius in Italy.

About this time word was brought to the Gothic King that the citizens of Rome viewed with impatience the presence and the exactions of the imperial army. That there was some foundation of truth for this statement will appear by a reference to the last chapter; but it was evidently much exaggerated, and it by no means followed that the citizens who grumbled the most bitterly at the general's preparations for the siege would lift a finger for the surrender of the city to the justly enraged Gothic army. However, the tidings kindled immediately a flame of hope in the feebly forecasting soul of Witigis: and now he, who had wasted precious months in purposeless inaction, thought every day an age till he had recovered possession of the abandoned city. With the whole armed nation of the Goths, (except the division that had been ordered to Dalmatia) he marched southwards in hot haste along the Flaminian Way. The numbers of his army amounted, if we trust the estimate of Procopius, to 150,000 men. The historian evidently uses round numbers, and has probably exaggerated the size of the besieging host in order to increase the fame of Belisarius; but there can be no doubt that Witigis was followed by a very large army, outnumbering many times over the little band of the

Imperialists. The proportions of infantry and cavalry are not stated, but we are told that the greater number, both of the horses and men, were completely encased in defensive armor.

Once started on his march, Witigis was tormented by a fond fear that Belisarius would escape him, and was earnest in his prayers by night and by day that he might behold the walls of Rome while yet the Imperial forces stood behind them. On the journey the army fell in with a priest who had just quitted the city, and who was brought with shouts to the King's tent. "Is Belisarius yet in Rome?" asked Witigis, breathless with anxiety. "Ay, and likely to remain there", was the answer of the priest, who had a better idea of the state of the game than his questioner.

Still, the Imperial general was for a moment perplexed by the tidings that so vast a host was rolling on towards him. It was not for his own position that he was in fear, but he felt that he could scarcely hold the latest conquests in Tuscany in the face of such an army. After some anxious deliberation he ordered Constantine and Bessas to garrison three towns only, and then to fall back on Borne. The three towns were Spoleto, Perugia, and Narni, all situated on the top of high hills, and therefore easily defended. Narni especially, built on

'that grey crag where girt with towers
The fortress of Nequinum lowers
O'er the pale waves of Nar,'

and commanding the entrance to a deep and picturesque gorge spanned by the stately bridge of Augustus (one of whose arches still remains), struck the mind of the historian by the grand inaccessibility of its position. Bessas, who lingered somewhat over the execution of the orders of his chief, had the excitement of a successful skirmish with the vanguard of the Gothic army before he retired from this fortress to Rome.

Notwithstanding the fact that these strongholds were in the possession of the enemy, Witigis appears to have pushed on by the Flaminian Way which winds at their feet; and was soon standing with his 150,000 men at the Etrurian end of the Milvian Bridge over the Tiber, two miles from Rome. This bridge, so well-known under its modern name of Ponte Molle to the fashionable loungers in Rome, is in its present shape the handiwork of Papal architects; but the foundations of the piers are ancient, and the general appearance of the six arches with which it spans the stream is not probably very different from that which it wore in the days of Belisarius. A bridge whose name had often been in the mouths of the Roman people in stirring times, in the crises of Punic wars and Catilinarian conspiracies, it had earned yet greater fame two centuries ago (A.D. 312) by the bloody battle fought under its parapets between the soldiers of Constantine and those of Maxentius, a battle the result of which ensured the triumph of Christianity through the whole Roman world, and which has been for this reason commemorated by Raffaele and Romano with splendid strength in the Stanze of the Vatican.

Expecting that the Goths would attempt to cross the river here, and anxious to retard their progress, though without hope of finally preventing them from reaching the eastern bank of the river, Belisarius had erected a fortress on the Etrurian bank, and decided to pitch his camp close to the stream on the Latian side, in order to overawe the barbarians by this show of confidence. And, indeed, the ardor of the Goths was not a little chilled when they saw the castle above, and the tawny river before them. They bivouacked between Monte Mario and the Tiber for the night, postponing till the morrow the assault on the bridge-fort. The night, however, brought gloomy forebodings to other hearts than theirs. It seemed to the garrison impossible that the bridge could be effectually defended against that vast horde of men whose camp-fires filled the plain. Twenty-two soldiers of the Roman army, themselves of barbarian origin, horsemen in the troop of Innocentius, went over to the foes and informed them of the state of discouragement which prevailed in the garrison. As night wore on, the rest of the men on duty in the bridge-fort deserted their post. They did not dare to show themselves in Rome,

but slunk away to Campania. When day dawned the Goths marched without difficulty through the empty guard-house, across the undefended bridge, and now they stood on the eastern bank of the Tiber with no natural obstacle between them and Rome.

Little dreaming of the cowardice of the garrison, Belisarius, who thought the barbarians were still on the other side of the river, sent 1000 picked horsemen to the bridge-end to reconnoiter for a suitable camping-ground. They fell in with a party of the Gothic horsemen who had just crossed the bridge, and an equestrian battle followed. Then, says the historian, Belisarius forgot for a moment the discretion which ought to be manifested by a general, and by exposing himself like a common soldier brought the Imperial cause into the extremest peril. Springing upon his charger he hurried to the place whence the clash of arms was heard, and was soon in the thickest of the fight. His horse, a noble creature, which did everything that a horse could do to carry its rider harmless through the fray, was well known to all the army. Dark-roan, with a white star upon its forehead, it was called by the Greeks Phalius, and by the barbarians in the army Balan. The deserters knew the steed and his rider, and strove to direct the weapons of the Goths against them. "Balan! Balan! Aim for the horse with the white star" was their eager exclamation. The cry was caught up by the Goths, scarce one of whom understood its meaning. But they knew that the horse with the white star must carry some personage of importance: and "Balan! Balan!" resounded from a thousand Gothic throats through the confused roar of the battle. All their bravest thronged to the place, some with lances, some with swords, striving to transfix or to hew down the horse and his rider. To right, to left, Belisarius dealt his swashing blows. The best men of his bodyguard gathered round him, some protecting his body and that of his horse with their shields, others thrusting back the onset of the barbarians by impetuous counter-charges. It was a true Homeric battle, in which all that was most martial in the two armies was drawn to a single point, and on one group of fighting men rested the whole fortune of the day. At length Roman arms and Roman discipline prevailed. After a thousand Gothic warriors of the foremost rank and many of the bravest men of the Roman general's household had fallen, the barbarians fled to their camp, and Belisarius emerged absolutely unwounded from the fray.

When the fugitives reached the Gothic camp their comrades poured out in support of them. The Romans retreated to a hill near at hand, and here again a battle of cavalry took place, in which the deeds of greatest daring were wrought by a certain Valentine, who served in the humble capacity of groom to the son-in-law of Belisarius. Alone the brave menial charged an advancing squadron of the Goths, and rescued his comrades from imminent peril. The advance of the barbarians was, however, too strong to be resisted, and at length the whole Roman army, with Belisarius at their head, were in full flight to the walls of the city. They reached the Pincian Gate, which, from that memorable day, was long afterwards known by the name of the Gate of Belisarius. Down the sides of the fosse swarmed the crowd of fugitives, but only to find to their despair the folding doors of the Porta Pinciana obstinately closed against them. The hoarse voice of Belisarius was heard, loudly and with doted threats calling to the sentinels to open the gate, but in vain. In that face, all covered with sweat, and dust and gore, they did not recognize, now that twilight was coming on, the countenance of the general whom they had so often seen serene in his hours of triumph: his voice they could not distinguish through the din of the refluent tide of war. Above all, the terrible rumor had reached their ears, brought by the first fugitives from the field, that Belisarius, after performing prodigies of valor, had been left dead upon the plain. This thought most of all unnerved them. They were left, it seemed, without a general and without a plan, and as they stooped forward from the round towers by the gate, to see by the fading light how went the fortune of the fight, they felt themselves to be doomed men whose only chance of safety lay in keeping fast the doors by which, if opened, Goth and Roman would enter together.

This was the state of affairs, the Roman soldiers huddled together under the wall, so close to one the another that they could hardly move, their comrades above refusing to open the gates, the Goths just preparing to rush down the fosse and make an exterminating charge, when the lost battle was retrieved by the wise rashness of Belisarius. Collecting his men into a small but orderly army he faced round and made a vigorous charge upon the pursuing Goths. Already thrown into disorder by the ardor of their pursuit, unable by the fading light to discern the small number of their foes, and naturally concluding that a new army was issuing from the gates of Rome to attack them, the barbarians turned and fled. Belisarius wisely pursued them but a short distance, reformed his ranks, and marched back in good order to the gate, where he had now no difficulty in obtaining an entrance. Thus did the battle, which had commenced at dawn and lasted till dark, end after all not disastrously for the Imperial troops. By universal consent the praise of highest daring on that day was awarded to two men, to Belisarius on the side of the Romans, and on that of the barbarians to a standard-bearer named Visandus. The latter was conspicuous in the thickest of the fight round Belisarius and the dark-roan steed, and it was not till he had received his thirteenth wound that he ceased from the combat. His victorious comrades saw and passed on from what they deemed to be the corpse of their champion; but three days after, when they came at their leisure to bury their dead, a soldier thought saw signs of life in the body of Visandus and implored him to speak. Hunger and a raging thirst prevented him from doing more than make one gasping request for water. When that was brought him consciousness fully returned, and he was able to be carried into the camp. He lived after this many years, having achieved great glory among his countrymen by his prowess and his narrow escape from death.

For Belisarius, not even yet were the labors and anxieties of this long day ended. He mustered the soldiers and the greater part of the citizens upon the walls, and ordered them to kindle frequent fires along their circuit and to watch the whole night through. Then he went round the walls himself, arranging who was to be responsible for the defence of each portion, and especially which generals were to be on guard at each of the gates. While he was thus engaged, a messenger came in breathless haste from the Praenestine Gate at the south-east of the city to say that Bessas, who was commanding there, had learned that the enemy were pouring in by the Gate of St Pancratius on the other side of the Tiber. Hearing this, the officers round him besought him to save himself and the army by marching out at some other gate. Unshaken by these disastrous tidings, Belisarius calmly said that he did not believe the report. A horseman, dispatched with all speed to the Trastevere, returned with the welcome news that the enemy had not been seen in that part of the city. Belisarius improved the opportunity by issuing a general order that under no circumstances, not even if he heard that the Goths were inside the walls, was the officer entrusted with the defence of one gate to leave it in order to carry assistance to another. Each one was to attend to his own allotted portion of work and leave the care of the general defence to the commander-in-chief.

The earnest work of the defence was interrupted by the comedy of a harangue from a Gothic chief named Wacis, who, by order of Witigis, drew near to the walls. With much vehemence he inveighed against the faithlessness of the Romans, who had betrayed their brave Gothic defenders and handed themselves over, instead, to the guardianship of a company of Greeks, men who had hitherto never been heard of in Italy except as play-actors, mimics, or vagabond sailors. Belisarius bade the men on the walls to treat this tirade with silent contempt: and in truth, after the deeds of that day, to revive the taunts which had passed current for centuries against Grecian effeminacy was an impertinence which refuted itself. None the less, however, did the Roman citizens marvel at and secretly condemn the calm confidence of success, the absolute contempt for his foe which was displayed on this occasion by Belisarius, so lately a fugitive from the Gothic sword. He understood the rules of the game, however,

better than they, and having repaired the error of the morning, knew that no second opportunity of the same kind would be afforded by him to the enemy.

And now, at last, when the night was already far advanced, was the general, who had fasted from early morning, prevailed on by his wife and friends to take some care for the refreshment of his body, hastily snatching a simple meal.

This memorable day was the beginning of the First Siege of Rome by the Ostrogoths, the longest and one of the deadliest that the Eternal City has ever endured. It began in the early days of March 537, and was not to end till a year and nine days later in the March of 538. When morning dawned, the Goths, who entertained no doubt of an early success against so large and helpless a city, proceeded to entrench themselves in seven camps, six on the eastern and one on the western side of the Tiber. They did not thus accomplish a perfect blockade of the city, but they did obstruct, in a tolerably effectual manner, eight out of its fourteen gates. As frequent reference in the course of this history will be made to one or other of these gates, it will be well to give a list of them here, with their ancient and modern names, printing those that were obstructed by the Goths in italics.

Ancient Name.	Modern Name.	No. of Towers.
<i>East bank of the Tiber :</i>		
1. Porta Flaminia	P. del Popolo	51
2. Porta Solaria	P. Salara.	10
3. Porta Nomentana near to	P. Pia.	57
4. Porta Tiburtina	P. San Lorenzo.	19
5. Porta Labicana		
6. Porta Praenestina)	P. Maggiore	26
7. Porta Asinaria near to	P. San Giovanni	20
8. Porta Metrovia (or Metronia)	Closed.	20
9. Porta Latina	Closed.	12
10. Porta Appia	P. San Sebastiano.	49
11. Porta Ostiensis	P. San Paolo.	49, 35 to the Tiber.
<i>West bank of the Tiber:</i>		
12. Porta Portuensis, near to	P. Portese.	29.
13. Porta Aurela1 (or Sancti Pancratii)	P. SanPancrazio.	24 to the Tiber
14. Porta Cornelia (or Sancti Petri) Destroyed (opposite Ponte S. Angelo).		16

		381.

To give some idea of the distance of one gate from another the number of square towers between each pair of gates is added on the authority of the Pilgrim of Einsiedeln. The intervals between the towers varied from 100 to 300 and even 400 feet, the wider spaces being chiefly found on the west side of the Tiber.

Between the Flaminian and the Salarian gates stood the somewhat smaller Porta Pinciana, now closed, which was the scene of some hot encounters during the siege. It is possible that Procopius may have reckoned the Porta Pinciana as one of the fourteen gates belonging to the whole circuit of the walls, and one of the six gates on the eastern side of the Tiber that were blocked by the enemy. In that case we must treat the Labicana and Praenestina as one gate, which their close proximity to one another justifies us in doing. It seems more probable, however, that Procopius, who is generally very careful to denote the Pincian by the term gate-

let, and who informs us that there were fourteen gates “besides certain gate-lets” did not mean to reckon the Pincian among the great gates of Rome.

The total circuit of the walls of Aurelian and Honorius was about twelve miles. The space blockaded by the Goths amounted probably to tent of the about two-thirds of this circumference. The camps of the barbarians were works of some solidity. Deep fosses were dug around them: the earth dug out of the fosse was piled on its inner face so as to make a high rampart, and a fence of sharp stakes was inserted therein. Altogether, as Procopius says, these Gothic camps lacked none of the defenses of a regular castle. A careful observer (Mr. Parker), who has had the advantage of several years’ residence in Rome, considers that the traces of all these camps are still visible. Without venturing to pronounce an opinion on a question requiring such minute local knowledge, it will not be amiss to place before the reader the result of his investigations. In any event the Gothic camps must have been near the sites which he has assigned to them.

The first camp was placed within a stone’s throw of the Porta Flaminia (to the north-east), in the grounds which formerly belonged to the villa of the Domitii. This camp was obviously required in order to obstruct the great northern road of Rome and to threaten the gate leading to it.

The second, probably the largest and most important of all, was erected in what are now the gardens of the Villa Borghese. The woods and shady coverts of this, which is one of the most beautiful of the parks surrounding the walls of Rome, make it now very difficult to get a clear view of the ground and to reconstruct in imagination the scene of so many terrible encounters. Still it is possible to behold the quickly-rising ground on which the camp was placed. The raised platform for the tents to stand upon (one of these tents was probably the royal pavilion of Witigis) and the cliffs around it are (says Mr. Parker) very visible. Clearly seen from it were doubtless the high walls of the city, the Pincian gate-let, and the Pincian gardens surrounding the palace in which Belisarius dwelt.

The third camp, concealed from view by modern walls, says Parker, lay on the left hand of th Via Nomentana, about half-way (or rather less) to the ancient church of St. Agnes outside the walls.

Rounding the sharp projecting angle of the Castra Praetoria we come to two camps, fourth and fifth, one on the north and one on the south of the Via Tiburtina. The fifth, says Parker, is very near to the great church and burial-ground of St. Laurence outside the walls, from which the cliffs of it are distinctly seen. The fourth is apparently placed by him only about a couple of hundred yards away near the Villa Santo Spirito. It may perhaps be doubted whether Parker is right in putting these two camps so near to one another.

The sixth, and last on this side of the river, is placed about half-a-mile from the south-eastern corner of the walls along the Via Praenestina.

On the other side of the Tiber the Goths built a camp to assure their hold upon the Milvian Bridge and to threaten the gates of St. Peter and St. Pancratius. We are told that it was in the Campus Neronis. It must have been therefore not far from where the Vatican palace now stands: but after the vast changes which the Popes, from the fifteenth century onwards, have made in that region, it would be futile now to look for its remains. Marcias, who had by this time arrived with the troops from Gaul, took the command of this trans-Tiberine camp. A Gothic officer was placed in charge of each of the other camps, Witigis having a general oversight of all on the east of the Tiber and the particular oversight of one, which, as has been before said, was probably that in the Borghese gardens.

On the Roman side Belisarius himself took the command of the portion of the wall between the Pincian gate-let and the Salarian gate; the part which was considered least secure, and where the Roman opportunities for a sally were the most inviting. The Praenestine Gate

(Maggiore) was assigned to Bessas, the Flaminia (P. del Popolo) to Constantine. The last-named gate was blocked up with large stones (perhaps taken from the old wall of King Servius), so that it might not be possible for traitors to open it to the enemy. For, on account of the close proximity of the first Gothic camp, a surprise at this gate was considered more probable than at any other.

The building of the seven camps of the barbarians was a temporary expedient, and when the war was over the traces of them, except for the eye of an archaeologist, soon passed away. Not so, however, with the next operation resorted to by the Goths, which may be said to have influenced the social life of Rome, and through Rome the social life of the kingdoms of Western Europe, throughout the ten centuries which we call the Middle Ages. This operation was the cutting of the Aqueducts. A deed of such far-reaching importance requires to be treated of in a chapter by itself; nor will the reader possibly object to turn for a little space from the tale of barbarous battle to the story of the wise forethought of the Romans of ancient days the builders of the mighty water-courses which fed the Eternal City.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CUTTING OF THE AQUEDUCTS.

The least observant visitor to Rome is awed and impressed by the ruins of the Aqueducts. As he stands on the top of the Colosseum, or as he is carried swiftly past them on the railway to Naples, he sees their long arcades stretching away in endless perspective across the monotonous Campagna, and, ignorant perhaps of the valuable service which some of them yet render to the water-supply of Rome, he is only touched and saddened by the sight of so much wasted labor, by the ever-recurring thought of the nothingness of man. But when he comes to enquire a little more closely into the history of these wonderful structures, he finds, not only that the ignorance of scientific principles to which it was once the fashion to attribute their origin, did not exist; not only that the Popes of later days have succeeded in restoring a few of them so as to make them practically useful in quenching the thirst of the modern Roman: but also that the aqueducts have a curious and interesting history of their own which admirably illustrates the life and progress of the great Republic. As her fortunes mounted, so the arches rose, higher and higher. As her dominion extended, so those mighty filaments stretched further and further up into the hills. Like a hand upon the clock-face of Empire was the ever-rising level of the water-supply of Rome.

For four hundred and forty-two years, that is during the whole period of the Kings and for the Rome before the first two centuries of the Republic, the Romans were satisfied with such water as they obtain from the tawny Tiber; from the wells, of which there was a considerable number; from the unspringing fountains, many of which were the objects of a simple religious worship; and from the cisterns in which they collected the not very abundant rain-fall.

At length, in the year 312 *BC*, when the Second Samnite War was verging towards its successful conclusion, the great Censor Appius Claudius bestowed upon Rome her first great road and her first aqueduct, both known through all after ages by his name. He went for his water-supply seven miles along the road to Palestrina, to a spot now called La Rustica, about half way between Rome and the hills, and hence, by a circuitous underground channel more than eleven miles long, he brought the water to the city. Not till it got to the Porta Capena, one of the old gates of the city on its southern side, did it emerge into the light of day, and then it was carried along arches only for the space of sixty paces. Thus, according to our modern use of the term, it might be considered as rather a conduit than an aqueduct. It has been remarked upon as an interesting fact that Appius Claudius, the first Roman author in verse and prose, the first considerable student of Greek literature, was also the first statesman to take thought for the water-supply of Rome. And further, that he whose censorship was marked by a singular coalition between the haughtiest of the aristocracy and the lowest of the commons, and who was suspected of aiming at the tyranny by the aid of the latter class, carried the water to that which was not only physically but socially one of the lowest quarters of Rome, the humble dwellings between the Aventine and the Caelian hills.

Forty years later, a much bolder enterprise in hydraulics was successfully attempted, when the stream afterwards known as the *Anio Vetus* was brought into the city by a course of 43 miles, at a level of 147 feet above the sea, or nearly 100 feet higher than the Aqua Appia. The last public act of the blind old Appius Claudius (the builder of the first aqueduct) had been to adjure the Roman Senate to listen to no proposals of peace from King Pyrrhus so long as a

single Epirote soldier remained on the soil of Italy. Eight years later, when the war with Pyrrhus had been triumphantly concluded, Manius Curius, the hero of that war, signalized his censorship by beginning to build the second aqueduct, the spoils won in battle from the King of Epirus furnishing the pay of the workmen engaged in the operation. He died before the work was finished, and the glory of completing it belonged to Fulvius Flaccus, created with him *duumvir* for bringing the water to Rome .

This time the hydraulic engineers went further afield for the source of their supply. They looked across the Campagna to the dim hills of Tivoli—

‘To the green steeps whence Anio leaps
In sheets of snow-white foam’

and daringly determined to bring the river Anio himself, or at least a considerable portion of his waters, to Rome. At a point about ten miles above Tivoli, near the mountain of S. Cosimato, the river was tapped. The water which was drawn from it was carried through tunnels in the rock, and by a generally subterranean course, till, after a journey as before stated of forty-three miles, it entered Rome just at the level of the ground, but at a point (the Porta Maggiore) where that level was considerably higher than the place where the Appian water crept into the city. Four generations passed before any further addition was made to the water-supply of Rome. Then, after the lapse of 128 years, the Marcian water, best of all the potable waters of Rome, was introduced into the city by the first aqueduct, in the common acceptation of the term, the first channel carried visibly above ground on arches over long reaches of country. Its source was at thirty-eight miles from Rome in the upper valley of the Anio, between Tivoli and Subiaco. Here lay a tranquil pool of water emerging from a natural grotto and of a deep green color, whence came the liquid treasure of the Marcia. The changes in the conformation of the valley make it difficult to identify the spot with certainty, but it is thought that the furthest east of three springs known as the Acque Serene is probably the famous Marcia. From a spot close to this, the Marcia-Pia aqueduct, constructed by a company in our own days, and named after Pope Pius the Ninth, now brings water to the city. The original Marcian aqueduct was built two years after the close of the Third Punic War, and the work was entrusted by the Senate, not this time to a Censor, but to the Praetor Urbanus, the highest judicial officer in Rome, who bore the name of Q. Marcius Rex. The aqueduct had a course of sixty-one miles, for seven of which it was carried upon arches, and it entered the city at 176 feet above the sea-level. The cost of its construction was 180 million sesterces, and it carried water into the lofty Capitol itself, not without some opposition on the part of the Augurs, who, after an inspection of the Sibylline books, averred that only the water of the Anio, not that of any spring adjacent to it, might be brought into the temple of Jupiter.

Only nineteen years had elapsed, but years of continued conquest, especially in the Spanish peninsula, when in BC 125 another aqueduct, smaller, but at a slightly higher level, was added to the water-bringers of Rome. This was the *Aqua Tepula*, thirteen miles in length, of which only six were subterranean, and entering Rome at a height of 184 feet above the sea-level. Servilius Caepio and Longinus Ravilla were the Censors to whom the execution of this work was entrusted. They resorted to a new source of supply, not utilizing this time either springs or streams in the Anio valley, but journeying to the foot of the conical Alban Mount (Monte Cavo), which rises to the south-east of Rome, and there wooing the waters of the tepid springs which bubbled up near the site of the modern village of Grotta Ferrata.

Another century passed, the century which saw the rise of Marius, Sulla, and the mighty Julius. Absorbed in foreign war and the factions of the Forum, Rome had no leisure for great works of industry, and did not even preserve in good condition those which she already

possessed. At length in the year *BC* 33, three years before the battle of Actium, M. Vipsanius Agrippa, the ablest of the ministers of Augustus, bestirred himself on behalf of the water-supply of the vastly expanded city. He restored the Appia, the Anio Vetus, and the Marcia, which had fallen into ruins, but he was not satisfied with mere reconstruction. The same hand which gave the Pantheon and its adjoining baths to the citizens of Rome gave them also two more aqueducts, the Julia (*BC* 33) and the Aqua Virgo (*BC* 19).

The *Julia* bore the name of its builder, who, himself of the plebeian Vipsanian gens, had been adopted, by reason of his marriage with the daughter of Augustus, into the high aristocratic family of the Caesars. Its source was near that of the Tepula, but a little further from Rome. Apparently, in order that it might impart some of its fresh coolness to that tepid stream, its waters were first blended with it and then again divided into another channel, which flowed into Rome at an elevation four feet above the Tepula (188 feet above the sea-level). These two aqueducts, the Tepula and the Julia, are carried through the greater part of their course upon the same arcade with the Marcia.

'Like friends once parted,
Grown single-hearted,
They plied their watery tasks.'

And, as a rule, wherever in the neighborhood of Rome the *specus* (so the mason-wrought channel is termed) of the Marcia is descried, one sees also first the Tepula and then the Julia rising above it.

This work, however, did not end Agrippa's labors for the sanitary well-being of Rome. The Julia, though twice as large as the Tepula, was still one of the smaller contributors of water to the city. Fourteen years after its introduction Agrippa brought the Aqua Virgo into Rome. This splendid stream, three times as large as the Julia, was exceeded in size only by the Anio Vetus and the Marcia, among the then existing Aqueducts. To obtain it he went eight miles eastward of Rome, almost to the same spot where the great Censor had gathered the Aqua Appia. The Aqua Virgo derived its name from the story that when the soldiers of Agrippa were peering about to discover some new spring, a little maid pointed out to them a streamlet, which they followed up with the spade, thus soon finding themselves in presence of an immense volume of water. This story was commemorated by a picture in a little chapel built over the fountain.

The Virgo was not, like all the more recent aqueducts, brought into Rome at a high level. In fact it was only fifteen feet higher than the Appia, as might have been expected from the nearness of origin of the two streams. Its course is perfectly well known, as it is still bringing water to Rome, and is in truth that one of all the aqueducts which shows the most continuous record of useful service from ancient to modern times. It comes by a pretty straight course, chiefly underground, till within about two miles of Rome; then it circles round the eastern wall of the city, winds through the Borghese gardens, creeps by a deep cutting through the Pincian hill, and enters Rome under what is now the Villa Medici. In old days it was carried on to the Campus Martius and filled the baths of its founder Agrippa. It still supplies many of the chief fountains of the city, especially the most famous of all, the Fountain of Trevi. When the stranger steps down in front of the blowing Tritons and takes his cup of water from the ample marble basin, drinking to his return to the Eternal City, he is in truth drinking to the memory of the wise Agrippa and of the little maid who pointed out the fountain to his legionaries.

The contribution made by Augustus himself to the water-supply of Rome was a less worthy one than those of his son-in-law. "What possible reason", says Frontinus, "could have induced Augustus, that most far-sighted prince, to bring the water of the Alsietine Lake, which

is also called Aqua Augusta, to Rome I cannot tell. It has nothing to recommend it. It is hardly even wholesome, and it does not supply any considerable part of the population [because of the low level at which it enters the city]. I can only suppose that when he was constructing his Naumachia he did not like to use the better class of water to fill his lake, and therefore brought this stream, granting all of it that he did not want himself to private persons for watering their gardens and similar purposes. However, as often as the bridges are under repair and there is a consequent interruption of the regular supply, this water is used for drinking purposes by the inhabitants of the Trans-Tiberine region". So far Frontinus. The work was altogether of an inglorious kind. The quantity supplied was small, less even than that in the little Aqua Tepula. The quality, as has been stated, was poor, the source of supply being the turbid Lago di Martignano among the Etrurian hills on the north-west of Rome. And though it started at a pretty high level (680 feet above the sea), after a course of a little more than twenty-two miles it entered Home on a lower plane than all the other aqueducts, lower even than the modest Appia, only about twenty-one feet above the level of the sea.

The frenzied great-grandson of Augustus, the terrible Caligula, side by side with all his mad prodigality did accomplish great work for the water-supply of Rome. He began, and his uncle Claudius finished, the two great aqueducts which closed the ascending series of Rome's artificial rivers, the Claudia and the Anio Novus. Thus by a singular coincidence the work which had been begun by a Claudius, the blind Censor of the fifth century of Rome, was crowned by another Claudius, not indeed a direct descendant, but a far distant scion, of the same haughty family, when the city was just entering upon her ninth century.

The two works, the Claudia and the Anio Novus, seem to have been proceeded with contemporaneously, and they travelled across the Campagna on the same stately series of arches, highest of all the arcades with whose ruins the traveler is familiar. They were, however, works of very different degrees of merit. The Claudia drew its waters from two fountains, the Caerulus and the Curtius, among the hills overhanging the Upper Anio, not many hundred yards away from the source of the Marcia. And the water which it brought to the citizens of Rome was always considered second only in excellence to the Marcia itself.

The construction of the Anio Novus, on the other hand, was another of those unwise attempts of which one would have thought the hydraulic engineers of the city had had enough, to make the river Anio, that turbid and turbulent stream, minister meekly to the thirst of Rome. The water was taken out of the river itself from a higher point than the Anio Vetus, indeed four miles higher than the fountains of the Claudia, but that did not remedy the evil. The bad qualities of the Aqua Alsietina did little harm, beyond some occasional inconvenience to the inhabitants of the Trastevere, because it lay below all the other aqueducts. But of the thick and muddy Anio Novus, flowing above the other streams and mixing its contributions with theirs, like some tedious and loud-voiced talker, whenever they were least desired, of this provoking aqueduct a wearied Imperial water-director could only say, "It ruins all the others". The length of its journey to the city was more than fifty-eight miles, that of the Claudia more than forty-six, and the arcade upon which they together crossed the plain was six miles and four hundred and ninety-one paces in length. The Anio Novus entered the city two hundred and fourteen feet above the level of the sea, the Claudia nine feet lower.

Thus were completed the nine great aqueducts of Rome; the aqueducts whose resources and machinery are copiously explained to us by the curator, Frontinus. Without troubling the reader with the names of some doubtful or obscure additions to the list, it must nevertheless be mentioned that the Emperor Trajan, in the year 109-110, brought the water of the Sabatine Lake to Rome. This lake was immediately adjoining to the (much smaller) Lacus Alsietinus from which Augustus had drawn his supply. Trajan, however, did not fritter away the advantage of his high fountain-head as Augustus had done, but brought his aqueduct right over

the hill of the Janiculum. Here in the days of Procopius its stream might be seen (till Witigis intercepted it) turning the wheels of a hundred mills. Here now its restored waters may be seen gushing in magnificent abundance through the three arches of Fontana on the high hill of S. Pietro in Montorio.

In the following century the excellent young Emperor Alexander Severus obtained a fresh supply from the neighborhood of the old city of Gabii, about four miles south-east of the source of the Aqua Virgo. Little is known of the size or the course of the Aqua Alexandrina, whose chief interest for us is derived from the fact that it is practically the same aqueduct which was restored by the imperious old Pope, Sixtus V, and which is now called, after the name which he bore "in religion", Aqua Felice. A more complete contrast is hardly presented to us by history than between the first founder and the restorer of this aqueduct, between the young, fresh, warm-hearted Emperor, only too gentle a ruler and too dutiful a son for the fierce times in which he lived, and the proud and lonely old Pope, who bent low as if in decrepitude till he had picked up the Papal Tiara, and then stood erect, just and inflexible, a terror to the world and to Rome.

With Alexander Severus the history of the aqueducts closes. In the terrible convulsions which marked the middle of the third century there was no time or money to spare for the embellishment of the city. When peace was restored Diocletian and his attendant group of Emperors were to be found at Milan, at Nicomedeia, anywhere rather than at Rome. Constantine was too much engrossed with his new capital and his new creed to have leisure for the improvement of the still Pagan city by the Tiber. And two generations after the death of Constantine the barbarians were on the sacred soil of Italy, and it was no longer a question of constructing great works, but of feebly and fearfully defending them.

The amount of careful thought and contrivance which was involved in the construction and maintenance of these mighty works can be but imperfectly estimated by us. Ventilating-shafts, or 'respirators' as they are sometimes called, were introduced at proper intervals into the subterranean aqueducts in order to let out the imprisoned air. At every half mile or so the channel formed an angle, to break the force of the water, and a reservoir was generally placed at every such corner. The land for fifteen feet on each side of the water-course was purchased from the neighboring owners and devoted to the use of the aqueduct. Injury from other buildings and from the roots of trees was thus avoided, and the crops raised on these narrow strips of land contributed to the sustenance of the little army of slaves employed in the maintenance of the waterway. Of these at the end of the first century there were 700, constituting two *familiae*. One *familia*, consisting of 240 men, had been formed by that indefatigable water-reformer, the Sir Hugh Middleton of Rome, Vipsanius Agrippa, by him bequeathed to Augustus, and by Augustus to the State. The other and larger body (460 men) had been formed by Claudius when he was engaged in the construction of the two highest aqueducts, and by him were likewise presented to the State. The command of this little band of men was vested in the *Curator Aquarum*, a high officer, who in the imperial age was generally designated for the work of superintending the water-supply. In earlier times this work had not been assigned to any special officer, but had formed part of the functions of an Aedile or a Censor.

Outside the walls there were a certain number of reservoirs (*piscinae*), in which some of the aqueducts had the opportunity of clearing their waters by depositing the mud or sand swept into them by a sudden storm.

Inside the city there were 247 'castles of water', heads or reservoirs constructed of masonry, in which the water was stored, and out of which the supply-pipes for the various regions of Rome were taken. For, in theory at least, no pipe might tap the channels of communication, but all must draw from some *castellum aquae*. This provision, however, was

often evaded by the dishonesty of the servile watermen, who made a profit out of selling the water of the state to private individuals. A vast under-ground labyrinth of leaden pipes, in Old Rome as in a modern city, conveyed the water to the cisterns of the different houses. The lead for this purpose was probably brought to a large extent from our own island, since we find traces of the Romans at work in the lead-mines of the Mendip Hills within six years of their conquest of Britain. As Claudius was the then reigning Emperor, the cargoes of lead so shipped from Britain to Rome would be usefully employed in distributing the new water-supply brought to the higher levels by the Anio Novus and Aqua Claudia. One thousand kilogrammes of these leaden pipes were sent, unchronicled, to the melting-pot five years ago by one proprietor alone. But by carefully watching his opportunities, the eminent archaeologist Lanciani has succeeded in rescuing six hundred inscribed pipes from the havoc necessarily caused by all building operations in the soil intersected by them; and these six hundred inscriptions, classed and analyzed by him, throw a valuable light on the aquarian laws and customs of Imperial Home.

It has been said that fraud was extensively practised by the slaves in the employment of the *Curator Aquarum*. It may have been some suspicion of these fraudulent practices which caused the Emperor Nerva to nominate to that high place Sextus Julius Frontinus. This man, energetic, fearless, thorough, and equally ready to grapple with the difficulties of peaceful and of warlike administration, reminds us of the best type of our own Anglo-Indian governors. For three years (AD 75-78) he successfully administered the affairs of the province of Britain, as the worthy successor of Cerealis, as the not unworthy predecessor of Agricola. The chief exploit that marked his tenure of office was the subjugation of the Silures, the warlike and powerful tribe who held the hills of Brecknock and Glamorgan. Twenty years later, and when he was probably past middle life, Nerva, as has been said, delegated to him the difficult task of investigating and reforming the abuses connected with the water-supply of the capital. The treatise which he composed during his curatorship is our chief authority on the subject of the Roman aqueducts. Containing many careful scientific calculations and many useful hints as to the best means of upholding those mighty structures, it is an admirable specimen of the strong, clear common-sense and faithful attention to minute detail which were the characteristics of the best specimens of Roman officials.

The attention of Frontinus was at once arrested by the fact that in the *commentarii* or registers of the water-office there was actually a larger connected quantity of water accounted for than the whole water-amount which, according to the same books, appeared to be received from the various aqueducts. This slip on the part of the fraudulent *aquarii* caused the new Curator to take careful measurements of the water at the source of each aqueduct: and these measurements led him to the astounding result that the quantity of water entering the aqueducts was greater than the quantity alleged to be distributed through them by nearly one half. Some part of this difference might be due to unavoidable leakage along the line of the aqueducts: but far the larger part of it was due to the depredations of private persons, assisted by the corrupt connivance of the *aquarii*. When a private person had received a grant of water from the State, the proper course was for him to deposit a model of the pipe which had been conceded to him in the office of the Curator, whose servants were then directed to make an orifice of the same dimensions in the side of the reservoir, and permit the consumer to attach to it a pipe of the same size. Sometimes however, for a bribe, the *aquarius* would make a hole of larger diameter than the concession. Sometimes, while keeping the hole of the right size, he would attach a larger pipe which would soon be filled by the pressure of the water oozing through the wall of the reservoir. Sometimes a pipe for which there was absolutely no authority at all would be introduced into the reservoir, or yet worse into the aqueduct before it reached the reservoir. Sometimes the grant of water, which was by its express terms limited to the individual for life,

would by corrupt connivance, without any fresh grant, be continued to his heirs. At every point the precious liquid treasure of the State was being wasted, that the pockets of the *familia* who served the aqueduct might be filled. It was probably some rumor of this infidelity of the *aquarii* to their trust, as well as a knowledge of the lavish grants of some of the Emperors, which caused Pliny to say, a generation before the reforms of Frontinus, "The Aqua Virgo excels all other waters to the touch, and the Aqua Marcia to the taste; but the pleasure of both has now for long been lost to the city, through the ambition and avarice of the men who pervert the fountains of the public health for the supply of their own villas and suburban estates".

These then were the abuses which the former governor of Britain and conqueror of the Silures was placed in office to reform; and there can be little doubt that, at any rate for a time, he did reform them and restore to the people of Rome the full water-supply to which they were entitled. What was that water-supply, stated in terms with which we are familiar? What was the equivalent of the 24,805 *quinariae* which Frontinus insisted on debiting to the account of the *aquarii* at Rome. In attempting to answer this question we are at once confronted by the difficulty, that though Frontinus has given us very exact particulars as to the dimensions of the pipes employed, he has not put beyond the possibility of a doubt the rate at which the water flowed through them, and which may have been very different for different aqueducts.

M. Bondelet, a French scholar and engineer of the early part of this century, after enquiring very carefully into the subject, came to the conclusion that the value of the *quinaria* was equivalent to a service of sixty cubic metres per day. Lanciani, going minutely over the same ground, slightly alters this figure, which he turns into 63'18 cubic metres, or 13,906 gallons a day. If we may rely on this computation, the whole amount of water poured into Rome at the end of the first century by the aqueducts, before Trajan and Alexander Severus had augmented the aquarian treasures of the city by the watercourses which bore their names, was not less than 344,938,330 gallons per day. Adopting the conjecture, in which there seems some probability, that the population of Rome in its most prosperous estate reached to about a million and a half this gives a supply of 230 gallons daily for each inhabitant.

In our own country at the present day the modern consumption of water in our large towns varies between twenty and thirty gallons per head daily, and in one or two towns does not rise above ten gallons. What the supply may have been in the London of the Plantagenets and Tudors, before the great water-reform of Sir Hugh Middleton, we have perhaps no means of estimating; but it is stated, apparently on good authority, that in 1550 the inhabitants of Paris received a supply of only one quart per day, and nine-tenths of the people were compelled to obtain their supply direct from the Seine.

The estimate of the contents of the aqueducts as given above is that which has hitherto obtained most acceptance. It is right, however, to mention that a recent enquirer throws some doubt on Rondelet's calculations. From some observations made by him on the diameter and the gradient of the channel of the Aqua Marcia he reduces the average velocity of the streams, and consequently the volume of water delivered by them, by more than one half. The value of the *quinaria* on this computation descends to about 6000 gallons a day, the total supply of the nine aqueducts in the time of Frontinus to 148,000,000 gallons, and the allowance per head per day to one hundred gallons. Even so, however, the Roman citizen had more than three times the amount provided for the inhabitants of our English cities by the most liberal of our own municipalities.

This last consideration brings us to the question of what could have been done with all this wealth of water so lavishly poured into the Eternal City. The sparkling fountains with which every open space was adorned and refreshed, the great artificial lakes, on which at the occasion of public festivals mimic navies fought and in which marine monsters sported, are in

part an answer to our question. But the *Thermae*, those magnificent ranges of halls in which the poorest citizen of Rome could enjoy, free of expense, all and more than all the luxuries that we associate with our misnamed Turkish Bath, the *Thermae*, those splendid temples of health, cleanliness, and civilization, must undoubtedly take the responsibility of the largest share in the water-consumption of Rome. We glanced a little while ago at the mighty Baths of Caracalla, able to accommodate 1600 bathers at once. Twice that number, we are told, could enjoy the Baths of Diocletian, those vast baths in whose central hall a large church is now erected, large, but occupying a comparatively small part of the ancient building. It is true that this was the most extensive of all the Roman *Thermae*; but the Baths of Constantine on the Quirinal, of Agrippa by the Pantheon, of Titus and Trajan above the ruins of the Golden House of Nero, were also superb buildings, fit to be the chosen resort of the sovereign people of the world; and all (with the possible exception of the Baths of Titus) were still in use, still receiving the crystal treasures of the aqueducts, when Belisarius recovered Rome for the Roman Empire

Now, in these first weeks of March 537, all this splendid heritage of civilization perished of the as in a moment. The Goths having thus arranged their army destroyed all the aqueducts, so that no water might enter from them into the city. The historian's statement is very clear and positive: otherwise we might be disposed to doubt whether the barbarians burrowed beneath the ground to discover and destroy the Aqua Appia, which is subterraneous till after it has entered the circuit of the walls. One would like to be informed also how they succeeded in arresting these copious streams of water without turning the Campagna itself into a morass. The waters which came from the Anio valley may perhaps have been diverted back again into that stream, but some of the others which had no river-bed near them must surely have been difficult to deal with. Possibly the sickness which at a later period assailed the Gothic host may have sprung in part from the unwholesome accumulation of these stagnant waters.

But our chief interest in the operation, an interest of regret, arises from the change which it must have wrought in the habits of the Roman people. Some faint and feeble attempts to restore the aqueducts were possibly made when the war was ended: in fact one such, accomplished by Belisarius for the Aqua Trajana, is recorded an inscription¹. But as a whole, we may confidently state that the imperial system of aqueducts was never restored. Three in the course of ages were recovered for the City by the public spirit of her pontiffs, and one (the Marcia) has been added to her resources in our own days by the enterprise of a joint-stock company; but the Rome of the Middle Ages was practically, like the Rome of the Kings, dependent for her water on a few wells and cisterns and on the mud-burdened Tiber. The Bath with all its sinful luxuriousness, which brought it under the ban of philosophers and churchmen, but also with all its favoring influences on health, on refinement, even on clear and logical thought, the Bath which the eleven aqueducts of Rome had once replenished for a whole people, now became a forgotten dream of the past. As we look onward from the sixth century the Romans of the centuries before us will be in some respects a better people than their ancestors, more devout, less arrogant, perhaps less licentious, but they will not be so well-washed a people. And the sight of Rome, holy but dirty, will exert a very different and far less civilizing influence on the nations beyond the Alps who come to worship at her shrines than would have been exerted by a Rome, Christian indeed, but also rejoicing in the undiminished treasures of her artificial streams. Should an author ever arise who shall condescend to take the History of Personal Cleanliness for his theme (and historians have sometimes chosen subjects of less interest for humanity than this), he will find that one of the darkest days in his story is the day when the Gothic warriors of Witigis ruined the aqueducts of Rome.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOTHIC ASSAULT.

An immediate effect of the cutting off of the water-supply was to endanger the regular delivery of the rations of flour to the soldier, and the citizens. Now that the water of Trajan's aqueduct no longer came dashing down over the Janiculan hill, the corn-mills which it had been wont to drive were silent. An obvious suggestion would have been to use beasts of burden to supply the needed power. But unfortunately, in order to effect the necessary economy of provisions, all beasts of burden, except the horses needed for warlike purposes, had been slain. Therefore, with his usual fertility of resource, Belisarius contrived to make water take the place of water. Stretching ropes across the Tiber from bank to bank near the Elian Bridge he moored two skiffs side by side at a distance of two feet apart, placed his mill-stones on board and hung his water-wheel between the skiffs, where the current of the river narrowed by the interposition of the bridge was strong enough to turn it and move the machinery. The Goths heard of this contrivance from the deserters who still came over to them, and succeeded in breaking the water-wheels by throwing huge logs, and even the carcasses of slain Romans, into the stream. Belisarius however by fastening to the bridge strong iron chains which stretched across the river, not only preserved his water-mills from these obstructions, but also, which was more important, guarded the city against the peril of a sudden attack by the boats' crews of the barbarians. The water-mills of the Tiber thus invented by Belisarius continued to be used in Rome down to our own day, but are now apparently all superseded by mills driven by steam.

The watchful care of Belisarius did not even neglect to take into consideration the *cloacae*, the great sewers, of Rome; but as the mouths of all of them opened into the Tiber, in that part of it which was within the circuit of the walls, no special provision against a hostile surprise appeared to be necessary in this quarter.

Just at this time, when men's minds were on the stretch, waiting for the mighty duel to begin, came the tidings of an incident, trifling and yet tragical, which the superstitious in either army might easily regard as an omen of success to the one and of disaster to the other. Some Samnite lads, keeping their sheep on the slopes of the Apennines, beguiled the tedium of their occupation by choosing out two of their sturdiest, naming one Witigis and the other Belisarius, and setting them to wrestle for the victory. As Fate would have it, Witigis was thrown. Then said the boys in sport, 'Witigis shall be hanged'. They had tied him up to a tree, meaning to cut him down again before he had received any serious harm, when suddenly a wolf from the mountains was upon them and they fled. The poor boy, abandoned to his fate, died in agony. But when the story was noised abroad through Samnium, people read in it an indication of the predestined victory of Belisarius, and took no steps for the punishment of the youthful executioners.

Still, notwithstanding omens and auguries, the citizens of Rome were by no means satisfied with the turn that things were taking. With their food doled out to them in strict daily rations, with only water enough for drinking (supplied by the river and the wells), and none whatever for the sadly remembered delights of the Bath, unwashed and short of sleep (since to each man his turn for sentry duty at night seemed constantly recurring); above all, with the depressing feeling that all these sacrifices were in vain, and that those myriads of the Goths whom they saw burning their villas and ravaging the pleasant places all around the city must soon be within its walls, they began to murmur against Belisarius. Speeches were made in the

Senate, not loud but full of angry feeling, against the general who had ventured to hold Rome with such an utterly inadequate force, and who was bringing the loyal subjects of the Emperor, guiltless of any wrong, into such extremity of peril by his rashness.

Witigis, who was informed by the deserters Gothic of this change of feeling, tried to turn it to account by sending an embassy to Belisarius, headed by a certain Albes. In the presence of Speech of the Senate and the Generals, Albes delivered an harangue in which, not uncourteously, he suggested to Belisarius that courage was one thing and rashness another. "If it is courage that has brought you here, look forth from the walls, survey the vast multitude of the Goths. You will have need of all your courage in dealing with that mighty host. But if you now feel that it was mere rashness that has led you hither, and if at the same time you are awakened to the thought of all the miseries which you are inflicting on the Romans by your opposition to their lawful ruler, we come to offer you one more opportunity of repentance. The Romans lived in all comfort and freedom under the rule of the good King Theodoric. Now, through your undesired interposition, they are suffering the extremity of misery, and their King, the King both of Goths and Italians, is obliged to encamp outside the walls, and practice all the cruel acts of war against the people whom he loves. We call upon you therefore to evacuate the city of Rome; but as it is not our wish to trample on the fallen we concede to you the liberty of marching forth unmolested and of taking with you all your possessions".

The spirit of the Gothic King was a good deal changed by the events of the last few days. On his march to Rome his only fear had been lest Belisarius should escape his dreadful vengeance. Now he was willing to offer him all the honors of war if only he would march out of the city which he ought never to have been allowed to enter. It may be doubted whether Witigis was wise in showing so manifestly his desire for the departure of the imperial General. The Senate, as we know, had begun to take a very gloomy view of the prospects of the defence. Such a speech as that of Albes would tend to reassure many a waverer, by showing him that the Goths, in their secret hearts, felt no great confidence of victory.

Belisarius in reply said, that the prudence or imprudence of his plan of campaign was his own affair, and he did not intend to take the advice of Witigis concerning it. "But I say to you that the time will come when you shall long to hide your heads under the thorns of the Campagna and shall not be able to do so. When we took Rome we laid hands on no alien possession, but only undid that work of violence by which you seized upon a city to which you had no claim. If any one of you fancies that he is going to enter Rome without a struggle he is mistaken. While Belisarius lives he will never quit his hold of this city"

So spoke Belisarius. The Roman Senators sat mute and trembling, not daring to echo the proud words of the General, nor to repel the accusations of the ambassadors upbraiding them with their treachery and ingratitude. Only Fidelius, aforetime Quaestor under Athalaric and now Praetorian Prefect under Belisarius, answered his late lords with words of scorn and banter. The ambassadors on their return to the camp were eagerly questioned by Witigis, what manner of man Belisarius was, and how he received the proposal for an evacuation of the city. To which they replied that he seemed to be the last man in the world to be frightened by mere words. Accordingly, Witigis set about the task of convincing him by more efficacious arguments.

Having counted the courses of masonry in the walls, and thus formed as accurate an estimate as possible of their height, the Goths constructed several wooden towers of the same height as the walls, running on wheels placed under their four corners, and with ropes fastened to them, so that they could be drawn by oxen. On the highest platform of the towers were ladders, which could be used if necessary to scale the battlements. In addition to the towers the Goths also made ready eight battering-rams. Procopius gives us a detailed description of this engine of war, Roman, as it is generally supposed, in its origin, but now borrowed from the

Romans by the barbarians. They also prepared fascines, of the boughs of trees and the reeds of the Campagna, which they could throw into the fosse, so filling it up and preparing the way for the advance of their warlike engines.

On his side Belisarius armed the towers and battlements with a plenteous supply of the defensive engines of the period, the *Balista*, that magnified bow, worked by machinery, which shot a short square arrow twice the distance of an ordinary bow-shot and with such force as to break trees or stones; and the *Onager* or Wild Ass, which was a similarly magnified sling. Each gate he obstructed with a machine called a *Lupus*, which seems, from the somewhat obscure description of Procopius, to have been a kind of double portcullis, worked both from above and below, and ready to close its terrible wolf-jaws upon any enemy who should venture within reach of its fangs.

The general disposition of the army of Belisarius, which amounted in all to but 5000 men, was the same as that mentioned in a previous chapter. Bessas the imperialist Ostrogoth, and Peranius the *Iberian prince* from the shores of the Caspian, commanded at the great Praenestine Gate. At the Salarian and Pincian Gates Belisarius himself took charge of the fight; at the Flaminian, Ursicinus, who had under him a detachment of infantry known as "The Emperor's Own". They had, however, little to do in the battle which is about to be described, as the Flaminian Gate stood on a precipitous piece of ground and was too difficult of access for the Goths to assault it.

More astonishing was it to Procopius that the wall a little to the east of the Flaminian Gate should also have been left unassaulted by the Goths. Here, to this day, notwithstanding some lamentable and perfectly unnecessary Restorations of recent years, may be seen some portions of the Muro Torto, a twisted, bulging, overhanging mass of *opus reticulatum*. It looks as if it might fall tomorrow (and so, as we shall see, thought Belisarius), but it has stood in its present state for eighteen centuries. But the story of this piece of wall and the superstitions connected with it is so curious that Procopius must tell it in his own words :

"Between the Flaminian Gate and the gate-let next in order on the right hand, which is called the Pincian, a part of the wall split asunder long ago of its own accord. The cleft however did not reach to the ground, but only about half-way down. Thus it did not fall, nor receive any further damage, but it so leaned over in both directions that one part seems within, the other without the rest of the enclosure. From this circumstance the Romans have from of old called that part of the wall, in their own language, *Murus Ruptus*. Now when Belisarius was at the first minded to pull down this bit and build it up again, the Romans stopped him, assuring him that Peter (the Apostle whom they venerate and admire above all others) had promised that he would care for the defence of their city at that point. And things turned out in this quarter exactly as they had expected; for neither on the day of the first assault, nor during any subsequent part of the siege, did the enemy approach this portion of the wall in force, or cause any tumult there. We often wondered that in all the assaults and midnight surprises of the enemy, this part of the fortifications never seemed to come into the remembrance either of besiegers or besieged. For this reason no one hath since attempted to rebuild it, but the wall remains to this day cleft in two. So much for the *Murus Ruptus*.

The reader will probably feel, in perusing this passage, that Procopius himself, though rather a Theist than a Christian, and not always constant even to Theism, was puzzled whether to accept or reject the legend of St. Peter's guardianship of the *Muro Torto*. He shows the same attitude of suspended belief towards the Sibylline Oracles and many other heathen marvels which are recorded in his pages.

Constantine, removed by Belisarius from the Porta Flaminia, was placed in charge of the riverside wall and the Bridge and Tomb of Hadrian. Paulus commanded at the Pancratian Gate on the other side of the Tiber: but here too, on account of the difficulty of the ground, the

Goths attempted nothing worthy of note. A striking contrast this to one of the very last sieges of Rome, that under General Oudinot in 1849, when the Porta S. Pancrazio was riddled with hostile bullets. In consequence of the frequent skirmishes in that quarter the whole Janiculum was then covered with mounds, now grass-grown and peaceful-looking, under which French and Italian soldiers, slain in those dreary days, slumber side by side.

The preparations of the Goths being completed, on the eighteenth day of the siege, at sunrise, they began the assault. With dismay the Romans, clustered on the walls, beheld the immense masses of men converging to the City, the rams, the towers drawn by oxen moving slowly towards them. They beheld the sight with dismay, but a smile of calm of scorn curved the lips of Belisarius. The Romans could not bear to see him thus trifling as they thought in the extremity of their danger implored him to use the *balistae* on the walls before the enemy came any nearer; called him shameless and incompetent when he refused: but still Belisarius waited and still he smiled. At length, when the Goths were now close to the edge of the fosse, he drew his bow and shot one of their leaders, armed with breastplate and mail, through the neck. The chief fell dead, and a roar of applause at the fortunate omen rose from the Roman ranks. Again he bent his bow and again a Gothic noble fell, whereat another shout of applause from the walls rent the air. Then Belisarius gave all his soldiers the signal to discharge their arrows, ordering those immediately around him to leave the men untouched and to aim all their shafts at the oxen. In a few minutes the milk-white Etrurian oxen were all slain, and then of necessity the towers, the rams, all the engines of war remained immovable at the edge of the fosse, useless for attack, only a hindrance to the assaulting host. So close to the walls, it was impossible for the Goths to bring up other beasts of burden, or to devise any means to repair the disaster. Then men understood the reason of the smile of Belisarius, who was amused at the simplicity of the barbarians in thinking that he would allow them to drive their oxen close up under his battlements. Then they recognized his wisdom in postponing the reply from the *balistae* till the Goths had come so near that their disaster was irreparable.

The towers and the rams had apparently been intended specially for that part of the wall close to the Pincian Gate. Foiled in this endeavor, Witigis drew back his men a little distance from the fosse, formed them into deep columns, and ordered them not to attempt any farther assault on that part of the walls, but so to harass the troops by incessant discharges of missile weapons as to prevent Belisarius from giving any assistance to the other points which he meant to assail, and which were especially the Porta Praenestina and the Porta Aurelia.

During this time sharp fighting was going on at the other gate which was under the immediate command of Belisarius, the Porta Salaria. Here for a little while the barbarians seemed to be getting the advantage. A long-limbed Goth, one of their nobles and renowned for his prowess in war, armed (as perhaps their common soldiers were not) with helmet and breastplate, left the ranks of his comrades and swung himself up into a tree from which he was able to discharge frequent and deadly missiles at the defenders of the battlements. At length, however, one of the *balistae* worked by the soldiers in the tower on the left of the gateway, more by good fortune than good aim, succeeded in striking him. The bolt went right through the warrior's body and half through the tree: thus pinned to the tree-trunk he was left dangling between earth and heaven. At this sight a chill fear ran through the Gothic ranks, and withdrawing themselves out of the range of the *balistae* they gave no more trouble to the defenders of the Salarian Gate.

The weight of the Gothic assault was directed against the Praenestine Gate, the modern Porta Maggiore. Here they collected a number of their engines of attack, towers, battering-rams, and ladders: and here both the hoped-for absence of the great general and the dilapidated state of the wall inspired some reasonable hope of victory. The neighborhood of the Porta Maggiore is to this day one of the most interesting portions of the wall of Rome. Here you see

the two stately arches which spanned the diverging roads to Labicum and Praeneste. Above them you read the clear, boldly-carved inscriptions which record the constructions of Claudius, and the restorations of Vespasian and Titus. Between them stands the curious tomb of the baker Eurysaces, which bore the sculptured effigies of the baker and his wife and a quaint inscription (still legible) recording that in this bread-basket the fragments of Marcus Vergilius Eurysaces and his excellent wife are gathered together. High above run the channels of the Anio Novus and the Aqua Claudia. Hard by at a lower level the Julia, Tepula, and Marcia, and yet lower the Anio Vetus enter the city. This intersection of the aqueducts gave the Porta Praenestina a strength peculiar to itself, and caused it to take an important place in the fortifications of the later emperors.

When the Goths assaulted Rome the Praenestine and Labican Gates did not show the same fair proportions which they displayed in the days of Claudius, and which they have recovered by the judicious restoration effected in 1838. By the operations of the military engineers of Aurelian and Honorius the Labican Gate was closed and the usual round towers were erected, flanking the gate, which enclosed and concealed from view till our own times the Tomb of Eurysaces. The high line of the aqueduct wall still remained (as it does to this day), but it had fallen much out of repair, and the real line of defence seems to have been a lower wall running parallel to it at a distance of less than 100 yards and skirting the line of the Via Labicana. Between these two walls, which ran thus side by side for about 500 yards, a strip of land was enclosed which was used in old days a menagerie for the wild beasts that were about to be employed in the shows of the amphitheatre. To use the words of Procopius, "It chanced that the [true] wall in that quarter had in great part crumbled away, as the bricks no longer cohered well together. But another low wall had been drawn round it on the outside by the Romans of old, not for safety's sake, for it had neither towers nor battlements nor any other of the appliances for defence, but on account of unseemly luxury, that they might there enclose in cages the lions and other beasts [or the amphitheatre. For which cause also they called it the Vivarium, for that is the name given by the Romans to a place where beasts of ungentle nature are wont to be kept.

To the *Vivarium* then the Goths directed the weight of their columns and the larger number of their engines of war. The objective point was well chosen. The ground was level and afforded easy access to the assailants. There was, it is true, a double wall, but the inner one, as the Goths well knew, was decayed and ruinous, and the outer one, though in better preservation, was low and undefended by towers or battlements. But the fatal fault of the attack was that in the narrow space between the two walls there was no room for the barbarians to maneuver, and of this fault Belisarius determined to avail himself. By this time he had hastened with the most valiant men of his little army to the place, but he set few defenders on the ramparts and offered little opposition to the strokes with which the Goths battered a breach in the wall of the *Vivarium*. When this was accomplished, when he saw them pouring in, in their multitudes, to the narrow enclosure, he sent Cyprian and some of the bravest of his troops to man the real wall, formed of the arcades of the aqueducts. The unexpected strength of this opposition caused some dismay in the hearts of the Goths, who had thought their work would be at an end when they had penetrated within the first enclosure. Then, when they were all intent upon the hand-to-hand encounter with the defenders of the wall, Belisarius ordered the Praenestine Gate to be thrown open. Behind it he had massed his troops armed with breastplate and sword; no javelin or pilum to encumber them with its needless aid. They had little to do but to slay. Panic seized the Goths, who sought to pour out of the *Vivarium* by the narrow breach which they had effected, and many of whom were trampled to death by their own friends. They thought no more of valor but of flight, says the historian, each man as best he could. The Romans followed and slew a great number before they could reach the distant Gothic camp.

Belisarius ordered the engines of war collected by the assailants to be burned, and the red flames shooting up into the evening sky carried terror to the hearts of the fugitives. A similar sally from the Salarian Gate met with like success.

Meanwhile, however, on the north-west of Rome, at the Porta Aurelia (opposite the Castle of Sant' Angelo), the Goths had been much nearer to achieving victory. Here, as has been said, Constantine, withdrawn for this purpose from the Flaminian Gate, had charge of the defence of the city. Two points were especially threatened, the Porta Aurelia and the stretch of river-side wall between it and the Porta Flaminia. This bit of wall had been left somewhat weak, the river seeming here sufficient defence, nor did Belisarius feel himself able to spare a large number of men for its protection. But Constantine, seeing that the enemy were preparing to cross the stream and attack at this place, rushed off himself to defend it. He was successful. When the Goths found that their landing was not unopposed, and that even this piece of wall had defenders, they lost heart and gave up the attempt. These movements, however, occupied precious time, and when, probably about noon, Constantine returned to the Porta Aurelia, he found that important events had taken place in his absence.

The whole course of the attack and defence in that quarter was determined then, as it has been in so many subsequent struggles, by

‘The Mole which Hadrian reared on high’

the tomb, the fortress, the prison, of Sant' Angelo. Procopius shall describe it for us, for his is still the fullest account which we possess of the mighty Mausoleum in its glory:

“The tomb of Hadrian the Roman Emperor is outside the Porta Aurelia, distant from the wall about a bow-shot, a memorable sight. For it is made of Parian marble, and the stones fit closely one into another with no other fastening. It has four equal sides, each about a stone’s throw in length, and in height overtopping the wall of the city. Above there are placed statues of men and horses made out of the same stone [Parian], and marvelous to behold. This tomb then the men of old, since it seemed like an additional fortress for their city, joined to the line of fortification by two walls reaching out from the main circuit of the fortifications. And thus the tomb seemed like a citadel protecting the gate”.

From this description and a few hints given by travelers who saw the Mausoleum in the Middle Ages, archaeologists have conjecturally reconstructed its original outline. A quadrangular structure of dazzling white marble, each side 300 Roman feet long and eighty-five feet high, it had upon its sides inscriptions to the various Emperors from Trajan to Severus who were buried within its walls. At the corners of this structure were equestrian statues of four Emperors. Above, two circular buildings, one over the other, were surrounded with colonnades and peopled with marble statues. Over all rose a conical cupola whose summit was 300 feet above the ground, so that it might be said of this Mausoleum as of the City in the Revelation, ‘The length and the breadth and the height of it were equal’. Visitors to the gardens of the Vatican may still see there a bronze fir-cone, eight feet high, which according to tradition once surmounted the cupola of Hadrian's Tomb.

Towards this tomb-fortress, then, swarmed the Gothic bands from their camp in the Neronian gardens. They had no elaborate engines like their brethren on the other side of the river, but they had ladders and bows in abundance, and hoped easily to overpower the scanty forces of the defenders. A long colonnade led from the Elian Bridge to the great Basilica of St. Peter, sheltered by which they approached close under the walls of the Tomb before they were perceived by the garrison. They were then too near for the *ballistae* to be used against them with effect, the bolts discharged by those unwieldy engines flying over the heads of the assailants. The arrows shot from the bows of the Imperial soldiers could not pierce the large oblong shields of the Goths, which reminded Procopius of the enormous bucklers that he had seen used in the Persian wars. Moreover, the quadrangular shape of the building which they

had to defend put the garrison at a disadvantage, since, when they were facing the foe on one side, they continually found themselves taken in rear by the assailants on the opposite quarter. Altogether, things looked ill for the defenders of the Tomb, till a sudden instinct drove them to the statues; that silent marble chorus which stood watching the terrible drama. Tearing these down from their bases and breaking the larger figures into fragments, they hurled them down upon the eager Gothic host.

At once the exultation of the latter was turned into panic. They drew back from the avalanche of sculpture. They retreated within range of the *balistae*. The garrison plied these engines with desperate energy, and with shouts discharged their arrows also against the enemy, whose shields now no longer formed the compact *testudo* which had before resisted their missiles. At this moment Constantine appeared upon the scene and turned repulse into defeat. The Tomb of Hadrian was saved, but at a price which would have caused a bitter pang to the artistic Emperor who raised and adorned that mighty mausoleum.

Thus, on both sides of the Tiber, the confident onset of the Goths had ended in utter failure. The battle, which began with early dawn, lasted till evening twilight. All night long the flare of the burning engines of the Goths reddened the sky. All night rose the contrasted clamors of the two armies; from the battlements of the city, the cheers and the rude songs in which the Romans praised the fame of their hero-general; from the Gothic camps the lamentation for the fallen, the groans of the wounded, the hurrying steps of men rushing to and fro to bring aid to their agonizing comrades.

It was asserted by the Romans, and, according to Procopius, admitted by the Gothic leaders, that on this day 30,000 of the barbarians were stretched dead upon the field, beside the vast numbers of the wounded.

CHAPTER VIII.

ROMAN SORTIES.

After the Gothic assault was repulsed, Belisarius sent a messenger to Justinian with a letter announcing the victory and praying for reinforcements. The letter, which was probably composed by Procopius himself, is worth reading, especially as it helps us to understand the light in which the invasion of Italy was regarded at Constantinople. "The King shall enjoy his own again" was the key-note of all the Imperial proceedings both at Carthage and at Rome. It was not a young and vigorous nationality, with a fair prospect of an honorable career, that Justinian and his generals seemed to themselves to be suppressing. It was simply an inalienable right that they were asserting, a right that generations of barbaric domination could not weaken, the right of the *Imperator Romanus* to Rome and to every country that her legions had once subdued.

"We have arrived in Italy" (said Belisarius) "in obedience to your orders, and after possessing ourselves of a large extent of its territory have also taken Rome, driving away the barbarians whom we found there, whose captain, Leuderis, we lately sent to you. Owing, however, to the large number of soldiers whom we have had to detach for garrison duty in the various towns of Italy and Sicily which we have taken, our force here is dwindled to 5000 men. The enemy has come against us with an army 150,000 strong; and in the first engagement, when we went out to reconnoiter by the banks of the Tiber, being forced, contrary to our intention, to fight, we were very nearly buried under the multitude of their spears. Then, when the barbarians tried a general assault upon our walls with all their forces and with many engines of war, they were within a little of capturing us and the city at the first rush. Some good fortune however (for one must refer to Fortune not to our valor the accomplishment of a deed which in the nature of things was not to be expected) saved us from their hands.

"So far however, whether Valor or Fortune have decided the struggle, your affairs have gone as well as could be desired, but I should like that this success should continue in days to come. I will say without concealment what I think you ought now to do, knowing well that human affairs turn out as God wills, but knowing also that those who preside over the destinies of nations are judged according to the event of their enterprises, be that event good or bad. I pray you, then, let arms and soldiers be sent to us in such numbers that we may no longer have to continue the war on terms of such terrible inequality with our enemies. For it is not right to trust everything to Fortune, since if she favors us at one time she will turn her back upon us at another. But I pray you, O Emperor, to let this thought into your mind, that if the barbarians should now vanquish us, not only shall we be driven out of your own Italy and lose our army too, but deep disgrace will accrue to us all as the result of our actions. We shall certainly be thought to have ruined the Romans who have preferred loyalty to your Empire above their own safety. And thus even the good luck which has attended us so far will prove in the end calamitous to our friends. If we had failed in our attempts on Rome, on Campania, or on Sicily, we should only have had the slight mortification of not being able to appropriate the possessions of others. Very different will be our feelings now when we lose what we have learned to look upon as our own, and drag those who have trusted us down into the same abyss of ruin.

“Consider this too, I pray you, that it is only the good-will of the citizens which has enabled us to hold Rome for ever so short a time against the myriads who besiege it. With a wide extent of open country round it, with no access to the sea, shut off from supplies, we could do nothing if the citizens were hostile. They are still animated by friendly feelings towards us, but if their hardships should be greatly prolonged it is only natural that they should choose for themselves the easier lot. For a recently formed friendship like theirs requires prosperity to enable it to endure: and the Romans especially may be compelled by hunger to do many things which are very contrary to their inclination.

“To conclude: I know that I am bound to sacrifice life itself to your Majesty, and therefore no man shall force me, living, from this place. But consider, I pray you, what kind of fame would accrue to Justinian from such an end to the career of Belisarius”

The effect of this letter was to accelerate the preparations already made for reinforcing the gallant band in Rome. Valerian and Martin had been sent, late in 536, with ships and men to the help of Belisarius, but, fearing to face the winter storms, had lingered on the coast of Aetolia. They now received a message from the Emperor to quicken their movements; and at the same time the spirits of the general and the citizens were raised by the tidings that reinforcements were on their way to relieve them.

On the very next day after the failure of the Gothic assault the unmenaced gates of Rome opened, and a troop of aged men, women, and children, set forth from the city. Some went out by the Appian Gate and along the Appian Way, others went forth by the Porta Portuensis and sailed down the Tiber to the sea. They were accompanied by all the slaves, male and female, except such of the former as Belisarius had impressed for the defence of the walls. Even the soldiers had to part with the servants who generally followed them to war. In thus immediately sending the useless mouths out of Rome Belisarius showed his prompt appreciation of the necessities of his position. He had repelled an assault; he would now guard as well as he might against the dangers of a blockade. Had Witigis been as great a master as Belisarius of the cruel logic of war, he would undoubtedly have prevented the Byzantine general from disencumbering himself of the multitude, who by their necessities would have been the most effectual allies of the Goths inside the city. Imperfect as was the Gothic line of circumvallation, it is impossible to believe that more than 100,000 warriors, including a large body of cavalry, could not by occupying the main roads have prevented at least some of a large and defenseless multitude from escaping, and have driven them back within the walls of Rome. But, in fact, all of them, without fear or molestation, reached the friendly shelter of the cities of Campania, or crossed the straits and took refuge in Sicily.

The fact seems to have been that, except by a series of brave and blundering assaults upon the actual walls of the city, the Goths, or perhaps we should rather say the Gothic King, had no notion how to handle the siege. One right step indeed he took, in view of the now necessary blockade. Three days after the failure of the assault he sent a body of troops to Portus, which they found practically undefended, notwithstanding its massive wall (the ruins of which are still visible), and it was at once occupied by them with a garrison of 1000 men. Procopius is of opinion that even 300 Roman soldiers would have been sufficient to defend Portus, but they could not be spared by Belisarius from the yet more pressing duty of watching on the Roman ramparts. The occupation of Portus caused great inconvenience to the Romans, although they still remained in possession of Ostia and the neighboring harbor of Antium. From Portus (which since the second century had practically displaced Ostia as the chief emporium of Rome) merchants were accustomed to bring all heavy cargoes up the Tiber in barges drawn by oxen, for which there was an excellent towpath all along the right bank of the river. From Ostia, on the other hand, merchandise had to be brought in skiffs dependent on the favor of the

wind, which, owing to the winding character of the river, seldom served them for a straight run from the harbor to the city.

Besides the occupation of Portus, Witigis could bethink him of no better device to annoy the Romans than the cruel and senseless one of murdering their hostages. He sent orders to Ravenna that all the Senators whom he had confined there at the outbreak of the war should be put to death. A few escaped to Milan, having had some warning of their impending fate. Among them were a certain Cerventinus, and Reparatus a brother of the deacon Virgilius, who was in a few months to become Pope. The others all perished, and with them went the Goth's last chance of ruling the Roman otherwise than by fear. Meanwhile the Gothic blockade, into which the siege was resolving itself, was of the feeblest and most inefficient kind. Leaving all the praise of dash and daring to the scanty bands of their enemies, the Goths clung timidly to their unwieldy camps, in which no doubt already pestilence was lurking. They never ventured forth by night, seldom except in large companies by day. The light Moorish horsemen were their especial terror. If a Goth wandered forth into the Campagna alone, to cut fodder for his horse or to bring one of the oxen in from pasture, he was almost sure to see one of these children of the desert bearing down upon him. With one cast of the Moor's lance the Goth was slain, his arms and his barbaric adornments were stripped from him, and the Moor was off again full speed towards Rome before the avenger could be upon his track.

Belisarius on the other hand, organized his defence of the city so thoroughly as to leave as little as possible to the caprice of Fortune. To prevent his own little band of soldiers from being worn out by continual sentinel-duty, especially at night, and at the same time to keep from starvation the Roman proletariat, all of whose ordinary work was stopped by the siege, he instituted a kind of National Guard. He mixed a certain number of these citizen soldiers with his regular troops, paying each of them a small sum for his daily maintenance, and dividing the whole amalgamated force into companies, to each of whom was assigned the duty of guarding a particular portion of the walls by day or by night. To obviate the danger of treachery, these companies were shifted every fortnight to some part of the circuit at a considerable distance from that which they last guarded. After the same interval the keys of every gate of the city were brought to him, melted down and cast afresh with different wards, the locks of course being altered to suit them. The names of the sentinels were entered upon a list which was called over each day. The place of any absent soldier or citizen was at once filled up, and he was summoned to the general's quarters to be punished, perhaps capitally punished, for his delinquency. All the night, bands of music played at intervals along the walls, to keep the defenders awake and to cheer their drooping courage. All night too, the Moors, the terrible Moors, were instructed to prowl round the base of the walls, accompanied by bloodhounds, in order to detect any attempt by the Goths at a nocturnal escalade.

About this time a curious attempt was made, which shows that there was still an undercurrent of the old Paganism in the apparently Christian and Orthodox City. The little square temple of Janus, nearly coeval with the Republic, still stood in the Forum in front of the Senate-house and a little above the *Tria Fata* or temple of the Fates. The temple was all overlaid with brass; of brass was the double-faced statue of Janus, seven and a-half feet high, which stood within it, looking with one face to the rising and with one to the setting sun; of brass were the renowned gates which the Romans of old shut only in time of peace, when all good things abounded, and opened in time of war. Since the citizens of Rome had become zealous above all others in their attachment to Christianity, these gates had been kept equally shut whether peace or war were in the land. Now, however, some secret votaries of the old faith tried, probably under cover of night, to open these brazen gates, that the god might march out as of old to help the Roman armies. They did not succeed in opening wide the massive doors, but they seem to have wrenched them a little from their hinges, so that they would no

longer shut tightly as aforetime; an apt symbol of the troubled state of things, neither settled peace nor victorious war, which was for many centuries to prevail in Rome. This evidence of still existing Paganism must have shocked the servants of the pious Justinian; but owing to the troublous state of affairs no enquiry was made as to the authors of the deed.

At length, on the forty-first day from the commencement of the siege, the long-looked-for reinforcements under Martin and Valerian arrived in Rome. They were but 1600 men after all, but they were cavalry troops, hardy horsemen from the regions beyond the Danube, Huns, Sclavonians, and Antes; and their arrival brought joy to the heart of Belisarius, who decided that now the time was come for attempting offensive operations against the enemy. The first sallying party was Belisarius under the command of Trajan, one of the body-guard of the General, a brave and capable man. He was ordered to lead forth 200 light-armed horsemen from the Salarian Gate, and to occupy a little eminence near to one of the Gothic camps. There was to be no hand-to-hand fighting; neither sword nor spear was to be used; only each man's bow was to discharge as many arrows as possible, and when these were exhausted the soldiers were to seek safety in flight. These orders were obeyed. Each Roman arrow transfixed some Gothic warrior or his steed. When their quivers were empty, the skirmishers hastened back under the shelter of the walls of the city. The Goths pursued, but soon found themselves within range of the *ballistae*, which were in full activity on the battlements. It was believed in the Roman camp that 1000 of their enemies had been laid low by this day's doings.

A second sortie under Mundilas and Diogenes and a third under Wilas, all three brave guardsmen of Belisarius, were equally destructive to the enemy, and the result was achieved with equally little cost to the troop, 300 strong in each case, by whom the sortie was effected.

Seeing the success of these maneuvers, Witigis, who had not yet apprehended the difference of training and equipment between his countrymen and the Imperialists, thought he could not do better than imitate them. Victory was evidently to be had if a general made his army small enough: and he accordingly sent 500 horsemen with orders to go as near as they could to the walls, without coming within range of the *ballistae*, and avenge upon the Romans all the evils which they had suffered at their hands. The Goths accordingly took up their position on a little rising ground; and Belisarius, perceiving them, sent Bessas with 1000 men to steal round and take them in rear. The Goths soon found themselves overmastered: many of them fell; the rest fled to their camp and were upbraided by Witigis for their cowardice.

"Why could not they win a victory with a handful of men as the troops on the other side did?" So did the clumsy workman quarrel with his tools. Three days after he got together another band of 500 men, picking them from each of the Gothic camps that he might be sure to have some valiant men among them, and sent them with the same general directions, "to do brave deeds against the enemy" When they drew near, Belisarius sent 1500 horsemen against them under the newly-arrived generals Martin and Valerian. An equestrian battle ensued. Again the Goths, hopelessly outnumbered, were easily put to flight, and great numbers of them were slain.

Not in the Gothic camp only did this uniform success of the Imperial troops, apparently on the most different lines of encounter, excite much and eager questioning: the Roman citizens, whose former criticisms had given place to abject admiration, attributed it all to the marvelous genius of Belisarius. In the Pincian Palace, however, the question was earnestly debated by the friends of the General. Upon this occasion it was that Belisarius expressed that opinion which has been already quoted, that the superiority of the Imperial army in mounted archers was the cause of its unvarying victories over the Goths, whether the battles were fought by larger or smaller bodies of men.

The repeated and brilliant successes of the Imperial troops were almost as embarrassing to Belisarius as to the Gothic King, though in a different way. They fostered both in officers

and soldiers such an overweening contempt of the barbarians, that now nothing would satisfy them but to be led forth to a regular pitched battle under the walls of Rome, and make an end once for all of the presumptuous besiegers. The method which Belisarius preferred, and which was far safer, was to wear out the barbarians by an incessant succession of such movements as Shakespeare indicates by “alarums, excursions”. He dreaded putting Fortune to the test with the whole of his little army at once. He found, however, at last that to keep that army at all in hand it was necessary (as it had been at the battle of Sura) to yield to their wish in this thing; and he indulged the hope that their confidence of victory might be one powerful factor in the process which would enable him to secure it. Still he would have made his grand attack somewhat by way of a surprise, but was foiled in this endeavor by the information given by deserters to the Goths. At length, therefore, he resigned himself to fight a regular pitched battle with full notice on either side. The customary harangues were delivered by each commander. Belisarius reminded his soldiers that this battle was one of their own seeking, and that they would have to justify the advice which they had ventured to give, and to maintain the credit of their previous victories, by their conduct on that day. He bade them not spare either horse or javelin or bow in the coming fray, since all such losses should be abundantly made up to them out of his military stores. The purport of the speech of Witigis—if Procopius’s account of it be not a mere rhetorical exercise—was to assure his brethren in arms that it was no selfish care for his crown and dignity which made him the humble suitor for their best assistance on that day. “For the loss of life or kingship I care not; nay, I would pray to put off this purple robe today if only I were assured that it would hang upon Gothic shoulders tomorrow. Even Theodahad’s end seems to me an enviable one, since he died by Gothic hands and lost life and power by the same stroke. But what I cannot bear to contemplate is ruin falling not only on me but on my race. I think of the calamity of the Vandals, and imagine that I see you and your sons carried away into captivity, your wives suffering the last indignities from our implacable foes, myself and my wife, the granddaughter of the great Theodoric, led whithersoever the insulting conqueror shall please to order. Think of all these things, my countrymen, and vow in your own hearts that you will die on this field of battle rather than they shall come to pass. If this be your determination, an easy victory is yours. Few in number are the enemy, and after all they are but Greeks and Greek-like people. The only thing which keeps them together is a vain confidence derived from some recent disasters of ours. Be true to yourselves, and you will soon shatter that confidence and inflict a signal punishment upon them for all the insults that we have received at their hands”.

After this harangue Witigis drew up his army in line of battle, the infantry in the middle, the cavalry on either wing. He stationed them as near as might be to the Gothic camps, in order that when the Romans were defeated, as he made no doubt they would be, owing to their enormous inferiority in numbers, their long flight to the shelter of their walls might be as disastrous to them as possible. Belisarius on his side determined to make his real attack from the Pincian and Salarian Gates. At the same time a feigned attack towards the Gothic camp under Monte Mario was to be made from the Porta Aurelia and the neighborhood of the Tomb of Hadrian. The object of this feigned attack was of course to prevent the large number of Goths on the right bank of the Tiber from swarming across the Milvian Bridge to the assistance of their brethren. Strict orders were, however, given to Valentine, who commanded the troops in this quarter, on no account to advance really within fighting distance of the enemy, but to harass him with a perpetual apparent offer of battle never leading to a decided result.

In further pursuance of the same policy the General accepted the service of a large number of volunteers from among the mechanics of Rome, equipped them with shield and spear, and stationed them in front of the Pancratian Gate. He placed no reliance on the services of these men for actual fighting, utterly unused as they were to the art of war, but he reckoned,

not without cause, on the effect which the sight of so large a body of men would have in preventing the Goths from quitting their camp under Monte Mario. Meanwhile, the orders to the mechanic-volunteers were, not to stir till they should receive the signal from him, a signal which he was fully determined never to give.

The battle, according to the original plan of Belisarius, was to be fought entirely with cavalry, the arm in which he knew himself to be strongest, many of his best foot-soldiers, who were already well-skilled in horsemanship, having provided themselves with horses at the expense of the enemy, and so turned themselves into cavalry. He feared too the instability of such infantry as he had, and their liability to sudden panics, and therefore determined to keep them near to the fosse of the city walls, there to act simply as a slight support for any of the cavalry who might chance to be thrown into confusion. The plan intention was changed at the last moment—the General was in a mood that day for receiving advice from all quarters—by the earnest representations of two valiant Asiatic highlanders, Principius, a Pisidian, and Tarmutus, an Isaurian, whose brother Eunus commanded the contingent of those hardy mountaineers. These men besought him no further to lessen the numbers of his gallant little army by withdrawing the foot-soldiers, the representatives of those mighty legions by which ‘the Romans of old’ had won their greatness, from active service. They asserted their conviction that if, in recent engagements, the infantry had done something less than their duty, the fault lay not with the common soldiers but with the officers, who insisted on being mounted, and who were, too often, only looking about for a favorable moment for flight. Thus the troops were discouraged, because they felt that the men who were giving them orders did not share their dangers. But if Belisarius would allow these horsemen officers to fight that day with the horsemen, and would allow them, Principius and Tarmutus, to share on foot the dangers of the men under their command, and with them to advance boldly against the enemy, they trusted with God’s help to do some deeds against them that the world should know of. Belisarius for long would not yield. He loved the two valiant highlanders: he was loth to run the risk of losing them: he was also loth to run the risk of losing his little army of foot-soldiers. At length, however, he consented. He left the smallest possible number of soldiers to guard, with the help of the Roman populace, the machines on the battlements and at the gates: and placing the main body of his infantry under the command of Principius and Tarmutus, he gave them orders to march behind the cavalry against the enemy. Should any portion of the cavalry be put to flight they were to open their ranks and let them pass through, themselves engaging the enemy till the horsemen had time to reform.

It was felt on both sides that this was to be a decisive trial of strength. Witigis had put in battle array every man of his army available for service, leaving in the camps only the camp-followers and the men who were disabled by their wounds. Early in the morning the hostile ranks closed for battle. The troops in front of the Pincian and Salarian Gates soon got the upper hand of the enemy, among whose clustered masses their arrows fell with terrible effect. But the Gothic multitudes were too thick, and the men too stout-hearted for even this slaughter to produce complete rout. As one rank of the barbarians was mown down, another pressed forward to supply its place. Thus the Romans, who had slowly pressed forward, found themselves by noon close to the Gothic camp, but surrounded still by so compact a body of their foes that they began to feel that any pretext which would enable them to return in good order under the shelter of their walls would be a welcome thing. The heroes of this period of the struggle were an Isaurian guardsman named Athenodorus and two Cappadocians, Theodoret and Georgius, who darted forth in front of the Roman line and with their spears transfixed many of the enemy. Thus again the men who came from the rough sides of Mount Taurus showed themselves conspicuous among the most warlike spirits of the Imperial army.

While this hot strife was being waged on the north-east of the city, strange events were taking place on the other side of the river in the Neronian plain under Monte Mario. Here the Gothic general Marcias had been enjoined by his King to play a waiting game, and above all things to watch the Milvian Bridge in order that no Romans should cross by it to succor their countrymen. The Romans, it will be remembered, had received a similar order from their general, and it might therefore have been expected that there would be no battle. But as the day wore on, it chanced that one of the feigned assaults of the Roman troops was turned into a real one by the sudden giving way of the Gothic ranks. The flying Goths were unable to reach their camp, but turned and reformed upon one of the hills in the neighborhood of the Monte Mario. Among the Roman troops were many sailors and slaves acting the soldier for the first time, and ignorant of discipline. Possibly, though this is not expressly stated, some of the mechanic crew who were stationed in front of the Pancratan Gate joined in the pursuit. At any rate the successful Romans soon became quite unmanageable by their leaders. The loudly-shouted commands of their general, Valentine, were unheard or disregarded. They did not concern themselves with the slaughter of the flying Goths. They did not press on to seize and cross the Milvian Bridge, in which case their opportune assistance to Belisarius might almost have enabled him to end the war at a stroke. They only occupied themselves with the plunder of the Gothic camp, where silver vessels and many other precious things (evidences of the enriching effect of the long peace on the Ostrogothic warriors) attracted their greedy eyes. The natural consequence followed. The Goths, so long left unmolested, and leisurely reforming on Monte Mario, looked on for a time quietly at the plunder of their camp. Then taking heart from their long reprieve, and reading the signs of disorder in the hostile forces, they dashed on with a savage yell, leaped the ramparts of their camp, and scattered the invaders of it like chaff before the wind. Silver vessels and golden trappings, all the spoils for the sake of which the greedy crew had sacrificed the chance of a splendid victory, were dashed in terror to the ground, while the slaves and sailors dressed up in military garb fled on all sides in utter rout and confusion from the camp, or fell by hundreds under the Gothic sword. The day's fighting on the Neronian Plain had been a series of blunders on both sides, but the eventual victory rested with the side which made fewest, Marcias and his Goths.

At the same time the fortunes of the Imperial army on the north-east of the city began to decline. The Goths, driven to bay at the rampart of their camp, formed a *testudo* with their shields and succeeded in withstanding the Roman onset, and in slaying many men and horses. The smallness of the attacking army became more and more terribly apparent both to itself and the enemy; and at length the right wing of the Gothic cavalry, bending round, charged the Romans in flank. They broke and fled. The cavalry reached the ranks of the supporting infantry, who did not support them, but turned and fled likewise; and soon the whole Roman army, horse and foot, generals and common soldiers, were in headlong flight toward the city walls.

Like Nolan at the charge of Balaklava, Principius and Tarmutus atoned by a brave death for the disastrous counsels which in all good faith they had given to the General. With a little knot of faithful friends they for a time arrested the headlong torrent of the Gothic pursuit, and the delay thus caused saved numberless lives in the Imperial army. Then Principius fell, hacked to pieces by countless wounds, and forty-two of his brave foot-soldiers fell around him. Tarmutus with two Isaurian javelins in his hand long kept the enemy at bay. He found his strength failing him, and was just about to sink down in exhaustion, when a charge of his brother Ennes, at the head of some of his cavalry, gave him a few moments' relief. Then plucking up heart again, he shook himself loose from his pursuers and ran at full speed (he was ever swift of foot) towards the walls of the city. He reached the Pincian Gate, pierced with many wounds and be dabbled with gore, but still holding his two Isaurian javelins in his hand.

At the gate he fell down fainting. His comrades thought him dead, but laid him on a shield and bore him into the City. He was not dead, however : he still breathed; but two days afterwards he expired of his wounds, leaving a name memorable to the whole army, but especially to his trusty Isaurian comrades.

The soldiers who had already entered the City shut the gates with a clash, and refused to let the fugitives enter, lest the Goths should enter with them. Panic-stricken, and with scarcely a thought of self-defense, the defeated soldiers huddled up under the shelter of the walls, their spears all broken or cast away in the flight, their bows useless by reason of the dense masses in which they were packed together. The Goths appeared in menacing attitude at the outer edge of the fosse. Had they poured down across it, as they were at first minded to, they might have well-nigh annihilated the army of Belisarius. But when they saw the citizens and the soldiers within the City clustering more thickly upon the walls, afraid of the terrible ballistae they retired, indulging only in the luxury of taunts and epithets of barbarian scorn hurled at the beaten army.

The events of the day had fully justified the intuitive judgment of Belisarius. The besieged, though terrible in skirmishes and sudden excursions, were too few in number for a pitched battle. "The fight" says Procopius, "which began at the camps of the barbarians ended in the trench and close to the walls of the City".

After this disastrous day the Imperial troops reverted to their old method of unexpected sallies by small bodies of troops, and practiced it with much of their former success. There is something of a Homeric, something of a mediaeval character in the stories which Procopius tells us of this period of the siege. No masses of troops were engaged on either side. Infantry were unused, save that a few bold and fleet-footed soldiers generally accompanied the horsemen. Single combats between great champions on horseback on either side were the order of the day.

Thus in one sally the general Bessas transfixed three of the bravest of the Gothic horsemen in succession with his spear, and with little aid from his followers put the rest of their squadron to flight. Thus also Chorsamantis, a Hun and one of the body-guard of Belisarius, in a charge on the Neronian Plain pursued too far, and was separated from his comrades. Seeing this the Goths closed round him, but he, standing on his defence, slew the foremost of their band. They wavered and fled before him. Drawing near to the walls of their camp and feeling that the eyes of their fellows were upon them, they turned, for very shame that so many should be chased by one. Again he slew their bravest, and again they fled. Thus he pursued them up to the very gates of the camp, and then returned across the plain unharmed. Soon after, in another combat, a Gothic arrow pierced his left thigh, penetrating even to the bone. The army surgeons insisted upon a rest of several days after so grave an injury, but the sturdy barbarian bore with impatience so long a seclusion from the delights of battle, and was often heard to murmur, "I will make those Gothic fellows pay for my wounded leg". Before long the wound healed and he was out of the doctors' hands. One day at the noontide meal, according to his usual custom, he became intoxicated, and determined that he would sally forth alone against the enemy, and, as he said over and over again to himself in the thick tones of a drunkard, "make them pay for my leg" Biding down to the Pincian Gate he declared that he was sent by the General to go forth against the enemy. The sentinels, not daring to challenge the assertion of one of the body-guard of Belisarius, and perhaps not perceiving his drunken condition, allowed him to pass through the gate. When the Goths saw a solitary figure riding forth from the city their first thought was "Here comes a deserter" but the bent bow and flying arrows of Chorsamantis soon undeceived them. Twenty of them came against him, whom he easily dispersed. He rode leisurely forward to the camp. The Romans from the ramparts, not recognizing who he was, took him for some madman. Soon he was surrounded by the

outstreaming Goths, and after performing prodigies of valor fell dead amid a ring of slaughtered enemies, leaving a name to be celebrated for many a day in the camp-fire songs of his savage countrymen.

In reading this and many similar stories told us by Procopius we are of course bound to remember that we do not hear the Gothic accounts of their own exploits, accounts which might sometimes exhibit a Gothic champion chasing scores of flying Byzantines. But after making all needful abatement on this account, we shall probably be safe in supposing that the balance of hardihood, of wild reckless daring, was on the side of the Imperial army. Though the members of it called themselves Romans they were really for the most part, like Chorsamantis, barbarians, fresher from the wilderness than the Ostrogothic soldiers, every one of whom had been born and bred amid the delights of Italy. And the stern stuff of which the Imperial soldiers were made was tempered and pointed by what still remained of Roman discipline, and driven by the matchless skill of Belisarius straight to the heart of the foe.

On another occasion, the general Constantine, perhaps desiring to vie with the achievements of his rival Bessas, sallied out with a small body of Huns from the Porta Aurelia and found himself surrounded by a large troop of the enemy. To preserve himself from being attacked on all sides he retreated with his men into one of the narrow streets opening on Nero's Stadium. Here his men, dismounting, discharged their arrows at the enemy, who menaced them from the opposite ends of the street. The Goths thought, "Their quivers must soon be empty, and then we will rush in upon them from both sides and destroy them" But such was the deadly effect of the Hunnish missiles that the Goths found before long that their number was reduced more than one half. Night was closing in. They were seized with panic and fled. The pursuing Huns still aimed their deadly arrows at the backs of the flying foe. Thus, after effecting a frightful slaughter among the Goths, Constantine with his 'Massagetic' horsemen returned in safety to Home that night.

At another time it befell that Peranius, the general who came from the slopes of Caucasus, headed a sortie from the Salarian Gate. It was at first successful, and the Goths fled before the Romans. Then, when the sun was going down, the tide of battle turned. An Imperial soldier flying headlong before the Goths fell unawares into an underground vault prepared by 'the Romans of old' as a magazine for corn. Unable to climb the steep sides of the vault, and afraid to call for help, he passed all night in that confinement, in evil case. Next day another Roman sortie, more successful than the last, sent the Goths flying over the same tract of country, and lo! a Gothic soldier fell headlong into the same vault. The two companions in misfortune began to consult as to their means of escape, and bound themselves by solemn vows each to be as careful for his companion's safety as his own. Then they both sent up a tremendous shout, which was heard, as it chanced, by a band of Gothic soldiers. They came, they peeped over the mouth of the vaults and asked in Gothic tongue whoever was shouting from that darksome hole. The Goth alone replied, told his tale, and begged his comrades to deliver him from that horrible pit. They let down ropes into the vault, the ropes were made fast, they hauled up a man out of the pit, and to their astonishment a Roman soldier stood before them. The Roman—who had sagaciously argued that if his companion came up first no Gothic soldiers would trouble themselves to haul up him—explained the strange adventure and besought them to lower the ropes again for their own comrade. They did so, and when the Goth was drawn up he told them of his plighted faith, and entreated them to let his companion in danger go free. They complied, and the Roman returned unharmed to the City. As Ariosto sings of Ferrau and Rinaldo, when those fierce enemies agreed to roam together in search of Angelica who was beloved by both of them,—

'Oh loyal knights of that long vanished day!

Their faiths were two, they wooed one woman's smile,
 And still they felt rude tokens of their fray,
 The blows which each on other rained erewhile:
 Yet through dark woods by paths that seemed to stray
 They rode, and each nor feared nor harboured guile.'
 (*Orlando Furioso*, I. 22.)

A breath of the age of chivalry seems wafted over the savage battlefield, as we read of the vow between the two deadly enemies in the vault so loyally observed, and we half persuade ourselves that we perceive another aura from that still future age when men everywhere, recognizing that they have all fallen into the same pit of ruin and longing for deliverance, shall listen to the voice of the Divine Reconciler, "Sirs, ye are brethren : why do ye wrong one to another?"

The month of June was now begun. The combatants had reached the third month of the siege and had finished two years of the war. A certain Euthalius had landed at Tarracina bringing from Byzantium some much-needed treasure for the pay of the soldiers. In order to secure for him and for his escort of 100 men a safe entrance at nightfall into the city, Belisarius harassed the enemy through the long summer's day with incessant expectations of attack, expectations which, after the soldiers had taken their midday meal, were converted into realities. As usual the attacks were made on both sides, from the Pincian Gate and over the Neronian Plain. At the former place the Romans were commanded by three of Belisarius's guards, the Persian Artasines, Buchas the Hun, and Cutila the Thracian. The tide of war rolled backwards and forwards many times, and many succors poured forth both from the City and from the Gothic camp, over both of which the shouts and the din of battle resounded. At length the Romans prevailed, and drove back their foes. In this action the splendid contempt of pain shown by Cutila and by a brother-guardsmen Arzes greatly impressed the mind of Procopius. Cutila had been wounded by a javelin which lodged in his skull. He still took part in the fight, and at sunset rode back with his comrades to the city, the javelin nodding to and fro in his head with every movement of his body. Arzes had received a Gothic arrow at the angle of the eye and nose, which came with such violence that it almost penetrated to the nape of his neck. He too rode back to Rome, like Cutila apparently heedless of the weapon which was shaking in the wound.

Meanwhile things were going ill with Martin and Valerian, who commanded the Imperial troops on the Neronian Plain. They were surrounded by large numbers of the enemy, and seemed on the point of being overwhelmed by them. At this crisis—it was now growing late—an opportune charge under Buchas the Hun, withdrawn for this purpose from the sortie on the other side of the city, saved the day. Buchas himself performed prodigies of valor. For a long time he alone, though still but a stripling, kept twelve of the enemy at bay. At length one Goth was able to deal him a slight wound under the right arm-pit, and another, a more serious wound, transversely, through the muscles of the thigh. By this time, however, he and his men had restored the fortunes of the Imperial troops. Valerian and Martin rode up with speed, scattered the barbarians who surrounded Buchas, and led him home between them, each holding one of his reins.

The object of all this bloody skirmishing was attained. Euthalius with the treasure, creeping along the Appian Way, stole at nightfall, unperceived, into the City. When all were returned within the walls, the wounded heroes were of course attended to; and Procopius, insatiable in his desire to widen his experience of human life, seems to have visited the surgical wards. The case of Arzes, who was looked upon as one of the bravest men in the household of Belisarius, gave the surgeons much anxious thought. To save the sight of the eye they held to

be altogether impossible; but moreover they feared that the laceration of the multitude of nerves through which the arrow must be drawn, if it were extracted, would cause the death of the patient. A physician, Theoctistus by name, pressed his finger on the nape of his neck and asked if that gave him pain. When Arzes replied that it did, Theoctistus gave him the glad assurance, "Then we shall be able to save your life and your eye too". At once cutting off the feather end of the arrow where it projected from the face, the surgeons dissected the comparatively insensitive tissues at the end of the neck till they grasped the triangular point of the arrow, and drawing it out endways gave the patient but little pain and left him with his eye uninjured and his face unscarred. The cases of Cutila and Buchas terminated less favorably. When the javelin was drawn from the head of the former he fainted. Inflammation of the membranes of the brain set in, followed by delirium, and he died not many days after. Buchas also died after three days, of the terrible hemorrhage from his wounded thigh. The physicians assured Procopius that had the lance penetrated straight in, his life might have been preserved, but the transverse wound was fatal.

The deaths of these heroes filled the Roman army with sorrow, which was only mitigated by the sounds of lamentation arising from the Gothic camp. These bewailings, not previously heard after much fiercer encounters, were due to the exalted rank of the warriors who had fallen by the sword of Buchas.

Such were some of the sallies and skirmishes which occurred in this memorable siege. Sixty-nine encounters in all took place, and Procopius wisely remarks that it is not needful for him to give the details of all of them. He himself, as we shall soon see, left the scene of action for a time; and for some months of the remainder of the siege we miss the minute descriptive touches (though some readers may find them tedious) which reveal the personal presence of the historian in the earlier acts of the great drama.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BLOCKADE

In the terrible struggle of the Thirty Years' War there was a memorable interlude when Gustavus Adolphus and Wallenstein watched one another for eleven weeks before the walls of Nuremberg, the Swede in vain attempting to storm the entrenchments of the Bohemian, the Bohemian hoping that famine and pestilence would force the Swede to move off and leave Nuremberg to his mercy. That 'Campaign of Famine' was virtually a drawn game. Gustavus was forced to evacuate his position, but Wallenstein's army was so weakened by hunger and disease that he had to leave the famine-stricken city unattacked.

Somewhat similar to this was the position of the two armies that now struggled for the possession of Rome. It was clear that the Goths could not carry the defenses of the City by simply rushing up to them in undisciplined valor with their rude engines of war, and seeking to swarm over them. It was equally clear that the little band of Belisarius could not beat off the enemy by a pitched battle on the plains of the Campagna. The siege must therefore become a mere blockade, and the question was which party in the course of this blockade would be soonest exhausted. In the course of the Crimean War a Russian diplomatist uttered the famous saying, "My master has three good generals, and their names are January, February, and March". Even so in the dread conflict that was impending, two spectral forms, each marshalling a grim and shadowy army, were to stalk around the walls of the City and the six camps of the Goths. They would fight on both sides, but the terrible question for Belisarius and for Witigis was, to which side would they lend the more effectual aid. The names of these two invisible champions were Limos and Loimos (Famine and Pestilence).

Recognizing the changed character of the siege, Witigis took one step which he would have done well to have taken three months before, towards completing the blockade of Rome. About three and a-half miles from the city there is a point now marked by a picturesque mediaeval tower called Torre Fiscale, where two great lines of aqueducts cross one another, run for about 500 yards side by side, and then cross again. The lofty arcade of the Anio Vetus and Claudia is one of these lines, running at first to the south of its companion, then north, and then south again. The other is the arcade of the Marcian, Tepulan, and Julian waters, which has been used by Pope Sixtus V as the support of his hastily-constructed aqueduct, the Aqua Felice. Even now, in their ruined state, these long rows of lofty arches, crossing and recrossing one another, wear an aspect of solemn strength; and were a battle to be fought over this ground today they might play no unimportant part in the struggle of the contending armies. Here then the Goths, filling up the lower arches with clay and rubble, fashioned for themselves a fortress, rude perchance, but of considerable strength. They placed in it a garrison of 7000 men, who commanded not only the Via Latina (which was absolutely close to the aqueducts), but also the Via Appia (which runs nearly parallel to the Latina at about a miles distance), so effectually that the transport of provisions to Rome along either of those roads seems to have become practically impossible.

When the citizens saw these two great roads to the south blocked, discouragement began to fill their hearts. They had long looked forward to the month of Quintilis—that month which also bore the name of the great Julius, and in which they had celebrated for a thousand years the victory of the Lake Regillus—as the month of their deliverance from the Goths; and indeed a Sibylline prophecy of the Sibyl was in circulation among the remnant of the Patricians which intimated not very obscurely that this should come to pass. Yet Quintilis with its burning heat

had come, was passing away, and still the yellow-haired barbarians clustered about the walls. So long as the crops stood in the Campagna some slight mitigation of the impending famine was afforded by bands of daring horsemen who rode forth at nightfall, hurriedly reaped the standing ears, laid them on their horses' backs, and galloped back to Rome to sell the furtive harvest at a high price to the wealthy citizens. But now even this resource was beginning to fail, and all the citizens, rich and poor alike, were being reduced to live on the grass which, as Procopius remarks, always, in winter and summer alike, covers with its green robe the land of the Romans. For animal food the resource of the moment was to make a kind of sausage out of the flesh of the army mules which had died of disease. Thus was the General, Limos, beginning to show himself in great force on the side hostile to Rome.

Belisarius, who was already sorely harassed by the daily increasing difficulties of commissariat, had the additional vexation of receiving, one day, an embassy from the hunger-stricken Romans. They told him in plain words that the patriotism and the loyalty to the Empire, on which they prided themselves when they opened to him the gates of the city, now seemed to them the extremity of foolishness. They felt that they were

‘Cursed with the burden of a granted prayer’

and longed for nothing so much as to be put back into the same happy state they were in, before a soldier from Byzantium showed his face among them. But that now could never be. Their estates in the country round were wasted. The city was so shut up that none of the necessaries of life could enter it. Many of their fellow-citizens were already dead; and upon these they thought with envy, wishing that they could be laid quietly underground beside them. Hunger made them bold to speak thus to the mighty Belisarius. Hunger made every other evil that they had ever endured seem light. The thought of death by hunger made any other mode of death seem a delightful prospect. In one word, let him lead them forth against the enemy, and they promised that he should not find them fail from his side in the stress of battle.

With a haughty smile and a profession of equanimity which masked his real discouragement, Belisarius replied: “I have expected all the events that have occurred in this siege, and among them some such proposal as this of yours. I know what the populace is fickle, easily discouraged, always ready to suggest impossible enterprises, and to throw away real advantages. I have no intention, however, of complying with your counsels, and so sacrificing the interests of my master and your lives as well. We do not make war in this way by a series of ill-considered, spasmodic efforts. War is a matter of calm and serious calculation, and my calculations of the game tell me that to wait is our present policy. You are anxious to hazard all upon a single throw of the dice, but it is not my habit to take any such short cuts to success. You announce that you are willing to go with me to battle. Pray when did you learn your drill? Have you never heard that a certain amount of practice is necessary to enable men to fight; and do you imagine that the enemy will be kind enough to wait while you are learning how to use your weapons? Still, I thank you for your readiness to fight, and I praise the martial spirit which now animates you. To explain to you some of my reasons for delay, I will inform you that the largest armament ever sent forth by the Empire has been collected by Justinian out of every land, and is now covering the Ionian Gulf and the Campanian shore. In a few days I trust they will be with us, relieving your necessities by the supplies which they will bring, and burying the barbarians under the multitude of their darts. Now retire. I forgive you for the impatience which you have shown, and I proceed to my arrangements for hastening the arrival of the reinforcements”.

Having with these boastful words revived the spirits of the Romans, the General dispatched the trusty Procopius to Naples to find out what truth there might be in the rumours

of coming help. The historian set out at nightfall, escorted by the guardsman Mundilas with a small body of horse. The little party stole out of the Porta San Paolo, escaped the notice of the Gothic garrison at Torre Fiscale, and felt themselves, before long, past the danger of pursuit by the barbarians. Procopius then dismissed his escort and proceeded unattended to Naples. Soon the General's wife Antonina followed him thither, under the escort of Martin and Trajan, partly in order that Belisarius might know that she was in a place of safety, but also that her considerable administrative talents might be employed in organizing expeditions of relief. Certainly they did not find that vast Byzantine host darkening all the bays of Magna Graecia of which Belisarius had bragged to the Roman populace. But they did find in Campania a considerable number of unemployed cavalry; they also found that it was possible safely to diminish some of the Campanian and Apulian garrisons, and above all, as the Romans had command of the sea, it was easy to collect a goodly number of well-loaded provision-ships. Procopius alone, before he was joined by Antonina, had forwarded five hundred soldiers to Rome, together with a great number of provision-ships, which possibly unloaded their cargoes at Ostia.

During the time, probably lasting four months (July to November), that Procopius was engaged on this important mission, we miss (as has been already remarked) all the minutely graphic touches of his pen as to the siege of Rome, and these are not compensated by much that is interesting as to his stay at Neapolis. He saw there the remains of a fine mosaic picture of Theodoric which had been set up in that monarch's reign. Apparently the cement with which the little colored stones were fastened to the wall was badly made. The head had fallen shortly before Theodoric's death; eight years after, the breast and belly had fallen, and Athalaric had died a few days afterward. The fall of the part representing the loins had preceded only by a little space the murder of Amalasintha. And now the legs and feet had also fallen, evidently showing that the whole Gothic monarchy was shortly to come to an end.

It was at this time also that Procopius studied the volcanic phenomena of Vesuvius, whose sullen caprices he describes very much in the language that would be used by a modern traveler. When he was there the mountain was bellowing in its well-known savage style, but had not yet begun to fling up its lava-stream; though this was daily expected. The upper part was excessively steep, the lower densely wooded. In the summit there was a cave so deep that it seemed to reach down to the very roots of the mountain, and in that cave, if one dared to bend over and look in, one could see the fire. People still kept alive the remembrance of the great eruption of 472, even as they now speak with awe of the eruption which occurred exactly fourteen centuries later, and point out to the traveler the wide-wasting desolation caused by the "lava di settanta due" In that earlier eruption the light volcanic stones were carried as far as Constantinople, so alarming the citizens that an annual ceremony (something like the Rogations in the Church at Vienne) was instituted for deliverance from this peril. By another eruption the stones were thrown as far as Tripoli in Africa. But Vesuvius upon the whole had not an evil reputation. The husbandmen had observed that when it was in a state of activity their crops of all kinds were more abundant than in other years: and the fine pure air of the mountain was deemed so conducive to health that physicians sent consumptive patients to dwell upon its flanks.

Leaving Procopius and Antonina at Naples, we return with their escorts to Rome. Great joy was brought to the citizens when Mundilas reported that the Appian Way was practically clear by night, the Goths not venturing to stir far from their aqueduct fortress after sunset. Belisarius hence inferred that while still postponing a general engagement he might adopt a somewhat bolder policy with the enemy, a policy which would make them besieged as well as besiegers. Martin and Trajan, after they had escorted Antonina on the road to Naples, were directed to take up their quarters at Tarracina. Gontharis and a band of Herulians occupied the

yet nearer post of Albano, situated, like Tarracina, on the Appian Way, but at only one-fourth of the distance from Rome.

Albano, it is true, was before long taken by the Goths, but the general policy of encompassing, harassing, and virtually besieging the besiegers remained successful. Magnus, one of the generals of cavalry, and Sinthues, another of the brave guardsmen of Belisarius, were sent up the Anio valley to Tibur. They occupied and repaired the old citadel which stood where Tivoli now stands, surrounded by the steaming cascades of Anio, and, from this coign of vantage, by their frequent excursions grievously harassed the barbarians, whose reserves were perhaps quartered not far from the little town. In one of these forays Sinthues had the sinews of his right hand severed by a spear-thrust, and was thus disabled from actual fighting ever after.

On the southern side of Rome the Basilica of St. Paul, connected by its long colonnade with the Ostian Gate of the city (where stands the pyramid of Caius Cestius), and protected on one side by the stream of the Tiber, furnished a capital stronghold, but one which, from religious reasons, the Goths had hitherto refrained from including in their sphere of operations. The orthodox Belisarius was troubled with no such scruples. All the Huns in his army—the Huns were still heathen—were sent thither under the command of Valerian to form a camp between the Basilica and the river. Here they could both obtain forage for their own horses and grievously interfere with the foraging excursions of the Goths from their fortress at Torre Fiscale. In truth, hunger, as the result of all these operations of Belisarius, was now beginning to tell severely on the unwieldy Gothic host. And not Hunger only: the other great general, Pestilence, began to lay his hand heavily on the barbarians. He was present in all their camps, but in none more terribly than in the new one between the Aqueducts. At length that stronghold had to be abandoned, and the dwindled remnant of its defenders returned to the camps nearer Rome. The deadly malaria had communicated itself also to the Huns in their trenches by S. Paolo, and they too returned to Rome. Already we seem to perceive in the sixth century the phenomenon with which we are so familiar in the nineteenth, that the malaria is more fatal in the solitary Campagna than in the crowded city.

So the autumn wore on, both armies suffering terrible privations, but each hoping to outlast the other. Probably about the month of October, Antonina returned to her fond and anxious husband. At least, on the 18th of November we find her taking part in a strange transaction, the particulars of which are preserved for us with dramatic vividness by the old Papal biographer. To understand it we must turn back a page or two in the tedious history of the Monophysite controversy. It will be remembered that the venerable Pope Agapetus during his visit to Constantinople in 536 had convicted Anthimus, the Byzantine Patriarch, of Monophysite heresy, had brought about his deposition from his see, and had Theodora consecrated Mennas in his room. The Empress Theodora, who clung to her Monophysite creed as passionately as if it had been some new form of sensual gratification, set her heart on the reversal of this deposition; and seeing the influence exerted over her husband's mind by the successors of St. Peter, determined that Anthimus should be recalled by the mediation of the Roman Pontiff. To the restless and intriguing intellect of the Empress the torrents of noble blood which were being shed in desperate conflict round the walls of the Eternal City meant merely that she was a little nearer to or a little further from the accomplishment of her project for having her own Bishop reinstated in his see. With this view she sent letters to the new Pope, Silverius, urging him to pay a speedy visit to Constantinople, or, failing in that act of courtesy, at least to restore Anthimus to his old dignity. Silverius, when he read the letters, said, "Now I know that this woman will compass my death"; but trusting in God and St. Peter he returned a positive refusal to recall the heretic who was justly condemned for his wickedness.

Finding Silverius inflexible, Theodora listened to the offer which had been already made by the archdeacon Vigilius, who was at this time acting as *Apocrisiarius*, or, in the language of later times, Nuncio of the Roman Bishop at the Imperial Court. This man, who, it may be remembered, was the expectant legate of the Papal dignity, if Pope Boniface II had obtained the power to will away that splendid heritage, now offered full compliance with all Theodora's demands in favor of the Monophysites, and in addition, it is said, a bribe of 200 pounds weight of gold if he were enthroned instead of Silverius in the chair of St. Peter. The Empress therefore addressed a letter to the Patrician Belisarius directing him to find some occasion against Silverius to depose him from the Pontificate, or, if that were impossible, to force him to repair to Constantinople. The noble Belisarius, who had little liking for the task, and had enough upon his hands in the defence of Rome without plunging into the controversy concerning the Two Natures, had perhaps lingered in the fulfillment of this odious commission. Now, if our reading of the course of events be correct, Antonina, anxious to win the favor of Theodora, having returned from her successful mission to Campania, urged her unwilling husband to execute the commands of their patroness.

A letter was produced, written in the name of Silverius and addressed to King Witigis, offering to open the Asinarian Gate to the Goths. There was this much of plausibility in the alleged treason, that the Lateran Church is close to the Asinarian Gate, and possibly it might seem not inconsistent with the office of a Christian bishop to end the frightful sufferings of his flock even by such an act of disloyalty as this. The contemporaries, however, of Silverius seem to have entirely acquitted him of responsibility in this matter: and even the names of the forgers of the document are given by one historian. They were, Marcus, a clerk, probably employed at the General's headquarters, and a guardsman named Julian.

With this letter in his hand, Belisarius sent for Silverius and urged him to avert his own ruin by obeying the mandates of the terrible Augusta, renouncing the decrees of Chalcedon and entering into communion with the Monophysites. For a moment Silverius seems to have wavered. He left the palace, withdrew from the dangerous Lateran, shut himself up in the church of St. Sabina on the desolate Aventine, and there took counsel with his friends what he should do. Photius, the son of Antonina, was sent to lure him from his retreat by promises of safety.

The Pope went once to the Pincian, notwithstanding the advice of his friends "to put no confidence in the oaths of the Greeks" He returned that time in safety though still unyielding; but going a second time with a heavy heart and fearing the malice of his enemies, he was, Liberatus tells us, "seen by his friends no more". The expressive silence of this historian corresponds with the fuller details given by the, perhaps later, Papal biographer: "At the first and the second veils" (such were the semi-regal pomp and seclusion which he great General maintained) "all the clergy were parted from him. Then Silverius, entering with Vigilius only into the Mausoleum, found Antonina the Patrician's wife lying on a couch, and Vilisarius [Belisarius] sitting at her feet. And when the Patrician's wife saw him, she said to him: Tell us, Lord Pope Silverius, what have we done to thee and to the Romans that thou shouldst wish to betray us into the hands of the Goths? While she was yet speaking the sub-deacon John, District-visitor of the first Region, stripped the pallium from his shoulders and led him into a bed-room. There he stripped him, put on him the monastic dress, and concealed him. Then Sixtus the sub-deacon, District-visitor of the sixth Region, seeing him already turned into a monk, went forth and made this announcement to the clergy: The Lord Pope has been deposed and made a monk. Then they, hearing this, all fled; and Vigilius the Archdeacon received Silverius as if into his protection, and sent him to banishment in Pontus"—or rather, as Liberatus tells us, to Patara in Lycia. Assuredly the first-fruits of the restored Imperial dominion in Italy were bitter for the Roman Bishops who had so large a share in bringing about

the change. That a Pope, the son of a Pope and a great Roman noble, should have the pallium torn from him and be thrust forth into obscure exile at the bidding of a woman, and that woman the daughter of an actress and a circus-rider, was a degradation to which the Arian Theodoric and his successors had never subjected the representative of St. Peter.

We will anticipate the course of the narrative by a few months in order to finish the story of Silverius. When he arrived at Patara his wrongs stirred the compassion of the Bishop of that city, who sought an audience with the Emperor and said, "Of all the many kings who reign in the world not one has suffered such cruel reverses of fortune as this man, who, as Pope, is over the whole Church". Justinian, who was perhaps ignorant of his wife's machinations, ordered that Silverius should be carried back to Rome and put on his trial. If the letters attributed to him were genuine, he should still have the choice of the episcopate of any other city but Rome; if forged, he should be restored to the Papal throne. Vigilius—so his enemies asserted—terrified by the return of his rival, sent a message to Belisarius, "Hand over to me Silverius; else can I not pay the price which I promised for the popedom". The unhappy ex-pontiff was transferred to the custody of two of the body-guard of Vigilius, and by them taken to the desolate island of Palmaria, where, being fed on the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, he expired on the 21st of June, 538. Posterity revered him as a martyr, and many sick persons were cured at his tomb.

We return to the siege of Rome. The month of December was now reached. Fresh troops, whose numbers were considerable when compared with the little band of Belisarius, though not when compared with the still remaining multitudes of the besiegers, had been dispatched from the East, and were collecting in the harbors of Southern Italy. There were at Naples 3000 Isaurians under Paulus and Conon, at Otranto 800 Thracian horsemen under John, and 1000 other cavalry under Alexander and Marcentius. There had already arrived in Rome by the Via Latina 300 horsemen under Zeno; and the 500 soldiers (perhaps infantry) collected by Procopius were still in Campania waiting to enter Rome.

Of the fresh generals who thus appear upon the scene, the only one of whom we need take special notice is John. He was the nephew of Vitalian, and from that relationship might have been supposed to be not a safe servant for Justinian, by whom Vitalian had been murdered. But we can discern no evidence of his being regarded with suspicion on this account. He was a skillful general and a stout-hearted soldier, absolutely incapable of fear, and able to vie with any of the barbarians in the endurance of hardship and in contentment with the coarsest fare. Either a cruel disposition, or, possibly, mere love for the gory revel of battle, had procured for him the epithet of *Sanguinarius*, under which he appears in the Papal Biography. Next to Bessas and Constantine, he was probably the most important officer now in the Imperial service in Italy, and, as we shall see hereafter, his fame was viewed with some jealousy by Belisarius. Although there were other officers bearing the same popular name, to prevent the tedious repetition either of his gory epithet or of his relationship to Vitalian, he will in these pages be called simply John, the others being distinguished by their peculiar epithets.

The large number of troops under Paulus and Conon were ordered to sail with at speed to Ostia. John, with his 1800 horsemen, to whom were joined the 500 soldiers raised by Procopius, marched along the Appian Way, escorting a long train of wagons laden with provisions for the famishing citizens of Rome. If the enemy should attack them their purpose was to form the wagons in a circle round them and fight behind this hastily raised barrier. No such attack, however, appears to have been made. The Goths at this time were thinking of embassies and oratory rather than of cutting off the enemy's supplies. It was no small disappointment to John and his troops to find Tarracina destitute of Roman forces. They had reckoned on meeting there Martin and Trajan, whom Belisarius had a few days before withdrawn into the city. However, favored perhaps in part by the fight which was at the same

time going on round the walls of Rome, both divisions of the army, by sea and land, arrived safely at Ostia, with all the stores of corn and wine with which they had freighted their ships and piled their wagons. The Isaurians dug a deep ditch round their quarters in the harbor-city, and the troops of John placed themselves in laager' (to use the phrase with which South African warfare has made us familiar) behind their wagons. Meanwhile to divert the attention of the barbarians from the movements of the relieving armies Belisarius had planned a fresh sortie. The story of these sallies is becoming monotonous, from their almost uniform success, but we are nearing the end of the catalogue. The main attack was to be made this time from the Porta Flaminia, a gate which had been so fast closed up by Belisarius that the Goths had practically come to regard it not only as unable, but also as containing for them no menace of a sally. Now, however, the General removed by night the large masses of stone (taken very likely from the *agger* of Servius Tullius) with which he had filled it up and drew up the great body of his troops behind it. A feigned attack made by 1000 horsemen under Trajan and Diogenes, issuing from the Pincian Gate, distracted the attention of the Goths, and caused them to pour out from the neighboring camps in chase of the flying Romans. When they were in all the confusion of pursuit, Belisarius ordered the Flaminian Gate to be opened and launched his well-drilled troops against the unsuspecting foe. The Romans charged across the intervening space, and were soon close up to the ramparts of that which we have called the First Gothic Camp, nearest of all the camps to the walls of Rome. A steep and narrow pathway which led to the main gate of the camp was held for a time, in Thermopylae fashion, by a courageous and well-armed barbarian, but Mundilas, the brave guardsman, at length slew the Gothic Leonidas and suffered no one to fill his place. The Roman soldiers pressed on, and swarmed round the ramparts of the camp, but, few as were the defenders within it, they were kept for some time at bay by the strength of the works. "For the fosse" says our historian, "was dug to a great depth, and the earth taken out from it, being all thrown to the inside, had made a very high bank which served the purpose of a wall, and was strongly armed with very sharp stakes and many of them". Then one of the household guard of Belisarius, an active soldier named Aquilinus, catching hold of a horse's bridle leaped upon its back, and was carried by its spring right over the rampart into the camp. Here he slew many of the Goths, but gathering round him they hurled upon him a shower of missiles. The horse was killed, but the brave and nimble Aquilinus escaped unhurt, and leaping down from the wall, joined on foot the stream of Roman soldiers who were pouring southwards from the Gothic camp towards the Pincian Gate, where the barbarians were still pursuing the flying troops of Trajan.

A shower of arrows in their rear slew many of the Goths: the survivors looked round and halted: the lately flying Romans also turned: the Goths found themselves caught between two attacks; they lost all cohesion and fell by hundreds. A few with difficulty escaped to the nearest camps, the occupants of which kept close and dared not stir forth to help them. In this battle, successful as were its main results for the Romans, Trajan received a wound which was well-nigh fatal. An arrow struck his face, a little above his right eye, in the angle formed by the eye and the nose. The whole of the iron tip, though long and large, entered and was hidden in the wound: the wooden part of the arrow, not well joined to the iron, fell to the earth. Notwithstanding his wound Trajan went on pursuing and slaying, and no ill results came of it. "Five years after" says the historian, "the arrow-tip of its own accord worked its way to the surface and showed itself in his face. For three years it has protruded a little from the surface. Everyone expects that in course of time it will work out altogether. Meanwhile Trajan has suffered no inconvenience from it of any kind".

The result of this sally was to strike deep discouragement into the hearts of the barbarians. "Already" said they to one another, "we are as much the besieged as the besiegers. Famine and Pestilence are stalking through all our camps. New armies, we cannot tell how

large, are on their way from Constantinople, and the terrible Belisarius, who knows that only a few of us are left to represent the many myriads who sat down before Rome, is actually daring to assault us in our camps, one of which he has all but taken". In some kind of assembly, which the historian calls their Senate, they debated the question of raising the siege, and decided on the desperate expedient of an appeal to the justice and generosity of Byzantium, while sending an embassy to Rome to plead their cause with Belisarius. The embassy consisted of an official of high rank in the Gothic state but of Roman lineage (one who occupied in fact nearly the same position formerly held by Cassiodorus, but whose name Procopius has not recorded), and with him two Gothic nobles. The arguments used by the Gothic envoy and the replies of Belisarius, which are probably in the main correctly reported by the historian, himself present at the interview, may best be presented in the form of a dialogue.

Gothic Envoys. This war is inflicting upon both the combatants indescribable miseries. Let us each moderate our desires, and see if some means cannot be found of bringing it to an end. The ruler should think not merely of the gratification of his own ambition, but also of the happiness of his subjects, and that assuredly is not being promoted on either side by the continuance of the war. We suggest that the conference be not conducted by means of studied orations on either side, but that each party say out that which is in their minds without preparation, and that if anything be said which seems improper, exception be taken to it at once.

Belisarius. I shall interpose no hindrance to the dialogue proceeding as ye propose: but see that ye utter words that are just and that tend towards peace.

Gothic Envoys. We complain of you, O Romans, that you have taken up arms without cause against an allied and friendly people: and we shall prove our complaint by facts which no man can gainsay. The Goths came into possession of this Gothic land not by violently wresting it from the Romans, but by taking it from Odovacar, who, having over-turned the Emperor of that day, changed the constitutional government which existed here into a tyranny. Now Zeno who was then Emperor of the East was desirous to avenge his colleague on the usurper and to free the country, but was not strong enough to cope with the forces of Odovacar. He therefore persuaded our ruler Theodoric, who was at that very time meditating the siege of Byzantium, to forego his hostility to the Empire in remembrance of the dignities which he had already received in the Roman State, (those namely of Patrician and Consul), to avenge upon Odovacar his injustice to Augustulus, and to confer upon this country and his own people the blessings of a just and stable government. Thus then did our nation come to be guardians of this land of Italy. The settled order of things which we found here we preserved, nor can any man point to any new law, written or unwritten, and say that was introduced by Theodoric. As for religious affairs, so anxiously have we guarded the liberty of the Romans that there is no instance of one of them having voluntarily or under compulsion adopted our creed, while there are many instances of Goths who have gone over to yours, not one of whom has suffered any punishment. The holy places of the Romans have received the highest honor from us, and their right of sanctuary has been uniformly respected. The high offices of the State have been always held by Romans, not once by a Goth. We challenge contradiction if any of our statements are incorrect. Then, too, the Romans have been permitted by the Goths to receive a Consul every year, on the nomination of the Emperor of the East. To sum up. You did nothing to help Italy when, not for a few months but for ten long years, she was groaning under the oppression of Odovacar and his barbarians: but now you are putting forth all your strength upon no valid pretext against her rightful occupants. We call upon you therefore to depart hence, to enjoy in quiet your own possessions and the plunder which during this war you have collected in our country.

Belisarius (in wrath). You promised that you would speak briefly and with moderation, but you have given us a long harangue, full of something very like bragging. The Emperor Zeno sent Theodoric to make war upon Odovacar, not in order that he himself should obtain the kingship of Italy (for what would have been the advantage of replacing one tyrant by another?), but that the country might be restored to freedom and its obedience to the Emperor. Now all that Theodoric did against the usurper was well done, but his later behavior, in refusing to restore the country to its rightful lord, was outrageously ungrateful: nor can I see any difference between the conduct of a man who originally lays hands on another's property, and his who, when such a stolen treasure comes into his possession, refuses to restore it to its true owner. Never, therefore, will I surrender the Emperor's land to any other lord. But if you have any other request to make, speak on.

Gothic Envoys. How true is all that we have advanced every member of this company knows right well. But, as a proof of our moderation, we will relinquish to you the large and wealthy island of Sicily, without which your possession of Africa is insecure.

Belisarius (with sarcastic courtesy). Such generosity calls for a return in kind. We will freely grant permission to the Goths to occupy the whole of Britain, a much larger island than you offer to us, and one which once belonged to the Romans as Sicily once belonged to the Goths.

Gothic Envoys. Well then, if we talk about adding Naples and Campania to our offer, will you consider it?

Belisarius. Certainly not. We have no power to grant away the lands of the Emperor in a manner which he might not approve of.

Gothic Envoys. Or if we pledged ourselves to pay a certain yearly tribute to your master?

Belisarius. No, not so. We can treat on no conditions but those which secure that the Emperor shall have his own again.

Gothic Envoys. Come then: allow us to send ambassadors to the Emperor to treat about all the matters in dispute, and let there be a cessation of hostilities on both sides for a fixed period, to give the ambassadors time to go and return.

Belisarius. Be it so. Never shall my voice be raised against any proposition which is really made in the interests of peace.

And thereupon the ambassadors returned to the Gothic camp to make arrangements for the coming truce. Thus ended this memorable interview between the representative of Caesar and the servants of the Gothic King. Memorable, if for no others, assuredly for us, the dwellers in that well-nigh forgotten island whose sovereignty Belisarius tossed contemptuously to the Goths as a reply to their proposed surrender of Sicily. Would that we had a Procopius to tell us what was passing at that moment in 'the island much larger than Sicily, which had belonged aforesaid to the Romans!' Three years before, as we are told, Cerdic, the half-mythical ancestor of King Alfred and of Queen Victoria, had died (if indeed he had ever lived), perchance in some palace rudely put together on the ruins of the Roman Praetorium at Winchester. His people had been for near twenty years pausing in their career of conquest, during that mysterious interval, or even reflux of the Saxon wave, which legend has glorified by connecting it with the great deeds of Arthur. In the far north, ten years after this time, King Ida was to rear upon the basaltic rock of Bamborough, overlooking the misty flock of the Fame Islands, that fortress which was to be the capital of the Bernician kingdom, and which narrowly missed being the capital of England itself and rivaling the world-wide fame of London. When we have said this we have told nearly all that is known of the deeds of our fathers and the fortunes of our land during this central portion of the sixth century after Christ.

The negotiations for a truce, and the consequent slackening of the vigilance of the Goths, came at the most opportune moment possible for the plans of Belisarius. Vast quantities of

corn, wine, and provisions for the relief of the hunger-stricken City were collected at Ostia, but a murderous struggle would have been necessary to cover their entrance into Rome. On the very evening of the day of conference Belisarius, accompanied apparently by his wife and attended by 100 horsemen, rode to Ostia to meet the generals who were in command of the Isaurians at that port. He encouraged them by the tidings of the negotiations that had been commenced, urged them to use all possible diligence in the transport of the provisions to Rome, and promised to do all in his power to secure them a safe passage. With the first grey of the morning he returned to the City, leaving Antonina behind to consult with the generals as to the best means of conveying the stores. The only practicable towpath—as was before said—ran along the right bank of the river, and was commanded by the Gothic garrison of Portus. Moreover, the draught-oxen were half dead with hunger and hardship. In these circumstances Antonina and the generals decided to trust to sails and oars alone. They selected all the largest boats belonging to the navy at Ostia, fitted each one with rude battlements of tall planks to protect the rowers from the arrows of the enemy, freighted them with the cargoes of provisions, and began their perilous voyage. A considerable part of the army accompanied them along the left bank of the river by way of escort, but several of the Isaurians were also left at Ostia to guard the ships. Apparently the wind blew from the south-west, for wherever the stream pursued a straight course their sails were full and all went pleasantly; but in the windings of the river they had to resort to their oars, and hard was the toil needed to traverse these portions of the stream.

Strangely enough, the Goths, though no truce was formally concluded, offered no opposition to this proceeding, though they must have known that that day's work, if successful, would undo, in great measure, the results of the last six months of blockade. The garrison at Portus lay quiet, marveling at the ingenuity of the Romans, and saw the heavy barges sail almost under the towers of their fortress. The Goths in the six camps lay quiet too, partly comforting themselves with the assurance that the Romans would never get their city revictualled in that way, partly thinking that it was not worthwhile to imperil the results of the conference and lose the longed-for truce by any hostile action which might offend the terrible Belisarius. So they let their opportunity slip. The barges passed and repassed till all the stores were safely transported to Rome. The ships then returned to Constantinople with all speed to avoid the peril of storms, the winter solstice being now reached. A few Isaurians, under the command of Paulus, were left at Ostia, but the great mass of the new soldiers entered Rome in safety.

When the Goths had quietly looked on at all these important operations, they might just as well have at once recognized the hopelessness of their task and marched away from Rome. They still clung however, or rather perhaps their King alone still clung, to the expedient of a truce and an embassy, and to the hope of obtaining favorable terms from the justice of Justinian. It was arranged that Gothic ambassadors should be sent under Roman escort to Constantinople, that a truce for three months should be concluded between the two armies to give the embassy time to go and return, and that hostages of high rank should be given on both sides. The Gothic hostage was a nobleman named Ulias; the Roman hostage was Zeno, a cavalry officer who, as was before stated, had recently entered Rome by the Latin Way.

In the whole course of these negotiations the Goths had been thoroughly outwitted by Belisarius. Nothing had been said about the question of revictualing Rome; and Belisarius had quietly decided that question in his own favor, under the very eyes of the puzzled barbarians. Neither does anything seem to have been said expressly as to the case of either army ceasing to occupy all its positions in force, a case which soon arose. Shut off from the coast by the Byzantines' command of the sea, and having, very likely, failed to maintain the Roman roads in good condition, the Goths found great difficulty in provisioning the garrisons at some of

their distant posts. Under the stress of this difficulty they withdrew their garrisons from Portus, from Centumcellae (the modern Civita Vecchia), and from Albanum. As fast as each square was thus left vacant on the chess-board, Belisarius moved up a piece to take possession of it. The Goths, who found themselves thus ever more and more hemmed in by the Roman outposts, sent an embassy of angry complaint to Belisarius. "Was this in accordance with the terms of the armistice? Witigis had sent for the Goths in Portus to come to him for a temporary service, and Paulus and his Isaurians had marched in and taken possession of the undefended fortress. So, too, with Albanum and Centumcellae. All these places must be given back to them or they would do terrible things". Belisarius simply laughed at their threats, and told them that all the world knew perfectly well for what reason those fortresses had been abandoned. The truce still formally continued, but both parties eyed one another with jealousy and distrust.

By the new reinforcements which had been sent poured into Rome, Belisarius found himself at the head of so large a number of troops that he could even spare some for distant operations. He therefore dispatched John at the head of 800 horsemen to the mountains of the Abruzzi. Two other bodies of troops, amounting to 1200 in all, were to follow his motions and adapt their movements to his, but, perhaps for reasons of commissariat, not to occupy the same quarters. One of these supporting armies was commanded by Damian, nephew of Valerian, and his troops were drawn from that general's army. The orders given to John were to pass the winter at Alba [Fuentia], a city about seventy miles from Rome, in the heart of the Apennines and near to the little lake of Fucinus. Here he was to rest, not disturbing the Goths so long as they attempted no hostile operation. The moment that he perceived the truce to be broken, he was to sweep like a whirlwind on the territory of Picenum, between the Apennines and the Adriatic, to ravage the Gothic possessions (scrupulously respecting those of the Romans), to collect plunder from every quarter, and to carry off their women and children into slavery. All this could be easily effected, since the men of the district were all serving in the Gothic armies. He was to take every fortress that threatened his route, leaving none to molest his rear, and he was to keep his plunder intact till the time came for dividing it among the whole army. "For it is not fair" said Belisarius, with a laugh, "that we should have the trouble of killing the drones and that you should divide all the honey".

Two events relieved the tedium of the siege during the early months of the year 538: the visit of the Archbishop of Milan and the quarrel between Belisarius and Constantine. Datius, the Ligurian Archbishop, came at the head of a deputation of influential citizens to entreat Belisarius to send a small garrison to enable them to hold their city (which had apparently already revolted from the Gothic King) for the Empire. They enlarged on the populousness and wealth of Mediolanum, the second city of Italy, its important position (eight days' journey from Bavena and the same distance from the frontiers of Gaul), and the certainty that Liguria would follow whithersoever its capital might lead. Belisarius promised to grant their request as soon as possible, and meanwhile persuaded Datius and his companions to pass the winter with him in Rome.

The quarrel with Constantine, in which Procopius sees the hand of Nemesis resenting the uniform prosperity of the Imperial cause, arose out of small beginnings. certain Presidius, one of the leading citizens of Ravenna, having some cause of complaint against the Goths, determined to flee to the Imperial army. Leaving Ravenna on pretence of hunting, he passed through the Gothic lines (this happened just before Witigis started for the siege of Rome) and made his way to the army which under Constantine was then quartered at Spoleto. Of all his possessions he was able to bring with him nothing but two daggers in golden scabbards set with precious stones. The fame of the refugee from Ravenna and his jeweled poniards reached the ears of Constantine, who sent one of his guards named Maxentius to the church outside the walls, where Presidius had taken refuge, to demand the daggers in the General's name.

Presidius was forced to submit to this spoliation, but hastened to Rome to lay his complaint before the General. In the turmoil of the Gothic assault and the Roman sorties, he found for long no suitable opportunity for stating his case; but now that the truce had been proclaimed he sought and obtained an audience with the General, before whom he laid his complaint. Belisarius had other reasons for censuring his lieutenant; but at present he confined himself to a gentle remonstrance with Constantine, and the expression of a wish that he would abstain from such acts of rapacity. The Fate which was brooding over the covetous general prevented him from "leaving well alone". He must needs taunt Presidius, whenever he met him, with the loss of his daggers, and ask him what he had gained by complaining to Belisarius. At length the refugee could bear it no longer; but one day when Belisarius was riding through the Forum he seized his horse's bridle and cried out with a loud voice, "Are these the far-famed laws of Justinian, that when a man takes refuge with you from the barbarians ye should spoil him of his goods by force?" The General's retinue shouted to him to let go the horse's bridle, but he clung to it, repeating his cries and passionate appeals for justice, till Belisarius, who knew the rightness of his cause, promised that the daggers should be restored to him.

The next day there was an assembly of the generals in a chamber of the palace on the Pincian. Constantine was there, and Bessas and Valerian. There was also present Ildiger, son-in-law of Antonina, who had lately come to Rome with a large troop of horsemen from Africa. Before all this assembly Belisarius related what had occurred on the previous day, blamed the unjust deed of Constantine, and exhorted him to make a tardy reparation for his fault by restoring the daggers to their owner. "No" replied Constantine, "I will do nothing of the kind. I would rather throw the daggers into the Tiber than give them back to Presidius". Belisarius asked him with some warmth if he remembered who was his general. "In everything else" said Constantine, "I am willing to obey you, since the Emperor orders me to do so, but as for the matter that you are now talking about I will never obey you". Belisarius ordered the guards to enter. "To kill me, I suppose" said Constantine. "No" was the answer, "but since your armor-bearer Maxentius by force took these daggers away, by force to compel him to restore them". Constantine, however, believing that his death was decided upon, determined to do some memorable deed while he yet lived, and drawing the dagger which hung at his side stabbed Belisarius in the belly. Wounded, but not fatally, the General staggered back, and clasping Bessas in his arms interposed the portly form of the Ostrogoth between himself and the assassin. He then glided out of the chamber. Constantine, mad with rage, was on the point of following him, but Ildiger seized him by the right hand and Bessas by the left, and they together pulled him in an opposite direction. Then the guards entered, and with much difficulty wrested the dagger from the furious officer. He was dragged off to a place of confinement in the palace, thence, after some days, to another house, and eventually was put to death by the order of Belisarius.

The execution of a lieutenant who had so grossly insulted his superior officer and attempted his life does not appear to be a deed difficult to justify. Procopius remarks, however, that "this was the only unholy action which Belisarius ever committed, and it was unlike his usual disposition. For he generally showed great gentleness in his dealings with all men. But, as before remarked, it was fated that Constantine should come to a bad end". This reflection convinces us that we have not heard the whole story, and that the affair of the jeweled poniards was rather the pretext than the cause of the death of Constantine. In the *Anecdota*, that Scandalous Chronicle written in the old age of Procopius, he informs us that when all Constantinople was talking about the gallantries of Antonina and the punishment inflicted on her lover by Belisarius, Constantine, in his condolence with the injured husband, said, "It is not the young man but the lady that I should punish in such a case". Antonina heard of the saying

and treasured up her wrath till an occasion was found for wreaking it upon the injudicious officer.

Not long after this affair, the Goths attempted to enter the City by guile. Agricola's aqueduct, the Aqua Virgo, is so constructed, for engineering reasons, as to form a long circuit round the east and north of the City. The course which it now pursues is almost entirely in the rear of the Gothic position, but there seems reason to think that in 538 it passed through the Gothic lines, that it touched the Wall of Aurelian near the Salarian Gate, and was then carried for some distance round the Wall on a low arcade only some three or four feet in height. However this may be, there is no doubt that then as now it burrowed under the Pincian Hill, and emerged into a deep well-like chamber communicating with one of the palaces on that eminence. That palace was then the Pincian Palace inhabited by Belisarius. The dwelling which now rises immediately above the receptacle of the Aqua Virgo is the Villa Medici, the home of the French Academy. A strong argument is thus furnished in favor of identifying the two sites. From the Pincian the water was carried, then as now, to the Campus Martius, the fountain of Trevi, and the neighborhood of the Pantheon; in fact the aqueduct ran right into the very heart of Rome.

A party of Goths, during this treacherous truce-time, determined to attempt an entrance into the City by this aqueduct, which of course, like all the others, was now only a tunnel bare of water. With lighted torches they groped their way through the *specus*, which is about six feet high by a foot and a half wide. They crept along unopposed, perhaps for a distance of one or two miles, till at last they were actually within the City, and close to the foot of the steps leading to the very palace of Belisarius. Here they found their further progress barred by a newly-erected wall. This wall had been built by command of Belisarius soon after his entry into the City. The wary General, who knew every move that his enemy ought to make upon the board, was not going to allow Rome to be taken from him as he had taken Naples from the Goths, by stealing through an aqueduct. Foiled in their present purpose, the Goths broke off a bit of stone from this wall as a record of their perilous expedition, and returned to tell Witigis how near they had been to success and why they had missed it. But while the explorers were moving along torches through the small part of the Aqua Virgo which was above ground, the flash of their torches through a chink in the walls attracted the attention of a sentinel, stationed perhaps in the fosse somewhere near the Pincian Gate. He talked to his comrades about this mysterious light, seen only a foot or two above the surface of the earth; but they only laughed at him, telling him that he must have seen a wolf's eyes gleaming through the darkness. However, the story of the sentinel and his wonderful light reached the ears of Belisarius. In a moment its true meaning flashed upon him. "This is no wolf" he said to himself; "the Goths are trying the aqueduct". At once he sent the guardsman Diogenes with a body of picked men to examine the channel. We must suppose that they took down part of the obstructing wall, and so entered the *specus*. They saw the place where the stone had been chipped off which was shown to Witigis. They pressed on: they found everywhere the droppings from the Gothic flambeaux, and at length discovered some Gothic lamps. It was clear that the enemy had been trying by these means to steal into Rome. The Goths soon perceived that Belisarius was acquainted with their adventure, and the design, which Witigis had discussed in a council of war, of following up the quest opened by the exploring party, was promptly abandoned.

During the remainder of the three months of nominal truce two more attempts upon the City were made, or at any rate planned, by the barbarians. One was upon the Pincian Gate, and was arranged for the hour of the midday meal, when but few soldiers were likely to be behind the battlements. The Goths were coming on in loose order, with ladders to mount the walls and fire to burn the gate. But not even in truce-time were the walls ever left quite bare of guards. Fortunately, it was then the turn of the gallant Ildiger to keep watch. He saw the loosely

marshaled band advancing, at once divined their traitorous design, sallied out with his followers, easily changed their disorderly advance into an equally disorderly retreat, and slew the greater number of them. A great clamor was raised in Rome; the Goths saw that their design was discovered, and all returned to their camps.

The next scheme was of a baser kind, and was worthy of the confused brain from which it sprung. It has been said that the wall of the City between the Tomb of Hadrian and the Flaminian Gate was low and destitute of towers, the military engineers of Aurelian having thought that the river would here be a sufficient protection. Witigis therefore argued thus with himself: "If I could only lull to sleep the vigilance of the Roman sentinels on that piece of wall, a strong detachment of my army might cross the river in boats, climb the wall, and open the gates of the City to the rest of the army, who shall be all waiting outside". He therefore took into his pay two Romans, probably of the laboring class, who dwelt near the great basilica of St. Peter. They promised to take a large skin of wine to these sentinels about nightfall, offer them refreshment, keep them drinking and talking till far into the night, and when they were too drunk to observe anything, throw an opiate, with which Witigis provided the traitors, into their cups. The infamous scheme was revealed to Belisarius by one of its intended instruments, who revealed also the name of his accomplice. The latter under torture confessed the criminal intention, and surrendered the opiate which he had received from Witigis. Belisarius cut off the nose and ears of the unhappy traitor,—these barbarous mutilations were becoming part of the penal code of Constantinople,—and sent him mounted on an ass to the Gothic camp to tell his dismal tale to his royal confederate. When the barbarians saw him they recognized that God did not bring their plans to a successful issue, and therefore that they would never be able to capture the City.

By these two attempts (if we may trust the statement of Procopius, who probably throws more blame on the Goths than they deserve) the three months' truce was broken to justify Belisarius in commencing a campaign of retaliation. He sent letters to John ordering him to begin the operations in Picenum which had been arranged between them. John marched with his two thousand horsemen through the settlements of the Goths, burning, plundering, wasting all that belonged to the enemy. Ulitheus, the aged uncle of Witigis, dared to meet him in battle, but was slain, and almost his whole army fell with him. After this, none would face him in the field. Pressing on through the country on the eastern slopes of the Apennines, he came to the fortresses of Urbino and Osimo, neither of them garrisoned by a large force of Goths, but both strong by their natural position. According to the orders of Belisarius he should have reduced each of these fortresses before proceeding further, but the cry of his army and his own military instinct both directed a bold forward movement to Rimini. To that city by the Adriatic he accordingly marched, and such was the terror of the Goths that he carried it at the first assault. It is true that he had not here, as in the cases of Urbino and Osimo, to attack a high hill fortress, for Rimini, though surrounded with walls, lies in a wide plain at the mouth of the Marecchia; and the supremacy by sea which the Byzantines possessed would have made it a difficult city for the Goths to hold against a united attack by sea and land.

But whatever the cause, here was the victorious army of John in possession of an important city two hundred miles in the rear of the Gothic army, and only thirty-three, a single days march, from their capital, Ravenna. John had rightly calculated that this step of his would lead to the raising of the siege of Rome. The Goths, thoroughly alarmed for the safety of their capital, began to chafe at every day spent in sight of those walls which, as they felt, they never should surmount. Their King too had his own reasons for sharing their impatience when it began to be whispered that his young wife Matasuentha, proud and petulant, and never forgiving her lowly-born husband for the compulsion which had brought her to his side in wedlock, had sent secret messages to John at Rimini congratulating him on his success, and

holding out to him hopes that she would betray the Gothic cause if he would accept her hand in marriage.

So it came to pass that when the three months of truce had expired, although no tidings had about been received from the ambassadors, the Goths resolved to abandon their blockade of Rome. It was near the time of the Vernal Equinox, and 374 days from the commencement of the siege, when they carried this resolution into effect. At dawn of day, having set all their seven camps on fire, the dispirited mass of men began to move northward along the Flaminian Way.

The Romans, who saw them departing, were for some time in doubt whether to pursue them or rather "to make a bridge of gold for a retreating foe". The absence of so many of their cavalry in Picenum was a reason for leaving them unmolested. But Belisarius hastily armed as large a force as he could muster, both of horse and foot, and when half the Gothic army had crossed the Milvian Bridge he launched his soldiers forth from the Flaminian Gate, and made a furious attack on the Gothic rear. Mundilas, the escort of Procopius, conspicuous in so many previous battles, wrought great deeds of valor in this, fighting four barbarians at once and killing them all. Longinus, an Isaurian, was also among the foremost in the fight, which, having been for some time doubtful, ended in the flight of the barbarians. Then followed a terrible scene, Goth struggling with Goth for a place upon the bridge and for a way of escape from the devouring sword. Many fell by the hands of their own comrades, many were pushed off the bridge, and, encumbered by the weight of their armor, sank in the stream of the Tiber. Few, according to the account of Procopius, succeeded in struggling across to the opposite shore, where the other half of the army stood awaiting them. In this statement there is probably some exaggeration, but there can be no doubt that the well-timed attack of Belisarius inflicted a severe blow upon the retreating enemy. The joy of the Romans in their victory was alloyed by grief for the death of the valiant Longinus.

So ended the long siege of Rome by Witigis, a siege in which the numbers and prowess of the Goths were rendered useless by the utter incapacity of their commander. Ignorant how to assault, ignorant how to blockade, he allowed even the sword of Hunger to be wrested from him and used against his army by Belisarius. He suffered the flower of the Gothic nation to perish, not so much by the weapons of the Romans as by the deadly dews of the Campagna. With heavy hearts the barbarians must have thought, as they turned them northwards, upon the many graves of gallant men which they were leaving on that fatal plain. Some of them must have suspected the melancholy truth that they had dug one grave, deeper and wider than all, the grave of the Gothic monarchy in Italy.

CHAPTER X.

THE RELIEF OF RIMINI.

The utter failure of the Gothic enterprise against Rome did not, as might have been expected, immediately bring about the fall of Ravenna. Unskillful as was the strategy of the Ostrogoths, there was yet far more power of resistance shown by them than by the Vandals. In three months the invasion of Africa had been brought to a triumphant conclusion. The war in Italy had now lasted for three years, two more were still to elapse before the fall of the Gothic capital announced even its apparent conclusion.

These two years were passed in somewhat desultory fighting, waged partly in the neighborhood of Milan and partly along the course of the great Flaminian Way. Leaving the valley of the Po for the present out of our calculations, we will confine our attention to the long struggle which wasted the Umbrian lands, traversed by the great north road of Italy which bore the name of Proconsul Flaminian. It had been always an important highway. By it the legions of Caesar had marched forth to conquer Gaul, and had returned to conquer the Republic. The course of events in the fifth and sixth centuries which made Rome and Ravenna both, in a certain sense, capitals of Italy, gave to the two hundred and thirty miles of road between those capitals an importance, political and military, such as it had never possessed before.

Notwithstanding some slight curves, we may think of this road as running due north and south, since Ravenna is in almost precisely the same longitude as Rome: and at the point of the history which we have now reached the fortresses to the right of it are for the most part in the hands of the Emperor's generals, while nearly all those on the left are held for the Gothic King. This was the manner in which the latter disposed of his forces. At Urbs Vetus, the modern Orvieto, were 1000 men under the command of Albilas. At Clusium, that tomb of old Etruscan greatness, 1000 under Gelimer. At Tuder, now Todi, which also still preserves the memory of Etruria by its ancient walls, there were 400 Goths under Uligisalus. Fiesole, which from her high perch looks down upon Florence and the vale of Arno, was another Gothic stronghold, but we are not told by how many men it was occupied. Osimo, which similarly overlooks Ancona and the Adriatic, was held by 4000 picked troops under Visandus, and here, the advance of Belisarius was to be checked by a more stubborn resistance than was maintained by any of the other Gothic garrisons. At Urbino were stationed 2000 Goths under Morras. Mons Feletris (the high rock of S. Leo and the original capital of the mediaeval principality of Montefeltro) was occupied by 500 Goths, and Cesena by the like number. All of these places were high city-crowned hills of the kind with which not only the traveler in Italy but the student of pictures painted by the Umbrian masters is so familiar. They all bring back to the memory of an Englishman those graphic lines of Macaulay,

'Like an eagle's nest
Perched on the crest
Of purple Apennine.'

Such were the Gothic strongholds.

On the other side the Romans held Narni, Spoleto, Perugia, and, across the central mountain-chain, Ancona and Rimini.

A glance at the map will show how the combatants were ranged, as if for one vast pitched battle, along the line of the Flaminian Way: and posts held by each party: Orvieto, seventy-four miles of Rome, garrisoned by Goths; Rimini, within thirty-three miles of Ravenna, garrisoned by Romans. If we may be permitted to take a simile from chess, each player has one piece pushed far up towards the enemy's line, threatening to cry check to the king, but itself in serious danger if not strongly supported. Belisarius had no mind to leave his piece so dangerously advanced. By a brilliant display of rashness, and it must be added of insubordination, John, with his 2000 Isaurian horsemen, had advanced to Rimini; and now the commander-in-chief, wanting the Isaurians for other service, ordered them to withdraw from that perilous position. Summoning his son-in-law Ildiger, and Martin (the veteran of the Vandal war and the sharer in the flight of Solomon), who had come out with the recent reinforcements to Italy, he put 1000 horsemen under their command and gave them a commission to take his orders to John. These orders were that he should withdraw with all his troops from Rimini, leaving in it a small garrison of picked soldiers drawn from the too numerous defenders of Ancona, which had been taken possession of by Conon at the head of his Thracians and Isaurians. The very smallness of the garrison at Rimini would, Belisarius hoped, induce the Goths to pass it by unmolested; while, on the other hand, two thousand cavalry soldiers, the flower of the Isaurian reinforcements, would offer a tempting prize to the enemy, to whom they would, if left at Rimini, soon be compelled to surrender by shortness of provisions.

Ildiger and Martin, whose watchword was speed, soon distanced the barbarian army who were marching in the same direction, but who were an unwieldy host, and were obliged to make a long circuit whenever they came near a Roman fortress. As many of our actors have to traverse the same Flaminian Way in the course of the next their few years, it may be well briefly to describe the journey of these two officers, though assuredly they, in their breathless haste, took not much note of aught beside castles and armies.

Issuing forth from Rome by the Flaminian Gate (Porta del Popolo), and after two miles' journey crossing the Tiber by the Ponte Molle, they would keep along the high table-land on the right bank of that river till they reached the base of precipitous Soracte—

‘Not now in snow’,
but which
‘from out the plain
Heaved like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hung pausing’

Soon after Soracte was left behind, they would pass through the long ravine-girdled street of Falerii (near Civita Castellana), and then at Borghetto, thirty-eight miles from Rome, would cross the Tiber again and strike into the Sabine hills. The town, which is called in inscriptions ‘*splendidissima civitas Otricolana*’ now represented by the poor little village of Otricoli, at a distance of forty-five miles from Rome, might possibly receive them at the end of their first day's journey.

Next day they would fairly enter the old province of Umbria, exchange greetings with the friendly garrison of Narni, high up on its hill, and gaze down on the magnificent bridge of Augustus, whose single arch still stands so proudly in the ravine through which Nar's white waters are rolling. Perchance on a still summer's day they might hear the roar of the cascades of Velinus as they rode out from the city of Interamnia (Terni). The second day's journey of forty miles would be ended as they wound up the hill of Spoleto and entered the strong fortress built upon its height by King Theodoric. They are still mounting up the valley of the

sulphurous Nar, and are now in the heart of what was formerly one of the most prosperous pastoral regions of Italy. The softly-flowing Clitumnus, by which perchance Virgil once walked, viewing with a farmer's admiring eye the cattle in its meadows, accompanies them when they start on their next day's journey, and they pass almost within sight of Mevania, which, like Clitumnus, nourished the far-famed; milk-white oxen that were slain for sacrifice on Rome's great days of triumph.

On this their third day's march they would pass the low-lying city of Fulginium, now Foligno. They might look down the valley of the Topino, past the hill on which now stand the terraced sanctuaries of Assisi, to the dim rock where the stronghold of Perugia was held by the faithful soldiers of the Emperor. But their course lies up the stream in a different direction. It is here that they begin to set themselves definitely to cross the great chain of the Apennines, whose high peaks have long been breaking the line of their northern horizon. Past the city and market which bore the name of the great road-maker Flaminius, they ride, ascending ever, but by no severe gradient, till they reach the upland region in which Nucera, Tadinum, Helvillum are situated, and see rising on their left the sharp serrated ridge at the foot of which, on the other side, lies the ancient Umbrian capital of Iguvium. They are breathing mountain air, and, if it be now the month of June, the snow is still lingering in patches on the summits of the Apennines; but the road is good, and easily passable everywhere, even by a large and encumbered army. And here, it may be on the summit of the pass just beyond the place where the waters divide, these flowing southwards to the Tiber, those northwards and eastwards towards the Adriatic, our horsemen end their day's journey; a long and toilsome one, for we have supposed them to travel on this day fifty-six miles. At the place where they halt for the night there is a posting station, with a sword for its sign. This sign might have been of prophetic import, for here probably, upon the crest of the Apennines, on the site of the modern village of Scheggia, was fought, fourteen years later, the decisive battle between the chosen Gothic champion and the lieutenant of the Byzantine Emperor.

The fourth morning dawns, and the flying column must be early in their saddles, for they suspect that there is tough work awaiting them today. Down through the narrow gorge of the Burano, over at least one bridge whose Roman masonry still endures to our own days, they ride for two hours till they reach the fair city of Cales, situated on the flanks of the precipitous Monte Petrano. And now at last, at the station which goes sometimes by the name of Intercisa, sometimes by that of Petra Pertusa, and which is twenty-three miles from their morning's starting-point, they find their onward course checked, and recognize that only by hard fighting can they win through to bear the all-important message to Rimini. For what happened at Intercisa we need not draw upon our imaginations, since we find ourselves here again under the guidance of Procopius. This is his description of Petra, a description evidently the result of personal observation:

"This fortress was not built by the hands of man, but was called into being by the nature of the place, for the road is here through an extremely rocky country. On the right of this road runs a river, fordable by no man on account of the swiftness of its current. On the left, near at hand, a cliff rises, abrupt and so lofty that if there should chance to be any men on its summit they seem to those at its base only like very little birds. At this point, long ago, there was no possibility of advance to the traveler; the rock and river between them barring all further progress. Here then the men of old hewed out a passage through the rock, and thus made a doorway into the country beyond. A few fortifications above and around the gate turned it into a natural fortress of great size, and they called its name Petra (Pertusa)"

The slight additional fortifications which the place received from the hand of man have disappeared, but the natural features of the Passo di Furlo—so the passage is now called—precisely correspond to this description of Procopius. Coming from Cagli on the south, one

enters a dark and narrow gorge, as grand, though not as long, as the Via Mala in Switzerland, and sees the great wall of rock rising higher and higher on the left, the mountain torrent of the Candigliano foaming and chafing angrily below. At length, when all further progress seems barred, the end of a tunnel is perceived; we enter, and pass for 120 feet through the heart of the cliff. Emerging, we find the mountain pass ended: we see a broad and smiling landscape before us, and looking back we read upon the northern face of the rock the following inscription, telling us that the passage was hewn at the command of the founder of the Flavian dynasty, seventy-six years after the birth of Christ:

IMP . CAESAR . AVG
VESPASIANVS . PONT . MAX
TRIB . POT . VII . IMP . XVII . P.P . COS . VIII.
CENSOR . FACIVND . CVRAVIT

An inscription, probably of similar purport, over the southern end of the tunnel has been obliterated.

Of course to our generation, which has seen the St. Gothard and the Mont Cenis pierced by tunnels twelve miles in length, or even to the generation before us which beheld the galleries hewn in the rock for the great Alpine roads of Napoleon and his imitators, this work has nothing that is in itself marvelous. But when we remember that the Romans were unacquainted with the use of gunpowder, and consequently, as blasting was impossible, every square inch of rock had to be hewn out with axe and chisel, we shall see that there is something admirable in the courage which planned and the patience which accomplished so arduous a work.

Before this mountain gateway, additionally fenced and guarded by some few towers and battlements, and provided with chambers for the accommodation of the sentinels, Ildiger and Martin, with their thousand travel-stained horsemen, appeared and summoned its garrison to surrender. The garrison refused: and for some time the Roman horsemen discharged their missiles to no purpose. The Goths attempted no reply, but simply remained quiet and invulnerable in their stronghold. Then the Imperialist troops—among whom there were very probably some sure-footed Isaurian highlanders—clambered up the steep hillside and rolled down vast masses of rock on the fortress below. Wherever these missiles came in their thundering course they knocked off some piece of masonry or some battlement of a tower. In the tunnel itself, the Goths would have been safe even from this rocky avalanche: but they were in the watch-towers, and it was perhaps too late to seek the tunnel's shelter. Utterly cowed, they stretched forth their hands to such of the Imperialist soldiers as still remained in the roadway, and signified their willingness to surrender. Their submission was accepted. They promised to become the faithful servants of the Emperor, and to obey the orders of Belisarius. A few, with their wives and children, were left as the Imperialist garrison of the fortress: the rest appear to have marched under the banner of their late assailants onward to Rimini. Petra Pertusa was won, and the Flaminian Way was cleared, from Rome to the Adriatic.

If there was yet time the successful assailants would probably push on in order to spend the night in comfortable quarters at Forum Sempronii. It is a journey of nine miles down the broadening valley of the Metaurus. To every loyal Roman heart this is classic ground, for here Livius and Nero won that famous victory over Hasdrubal, which saved Italy from becoming a dependency of Carthage. One of the high mountains that we have passed on our left bears yet the name of Monte Nerone in memory of the battle. What more immediately concerns the soldiers of Justinian is that the side valley, the mouth of which they are now passing, leads up to Urbino, thirteen miles off, and that Morras with his 2000 Goths holds that place for Witigis.

But the barbarians seem to be keeping close in their rock-fortress, and without molestation from their foraging parties, Ildiger and Martin reach the friendly shelter of Forum Sempronii. This place, of which there are still some scanty ruins left about a mile from its successor and strangely disguised namesake, Fossombrone, was in Roman times an important centre of trade and government, a fact which is vouched for by the large collection of inscriptions now preserved at the modern city. Next day, the fifth of their journey according to our calculations, the horsemen would travel, still by the banks of the Metaurus and under the shade of its beautiful groves of oak. Sea-breezes and touch of coolness in the air warn them that they are approaching the Adriatic; but still, if they look back over the route which they have traversed, they can see the deep cleft in the Apennine wall caused by the gorge of Petra, a continuing memorial of the hard-fought fight of yesterday. At the end of sixteen miles they reach the little city by the sea which bears the proud name of the Temple of Fortune (Fanum Fortunae). Its modern representative, Fano, still keeps its stately walls, mediaeval themselves, but by the quadrangular shape of their enclosure marking the site of their Roman predecessors: and we can still behold the Arch of Augustus, added to by Constantine, under which in all probability rode the horsemen of Ildiger.

Southwards from Fano the great highway runs along the seashore to Sena Gallica (Sinigaglia) and Ancona, which latter place is distant forty miles from the Fane of Fortune. To Ancona the two officers proceed, turning their backs for a moment on Rimini. They collect a considerable number of foot-soldiers at Ancona, went back with them to Fano, and then, turning northwards and passing through the little town of Pisaurum, traverse the forty-four miles which separate Rimini from Fano. They reach Rimini on the third day after leaving Ancona, the ninth (according to our conjectural arrangement of their journey) since their departure from Rome.

Rimini is now a tolerably bright and cheerful Italian city, with a considerable wealth of mediaeval interest. The great half-finished church (instinct with the growing Paganism of the early Renaissance), which bears the name of 'The Temple of the Malatestas' and which shows everywhere the sculptured elephant, badge of that lawless house, everywhere the intertwined initials of Sigismund and his mistress Isotta,—the chapel in the market-place, where a Saint Anthony of Padua, distressed that men would not hearken to him, preached to the silent congregation of the fishes,—the house of Francesca da Rimini, where she read the story of Lancelot with her ill-fated lover, and 'that day read no further'—these are some of the chief spots hallowed by the associations of the Middle Ages. But the classical interests of the city are at least equally strong. Here, in the market-place, is the little square *suggestus* on which, so men say, Julius Caesar sprang to harangue his troops after the passage of the Rubicon. Here is a fine triumphal arch of Augustus, perhaps somewhat spoiled by the incongruous additions of the Middle Ages, but still bearing on its two fronts, the faces, in good preservation, of Jupiter and Minerva, of Venus and Neptune. Above all, here still stands the Roman bridge of five stately arches spanning the wide stream of the Marecchia. Two slabs in the parapet of this bridge, which the *contadino*, coming in to market, brushes with his sleeve, record, in fine and legible characters, that the bridge was begun in the last year of Augustus and finished in the seventh year of Tiberius. Below the parapet, on the centre-stones of the arches, are yet visible the Augur's wand, the civic wreath, the funeral urn, and other emblems attesting the religious character of the rites with which the Imperial bridge-maker (Pontifex Maximus) consecrated his handiwork.

When Ildiger and Martin stood before John in the Praetorium at Ariminum and delivered the message of Belisarius, that general flatly refused to obey it. It is difficult to understand how John could have excused to himself such a violation of that implicit obedience which is the first duty of the soldier: but the one defect in the military character of Belisarius—a defect

which parts him off from the general whom in many respects he so greatly resembles, Marlborough—was his failure to obtain the hearty and loyal cooperation of his subordinate officers. There may have been a strain of capricious unreasonableness in his own character to produce this result: or it may have been due to the fact that he was too obviously guided in important affairs by the whims and the animosities of Antonina.

Whatever the cause, John refused to part with the 2000 horsemen under his command, or to evacuate Rimini. Damian also, his lieutenant, elected to abide with him. All that Ildiger and Martin could do was to withdraw the soldiers who belonged to the household of Belisarius, to leave the infantry brought from Ancona, and to depart, which they did with all speed.

Before long, Witigis and his army stood before the walls of Ariminum. They constructed a wooden tower high enough to overtop the battlements and resting on four strong wheels. Taking warning by their experience at the siege of Rome, they did not, this time, avail themselves of oxen to draw their tower, but arranged that it should be pushed along by men inside, protected from the arrows of the foe. A broad and winding inside—perhaps not unlike that which leads to the top of the Campanile of St. Mark's at Venice—enabled large bodies of troops to ascend and descend rapidly. On the night after this huge machine was completed, they betook themselves to peaceful slumber, making no doubt that next day the city would be theirs; a belief which was fully shared by the disheartened garrison, who saw that no obstacle existed to hinder the progress of the dreaded tower to their walls. Not yet, however, would the energetic John yield to despair. Leaving the main body of the garrison to the walls in their usual order, he secretly sallied forth at dead of night with a band of hardy Isaurians, all supplied with mattocks and trenching tools. Working with a will, but in deep silence, the brawny mountaineers succeeded, before daybreak, in excavating a deep trench in front of the tower: and, moreover, the earth which they had dug out from the trench being thrown up on the inside interposed the additional obstacle of a mound between the besiegers and their prey. Neither trench nor mound seems to have gone all round the city, but they sufficiently protected a weak portion of the walls, against which the Goths had felt secure of victory. Just before dawn the barbarians discovered what was being done, and rushed at full speed against the trenching party; but John, well satisfied with his night's work, retreated quietly within the city.

At day-break Witigis, who saw with sore heartache the hated obstacle to his hopes, put to death the careless guards whose slumbers had made it possible to construct it. He still determined, however, to try his expedient of the tower, and ordered his men to fill up the trench with fascines. This they did, though under a fierce discharge of stones and arrows from the walls. But when the ponderous engine advanced over the edge of the trench, the fascines bent and cracked under its weight, and the impelling soldiers found it impossible to move it further. Moreover, were even the trench surmounted, the heaped-up mound beyond would have been an insuperable difficulty. As the day wore on, the weary barbarians, fearing lest the tower should be set on fire in a nocturnal sally, prepared to draw their ineffectual engine back into their own lines. John saw the movement, and longed to prevent it. He addressed his soldiers in kindling words, in which, while complaining of his desertion by Belisarius, he urged upon his men the thought that their only chance of seeing again the dear ones whom they had left behind, lay in their own prowess, in that supreme crisis of their fate when life and death hung upon a razor's edge. He then led nearly his whole army forth to battle, leaving only a few men to guard the ramparts. The Goths resisted stubbornly, and, when evening closed in, succeeded in drawing back the tower; but the contest had been so bloody, and they had lost in it so many of their heroes, that they determined to try no more assaults, but to wait and see what their ally, Hunger, whose hand was already making itself felt upon the besieged, would do towards opening the gates.

Not long after the successful repulse of the Gothic attack on this Umbrian sea-port, her rival the sea-port of Picenum, Ancona, all but fell a prey to a similar assault. Witigis had sent a general named Wakim to Osimo with orders to lead the troops assembled in that stronghold to the siege of the neighboring Ancona. The fortress of this city was very strong, situated probably on the high hill where the cathedral now stands, looking down on the magnificent harbor. But if the Roman castellum was strong, the town below it was weak and difficult to defend. Conon, one of the generals of Isaurians recently dispatched from Constantinople, either from a tender-hearted desire to protect the peaceful citizens, or from a wish to distinguish himself by performing that which seemed impossible, included not the fortress only but the city in his line of defence, and drew up his forces on the plain about half-a-mile inland from the city.

Here he professed to entrench himself, "but his trench", says Procopius contemptuously, "winding all-round the foot of the mountain, might have been of some service in a chase after game, but was quite useless for war". The defenders of this line soon found themselves hopelessly outnumbered by the Goths. They turned and fled towards the castle. The first comers were received without difficulty, but when the pursuing Goths began to be mingled with the pursued, the defenders wisely closed the gates. Conon himself was among those who were thus shut out, and who had to be ignominiously hauled up ropes let down from the battlements. The barbarians applied scaling ladders to the walls, and all but succeeded in surmounting them. They probably would have succeeded altogether but for the efforts of two brave men, Ulimun the Thracian and Bulgundus the Hun, the former in the bodyguard of Belisarius, the latter in that of Valerian, who by mere chance happened to have recently landed at Ancona. These men kept the enemy at bay with their swords till the garrison had all re-entered the fort. Then they too, with their bodies hacked all over, and half-dead from their wounds, turned back from the field of fight.

Procopius does not say what became of the city of Ancona, but it was probably sacked by the enemy.

We hear but little of the doings of Belisarius while these events were passing. His scheme for gradually and cautiously reducing the district which lay nearest to Rome, before advancing northwards, was rewarded by the surrender of Tuder and Clusium. The four hundred Goths who occupied the former place and the thousand Goths in the latter surrendered at the mere rumor that his army was approaching, and having received a promise that their lives should be spared, were sent away unharmed to Sicily and Naples.

But now the arrival of fresh and large reinforcements from Constantinople in Picenum drew Belisarius, almost in spite of himself to the regions of the Adriatic, and forced him to reconsider the decision which he had formed, to leave the mutinous general at Rimini to his fate.

At the head of this new army sent forth from Constantinople was the Eunuch Narses, a man destined to exert a more potent influence on the future fortunes of Italy than even Belisarius himself. He was born in Persarmenia—that portion of Armenia which was allotted to Persia at the partition of 384—and the year of his birth was probably about 478. As the practice of rearing boys for service as eunuchs in the Eastern Courts had by this time become common, it is quite possible that he was not of servile origin. But whatever his birth and original condition may have been, we find him in middle life occupying a high place in the Byzantine Court. After filling the post of *Chartularius*, or Keeper of the Archives of the Imperial Bed-chamber, an office which he shared with two colleagues and which gave him the rank of a *Spectabilis*, he rose (some time before the year 530) to the splendid position of *Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi*, or Grand Chamberlain. He thus became an *Illustis*, and one of the greatest of the *Illustres*, standing in the same front rank with the Praetorian Prefects and the

Masters of the Soldiery, and probably, in practice, more powerful than any of these ministers, as having more continual and confidential access to the person of the sovereign.

It has been already stated that in the terrible days of the insurrection of the NIKA the Eunuch Chamberlain rendered essential service to his master. While the newly proclaimed Emperor Hypatius was sitting in the Circus receiving the congratulations of his friends and listening to their invectives against Justinian, Narses crept forth into the streets with a bag in his hand filled from the Imperial treasury, met with some of the leaders of the Blue faction, reminded them of old benefits of Justinian's, of old grudges against the Greens, judiciously expended the treasures in his bag, and finally succeeded in persuading them to shout "Justiniane Imperator Tu vincas". The coalition of the two factions was dissolved and the throne of the Emperor was saved.

This then was the man, hitherto versed only in the intrigues of the cabinet, or at best in the discussions of the cabinet, whom Justinian placed at the head of the new army which was sent to Italy to secure the conquests of Belisarius. What was the Emperor's motive in sending so trusty a counselor but so inexperienced a soldier, a man too who had probably reached the sixth decade of his life, on such a martial mission? The motive, as we shall see, was not stated in express terms to the Eunuch: perhaps it was not fully confessed by the Emperor even to himself. But there can be little doubt that there was growing up in the Imperial mind a feeling that the splendid victories of Belisarius might make of him a dangerous rival for the Empire, and that it was desirable to have him closely watched, but not seriously hampered, by a devoted partisan of the dynasty, a man who from his age and condition could never himself aspire to the purple. Like an Aulic counsellor in the camp of Wallenstein, like the Commissioners of the Convention in the camp of Dumouriez, was Narses in the praetorium of Belisarius.

A great council of war was held at Firmum (now Fermo), a town of Picenum about forty miles south of Ancona and six miles inland from the Adriatic. There were present at it not only the two chiefs Belisarius and Narses, but Martin and Ildiger, Justin the Master of the Soldiery for Illyricum, another Narses with his brother Aratius (Persarmenians like the Eunuch Narses, who had deserted the service of Persia for that of Byzantium), and some wild Herulian chieftains named Wisand, Alueth, and Fanotheus. The one great subject of discussion was, of course, whether Rimini should be relieved or left to its fate. To march so far northwards, leaving the strong position of Osimo untaken in their rear, seemed like courting destruction for the whole army. On the other hand, the distress of the defenders of Rimini for want of provisions was growing so severe that any day some terrible tidings might be expected concerning them. The opinion of the majority of the officers was bitterly hostile to John. By his rashness, his vanity, his avaricious thirst for plunder, he had brought a Roman army into this extremity of danger. He had disobeyed orders, and not allowed the commander-in-chief to conduct the campaign according to his own ideas of strategy. They did not say "Let him suffer the penalty of his folly" but the conclusion to be drawn was obvious.

When the younger men had blurted out their invectives against the unfortunate general, the grey-headed Narses arose. Admitting his own inexperience in the art of war, he urged that in the extraordinary circumstances in which they Rimini were placed, even an amateur soldier might be listened to with advantage. The question presented itself to his mind in this way. Were the evil results which might follow from one or other of the two courses proposed, of equal magnitude? If Osimo were left untaken, if the garrison of Osimo were allowed to recruit itself from without, still the enterprise on that fortress might be resumed at some future time, and probably with success. But if Rimini were allowed to surrender, if a city recovered for the Emperor were suffered to be retaken by the barbarians, if a gallant general, a brave army were permitted to fall into their cruel hands, what remedy could be imagined for these reverses? The

Goths were still far more numerous than the soldiers of the Emperor, but it was the consciousness of uniform disaster which cowed their spirits and prepared them for defeat. Let them gain one such advantage as this, so signal, so manifest to all Italy, they would derive new courage from their success, and twice the present number of Imperial soldiers could not beat them. "Therefore" concluded Narses, "if John has treated your orders with contempt, most excellent Belisarius, take your own measures for punishing him, since there is nothing to prevent your throwing him over the walls to the enemy when once you have relieved Rimini. But see that you do not, in punishing what I firmly believe to have been the involuntary error of John, take vengeance on us and on all loyal subjects of the Emperor"

This speech, uttered by the most trusted counselor of Justinian, and coming from one who loved the besieged general with strong personal affection, produced a great effect upon the council; an effect which was increased by the reading of the following letter, which, just at the right moment of time, was brought by a soldier who had escaped from the besieged town and passed unnoticed through the ranks of the enemy.

"John to the Illustrious Belisarius, Master of the Soldiery.

Know that all our provisions have now long ago been exhausted, and that henceforward we are no longer strong enough to defend ourselves from the besiegers, nor to resist the citizens should they insist on a surrender. In seven days therefore, much against our will, we shall have to give up this city and ourselves to the enemy, for we cannot longer avert the impending doom. I think you will hold that our act, though it will tarnish the luster of your arms, is excused by absolute necessity"

In sore perplexity, Belisarius, yielding to the wishes of the council of war, devised the following almost desperate scheme for the relief of Rimini. To keep in check the garrison of Osimo a detachment of 1000 men were directed to encamp on the sea-coast, about thirty miles from the Gothic stronghold, with orders vigilantly to watch its defenders, but on no account to attack them. The largest part of the army was put on ship-board, and the fleet, under the command of Ildiger, was ordered to cruise slowly towards Rimini, not outstripping the troops which were to march by land, and when arrived, to anchor in front of the besieged city. Martin, with another division, was to march along the great highway, close to the coast, through Ancona, Fano, and Pesaro. Belisarius himself and the Eunuch Narses led a flying column, which was intended to relieve Rimini by a desperate expedient if all the more obvious methods should fail.

Marching westwards from Fermo they passed through Urbs Salvia, once an important city, but so ruined by an onslaught of Alaric that when Procopius passed through it he saw but a single gateway and the remains of a tessellated pavement, attesting its former greatness. From thence they struck into the heart of the Apennines, and in the high region near Nocera descried the great Flaminian Way coming northwards from Spoleto. Keeping upon this great highway they recrossed the Apennine chain, but before they were clear from the intricacies of the mountains, and when they were at the distance of a day's journey from Rimini, they fell in with a party of Goths who were casually passing that way, possibly marching between the two Gothic strongholds of Osimo and Urbino. So little were the barbarians thinking of war that the wounds received from the arrows of the Romans were the first indications of their presence. They sought cover behind the rocks of the mountain-pass, and some thus escaped death. Peeping forth from their hiding-places, they perceived the standards of Belisarius; they saw an apparently countless multitude streaming over the mountains—for the army was marching in loose order by many mountain pathways, not in column along the one high road—and they fled in terror to the camp of Witigis, to show their wounds, to tell of the standards of Belisarius and to spread panic by the tidings that the great general was on his march to encompass them. In fact, the troops of Belisarius, who bivouacked for the night on the scene of this little skirmish,

did not reach Rimini till all the fighting was over; but its Gothic besiegers expected every moment to see him emerge from the mountains, march towards them from the north, and cut off their retreat to Ravenna.

While the Goths were thus anxiously looking towards the north, suddenly upon the south, between them and Pesaro, blazed the watch-fires of an enormous army. These were the troops of Martin, who had been ordered by Belisarius to adopt this familiar stratagem, to make his line appear in the night-time larger than it actually was. Then, to complete the discouragement of the Goths, the Imperial warships, which indeed bore a formidable army, appeared in the twilight in the harbor of Rimini. Fancying themselves on the point of being surrounded, the soldiers of Witigis left their camp, filled as it was with the trappings of their barbaric splendor, and fled in headlong haste to Ravenna. Had there been any strength or spirit left in the Roman garrison, they might, by one timely sally, have well-nigh destroyed the Gothic army and ended the war upon the spot; but hunger and misery had reduced them too low for this. They had enough life left in them to be rescued, and that was all. Of the relieving army, Ildiger and his division were the first to appear upon the scene. They sacked the camp of the Goths and made slaves of the sick barbarians whom they found there. Then came Martin and his division. Last of all, about noon of the following day, Belisarius and the Eunuch appeared upon the scene. When they saw the pale faces and emaciated forms of the squalid defenders of Rimini, Belisarius, who was still thinking of the original disobedience to orders which had brought about all this suffering, could not suppress the somewhat ungenerous taunt, "Oh, Joannes! you will not find it easy to pay your debt of gratitude to Ildiger for this deliverance". "No thanks at all do I owe to Ildiger, but all to Narses the Emperor's Chamberlain" answered John, who either knew or conjectured what had passed in the council of war at Fermo regarding his deliverance.

Thus were sown the seeds of a dissension which wrought much harm, and might conceivably have wrought much more, to the affairs of the Emperor.

CHAPTER XI.

DISSENSIONS IN THE IMPERIAL CAMP.

The relief of Rimini greatly strengthened the party of Narses at the council-table of the Imperial generals. It was indeed the arm of Belisarius that had wrought that great achievement, but the directing brain, as John asserted, and as most men in the army believed, was the brain of the Imperial Chamberlain. Accordingly friends and flatterers of this successful amateur general gathered round him in large numbers, with their unwise yet only too gratifying suggestions. "It was surely" they said, "beneath his dignity to allow himself to be dragged about, as a mere subordinate officer, in the train of Belisarius". When the Emperor sent a minister of such high rank, the sharer of his most secret counsels, into the field, he must have intended him to hold a separate command, to win glory for himself by his great actions, and not merely to help in gathering fresh laurels for the brow of the already too powerful Master of the Soldiery. The suggestion that he should himself be general-in-chief over a separate army was one which would meet with ready acceptance from the bravest of the officers and the best part of the troops. All the Herulian auxiliaries, all his own bodyguard, all John's soldiers and those of Justin, all the men who followed the standards of the other Narses and his brother Aratius, a gallant host amounting in all to fully 10,000 men, would be proud to fight under the deliverer of Rimini, and to vindicate for Narses at least an equal share with Belisarius in the glory of the recovery of Italy. An equal, or even henceforward a greater share; for the army of Belisarius was so weakened by the detachment of soldiers doing garrison-duty in all the towns from Sicily to Picenum, that he would have to follow rather than to lead in the operations which were yet necessary to finish the war".

These insidious counsels, urged at every possible opportunity, bore their expected fruit in the mind of the Eunuch, elated as he was by his great success in the affair of Rimini. Order after order which he received from Belisarius was quietly disregarded, as not suited to the present posture of affairs; and the General was made to feel, without the possibility of mistake, that, though he might advise, he must not presume to command, so great a personage as the Praepositus of the Sacred Bed-chamber. When Belisarius understood that this was really, the position taken up by Narses he summoned all the generals to a council of war. Without directly complaining of the spirit of insubordination which he saw creeping in among them, he told them that he saw their views did not coincide with his as to the present crisis. The enemy, in his view, were still essentially stronger than their own forces. By dexterity and good-luck the Goths had hitherto been successfully outgeneraled; but, let them only redeem their fortunes by one happy stroke, the opportunity for which might be offered them by the over-confidence of the Imperial officers, and, passing from despair to the enthusiasm of success, they would become dangerous, perhaps irresistible. To the mind of Belisarius the present aspect of the theatre of war brought grave anxiety. With Witigis and thirty or forty thousand Goths at Ravenna, with his nephew besieging Milan and dominating Liguria, with Osimo held by a numerous and gallant Gothic garrison, with even Orvieto, so near to Rome, still in the possession of the enemy, and with the Franks, of old so formidable to the Romans, hanging like a thunder-cloud upon the Alps, ready at any moment to sweep down on Upper Italy, there was danger that the Imperial army might soon find itself surrounded by foes. He proposed

therefore that the host should part itself into two and only two strong divisions, that the one should march into Liguria for the relief of Milan, and the other should undertake the reduction of Osimo and such other exploits in Umbria and Picenum as they might find themselves capable of performing. We are led to infer, though the fact is not expressly stated, that Belisarius offered to Narses and the generals of his faction the choice of undertaking independently either of these alternative operations.

When the speech of Belisarius was ended, Narses said curtly, and with little deference to the General's authority, "What you have laid before us is doubtless true as far as it goes. But I hold that it is quite absurd to say that this great army is equal only to the accomplishment of these two objects, the relief of Milan and the reduction of Osimo. While you are leading such of the Romans as you think fit to those cities, I and my friends will proceed to recover for the Emperor the province of Aemilia [in other words, the southern bank of the Po from Piacenza to the Adriatic]. This is a province which the Goths are said especially to prize. We shall thus so terrify them that they will not dare to issue forth from Ravenna and cut off your supplies, an operation which they are sure to undertake if we all march off together to besiege Osimo"

So spoke Narses, and thus forced Belisarius to fall back on his Imperial commission, which gave him the supreme and ultimate responsibility for the movements of the whole army of Italy. That this authority was not impaired by recent changes was proved by a letter from the Emperor, which he read to the council, and which ran as follows:

"We have not sent our chamberlain Narses to Italy to take the command of the army. For we wish Belisarius alone to lead the whole army, whithersoever it may seem best to him; and it behoves you all to follow him in whatsoever makes for the good of our Empire".

So ran the letter of Justinian, which seemed at first sight entirely to negative the claims of Narses clause in to an independent command. But, as the Eunuch pointed out, a singular limitation was contained in the last clause, "you are to follow him in whatsoever makes for the good of our Empire". "We do not think", said Narses, "that your present plan of campaign is for the good of the Empire, and therefore we decline to follow you". The clause had possibly been introduced in order to guard against the contingency of Belisarius aspiring to the purple. Or perhaps, now as in the case of Odovacar's embassy to Constantinople, it seemed to the guiding spirits in the Imperial Chancery a stroke of statesmanship to put forth an ambiguous document which might be interpreted by each side according to its own inclination. The Empire by the Bosphorus was already developing those qualities which we, perhaps unfairly, term Oriental.

For the moment some kind of compromise seems to have been patched up. Peranius, with a large army, was sent to besiege Orvieto, which, from its nearness to Rome, was admitted by all to be a point of danger. Belisarius, with the rest of the army, moved off to attack Urbino, which was a day's journey to the south of Rimini. Narses and John, and the other generals of that party, followed or accompanied Belisarius; but when they came in sight of the city, the disaffected generals encamped on the west, leaving Belisarius and his adherents to sit down on the eastern side.

Urbino, the Athens of Italy, as she was called in the short but glorious summer of her fame, acquired imperishable renown under the rule of the princes of the house of Montefeltro in the fifteenth century. The influence exerted on Italian Literature by the fostering care of these princes is known to all scholars; but in the history of Painting the name of their little capital is of mightier meaning, since the utmost ends of the earth have heard the fame of Raffaele of Urbino. Now, she is again not much more than she was in the days of Belisarius, a little bleak fortress looking forth upon the bare horizon of Umbrian hills, herself highest of them all. No river has she of her own, but is reached by a steep ascent of five miles from the fair valley of the Metaurus. This was the city to which, in the autumn of 538, Belisarius sent

ambassadors, promising all kinds of favors to the garrison if they would anticipate their inevitable fate by a speedy surrender. Strong in their belief of the impregnability of their fortress, in the good store of provisions which they had accumulated within its walls, and in the possession of an excellent spring of water, the garrison refused to surrender, and haughtily bade the ambassadors to depart from the gates immediately.

Seeing that Belisarius was bent upon reducing Narses and the place, by a tedious blockade if that were needful, Narses and John decided to take their own course. John had slightly attempted Urbino before, on his first entry into Picenum, and had found it impregnable. Since then a much larger garrison and stores of provisions had been introduced. Why linger any longer on these bleak highlands, winter now approaching, and success well-nigh impossible? They broke up their camp on the west of the city, and marched away, intent upon their favorite scheme of the annexation of the Aemilia.

The garrison, seeing that half their enemies had marched away, flouted and jeered those who remained. The city, though it did not stand on a precipitous cliff like others of these Umbrian fortresses, was nevertheless at the top of an exceedingly steep hill; and only on the north side was the approach anything like level. On this side Belisarius proposed to make his attack. ordered his soldiers to collect a quantity of trunks and boughs of trees, and out of these to construct a machine which they called the *Porch*. The trunks being fixed upright, and the boughs, perhaps still covered with leaves, being wattled together to form the sides, the machine, worked by soldiers within, was to be moved along the one level approach to the city, and the soldiers under its shelter were to begin battering at the wall. But no sooner had they reached the vicinity of the fortress, than, instead of being met by a shower of arrows, they saw the battlements thronged with Goths stretching out their right hands in the attitude of suppliants and praying for mercy. This sudden change in the attitude of the garrison, lately so bent on resistance to the death, was caused by the mysterious failure of their one hitherto copious spring. It had for three days fallen lower and lower, and now, when the soldiers went to draw water, they obtained nothing but liquid mud. Without a spring of water defence was impossible, and they did wisely to surrender. The characteristic good-fortune of Belisarius had prevailed. Urbino was his, and some of its late defenders appear to have taken service in the Imperial army.

The news of the speedy surrender of Urbino brought not only surprise but grief to the heart of Narses, who was still quartered at Rimini. He urged John to undertake the reduction of the strong city of Cesena, twenty miles inland on the Emilian Way. John took scaling ladders, and attempted an assault. The garrison resisted vigorously, slaying many of the assailants, among them Fanotheus, the King of the wild Herulian auxiliaries of the Empire. John, whose temper was impatient of the slow work of a siege, pronounced this, as he had pronounced so many other cities under whose walls he had stood, impregnable, and marched off for the easier exploit of overrunning the Emilian province. The ancient city of Forum Cornelii (now Imola) was carried by surprise, and the whole province was recovered for the Emperor; an easy conquest, but probably not one of great strategic value.

The winter solstice was now past, and the new year, 539, begun. The heart of Belisarius was still set upon what he knew to be the necessary task of the capture of Osimo; but he would not in the winter season expose his troops to the hardships of a long encampment in the open country while he was blockading the city. He therefore sent Aratius, with the bulk of the army, into winter quarters at Fermo, with orders to watch the garrison of Osimo and prevent their wandering at will over Picenum: and he himself marched with a detachment of moderate size to Orvieto, which had been for many months besieged by Peranius, and the garrison of which were hard pressed by famine.

Albilas their general had long kept up their spirits by delusive hopes of coming reinforcements, but they were already reduced to feed upon hides steeped in water to soften them: and when they saw the standards of the mighty Belisarius under their walls, they soon surrendered at discretion. It was well for the Roman cause that the blockade had been so complete, for, to an assault, the rock-built city of the Clanis would have been, in the judgment of Belisarius, quite inaccessible.

It was now nine months since the raising of the siege of Rome. The progress of the Imperial arms since that time had not been rapid, but it had been steady. Rimini had been relieved, Urbino taken, the Aemilia reannexed to the Empire, Orvieto, that dangerous neighbor to Rome, reduced. Now, however, in the early months of 539, the Imperial arms sustained a terrible reverse in the reconquest of Milan by the Goths. To understand the course of Rome, of events which led up to this disaster, we must go back twelve months, to the early part of 538, shortly after the conclusion of the three months' truce between Belisarius and Witigis. The reader may remember that at that time Datius, the Archbishop of Milan, made his appearance in Rome, at the head of a deputation, entreating Belisarius to send troops to rescue the capital of Liguria from the barbarians. The General, perhaps unwisely, complied, thus in appearance committing the same faults, of advancing too far and extending his line of defence too widely, which he had blamed in the case of his subordinate John, when that officer occupied Rimini. After the siege of Rome was raised he sent one thousand troops to escort Datius back to his diocese. The little army was composed of Isaurians under Ennes, and Thracians under Paulus. Mundilas, whose Praetorium was sentinelled by a few picked soldiers from Belisarius's own bodyguard, commanded the whole expedition, which was also accompanied by Fidelius, formerly Quaestor under Athalaric, now Praetorian Prefect of Italy under Justinian, and the most important civil functionary in the restored province.

The expedition sailed from Porto to Genoa. There the soldiers left the ships, but took the ships' boats with them on wagons, and by their means crossed the river Po without difficulty. Under the walls of Pavia (Ticinum) they fought a bloody battle with the Goths, in which the Imperial arms triumphed. The fugitive barbarians were only just able to close the gates of their city in time to prevent it from being taken by the conquerors. It would have been an important prize; for Pavia, even more perhaps than Ravenna, was the treasury and arsenal of the Gothic monarchy. The exultation of Mundilas at his victory in the field was damped by the disappointment of not occupying Pavia, and yet more by the death of the Illustris, Fidelius, who had tarried behind to offer his devotions in a church near the field of battle. On his departure, his horse fell with him : the Goths perceived his helpless condition, and sallying forth from the city slew the recreant official, whom they doubtless considered a traitor to the house of Theodoric.

When the expedition arrived at Milan, the city, thoroughly Roman in its sympathies, surrendered itself gladly into their hands. Bergamo, Como, Novara, and other towns in the neighborhood, followed the example of the capital, and were garrisoned by Roman troops. In this way Mundilas reduced his own immediate following in Milan to three hundred men, among whom, however, were his two capable officers, Paulus and Ennes.

On hearing of the defection of Milan, Witigis dispatched a large army, under the command of his nephew Uraias, for its recovery. Uraias was one of the favorite heroes of the Gothic nation, as brave and energetic as his uncle was helpless and timid. He was not the only enemy by which the re-Romanised city was threatened. Theudibert, King of the Franks, intent, as his nation used ever to be, on turning the calamities of Italy to profit, but not wishing at present openly to quarrel with the Emperor, ordered, or permitted, ten thousand of his Burgundian subjects to cross the Alps and to encamp before Milan, holding himself ready to disavow the action of the invaders should it suit his purpose to conciliate the Court of

Byzantium. By these two armies, the Frankish and the Gothic, Milan was, in the spring months of 538, so closely invested that it was impossible to carry any food into the city. The little band of three hundred Thracians and Isaurians being quite inadequate to guard the wide circuit of the city-walls, Mundilas was forced to call upon the citizens themselves to man the ramparts.

When Belisarius heard that Uraias had formed the siege of Milan, he sent two generals, Martin and Uliaris, with a large army, to relieve the beleaguered city. Martin had shared with Ildiger the perils of his bold dash through Umbria, and Uliaris had taken, apparently, a creditable part in the expedition for the relief of Rimini; but neither officer now behaved in a manner worthy of his former reputation. When they reached the river Po, they encamped upon its southern bank, and there remained for a long time timidly consulting how they should cross the stream.

A messenger dispatched by Mundilas, Paulus by name, stole through the ranks of the besiegers, swam across the river, and was admitted to the tent of the generals. With burning words he told them that their delay was ruining the cause of the Emperor, and that they would be no better than traitors if they allowed the great city of Mediolanum, wealthiest and most populous of all the cities of Italy, her great bulwark against the Franks and all the other Transalpine barbarians, to fall into the hands of the enemy. The generals promised speedy assistance, a promise with which Paulus, returning by night through the ranks of the enemy, gladdened the hearts of his fellow-citizens. But still they sat, week after week, in unaccountable hesitation, cowering by the southern bank of the great river.

At length, in order to justify themselves to Belisarius, they wrote him a letter saying that they feared their forces were insufficient to cope with the great armies of the Goths and Franks that were roaming through the plains of Liguria, and begging him to order John and Justin to march from the neighboring province of Aemilia to their aid. Such an order was sent to those generals, who openly refused to obey any command of Belisarius, saying that Narses was their leader.

In these wretched delays, the fruit of cowardice and of insubordination, more than six months must have passed from the first investment of Milan. At length Narses, having received a letter from Belisarius frankly setting before him the dangers which his insubordinate policy was preparing for the Empire, gave the required order. John began collecting boats upon the Venetian coast to enable the army to make the passage of the river, but was attacked by fever—apparently a genuine, not a feigned attack—and when he recovered, the opportunity was lost.

For, in the meantime, the disgracefully abandoned defenders of Milan had been undergoing terrible privations. They were reduced at last to eat dogs and mice and such creatures as no man had ever thought of before in connection with the idea of food. The besiegers, who knew how matters stood with them, sent ambassadors, calling on Mundilas to surrender the city, and promising that the lives of all the soldiers should be preserved. Mundilas was willing to agree to these terms if the citizens might be included in the capitulation; but the enemy, indignant at the treachery of the Milanese, avowed that every one of them should perish. Then Mundilas made a spirit-stirring address to his soldiers, exhorting them to seize their arms and burst forth with him in one last desperate sally. He could not bear, by looking on, to make himself a partaker in the dreadful deeds which would assuredly be done against these unhappy subjects of the Emperor, whose only crime was having invited him within their walls. "Every man" said he, "has his appointed day of death, which he can neither hasten nor delay. The only difference between men is that some meet this inevitable doom gloriously, while others, struggling to escape from it, die just as soon, but by a coward's death. Let us show that we are worthy of the teaching of Belisarius, which we have all shared, and which makes it an impiety for us to be anything else but brave and glorious in our dying. We

may achieve some undreamed of victory over the enemy: and if not we are nobly freed from all our present miseries”.

The exhortation was in vain. The soldiers, disheartened by the hardships of the siege, could not rise to the height of the desperate courage of their leader, and insisted on surrendering the city to the Goths. The barbarians honorably observed towards the soldiers the terms of the capitulation, but wreaked their full vengeance on the wretched inhabitants of Milan. All the men were slain, and these, if the information given to Procopius was correct, amounted to 300,000. The women were made slaves, and handed over by the Goths to their Burgundian allies in payment of their services. The city itself was razed to the ground: not the only time that signal destruction has overtaken the fair capital of Lombardy. All the surrounding cities, notwithstanding their Imperial garrisons, had to open their gates to the foe; but we do not read that they shared the same terrible fate. Liguria was once again part of the Gothic monarchy.

Reparatus, the Praetorian Prefect, and successor of Fidelius, fell into the hands of the Goths, and, not being included in the army's capitulation, was cut up by the barbarians into small pieces, which were then contemptuously thrown to the dogs. Cerventinus his brother—the two were also brothers of Pope Vigilius—had shared the flight of Reparatus from Ravenna. More fortunate than his brother, he now escaped from the doomed city, and making his way through Venetia, bore the terrible tidings to Justinian. Martin and Uliaris, returning from their inglorious campaign, brought the same tidings to Belisarius, who received them with intense grief and anger, and refused to admit Uliaris to his presence. In his letter to the Emperor he doubtless laid the blame disaster of the fall of Milan on the divided counsels by which for the last twelve months his arm had been paralyzed. Justinian, among whose many faults cruelty was not included, inflicted no signal punishment on any of the blunderers by whom his interests had been so grievously injured, but took now the step which he should have taken on the first news of the dissensions of the generals, by sending to Narses a letter of recall, and formally constituting Belisarius Generalissimo of the Imperial forces in Italy.

Narses accordingly returned with a few soldiers to Constantinople. The wild Herulians who had come in his train refused to serve under any other leader, marched off into Liguria, sold their captives and their beasts of burden to the Goths, took an oath of perpetual friendship with that nation, marched through Venetia into Illyria, again changed their minds, and accepted service under the Emperor at Constantinople. An unstable and brutish people, and one for which Procopius never spares a disparaging word when an opportunity of uttering it is afforded by the course of his narrative.

CHAPTER XII.

SIEGES OF FIESOLI AND OSIMO.

The war had now lasted four years, and it was over a ruined and wasted Italy that the wolves of war were growling. The summer of 538 was long remembered as the time when Famine and her child Disease in their full horror first fell upon Tuscany, Liguria, and the Aemilia. The fields had now been left for two years uncultivated. A self-sown crop, poor but still a crop, sprang up in the summer of 537. Unreaped by the hand of man, it lay rotting on the ground: no plough stirred the furrows, no hand scattered fresh seed upon the earth, and in the following summer there was of course mere desolation. The inhabitants of Tuscany betook them to the mountains, and fed upon the acorns which they gathered in the oak-forests that cling round the shoulders of the Apennines. The dwellers in the Aemilia flocked into Picenum, thinking that the nearness of the seaboard would at least preserve them from absolute starvation;

Procopius marked the stages of decline in this hunger-smitten people, and describes it in words which were perhaps meant to remind the reader of Thucydides' description of the Plague of Athens. First the pinched face and yellow complexion surcharged with bile; then the natural moisture dried up, and the skin, looking like tanned leather, adhering to the bones; the yellow color turning to a livid purple, and the purple to black, which made the poor famine-stricken countryman look like a burned-out torch; the expression of dazed wonder in the face sometimes changing to the wild eyes of the maniac;—he saw and noted it all. As is always the case after long endurance of hunger, some men, when provisions were brought into the country, could not profit by them. However carefully the nourishment was doled out to them, in small quantities at a time as one feeds a little child, still in many cases their digestions could not bear it, and those who had survived the famine died of food.

In some places cannibalism made its appearance. Two women dwelt in a lonely house near Rimini, and were wont to entice into their dwelling the passers-by, whom they slew in their sleep, and on whose flesh they feasted. Seventeen men had thus perished. The eighteenth started up out of sleep just as the hags were approaching for his destruction. With drawn sword he stood over them, forced them to confess all their wickedness, then slew them.

Elsewhere the famine-wasted inhabitants might be seen streaming forth into the fields to pluck any green herb that could be made available for food. Often when they had knelt down for this purpose their strength would not serve them to pull it out of the ground. And so it came to pass that they lay down and died upon the ungathered herbage, unburied, for there was none to bury them, but undesecrated, for even the birds of carrion found nothing to attract them in those fleshless corpses.

One little story told by Procopius brings vividly before us the misery caused in Italy by the movements of the hostile armies. When the historian accompanied Belisarius on his march over the Apennines for the relief of Rimini, he saw a child which was suckled and watched over by a goat. The mother of this child, a woman of Urbs Salvia, had fled before the approach of John's army—the liberating army—into the province of Picenum. In her flight she had been for a moment, as she supposed, parted from her new-born babe; but either death or captivity had prevented her from returning to the place where she had laid it down. The babe, wrapped

in its swaddling-clothes, lifted up its voice and wept. A she-goat which was near ran to it, and pitying its cry, nourished it as she would have nourished her own little one, and guarded it from all other animals. When the inhabitants of Urbs Salvia found that John's army had friendly thoughts towards them, they returned to their homes; but among them was not the mother of the child. One after another of the women offered to give suck to the child, but it refused all nourishment save that of its four-footed nurse; and she with loud bleatings and gestures of anger claimed the child as her own charge. It was therefore left to the care of the goat, and named, like the outcast prince of Argos, Aegisthus, "the goat's child". Procopius, as has been said, saw this marvel on his way through Urbs Salvia. The goat was at the time at some little distance from her charge, but when Procopius and his friends pinched it and made it cry, she came bounding towards it with a bleat of distress, and standing over it, signified with butting horn that she would guard it against all assailants.

Notwithstanding the cruel exhaustion of Italy, the parties were still too evenly matched for the struggle to come to an end: Witigis, who by his tardy and resourceless policy reminds us not a little the Saxon Ethelred, began to cast about him for allies, a step which, if he had taken it three years ago, might perhaps have saved him from ruin. The Franks were too utterly untrustworthy; the Lombards, to whose King Wacis he sent an embassy offering great gifts as the price of his alliance, refused to break with Byzantium. He therefore called an assembly of the elders, and there setting forth the difficulties of his situation, asked for the advice of his subjects. After long deliberations and many idle suggestions, a proposal was made which was fitted to the present state of affairs. It was pointed out by one of the Gothic statesmen that the peace which Justinian concluded on the accession of Chosroes in 531 was the true cause of the disasters both of the Vandal and the Gothic monarchies. Had the Caesar of Constantinople not felt secure of attack from the Persian King, he had never dared to employ the matchless skill of Belisarius on the banks of Libyan rivers and under the walls of Umbrian towns. It was therefore proposed and decided to send ambassadors to Chosroes to stir him up, if possible, to a renewal of hostilities against the Roman Empire. The ambassadors chosen were not Goths, whose nationality might have prevented them from traversing in safety the wide provinces of the East, but two priests of Liguria, probably Arian by their creed though Roman by speech and parentage, who for the promise of a large sum of money undertook this hazardous enterprise. One of these assumed the style of a bishop to give weight to his representations, and the other accompanied him as an ecclesiastical attendant.

The journey of these men to the Persian Court of course occupied a considerable time, and the full results of their mission were not apparent for more than a year after the period which we have now reached. The mere rumor, however, that negotiations were being opened between the Goths and the Persians made Justinian, who knew the weakness of his eastern frontier, so anxious to close the Italian war that he at once sent home the Gothic envoys, who for a twelvemonth had been waiting in his ante-chambers, suffering all those heart-breaking delays which seem to be engendered by the very air of Constantinople. Now they were bidden to return, offering to the Goths a long truce on terms which should be beneficial to both the combatants. Belisarius, however, who throughout this stage of the proceedings overruled with little hesitation the decisions of his master, refused to allow the Gothic envoys to enter Ravenna till the sanctity of the persons of ambassadors had been vindicated by the return of Peter and Athanasius, the Emperor's envoys to Theodahad, who, for nearly four years, had been kept in unjustifiable captivity. They returned, and as a reward of their devotion were promoted to high offices in the Empire. Athanasius was made Praetorian Prefect of Italy in the room of Reparatus, slain at Milan; and Peter, the brave and outspoken disputant with Theodahad, was hailed as Illustrious Master of the Offices, and received the embassies of foreign rulers in the palace-hall of Byzantium.

In these negotiations the winter and early spring of 539 wore away. In May 539 Belisarius addressed himself to the capture of the two fortresses which still held out for the Goths south of Ravenna: and such was the strength of position, perched upon their almost inaccessible heights, that all the rest of the year was consumed upon the task. The two fortresses were Faesulae and Auximum, represented by the modern towns of Fiesole and Osimo, the one overlooking the gleaming Arno, the other beholding the blue Adriatic upon its horizon.

Every Italian traveler knows the little Tuscan town to which we climb for our finest view of the dome of Brunelleschi and the tower of Giotto, pausing in our ascent to visit the villa of the Magnificent Lorenzo, and thinking of Milton's conversations with Galileo as we gaze upon

'The moon whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist viewed
At evening from the top of Fiesole.'

Instead of all this cluster of enchanting sights and memories, what had the Faesulae of the sixth century to show? She had, no doubt in greater extent, that stupendous Etruscan wall, the mere fragments of which make the Roman ruins by the side of it look like the handiwork of pigmies. She had the high fortress or Arx, a thousand feet above the Plain of Arno, where the friars of St. Francis' order now kneel for worship; the Temple of Bacchus, which was perhaps even then turned into a Christian basilica; and the Theatre, on whose stone seats we may still sit and imagine that we see from thence the couriers of Belisarius or Witigis spurring their steeds along the Cassian Road below. She had perhaps some remembrance of the day, six centuries ago, when Petreius defeated Catiline under her cliffs. More probably, her inhabitants yet pointed to the spot, near to her walls, where the vast horde of Radagaisus was surrounded and starved into submission by Stilicho.

Fiesole was held by a body of Gothic troops, of whose numbers we are not informed. To compel their surrender, Cyprian, one of the old officers who had fought under Belisarius at the siege of Rome, and Justin, one of the new arrivals under Narses, were sent with some of their own soldiers (probably cavalry) and a band of Isaurian auxiliaries, together with five hundred of the regular infantry, who still represented, though faintly, the old Roman legion. John, now again obedient to the orders of Belisarius; another John, whose mighty appetite procured him in the camp the nickname of the Glutton; and Martin, apparently forgiven for his disgraceful failure before Milan, were sent with a large body of troops to cover the siege of Fiesole and to hover about the upper waters of the Po. If possible, they were to intercept the communications of Uraias with Ravenna; if that were impossible, and if he should march to the relief of his uncle Witigis, they were to keep up an active pursuit of his army. These generals found the town of Tortona (then called Dertona), by the bank of the Po, a convenient basis of operations. As it was unwalled, it could be easily occupied by them; but by the command of Theodoric it had been plentifully supplied with houses suitable for the quartering of troops, and these were now taken advantage of by the generals who came to overthrow his kingdom. After a few skirmishes the siege of Fiesole settled down into a mere blockade. The Roman soldiers were unable to scale the heights on which the city stood, but they could easily surround them and see that no provisions were brought into Fiesole. Pressed by famine, the garrison called on Witigis, who ordered his nephew Uraias to advance to their assistance. Uraias with a large army marched to Pavia, crossed the Po, and sat down over against John and Martin, at a distance of some seven miles from their camp at Tortona. Neither party was willing to begin the fight. The Romans felt that their end was gained if they prevented Uraias from attacking the besiegers of Tortona. The Goths feared that one lost battle would shatter the last hope of their monarchy.

Both armies therefore resumed that waiting game which they had played before the fall of Milan, and for which the Lombard plain (as we now call it) is so eminently adapted.

While this was the position of affairs, a new enemy swept like a torrent down the ravines of the Alps of St. Bernard, an enemy whose advent for a time changed the whole aspect of the war in Upper Italy. "The Franks", says Procopius, "seeing the mischief which Goths and Romans were inflicting on one another, and the length to which the war was being protracted, began to take it very ill that they should obtain no advantage from the calamities of a country of which they were such near neighbors. Forgetting, therefore, the oaths which they had sworn and the covenants which they had ratified only a short time before with both kingdoms—for this nation is the most slippery of all mankind in its observance of its plighted word—they marched into Italy to the number of 100,000 men under the guidance of their King Theudibert. A few horsemen armed with spears surrounded the person of their King: all the rest fought on foot, having neither bow nor spear, but each with a sword and shield and one axe. The iron of this axe is stout, sharp, and two-edged; the handle, made of wood, is exceedingly short. At a signal given they all throw these axes, and thus at the first onset are wont to break the shields of the enemy and slay his men.

When the Goths heard that this new host under Theudibert's own command was descending from the passes of the Alps, they trusted that the Franks were about to throw their weight into the opposite scale to that of the Empire, and that the hard struggle of the last four years was at length to be terminated by their co-operation. The Franks took care not to undeceive them so long as the Po had still to be crossed, but marched as a friendly force, harming no one, through Liguria. Having entered Pavia, having been allowed quietly to obtain possession of the bridge at the confluence of the Ticino and the Po, they threw off all disguise, and slaying the Gothic women and children whom they found there, cast their dead bodies into the stream, as an offering to the unseen powers and as the first-fruits of the war. Procopius assures us that this savage deed had really a religious significance, "since these barbarians, Christians though they be, preserve much of their, old creed, still practicing human sacrifices and other unhallowed rites, by which they seek to divine the future". Thin as the varnish of Christianity was over the Frankish nation, "the eldest daughter of the Catholic Church", it is hardly possible that this statement can be literally true. There were many Alamanni, doubtless, and other men of tribes confessedly still heathen, in the wild horde which clustered round the horse of King Theudibert; and it may have been some of these who performed the religious part of the rite, the Christian Franks only sharing in the brutal butchery which preceded it.

When the Gothic sentinels on the bridge saw the horrid deed perpetrated by these savages, they fled without striking a blow. The Franks proceeded towards Tortona; the main body of the Gothic army, still believing in their friendly intentions, advanced to meet them, but were soon undeceived by the storm of flying axes, swung by Frankish hands, laying their bravest low. In their consternation they turned to flee, and fled right through the Roman camp, never stopping till they reached Ravenna.

When the Imperial troops saw the flight of the Goths, deeming that Belisarius must certainly have arrived, must have conquered, and must be now pursuing, they advanced, as they supposed, to meet him. They too were cruelly undeceived, and being easily routed by the vast host of the Franks, fled across the Apennines, some into Tuscany to join the besiegers of Fiesoli, others to Osimo to tell the grievous tidings to Belisarius. The Franks, having thus won an easy victory over both armies, and sacked both camps, rioted for some time in the enjoyment of all the good things that they found there. When these came to an end, having no proper commissariat, and, like the brutish barbarians that they were, having no skill for aught but mere ravage of the country in which they found themselves, they fell short of provisions. The large draught-oxen of Liguria furnished them for a time with beef, but their only drink was

the water of the great river. The combination proved injurious to the digestion of the greedy soldiers, and diarrhea and dysentery soon scourged the army of Theudibert, a third part of which, so it was reported, fell victims to these diseases.

Belisarius was filled with anxiety for the fate of the besiegers of Fiesole when he heard of the Frankish invasion. He wrote a letter to Theudibert charging him with conduct which the basest of mankind could scarcely have been guilty of, in violating his sworn and written promise to join in a league against the Goths, nay more, in actually turning his arms against the Empire. He warned him that the wrath of the Emperor for such a wanton outrage would not be easily turned aside, and recommended him to take care lest, in his light-hearted search after adventures, he fell himself into the extreme of peril. The letter reached Theudibert just at a time when his fickle soldiers were loudly complaining of the loss of so many thousands of their comrades by disease. The purpose of his soul was changed, and he vanished across the Alps with the remainder of his host as speedily as he came, having done nearly as much mischief and reaped as little advantage as Charles VIII, the typical Frank of the fifteenth century, in his invasion of Italy. Thus already is the melancholy strain begun which for a thousand years and more was to be the dirge of Italy. Already might a truly statesmanlike Roman see the mistake which had been made in rejecting—for merely sentimental reasons—the wise policy of Theodoric and Cassiodorus, that policy which would have made the Roman the brain and the Ostrogoth the sword-arm of Italy. Might that scheme have had fair play,—

Then, still untired,
 Would not be seen the armed torrents poured
 Down the steep Alps, nor would the hostile horde
 Of many-nationed spoilers from the Po
 Quaff blood and water, nor the stranger's sword
 Be her sad weapon of defence, and so,
 Victor or vanquished, she, the slave of friend or foe.

While these events were passing in the north and west of Italy, Belisarius was prosecuting, with less success than had hitherto fallen to his lot, the slow siege of Osimo. This little city, which stands on a hill 900 feet above the sea, is ten miles south of Ancona, and about nine west of the Adriatic shore. Few travelers now climb up to its difficult height except those who may be disposed to take it on their way, when making pilgrimage to the Holy House of the Virgin brought, as the story goes, by angels from Nazareth and deposited on the neighboring hill of Loretto. The journey leads us through one of the fairest districts of Italy; a fertile undulating land, each height crowned with its own village, a stronghold in former days. We meet the stalwart peasants of La Marca driving their milk-white oxen in their antique chariot-like carts. Each cart is adorned with some picture of virgin or saint, or, for those who do not soar so high, of wife or sweetheart, rudely painted, but testifying to that yearning after the beautiful in Art which is the Italian's heritage. At length the road mounts steeply upward. After a toilsome ascent we stand upon the mountain crest of Osimo and survey the wide panorama.

Almost at our feet lies Castelfidardo, where, in 1860, Lamoricière, commanding the soldiers of the Pope, sustained a crushing defeat at the hands of the general of Victor Emmanuel. The curving coast of Ancona on the north, the Adriatic filling up the eastern horizon, the long line of the Apennines on the west, and their king the Gran Sasso d'Italia in the dim south, may all be seen from our airy watch-tower. In the Palazzo Pubblico of the town we find abundant evidence of its vanished greatness. Here are many inscriptions, belonging to the

age both of republican and imperial Rome, betokening the pride of the Auximates in their city, once like Philippi in Macedonia, “a chief city in that country and a colony”.

The gens *Oppia* seems for some time to have supplied the chief persons of the miniature senate, but all, of whatever family, proudly claim the title of “Decurio of the Roman colony of the Auximates”, that word Decurio being still a badge of honor, not yet the branded mark of servitude. Looking at these tombs we recall with interest the words of Caesar, who tells us that at the beginning of the Civil War, the *Decuriones of Auximum* sent a message to the Senatorial general who commanded the garrison, “that neither they nor their fellow-townsmen could endure that after all his services to the Republic, Caius Caesar the general should be excluded from their walls”. In the years, nearly six hundred, which had passed since that important resolution was formed, Auximum had generally played its part with credit, as the leading city of Picenum. Ancona, which now far surpasses it in importance, was then its humble dependent, bearing to it nearly the same relation that Ostia bore to Rome or Piraeus to Athens.

Auximum was garrisoned by some of the noblest and most martial of the Goths, who rightly looked upon it as the key of Ravenna. The Roman troops were quartered in huts all-round the foot of the hill; and the garrison saw a chance of success by making a charge at evening upon a portion of the host while Belisarius was still engaged with his body-guard in measuring the ground for the camp. The attack was bravely repelled, and the garrison retired, but the moment they stood again on their precipitous hill-top the battle again inclined in their favour. Night fell: a number of the garrison, who had gone out to forage the day before, returning, found the camp-fires between them and Auximum. A few managed to steal through the lines of the Romans into the city, but the greater number took refuge in some woods near, and were there found by the besiegers and killed.

Reluctantly Belisarius, having carefully surveyed the ground, came to the conclusion that the place being absolutely unapproachable all round, except by a steep ascent, was invulnerable to any sudden stroke, and must be blockaded. The blockade took him seven months, months of weariness and chafing delay, during which the Frank was descending into Lombardy, the Courts of Ravenna and Ctesiphon were spinning their negotiations for alliance, and the position of the Empire under the grasping policy of Justinian was becoming every day more full of peril.

There was a green patch of ground not far from the walls of Osimo which was the scene of many a bloody encounter. Each party by turns resorted to it to obtain forage for their horses and cattle, sometimes, in the case of the hard-pressed garrison, to pluck some herbs by which men could allay the pangs of hunger; and each party when thus engaged was of course harassed by the enemy. Once the Goths, seeing a number of Romans on the foraging-ground, detached some heavy wagon-wheels from their axles and rolled them down the hill upon their foes: but the Romans easily opened their ranks and let the wagon-wheels thunder past them into the plain, guiltless of a single besieger’s life. In reading of these naive expedients of the Goths for inflicting injury on their foes, one feels that they were but overgrown schoolboys, playing the game of war with a certain heartiness and joviality, but quite ignorant of the conditions of success.

Their next move, however, showed a little more tactical skill. They stationed an ambushade in a valley at some little distance from the town, by judicious appearance of flight drew the Romans towards it, and then with their combined forces inflicted heavy loss on the besiegers. The misfortune of the position was that the Romans who remained in the camp could plainly see the ambushade, and shouted to their comrades not to venture further in that direction: but in the din of battle the shouts were either unheard or supposed to be shouts of encouragement, and thus the Gothic stratagem succeeded.

While Belisarius was brooding over this disappointing day's work, his secretary, the literary Procopius, approached him with a suggestion drawn from his reading of the war-books written by 'the men of old'. "In ancient times" said he, "armies used to have one note on the bugle for advance, another for recall. It may be that your troops, largely recruited from among the barbarians, are too untutored to learn this difference of note, but at least you may have a difference of instrument. Let the light and portable cavalry-trumpet, made as it is only of wood and leather, be always used to sound the advance: and when the deep note of the brazen trumpet of the infantry is heard, let the army know that that is the signal for retreat". The general adopted his secretary's suggestion, and calling his soldiers together delivered a short harangue in which he explained the new code of signals, at the same time cautioning them against headlong rashness, and assuring them that, in the skirmishing kind of warfare in which they were now engaged, there was no shame in retreat, or even in flight when the exigencies of the position required it. Of those exigencies the general must be the judge, and he would give the signal for retreat, when he deemed it necessary, by a blast from the infantry trumpet.

In the next skirmish at the foraging-ground under the new tactics the Romans were victorious. One of the swart Moorish horsemen from Mount Atlas seeing the dead body of a Goth covered with gold armor—haply such as Theodoric was buried in at Ravenna—began dragging him from the field by the hair of his head. A Goth shot an arrow which pierced the spoiler through the calves of both of his legs. Still, says Procopius, the Moor persisted in dragging the golden-armored hero by his hair. Suddenly the trumpet of retreat was heard, and the Romans hurried back to the camp carrying off with them both the Moor and his prize. The garrison, who were beginning to be hard pressed with hunger, resolved to send messengers to Ravenna to claim the help of their King. The letters were written and the messengers prepared. Upon the first moonless night the Goths crowded to the ramparts and uttered a mighty shout, which made the besiegers think that a sally was in progress or that assistance was arriving from Ravenna. Even Belisarius was deceived, and fearing the confusion of a nocturnal skirmish he ordered his soldiers to keep quiet in their quarters. This was exactly what the barbarians desired, since it enabled their messengers to steal through the Roman lines in safety. The letter which they delivered to Witigis was worded in that independent tone which the German warriors feared not to adopt to their King. "When you placed us, O King, as a garrison in Auximum, you asserted that you were committing to us the keys of Ravenna and of your kingdom. You bade us hold the place manfully, and you promised that you with all your army would promptly move to our assistance. We, who have had to fight both with hunger and Belisarius, have been faithful to our trust, but you have not lifted a finger to help us. But remember, that if the Romans take Auximum, the keys of your house, there is not a chamber therein from which you will be able to bar them". Witigis read the letter, heard the messengers, sent them back to buoy up the beleaguered garrison with hopes of speedy assistance, but took not a single step in fulfillment of his promise. He was afraid of John and Martin, hovering over the valley of the Po: he was perhaps more justly afraid of the difficulty of provisioning his troops on the long march into Picenum. To the Romans who had possession of the sea, and who could import all that they needed from Sicily and Calabria, this difficulty was far less formidable than to him. Still, if the relief of Osimo was dangerous, its reduction meant certain ruin. Anything would have been better than to let his brave soldiers, trusting to his plighted word, starve slowly on their battlements, while he himself, like another Honorius, skulked behind the lagoons of Ravenna.

After these events came the mad torrent of the Frankish invasion, bringing equal consternation to Goths and Romans, and affording to Witigis something more than a mere pretext for the postponement of his promise. The garrison of Osimo of course knew nothing of this invasion; and Belisarius, informed of the previous embassy by deserters, watched the

fortress with added diligence to prevent any second-message from being sent. In these circumstances, the Goths, bent on bringing their case again before their King, began to parley with a certain Burcentius, a soldier (probably an Armenian) who had come to Italy with Narses the Less, and who was stationed in a lonely place to prevent the foraging expeditions of the garrison. Large moneys in hand and the promise of more on his return from Ravenna induced this man to turn traitor and to bear the Second letter of the Goths to Witigis. The letter ran thus: "You will best inform yourself as to our present condition by enquiring who is the bearer of this dispatch. For it is absolutely impossible for any Goth to get through the enemy's lines. Our best food is now the herbage which grows near the city wall, and even this cannot be obtained without the sacrifice of many lives. Whither such facts as these tend we leave to be judged of by you and all the Goths in Ravenna".

To this short and pathetic letter Witigis returned a long and shifty answer, laying the blame of his past inactivity on Theudibert and the Franks; promising now with all speed to come to the assistance of his brave soldiers, and beseeching them to continue to act worthily of the reputation for valor which had caused him to single them out from all others as the defenders of his kingdom.

With the King's letter and many pieces of Gothic gold in his girdle, Burcentius returned to his station by the foraging-ground. His six days' absence was easily explained to his comrades. He had been seized with illness, and had been obliged to spend those days, off duty, in a neighboring church. At a suitable time he gave the King's letter to the garrison, who were greatly encouraged thereby, and persevered many days longer in their diet of salad, ever hoping that the trumpet of Witigis would be heard next day beneath their walls.

Still the slothful and cowardly King came not. Once more the Goths employed the services of the traitor Burcentius, who this time bore a letter from them saying that they would wait five days, no longer, and would then surrender the city. Again Burcentius returned after his opportune illness, bringing yet further flattering words and false hopes from the Nothing (as Saxons would have called him) in his palace at Ravenna. Again they were duped, and waited on in the extremity of hardship, resisting all the kind and coaxing words of Belisarius, to whom it began to be a matter of life and death to get the siege speedily ended.

Utterly perplexed by this extraordinary pertinacity of the Goths, and longing to find out its cause, the General discussed with his subordinate Valerian, whether it would be possible to capture some prisoner of distinction and extort from him the desired knowledge. Valerian mentioned that he had in his train some Slovenes from the banks of the Danube, and that these men were wont to crouch behind some small rock or shrub and stealing forth from thence to capture unwary travelers, either Romans, or barbarians of another tribe. This savage accomplishment, as it seemed, might now be turned to useful account. A tall and powerful Slovene was chosen and told that he should receive a large sum if he would capture a living Goth. He went forth accordingly in the dim morning twilight, and, bending his stalwart limbs into the smallest possible compass, hid behind a bush close to the foraging-ground. Thither came soon a Gothic noble to pick some herbs for his miserable meal. He cast many a look towards the Roman camp, to see if danger threatened him from thence, but suspected nothing of his nearer foe. While he was stooping down, suddenly the Slovene was upon him, grasped him tightly round the waist, and in spite of his struggles carried him into the camp to Belisarius. The prisoner, when questioned as to the cause of his countrymen's extraordinary pertinacity, revealed the history of the last two messages to Ravenna, and pointed to Burcentius as the bearer of them. The wretched Armenian confessed his guilt, and was handed over to his comrades to be dealt with according to their pleasure. The pleasure of these barbarians was that he should be burned alive in the full sight of the garrison, his employers. "Thus" says Procopius, "did Burcentius reap the fruit of his greediness for gain".

Still the indomitable Goths would not surrender the fortress which had been confided to them by the faithless Witigis—faithless, but yet their king, Belisarius therefore determined to cut off their supply of water, and thus force them to a capitulation. There was outside the city, but near the walls, a cistern constructed of massive masonry, from which the Goths used to draw water, each excursion for the purpose being a sortie, which had to be effected hurriedly and by stealth. The General's design was to break down the masonry of this cistern sufficiently to prevent any large accumulation of water therein, as the Goths would never have time to wait and fill their amphorae from the slowly-running stream. Drawing up all his troops in battle array and threatening the town with an attack, he kept the garrison occupied while five Isaurians, equipped with axes and crowbars, stole into the cistern. They were, however, perceived by the garrison, who guessed their errand, and assailed them with a cloud of missiles. The strong vaulted roof over their heads, placed there by the builders of the cistern to keep its waters from the noon-day sun, proved to the Isaurians an effectual shelter. Hereupon the garrison issued forth to dislodge them. So fierce was their onset that the besiegers' line wavered before them. Belisarius rushed to the spot, by voice and gesture exhorting them to stand firm. While he was thus engaged an arrow from a Gothic bow came whizzing towards him, and would certainly have inflicted on him a fatal wound in the belly, had not one of his guards, named Unigat, seeing the General's danger, interposed his hand and in it received the hostile weapon. The faithful guardsman was forced to quit the field in agony, and lost for the remainder of his days the use of his hand; but the General's life was saved:—his narrowest escape this, since he rode the dark roan charger on the first day of the siege of Borne. At the same time, seven Armenian heroes (soldiers of Narses the Less and Aratius) did great deeds of valor, charging uphill against the Goths, dispersing their forces on the level ground, and at length, about noon-day, turning the battle, which had begun at dawn and seemed at one time likely to be a Roman defeat, into a Roman victory. Great, however, was the disappointment of Belisarius when he found that all this bravery had been wasted. The Isaurians, emerging from the cistern, were obliged to confess that in six hours of labor they had not been able to loosen a single stone. “For the masons of old time”, says the historian, “put such thoroughly good work into this as into all their other buildings, that they yielded not easily either to time or to the hand of an enemy”. This remark, which is fully confirmed by all that we see of the earlier work of the Romans in our own land, is perhaps meant as a covert criticism on the ostentatious but unenduring edifices of Justinian.

Thus foiled in his attempt to destroy the cistern, Belisarius, regardless of those general instincts of humanity which have endeavored to formulate themselves under the title of “The Laws of War”, resolved to poison the well. The bodies of dead animals, poisonous herbs, and heaps of quicklime were thrown by his orders into the cistern. Still, however, the brave garrison held out, drawing their water from one tiny well in the city, and looking forth daily for the Gothic banners on the northern horizon.

At length the end of this tedious siege came from an unexpected quarter. The garrison of Fiesole, unable to endure their hardships longer, surrendered to Cyprian and Justin, on condition that their lives should be spared. Bringing their new prisoners with them, the generals marched to Osimo. The sight of their captive fellow-countrymen, aided by the remonstrances of Belisarius, broke down the long endurance of the defenders of the capital of Picenum, and they offered to surrender if they might march forth with all their possessions to join their countrymen at Ravenna. Belisarius was earnestly desirous to end the siege at once, before an alliance which he dreaded between Franks and Goths should have had time to consolidate itself. On the other hand, he was reluctant to allow so many noble Goths, the bravest of the brave, to swell the ranks of the defenders of Ravenna; and his soldiers loudly murmured that it was monstrous, after subjecting them to the hardships of a siege, and such a

siege, to deprive them of a soldier's heritage, the spoil. At length the two parties came to a fair arrangement. The Goths were to surrender half their property to the besiegers, taking a solemn oath to conceal nothing, and were allowed to retain the other half. So satisfied were they with these terms, and probably also so exasperated at the faithlessness of their King, that they appear to have actually taken service under the standards of the Emperor. There were evidently still many Goths to whom only two relations towards the Empire suggested themselves as possible, hostile invasion of its territory, or settlement as *foederati* within its borders. The siege of Osimo had lasted, according to one authority, seven months. It probably began in May, 539, and ended in December of the same year.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FALL OF RAVENNA.

Osimo being taken, Belisarius collected all his energies for the siege of Ravenna. Ravenna, defended by a power having command of the sea, would have been practically impregnable; Ravenna, beleaguered by land and by sea, had delayed Theodoric for three years before its walls, and had at length only surrendered on a capitulation which, if faithfully observed, would have left Theodoric but half a victory. Belisarius therefore, while making all his preparations for a siege, determined not to leave untried the path of negotiation, which in the present state of the Emperor's affairs, with Persia menacing and the Franks eager for mischief, might shorten this dangerous last act of the drama. The Franks, as the General had been informed, were sending their embassy to Witigis, proposing an alliance for the reconquest and division of Italy; and Belisarius sent his ambassadors to confront them there, and argue against Metz for Constantinople. At the head of the Imperial embassy was Theodosius, an officer of high rank in the semi-regal household of Belisarius, but whose guilty intimacy with Antonina, the mistress of that household, had already been spoken of by his retinue under their breath, and was at a later period to be blazed abroad in court and marketplace, and to exercise a disastrous influence on the fortunes and character of the uxorious General.

As was before said, Belisarius was not trusting wholly to negotiation. Magnus and Vitalius, with two large bodies of troops, were sent to operate on the two banks of the Po, and to prevent provisions from its fertile valley being introduced into Ravenna. Their efforts were marvelously seconded by a sudden failure of the waters of the river, which caused the Gothic flotilla, prepared for the transport of provisions, to be stranded on the banks and to fall a prey to the Roman soldiers. In a very short time the river resumed its usual course, and navigable once more, served the purposes of the besiegers as it had failed to serve those of the besieged. It was therefore in a city which was already feeling some of the hardships of scarcity, if not yet of actual famine, that the envoys of Belisarius and of Theudibert set forth their commissions.

The Franks declared that their master was even now sending 500,000 warriors over the Alps, whose hatchets flying through the air would soon bury the Roman army in one heap of ruin. Theudibert had heard with sorrow of the sufferings of his good friends the Goths at the hands of the Romans, the natural and perfidious enemy of all barbarian nations. He offered them therefore victory if they would accept his companionship in arms, and a peaceable division of the land of Italy between them; or, on the other hand, if they were mad enough to choose the Roman alliance, defeat, ignominious defeat, to be shared with their bitterest and most irreconcilable foes.

The ambassadors of Belisarius had an easy task in enlarging on the faithlessness of the nation of Clovis. The present depressed condition of the Thuringians and Burgundians showed too plainly what an alliance with this all-grasping nation foreboded to those who were foolish enough to enter into such a compact. The corpses of all the brave Gothic warriors lately slain upon the banks of the Po attested the peculiar Frankish manner of helping distressed allies. What god they could invoke, or what pledge of fidelity they could give that had not already been forsworn and violated by them, the ambassadors could not conjecture. This last proposition, that the Goths should share all their lands with the Franks, was the most impudent of all their proceedings. Let Witigis and his subjects once make trial of it, and they would find,

too late, that partnership with the insatiable Frank meant the loss of all that yet remained to them.

When the ambassadors had finished their harangues, Witigis conferred with the leading men of the nation as to their proposals. Would that the debates of this Gothic *Witenagemote* had been preserved for us! We can, however, only record the result of their deliberations, which was, that the Emperor's offers should be accepted and the Frankish envoys dismissed. Parleys as to the terms of peace followed; but Belisarius, less generous or more wary than the Gothic King, when similar negotiations were going forward two years previously under the walls of Rome, refused to relax by a single sentinel the rigor of his blockade of Ravenna. Ildiger commanded the flying columns which maneuvered on each bank of the Po, while Vitalius was sent into Venetia to force or persuade the cities in that province to resume their allegiance to the Empire. During this pause in the contest the large magazines of provisions collected in Ravenna were destroyed by fire. In the Roman army it was generally believed that this was brought about by the bribes of Belisarius. The Goths differed in opinion from one another, some attributing the disaster to a stroke of lightning, others to domestic treachery, in connection with which the name of Matasuentha, the ill-mated wife of Witigis, was freely mentioned. They scarcely knew which explanation of the event should fill them with the gloomier forebodings, since one indicated the faithlessness of man, the other the anger of Heaven.

The brave and loyal Uraias, hearing of the blockade of Ravenna, was about to march to its assistance with 4000 men, partly natives of Liguria, partly Goths whom he had drawn from garrison duty in the various fortresses of the Cottian Alps. Unfortunately on their march the troops heard that the garrisons of these fortresses, at the instigation of Sisigis, the general upon the Frankish frontier, were surrendering themselves wholesale to a guardsman of Belisarius named Thomas, who had been sent with quite a small body of troops to receive them into the Imperial allegiance. Anxious for the safety of their wives and children, the soldiers of Uraias insisted on retracing their steps westward. They were too late: John and Martin, who were still stationed in the upper valley of the Po, hurried to the Cottian forts before them, took the very castles in which the families of these soldiers were lodged, and carried them into captivity. With such precious pledges in the hands of the Romans, the barbarians refused to fight against them. They suddenly deserted the standards of Uraias, and seeking the encampment of John begged to be admitted as *foederati* into the Imperial service. Baffled and powerless, Uraias was obliged to retire with a few followers into the fastnesses of Liguria. Thus all hope of assistance from him for the blockaded city was at an end.

About this time, probably early in the year 540, came two senators from Constantinople, Domnicus and Maximus, bearing the Emperor's offer of terms of peace. These terms were unexpectedly favorable to the Goths. Witigis was to be allowed to retain the title of King and half the royal treasure, and to reign over all the rich plains to the north of the Po; the other half of the royal treasure and all Italy south of the Po, with Sicily, were to be reunited to the Empire. Such concessions, at this late period of the struggle, might well seem almost absurd to one who watched the fortune of the game in Italy alone. But the Emperor knew well the other and terrible dangers which threatened his dominions. A swarm of ferocious Huns were about to burst upon Illyria, Macedon, and Thrace, extending their ravages up to the very suburbs of Constantinople. Even more formidable than these transitory marauders was the more deeply calculated advance of the Persia potentate, Chosroes was moving to battle, stirred thereto in part by the representations of Witigis, in part by his own hereditary hatred of the Empire: and in June of this year he was to fall, with the pitiless fury of an Oriental despot, on the wealthy and luxurious city of Antioch. Decidedly Justinian had good reason for wishing to have his matchless general and as many as possible of his soldiers recalled from Italy. Decidedly he was

right in offering easy terms to the Goths; and Italy might possibly have been spared some centuries of misery could those terms have formed the basis of a peace.

The obstacle came not from the Goths, who gave a joyful assent to the proposals of the ambassadors, but it came from Belisarius, who had set his heart on ending the Italian war with a complete and dramatic success, and on leading Witigis, as he had already led Gelimer, a captive to the feet of Justinian. He refused to be any party to the proposed treaty; and the Goths, fearing some stratagem, would not accept it without his counter-signature. Murmurs were heard in the tents of the Imperial captains against the presumption of the General who dared to disobey the orders which proceeded from the sacred presence-chamber of the Emperor, and who was bent on prolonging the war for sinister purposes of his own. Knowing that these injurious reports were flying about the camp, Belisarius called a council of war, at which he invited the presence of the ambassadors. He said to his discontented subordinates, with apparent frankness: "No one knows better than myself the great part which chance plays in war, and how a cause apparently quite hopeless will sometimes revive, and prove after all victorious. By all means let us take the best possible advice in debating so important a subject as the proposed treaty. Only one thing I must protest against. No man must hold his peace now, and then lie in wait to censure me after the event. Let everyone speak his opinion now, on the question whether we can recover the whole of Italy, or whether it is wiser to abandon part of it to the barbarians; and, having spoken it, let him stand by it like a man". Thus adjured, the generals without exception stated that they thought it politic to let the treaty of peace go forward, upon the proposed conditions. Belisarius desired them to sign a paper to that effect, and they signed it.

While these deliberations were going on in the Imperial camp, the scarcity was growing into famine within the city. Sore pressed by hunger, yet determined not to surrender unconditionally to the Emperor, fearing, above all things, to be transported from their own beloved Italy to the distant and unknown Constantinople, the Goths conceived the extraordinary idea of offering to their victor, Belisarius, the Empire of the West. Even Witigis supported this proposal, and besought the great General to accept the proffered dignity. The scheme had a certain brilliant audacity about it, and was the most striking testimony ever offered to the strategical genius of Belisarius. Yet it probably seemed less strange and (if we may use the word by anticipation) less romantic to contemporaries than it does to us. All the traditions of the Ostrogoths, except for the thirty years of Theodoric's reign, pointed to the Empire as the natural employer of armies of Gothic *foederati*. Even Theodoric, in his mode of working the machinery of the state, had shown himself an Emperor of the West in everything but the name. A Teutonic kingdom in Roman lands was still a comparatively new and untried thing, while an Empire fought for by Gothic arms was a familiar conception.

The feelings with which Belisarius received this startling proposition were probably of a mingled kind. As Procopius says, "he hated the name of an usurper with perfect hatred, and had bound himself by the most solemn oaths to the Emperor to attempt no revolution in his lifetime". He probably looked upon himself as the destined successor of his master, should he survive Justinian, and he knew what ruin the revolutionary attempts upon the purple, made by successful generals, had wrought for the Empire. On the other hand, he saw that a feigned compliance with the wishes of the Goths would at once open to him the gates of Ravenna, and, possibly, the thought was not altogether absent from his mind that it might be desirable at any moment to turn that feigned compliance into reality.

In order to keep his hands clear, he ordered the generals of the party which still called itself anti-Belisarian to disperse in various directions in order to obtain provisions for the army. These generals were John and Bessas, Narses the Less, and Aratius; and they were accompanied by Athanasius, the recently-appointed Praetorian Prefect of Italy. Before they

went, he convoked another council of generals and ambassadors, and asked them what they would think of the deed if he succeeded in saving all Italy for the Empire and carrying all the Gothic nobles, with their treasures, captive to Constantinople. They replied that it would be a deed past all praise, and bade him by all means to accomplish it if he could. He then sent private messengers to the Goths offering to do all their will. The Gothic envoys returned with their vague talk of peace for the multitude and their secret proposals for Belisarius's own ear. He willingly stipulated that the persons and property of the Goths should be held harmless, but postponed till after the entry into Ravenna, the solemn oath (the coronation-oath, as we should term it), by which he was to pledge himself to reign as the impartial ruler of Goths and Romans alike. The suspicions of the barbarians were not excited even by this postponement. They imagined that he was hungering and thirsting for empire, and never supposed that he himself would throw any difficulties in the way of winning it.

Of all the many dramatic situations in the life of the great general—and they are so many as to excite our marvel that no great poet has based a tragedy on his story—the most dramatic was surely his entry into Ravenna in the spring of 540. The Roman fleet, laden with corn and other provisions, had been ordered to cast anchor in the port of Classis. Thus, when the gates were opened to admit Belisarius, he brought with him plenty to a famine-stricken people. Then he rode through the streets of the impregnable Queen of the Lagoons, with the Gothic ambassadors by his side, and the all-observing Procopius in his train. Much did the secretary ponder, as he rode, on one of his favorite themes of meditation, that hidden force—he will not call it Providence, and perhaps dare not call it Fate—which loves to baffle the calculations of men, and give the race not to the swift, the battle not to the strong, but to the objects of its own apparently capricious selection. The streets were crowded with tall and martial Goths, far surpassing in number and size the Roman army, and through them marched the little band of Belisarius, undersized, mean-looking men, but conquerors. The Goths, still confiding in what the new Emperor of the West would do for them, felt not nor admitted the shame; but the quick instinct of the women told them that their husbands were disgraced by such an ending to the war. They spat in the faces of the barbarians, and, pointing to the insignificant-looking men who followed the ensigns of the *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, “Are these the mighty heroes”, said they, “with whose deeds you have terrified us? Are these your conquerors? Men can we call you no longer, who have been beaten by champions such as these”

The exact time when Belisarius dropped the mask and let the barbarians see that he was not their Emperor, but still only the general of Justinian, is not clearly indicated. Probably the process of disillusion was a gradual one. At the moment of his triumphal entry he doubtless allowed himself to be saluted as Caesar, but any thoughts which he may have entertained of keeping his promise to the Goths and actually assuming the purple vanished.

*His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful, kept him falsely true.*

On one point, however, he did keep the compact to which he had sworn. There was no plunder of the city, and the Goths were allowed to retain all their private property. But the great hoard of the kings, stored up in the palace, all that the wisdom of Theodoric and the insatiate avarice of Theodahad had accumulated, was carried away to Constantinople. Some of it may perchance have remained in the treasure-vaults of the palace of the Eastern Caesars till Baldwin and Dandolo with their Franks and Venetians, the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade, wrenched open the doors of those mysterious chambers, nearly seven centuries after the accession of Justinian. Witigis himself was treated courteously, but kept for the present in ward, till he could be taken in the conquerors train to Constantinople. Some of his greatest nobles were selected to accompany him. The mass of the Gothic warriors, at least such of them

as dwelt south of the Po, were told to return to their own lands. The Roman soldiers and the men of Roman extraction thus became actually the majority in the former capital of the Goths.

In this way did the strong and stately city of Ravenna come again under the sway of a Roman Caesar, the stronghold of whose dominion in Italy it was destined to remain for two centuries, till Aistulf the Lombard in 752 reft it from Byzantium, to be himself despoiled of it a few years later by Pepin the Frank. and many others, surrendered at once to the Imperial forces on hearing of the fall of Ravenna. Verona and Pavia seem to have been the only cities of any importance still held by the unsubdued Gothic warriors. In Verona the command was vested in a brave chief named Ildibad, nephew of Theudis, King of the Visigoths in Spain. This man refused to transfer his allegiance to the Emperor, though Belisarius, by detaining his children captives in Ravenna, had it in his power to put sore pressure upon him. In Pavia the noble Uraias, nephew of Witigis, still commanded.

When the hope that Belisarius would play an independent part as Emperor of the West faded from the hearts of the Gothic warriors, the bravest of them flocked to Pavia and sought an audience with Uraias. With tears such as valiant men may shed, they thus addressed him: "Of all the evils which have befallen the nation of the Goths you, O Uraias! are the chief cause, through your very worthiness. For that uncle of yours, so cowardly and so unfortunate in war, would long ago have been thrust aside by us from the throne, even as we thrust aside Theodoric's own nephew Theodahad, if we had not looked with admiration on your prowess, and believed that you were in truth at the helm of the state, leaving only the name of kingship to your uncle. Now is our good-nature shown to have been folly, and the very root of all the evils that have come upon us. Hosts of our best and bravest, as you know, O dear Uraias! have fallen on our Italian battlefields. Our proudest nobles, with Witigis and the Gothic hoard, are being carried off to Constantinople by Belisarius. You and we alone remain, a feeble and miserable remnant, and we too shall soon, if we live, share the same fate. But we can die, O Uraias! and it is better for us to die than to be carried captive with our wives and our little ones to the uttermost ends of the earth. Be you our leader, and we shall do something worthy of our renown before we find a grave in Italy"

Uraias replied, that he too, like them, preferred death to slavery, but that the kingship he would not take, since he would seem to be setting himself up as a rival to his uncle. He strongly advised them to offer it to Ildibad, a man of bravery and might, and one whose relationship to Theudis, the Visigothic King, might at this crisis prove serviceable to their cause. The advice seemed good to the Gothic warriors, who at once repaired to Verona and invested Ildibad with the purple robe of royalty. Though accepting the kingly office, he urged his new subjects not yet to abandon all hope of persuading Belisarius to fulfill his plighted word and ascend the Western throne by their assistance, in which event Ildibad would willingly return into a private station. One more effort accordingly they made to shake the loyalty of their conqueror. All Italy knew that he was under orders to leave Ravenna; to take charge of the Persian war, said some, accused by his brother generals of treasonable designs, said others. There was some truth in both assertions. Justinian needed Belisarius on the banks of the Euphrates, but he also feared him in the palace at Ravenna. The Gothic envoys appeared in the presence of Belisarius: they reproached him for his former breach of faith; they upbraided him as a self-made slave, who did not blush to choose the condition of a lackey of Justinian when he might, in all the dignity of manhood, reign as Emperor of the West over brave and loyal warriors. They besought him even yet to retrace his steps. Ildibad would bring his new purple and gladly lay it at the feet of the monarch of the Goths and Italians. Reproaches and blandishments were alike in vain. The Roman General refused to strike a single stroke for Empire in the lifetime of Justinian. The Envoys returned to Ildibad. Belisarius, in obedience to

his masters orders, quitted Ravenna; and with his departure, which coincided with the end of the fifth year of the war, ended the first act of the Byzantine reconquest of Italy.

At this point also we take our final leave of one whose name has been of continual occurrence through many chapters of this history, the late Praetorian Prefect, Cassiodorus. Since the election of King Witigis he had not, apparently, taken any conspicuous part in public affairs. Amid the clash of arms his persuasive voice was silent: and with the two races, Goth and Roman, exasperated against one another by memories of battle, massacre, and the privations of terrible sieges, he recognized but too plainly that the labor of his life was wasted. The united commonwealth of Goths and Romans was a broken bubble, and he might as easily call up Theodoric from the grave as recall even one of the days of that golden age when Theodoric was king.

Something, however, might yet be done to save the precious inheritance of classical antiquity from the waves of barbaric invasion which were now too obviously about to roll over Italy, from Byzantium's mercenaries, the Lombard and the Herul, as well as from the Frankish neighbor who had learned with too fatal aptitude the road across the Alps. This service—and it was the greatest he could have rendered to humanity—Cassiodorus determined to perform while he passed the evening of his life in monastic seclusion in his native Bruttii, at his own beloved Scyllacium.

It was probably in the year 539 or 540 that the veteran statesman laid aside the insignia of a Praetorian Prefect and assumed the garb of a monk. The chief reason for choosing the earlier year, and for supposing Cassiodorus not to have continued till the bitter end in the service of Witigis, is that had he been present on the memorable day when Belisarius and his men entered Ravenna, he would probably have met and conversed with Procopius. In that case his noble character, and the important part which he had played for a generation in the Ostrogothic monarchy, would surely have impressed themselves on the mind of the historian, and prevented that strange omission which he has made in writing so fully about Theodoric's kingdom and never mentioning the name of Cassiodorus.

In any event the late chief minister was close upon the 60th year of his age when he retired to Squillace. His mind during the last few dreary years had been ever more and more turning to the two great solaces of a disappointed man, Literature and Religion. After he had completed the collection of his Various Epistles he had, upon the earnest entreaty of his friends, composed a short treatise on the Nature of the Soul. The philosophy of this treatise is not new, being chiefly derived from Plato: and the philology, as displayed in some marvelous derivations at the outset of the treatise, if new, is not true. But there are some striking thoughts in this little essay, as, for instance, on the ineffable love which the soul bears to her dwelling-place the body, fearing death for its sake though herself immortal, dreading the body's pain from which she cannot herself receive any injury. But the most interesting passage, coming from so old and astute a statesman as Cassiodorus, is one in which he naively attempts to describe the outward signs by which we distinguish evil men from the good.

“The bad man's countenance, whatever be its natural beauty, always has a cloud resting upon it. In the midst of his mirth a deep and secret sadness is always waiting to take possession of him, and appears on his countenance when he deems himself unobserved. His eye wanders hither and thither, and he is ever on the watch to see what others think of him. His conversation is by fits and starts: he takes up one subject after another and leaves his narratives unfinished without apparent cause. He has a look of worry and preoccupation in his idlest hours, and lives in perpetual fear when none is pursuing him. Seeking greedily for all the pleasures of life, he is incurring the penalty of eternal death; and endeavoring to prolong his share of this world's light he is preparing for himself the shades of eternal night”

Was Cassiodorus when he drew this striking picture describing the way in which the memory of the murdered Amalasantha tormented the soul of Theodahad?

“The good man, on the other hand, has a certain calm joyousness in his countenance, earned by many secret tears. His face is pale and thin, but suggests the idea of strength. A long beard gives venerableness to his aspect: he is very clean, without a trace of foppery. His eyes are clear, and brighten naturally when he addresses you. His voice is of moderate tone, not so low as to be akin to silence, nor swollen into the harsh bluster of the bully. His very pace is ordered, neither hurrying nor creeping. He does not watch another's eye to see how it is regarding him, but holds simply straightforward on his way. Even the natural sweetness of his breath distinguishes him from the evil man, who seeks to hide the fumes of wine by the sickening scent of artificial perfumes”.

The time was now come for Cassiodorus openly to enter that monastic state towards which, as we can perceive from this ideal portraiture of a good man, his own aspirations had for some time been tending. Leaving the lagunes of Ravenna, the pine-wood and the palace of the Ostrogothic kings, where so many of the hours of his middle life had been spent, he returned to his first love, his own ancestral Scyllacium, its hills, its fish-ponds, its wide outlook over the Ionian sea. Here upon his patrimonial domain he founded two monasteries. High up on the hill, and perhaps surrounded by the walls of the older and deserted city, was placed the secluded hermitage of Castellum, destined for those who preferred the solitary life of the rigid anchorite to the more social atmosphere of the monastic brotherhood. The latter and more popular type of convent was represented by the monastery of Vivarium, situated by the little river Pellena, and on the edge of the fish-ponds of which Cassiodorus has already given us so picturesque a description. Here the old statesman erected for the monks, who soon flocked round him, a building which, though not luxurious, was better supplied with the comforts of life than was usual with institutions of this kind, at any rate in the first fervor of monasticism. These are the terms in which Cassiodorus himself describes the place, in a treatise dedicated to his monks:

“The very situation of the Vivarian monastery invites you to exercise hospitality towards travelers and the poor. There you have well-watered gardens and the streams of the river Pellena, abounding in fish, close beside you. A modest and useful stream, not overwhelming you by the multitude of its waters, but on the other hand never running dry, it is ever at your call when needed for the supply of your gardens. Here, by God's help, we have made in the mountain caverns safe receptacles for the fish which you may catch from the stream. In these they can swim about and feed and disport themselves, and never know that they are captives, till the time comes when you require them for your food. We have also ordered baths to be built, suitably prepared for those who are in feeble health; and into these flows the fair transparent stream, good alike for washing and for drinking. We hope therefore that your monastery will be sought by strangers rather than that you will need to go elsewhere to seek delight in strange places. But all these things, as you know, pertain to the joys of the present life, and have nought to do with the hope of the future which belongs to the faithful. Thus placed here, let us transfer our desires to those things which shall cause us to reign there with Christ”.

Again, after describing in attractive terms the happy labors of the *antiquarii* in the copying-room of the monastery, he goes on to speak of the permitted luxury of comely book-binding, and of his mechanical contrivances for promoting the regular employment of the monastic day. “To these we have also added workmen skilled in covering the codices, in order that the glory of the sacred books may be decked with robes of fitting beauty. Herein we do in some sort imitate that householder in our Lord's parable who, when he had asked the guests to his supper, desired that they should be clothed in wedding garments. By these workmen we

have caused several kinds of binding to be all represented in one codex, in order that the man of taste may choose that form of covering which pleases him best. We have also prepared for your nocturnal studies mechanical lamps, self-trimming and self-supplied with oil, so that they burn brightly without any human assistance. And in order that the division of the hours of the day, so advantageous to the human race, may not pass unobserved by you, I have caused one measurer of time to be constructed in which the indication is made by the sun's rays, and another, worked by water, which night and day marks regularly the passage of the hours. This is also of use in cloudy days, when the inherent force of water accomplishes what the fiery energy of the sun fails to perform. Thus do we make the two most opposite elements, fire and water, concur harmoniously for the same purpose". From these few passages it will be seen what was the spirit in which Cassiodorus founded his monastery of Vivarium. Religion and learning were to be the two poles upon which the daily life of the community revolved. He himself tells us that he had earnestly striven to persuade Pope Agapetus to found a great theological school at Rome, like those which were then flourishing at Alexandria and Nisibis. The wars and tumults which had recently afflicted the kingdom of Italy made the fulfillment of this design impossible; and Cassiodorus thereupon resolved that his own retirement from the field of political life should be the commencement of a vigorous and sustained effort to stem the tide of ignorance and barbarism which was flowing over Italy. Hitherto the monk retiring from the world had been too much inclined to think only of the salvation of his own individual soul. Long hours of mystic musing had filled up the day of the Egyptian anchorite. Augustine and Cassian, men so widely divergent in their theological teaching, had each contributed something towards the introduction of healthy work into the routine of the monastic life; and Benedict, with whose life and career we shall soon have to concern ourselves in greater detail, had wisely ordained in his rule that a considerable part of the day should be devoted to actual toil. Still, all this had reference only to manual labor. It was the glory of Cassiodorus that he, first and preeminently, insisted on the expediency of including intellectual labor in the sphere of monastic duties. Some monks, he freely admitted, would never be at home in the cloister library, and might better devote their energies to the cloister garden. But there were others who only needed training to make them apt scholars in divine and human learning, and this training he set himself to give them. This thought—may we not say this divinely suggested thought?—in the mind of Cassiodorus was one of infinite importance to the human race. Here, on the one hand, were the vast armies of monks, whom both the unsettled state of the times and the religious ideas of the age were driving irresistibly into the cloister; and who, when immured there with only theology to occupy their minds, became, as the great cities of the East knew too well, preachers of discord and mad fanaticism. Here, on the other hand, were the accumulated stores of two thousand years of literature, sacred and profane, the writings of Hebrew prophets, Greek philosophers, Latin rhetoricians, perishing for want of men at leisure to transcribe them. The luxurious Roman noble with his slave-amanuenses multiplying copies of his favorite authors for his own and his friends' libraries, was an almost extinct existence. With every movement of barbarian troops over Italy, whether those barbarians called themselves the men of Witigis or of Justinian, some towns were being sacked, some precious manuscripts were perishing from the world. Cassiodorus perceived that the boundless, the often wearisome leisure of the convent might be profitably spent in arresting this work of denudation, in preserving for future ages the intellectual treasure which must otherwise have inevitably perished. That this was one of the great services rendered by monasticism to the human race, the most superficial student of history has learned: but not all who have learned it know that the monk's first decided impulse in this direction was derived from Theodoric's minister Cassiodorus.

The veteran statesman seems to have wisely abstained from making himself actual Abbot of either of his two monasteries. To have done so would have plunged him into a sea of petty administrative details and prevented him from thinking out his schemes for the instruction of the men who had gathered round him.

Cassiodorus (as has been said) was probably about sixty years of age when he retired from Ravenna and when this 'Indian summer' of his life, so beautiful and so full of fruit for humanity, began. His own writings after this time were copious, and though they have long since ceased to have any scientific value, they are interesting as showing the many-sided, encyclopedic character of the attainments of him who had been all his life a busy official. A voluminous commentary on the Psalms was the work on which he probably prided himself the most, and which is now the most absolutely useless. In the so-called "*Historia Tripartita*" he and his friend Epiphanius wove together, somewhat clumsily, into a single narrative the three histories of Church affairs from the Conversion of Constantine to the days of Theodosius II given by Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret. In the '*Complexiones*' he comments upon the Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse: and here it may be remarked in passing, that he includes the Epistle to the Hebrews among the writings of the Apostle Paul, apparently without a suspicion that this had not always been the received view in the Roman Church. In his book "*De Institutione Divinarum Litterarum*" from which some quotations have already been made, he gives his monks some valuable hints how to study and how to transcribe the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. Some precepts for the regulation of their daily life are also included herein, and upon the whole the book seems to approach nearer to the character of the 'Rule of Cassiodorus' than any other that he has composed. In the "*De Artibus ac Disciplinis liberalium Litterarum*" he treats of the seven liberal arts, which are Grammar, Rhetoric, Dialectic, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry, and Astronomy. It is characteristic of the writer that Rhetoric and Dialectic, the two great weapons in the armory of a Roman official, are treated of at considerable length, while of the other five arts only the slenderest outline is furnished.

Lastly, when the veteran statesman had already reached the ninety-third year of his age, he composed for his faithful monks a somewhat lengthy treatise on Orthography. They said to him, "What does it profit us to know what the ancients wrote or what your sagacity has added thereto, if we are entirely ignorant how we ought to write these things, and through want of acquaintance with spelling cannot accurately reproduce what we read in our own speech?". He accordingly collected for their benefit the precepts of ten grammarians, ending with his contemporary Priscian, as to the art of orthography. One of the greatest difficulties even of fairly educated Romans at that day seems to have been to distinguish in writing between the two letters *b* and *v*, which were alike in sound. This difficulty, which is abundantly illustrated by the errors in inscriptions in the Imperial age, is strenuously grappled with by Cassiodorus, or rather by the authors from whom he quotes, and who give long and elaborate rules to prevent the student from spelling *libero* with a *v*, or *navigo* with a *b*.

Amid these literary labors, in the holy seclusion of Squillace, we may suppose Cassiodorus to have died, having nearly completed a century of life. Even in 573, when he wrote his treatise on Orthography, he had already long overpassed the limit of time prescribed for the present volume. It was then twenty years after the final overthrow of the Ostrogothic monarchy. The Lombards had been in Italy five years. Narses was dead, Alboin was dead, Justinian's successor had been for eight years upon the throne. Yet still the brave and patient old man, who had once been the chief minister of a mighty realm, toiled on at his self-imposed task. The folly of his countrymen, the hopelessly adverse current of events, had prevented him from building up the kingdom of Italy: they could not prevent him from conferring a priceless

gift on mankind by rescuing the literature of Rome from the barbarians for the benefit of those barbarians' progeny.

CHAPTER XIV

AFFAIRS AT CONSTANTINOPLE

The year 540 was a memorable one for the monarchy of Justinian, both by its disasters and its triumphs. In June of that year, not many weeks after the fall of Ravenna, the troops of Chosroes entered Antioch. Heavily had the citizens of that fair and luxurious city, for near three centuries the inviolate capital of Syria, the place where the disciples were first called Christians, to pay for the taunts and gibes which, confiding in the strength of their walls, they had leveled at the haughty King of the fire-worshippers. Men, women, and children were mixed in one promiscuous carnage; long and stately streets were turned into smoking ruins; the sad remnant of the population which had laughed at Julian and rebelled against Theodosius was carried away into captivity beyond the Euphrates, beyond the Tigris, and there in the new city of Chosroantiocheia pined in vain for the groves of Daphne and the streams of Orontes, themselves the living monuments of their tyrant's triumph.

But also in the same year, and very shortly after these terrible tidings reached Constantinople, the ships bearing Belisarius with his captives and the Gothic hoard cast anchor in the Golden Horn. There was no regular triumph, as there had been when the Vandal King was led through the streets of the City. The jealous timidity of the Emperor was aroused, and he feared to grant the soldiers and the populace so tempting an opportunity for shouting "*Belisarie Imperator tu Vincas*", and placing the brilliant General on the throne of the studious and secluded monarch. But though the formal pageant was withheld, none the less must the day when the successor of Theodoric prostrated himself in the purple presence-chamber of the Caesars have been felt as a real triumph for Belisarius. Then might the Byzantines see Witigis and his wife, the grand-daughter of the great Amal, followed by a long train of Gothic warriors whose stately frames and noble countenances filled even the exacting Justinian with admiration. With them came the children of the gallant Ildibad, unwilling hostages on behalf of the newly-crowned King. The vessels of gold and silver, and all the ponderous magnificence of the great Gothic hoard, were exhibited to the wondering Senators, though not to the multitudes outside the palace. Then Witigis having made his prostration was raised by the Emperor and received the title of Patrician. After he had spent two years at the capital, honored by the friendship of the Emperor, the old Gothic King died. A man apparently who in his younger and hungrier days had done the State some service; but when his countrymen gave him a palace and a crown and a royal bride as rewards for the deliverance which they expected at his hands, he replied, by his acts or rather by his utter absence of acts, in the words of Horace's wealthy soldier, 'Let him fight battles who has lost his all' His young wife, Matasuentha, soon after his death married Germanus, at that time the favorite nephew of Justinian. What mattered to her the ruin of her people and the downfall of the edifice erected by the wise patience of her illustrious grandfather? She had seen Constantinople, that Paradise of all degenerate Teutons, she had been able to copy the dresses of the crowned circus-dancer Theodora, she was even admitted into the family of the Dardanian peasants who swayed the destinies of the Empire.

As for Belisarius himself, the man who had brought two kings to the footstool of Justinian; who had subdued the two races of most terrible renown in the wars of the preceding century, the Goths and the Vandals; who had again, as it seemed, united to the Empire its severed Western portion, his name and fame were in the mouths of all men. Though the well-

earned triumph had been denied him, every day that he showed himself in the streets of Constantinople was in fact a triumph. It was a pleasure of which the Byzantines never tired, to see him ride through the city from his palace to the Agora. Before him went troops of tall Vandals and Goths, of swarthy Moors the wiry sons of the desert. All had at one time or another felt his conquering sword, yet all delighted to sound his praises. Behind him rode some of his own domestic body-guard, itself a little army of 7000 men when all were mustered; each horse a stately charger, each man nobly born and of noble aspect, and one who had done great deeds fighting in the foremost ranks with the enemy. In the course of this history we have heard continually of the exploits performed by this 'spearman' or that 'shield-bearer' of Belisarius. No wonder that the astonished Senators of Rome had said, 'One household alone has destroyed the kingdom of Theodoric,' when they marked the great part played by the body-guard of the General, in the world-famous defence of Rome.

The central figure of this brilliant cavalcade, Belisarius himself, was of mighty stature, with well-proportioned limbs and a countenance of manly beauty. Though, as we have seen, he had not the power of attaching to himself the loyal devotion of his officers of highest rank, his affability with the multitude, his tender care over the common soldier, even his desire to mitigate the horrors of war for the peasants of the invaded lands, were the theme of universal praise. He visited his wounded soldiers, doing all that money could do to assuage their sufferings. The successful champions received from his own hand armlets of costly metal, or chains of gold or silver. If a brave but needy warrior had lost his horse or his bow in the combat, it was from the private stores of the General that the loss was supplied. No soldier, where Belisarius commanded, was permitted to straggle from the high road and tread down the growing crops of grass or of corn. Even the fruit hanging ripe from the trees was safe from depredation when he marched past with his men. All provisions were paid for on a liberal scale, and thus, like our own Wellington on his march from the Pyrenees to Paris, he made even the greed of the peasant the most effectual helper of his commissariat.

His military character, as it had thus far revealed itself, has been sufficiently indicated by his deeds. His one distinguishing quality was resourcefulness. Nothing seemed to daunt or perplex him; and whatever move his antagonist might make, he was always ready with the reply. He was bold to the very verge of rashness, when only by audacity could the game be won; but when time was on his side, he could delay like Fabius himself. Strong, and even terrible, when sternness was required, yet with a disposition naturally sympathetic, temperate at the banquet, for 'no man ever saw Belisarius intoxicated', chaste in morals and faithful to his wedded wife through all the license of a camp, he anticipates, in some features of his character, the ideals of knight errantry and Christian soldiership, the Sir Galahad and the Bayard of chivalry, the Gustavus and the Havelock of the modern age.

Such was Belisarius in the midsummer of his greatness and renown, at the thirty-sixth year of his age, a year younger than Napoleon at Austerlitz, four years older than Hannibal at Cannae. Unfortunately, the happiness of his lot was only in outward seeming. Even while he strode through the Agora of Constantinople, followed by the yellow-haired giants from Carthage or Ravenna, his heart was brooding sadly over the thought that the wife whom he loved with such passionate devotion no longer cared for him, and that all her affection seemed to be reserved for a shaven monk at Ephesus.

The whole story of the infidelities of Antonina, infidelities told with a cruel zest in the *Anecdota* of Procopius, need not be repeated here. The backstairs-gossip of a palace does not become worthy material for history, because it happens to relate to the wrongs of a warrior and a statesman. It is enough to say that the wife of Belisarius, though she had already reached or passed middle life, unmindful of her conjugal duty was passionately in love with her handsome chamberlain, Theodosius, and adopted child of herself and her husband. At Carthage and at

Syracuse Belisarius saw and heard enough to rouse his suspicions: but he put the terrible thought away from him, and even consented, as we have seen, to put to death (ostensibly for another offence) the officer, Constantine, who had expressed an opinion unfavorable to the honor of Antonina. So the years had gone by, Theodosius holding a place of honor and trust in the General's palace, passionately loved by its mistress, and Belisarius the only person therein who was ignorant of his dishonor. When the whole party returned to the capital, Theodosius felt that the risk which he was running was too terrible, and retired to Ephesus, where he entered a convent. Antonina made no attempt to conceal her wild grief at his departure, and actually persuaded Belisarius to join her in entreating the Emperor to command his return.

At length, in the spring of 541, all his preparations being completed, Belisarius started for the East to try conclusions with Chosroes. On the eve of his departure, Photius, son of Antonina, driven to despair by the machinations of his unnatural mother against his life, laid before the General convincing proof of her past unfaithfulness. He proved to him also that Theodosius, who had refused to leave his convent in obedience to the Emperor's orders, was in reality only waiting for the moment of Belisarius's departure to return to Constantinople and resume the interrupted intrigue. Now at length the emotion of jealousy, so long kept at bay, took full possession of the General's soul.

He made Photius his confederate, and devised with him a scheme for separating the guilty lovers and imprisoning Theodosius. Then he started for the field; but with a mind distracted by these bitter thoughts, and hampered by the necessity of keeping open his communications with his step-son, he failed to achieve any brilliant success over Chosroes. The plan, however, devised between him and Photius was at first successfully executed. Antonina was kept in harsh durance, and her lover was carried off to a fortress in Cilicia, the very name of which was known only to Photius. So far the avengers of the injured honor of the husband had succeeded; but now Theodora appeared upon the scene, her aid being invoked by the guilty but furious wife; and whenever Theodora condescended to intervene, all laws human and divine must give way before her. To understand the Empress's motives for interfering, obviously on the wrong side, in this wretched matrimonial dispute, we must turn to the political history of the times and take note of another event which signalized this year 541, the fall of John of Cappadocia.

It will be remembered that in the terrible insurrection of the Nika, the fury of the populace had been especially directed against two ministers of the Emperor, Tribonian the quaestor, and John of Cappadocia the Praetorian Prefect. Both had bowed before the storm, but both, soon after the suppression of the revolt, had been restored to their old offices. Tribonian had probably learned the lesson that the ministers of a king must at least seem to do justice. At any rate, his courteous demeanor, his honeyed words, and the vast learning of which he was undoubtedly master, caused the people to acquiesce patiently in his subsequent tenure of office, and he died, a few years after the time which we have now reached, at peace with all men. Far different was the career of his early partner in unpopularity, the coarse-fibred, ignorant, but singularly able John of Cappadocia. For eight years this remorseless tyrant was the ruling spirit in the internal administration of the Empire. When it came to a question of foreign policy, such as the Vandal expedition, which he would fain have dissuaded Justinian from undertaking, he might be, and was outvoted: but when a new tax had to be levied, or a provincial governor too chary of the fortunes of his subjects to be reprimanded, the voice of John was supreme. He had essentially the slave-driver's nature, the harsh bullying voice, the strong clear brain, the relentless heart, which enable a man in authority to get the maximum of work out of those below him, if they have no choice but to obey. Such a man with the powers of a Grand Vizier was invaluable to Justinian, whose expensive and showy policy required that a great number of

harsh and even cruel deeds should be done, though personally his not unkind disposition and his studious nature would have shrunk from the doing of them.

Of any such scruples the hard heart of the Cappadocian felt not a trace. As pitiless as he was quick-witted, a man who lived for the gratification of his lusts, and who believed in nothing else, except in a sorcerer's spells, John was both cruel himself and the cause of cruelty in others. He erected the stocks and the rack in a secret chamber of the Prefect's palace, and there tortured those whom he suspected of concealing their wealth from him, till they had given up the uttermost farthing. One old man, Antiochus by name, was found when he was loosed from the ropes to have died under the severity of the torture. What the Prefect was doing himself in the capital, his minions, emulous of his cruelty, were doing in all the provinces of the East. One in particular, also named John, and surnamed Baggy-cheek from the fat and flabby cheeks which made his face hideous, laid waste the province of Lydia and the city of Philadelphia with his cruel exactions. A certain Petronius possessed a valuable jewel which had been handed down to him by his ancestors. Of this jewel the Governor was determined to obtain possession; whether for the Emperor's treasury or his own, who shall say? The owner was put in irons; was beaten with rods by stalwart barbarians; still he refused to part with the inheritance of his fathers. He was shut up in a mule-stable and compelled to spend his days and nights in that filthy dwelling. All his fellow-citizens bewailed, but none were able to help him. The Bishop of Philadelphia, timidly venturing on some words of remonstrance, backed by an appeal to the sacred writings, was assailed by such a torrent of abuse, for himself, for his office, for the holy books, as might only have been rivaled in the lowest stews of Constantinople. The Bishop wept, but Petronius, seeing that he had fallen into the hands of a monster who feared neither God nor man, sent to his house for the jewel, handed it to the tax-collector, and was permitted to depart, after he had given several pieces of gold to his tormentors as a fee for their labors in chastising him.

Sadder yet was the history of Proclus, a retired veteran, whom the tyrant assailed with a demand for twenty *aurei*, which the unfortunate soldier did not possess. The exactors thought that he merely feigned poverty, and blunted all their instruments of torture on his miserable frame. Wearied out at length he said, "Very well, then, come home with me and I will give you the twenty *aurei*". On the road he asked leave to tarry for a few minutes at a wayside inn. His oppressors waited outside, but as he was long in returning, they broke into the chamber and found the poor wretch hanging by a cord from a hook. Indignant at being thus outwitted by a man who had dared to die instead of satisfying the tax-gatherer, they cast his body into the Agora to be trodden under foot of men, and appropriated to the Imperial treasury the slender fortune which might otherwise have sufficed, and not more than sufficed, for the costs of his burial.

The collector of the public revenue is always and everywhere spoken against, and we generally read the stories of his wrongdoing with some abatement for probable exaggeration. But in this case the most grievous tales of oppression come to us, not from the oppressed provincials, but from a leading member of the Civil Service, from the Somerset House (so to speak) of Constantinople; and the remarkable but unconcerted agreement between Joannes Lydus and Procopius gives great additional value to the testimony of each.

The daily life of the master-extortioner John of Cappadocia is painted by these writers in vivid colors, too vivid indeed and too horrible to be reproduced here. The official palace in which he abode had been built by one of his most virtuous predecessors, Constantine, some seventy years previously, in the reign of Leo, and was then a modest well-proportioned dwelling, such as suited the chief minister of a well-ordered state. It was adorned—and here we get an interesting glimpse of the arts of the Fifth Century—by a picture in mosaic representing the installation of its founder. A later Prefect, Sergius, had added a large upper story, which

somewhat spoilt the proportions of the building, and in these upper rooms John of Cappadocia spent his nights and days, wallowing in all kinds of brutal and sensual indulgences.

Sea and land were ransacked to supply the materials for his gluttony, and while he reclined at the banquet, with his head covered with a veil to look like a king upon the stage, and while troops of the most degraded of mankind of both sexes shared his orgies, the grave and reverend members of his staff, men who had enrolled themselves in the *officium* of the Prefect, believing that they were entering a learned and honorable profession, were compelled to wait upon him at table, like the basest of menials, doing his bidding and that of the shameless crew by whom he was surrounded. If any one dared to thwart the will of the tyrant in this or any other matter, he was handed over to the rough chastisement of John's barbarian men-at-arms, "men with wolfish souls and wolfish names".

So passed the Cappadocian's evening, in flagitious and obscene orgies prolonged far into the night. When his troop of parasites had left him and he had to seek his bed-chamber, then the timidity of the bully showed itself. He knew that he had many enemies (one especially, mightiest and most unscrupulous of them all), and in spite of his thousands of bodyguards he could never shake off the haunting fear that he should wake up to see some barbarian's eyes gleaming at him from under shaggy eye-brows and the knife raised to strike him to the heart. He started up at intervals to peep out from under the eaves of his dwelling, looking this way and that way at every avenue leading to the palace. Thus with fitful and broken slumbers the night wore away. But when morning came, the fears, the half-formed resolutions of amendment made in the night, had all vanished. He perhaps bethought him that it was well to cultivate his popularity with the mob; for this man, whose hand was so heavy on wealthy senators and Christian bishops, had a certain following among the lowest of the populace, particularly among the Green faction and the brawny Cappadocian porters, his countrymen. Accordingly, dressed in a robe of vivid green, which made more conspicuous the paleness of his sodden face, he would rush through the Agora courting the salutations and the applause of the multitude. Then back to the palace to spend the morning in schemes for amassing money by extortion, the evening in devices for squandering it on bodily delights: and so day was added to day in the life of the Praetorian Prefect of the East.

The man, though enslaved to bestial pleasures, had yet some stirrings of ambition, and probably some intellectual qualities which made him fit to rule: and he had a fixed persuasion that he would one day be chosen Emperor. It was a natural thing for a Praetorian Prefect, already so near the summit of the State,—

‘Lifted up so high,
To scorn subjection, and think one step higher
Would set him highest’

He wore already a cloak dyed in the purple of Cos, but differing from the Emperor's in that it reached only to the knees, while the Emperors swept the ground; and the gold lace with which the Prefect's was trimmed was of a different and less conspicuous shape. When the Praetorian Prefect entered the room in the palace where the Senate was assembled, the chief officers of the army rose from their seats and fell prostrate before him. The etiquette was for him to raise them and assure them by a kiss, of his good-will to the military power. A minister thus highly distinguished might, as has been said, think the last step an easy one, and yet practically we do not find in the history of the Empire that it was often made. Officers of the guard and ministers of the household were hailed Emperor more often than Prefects of the Praetorium.

In the case of John of Cappadocia the coming elevation was not a matter of political calculation but of superstitious belief. Though he feared not God nor regarded man, he had

great faith in the power of sorcerers and soothsayers; and the prediction with which these men flattered him, "Thou shall be wrapped in the mantle of Augustus", sank deep into his heart. Often might he be seen kneeling the whole night through on the pavement of a Christian church, dressed in the short cloak of a priest of Jupiter, and not engaged, so men said, in Christian, devotions, but muttering some Pagan prayer or spell, which, as he hoped, would save his life from the assassin's dagger, and make the mind of the Emperor yet more pliable in his hands than it was already.

But it was the Emperor only, not his more quick-witted wife, whose mind submitted to the ascendancy of the Cappadocian. Utterly insensible as Theodora was to the distinction between right and wrong, her artistic Greek nature felt keenly the difference between the beautiful and the uncomely; and the coarse, clumsy profligacy of the Prefect filled her with disgust. He courted the favor of the Green faction to whom she had vowed a life-long enmity. She read doubtless his designs on the Imperial succession, and knew that, if they prospered, the days of Justinian's widow would be numbered. Thus it came to pass that, early in the career of John of Cappadocia, Theodora was his declared foe. At the time of the sedition of the Nika she had counseled his disgrace, and we may fairly conclude that his second tenure of office, though it lasted eight years, was one long struggle for power between the Emperor's minister and his consort. There is one notable instance, that of Richelieu, in which such a struggle has terminated in the minister's favour; but generally speaking, however indispensable the counselor may seem, the final victory rests with the wife.

When Belisarius returned from the Gothic war, his popularity and his renown were wormwood to the jealous Prefect, who laid many an unsuccessful snare for his rival. Belisarius started for his Eastern campaign; but his wife, a far more dangerous foe, remained behind. Antonina, who had set her heart on obtaining the favor of Theodora, and knew that John's destruction would be the surest means to that end, devised a scheme for his ruin, so dishonorable that even the brutal Prefect wins a moment's sympathy when we see him thus ensnared. The one amiable feature in his character was his fondness for his only child Euphemia, a young and modest girl, who must assuredly have been brought up out of sight and hearing of her father's orgies. With this child Antonina cultivated an apparent friendship, and, after many visits had established seeming intimacy, she one day burst out into angry complaints of the way in which the Empire was now governed. "See what an ungrateful master Justinian has been to Belisarius. After extending the bounds of the Roman Empire further than it had ever reached before, and bringing two kings with all their treasures captive to Constantinople, what thanks has my husband received?". Other words were added to the same effect. Euphemia, who, young as she was, shared her father's enmity to Theodora, delighted at this prelude, replied, "Dear lady, the fault is surely yours and your husband's. You could make an end of all this, but will not, and seem to be satisfied with things as they are". "We are powerless" said Antonina, "by ourselves. Our strength lies only in the camp, and unless someone in the cabinet seconds our efforts, we can do nothing; but if your father would help us, by God's blessing we might perhaps accomplish something worth telling of".

All this conversation was duly reported to John of Cappadocia, who, thinking that now at last the words of the soothsayers were coming true and that by the arms of Belisarius he was to be seated on the throne of the Caesars, fell headlong into the trap prepared for him and pressed for an immediate interview with Antonina, at which they might arrange their plans and exchange oaths of secrecy and fidelity. Apparently in order to gain time to communicate with Theodora, Antonina replied that an interview in the capital would be inexpedient and dangerous, but that on her approaching departure to join her husband at the camp, John could safely pay her a valedictory visit at the suburb which marked the first stage of her journey. The deceived Prefect willingly accepted the invitation. And yet the very scene of their meeting

might have suggested thoughts of prudence. It was a country house of Belisarius, but it was named Rufinianum, having no doubt once belonged to the aspiring Prefect of Arcadius, who mounted the platform to be saluted as Emperor, and descended from it a mutilated and dishonored corpse.

All these arrangements were duly communicated to Theodora, and by her to the Emperor. Narses the Eunuch and Marcellus Captain of the House-hold Troops were sent with a considerable number of troops to listen, and if they heard treasonable words to arrest the traitor. Theodora arrived at the country house where she was to pass the night, and whence she was to start on the morrow. John of Cappadocia came there too, having, so it was said, received and disregarded a message from Justinian—"Have no secret interview with Antonina". At midnight they met, the deceived and the deceiver, apparently in the garden of the palace. Behind a low fence crouched Narses and Marcellus with some of their followers. The Cappadocian began open-mouthed about the plot, binding himself and seeking to bind Antonina by the most terrible oaths to secrecy. When they had heard enough, the spies arose and came towards John to arrest him. He uttered a cry: his own guards rushed to the spot, and a struggle followed in which Marcellus was wounded, but not mortally, by a soldier ignorant of his rank. In the scuffle John escaped. Men thought that even then, if he had gone straight to Justinian and appealed to the Imperial clemency, he might still have retained his office; but by fleeing to a church for refuge he left the field free to Theodora, who made his ruin sure. Having been seized in the church, he was degraded from his dignity of Prefect and taken to the city of Cyzicus, on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmora, where he was forced to assume the priestly office, changing his name from John to Peter. It was noted by those who were present at in the sacred ceremony, that a priestly robe not having been specially prepared for the unwilling candidate, the garment of a clerical by-stander was borrowed for the purpose, that the name of this by-stander chanced to be Augustus, and that thus the promises of the sorcerers to the Prefect were literally fulfilled, since he had been "wrapped in the mantle of Augustus".

By the favor of the Emperor, who had not yet of lost his kindly feeling towards him, the new-made priest was allowed to retain a sufficient portion of his vast and ill-gotten wealth to excite the sore envy of his fellow citizens. The murder of a highly unpopular bishop of Cyzicus, of which crime John was unjustly accused, afforded a pretext to the Commissioners of the Senate to inflict upon him a terrible punishment. The former Consul, Patrician, and Prefect was stripped naked, like the meanest criminal, grievously scourged, and compelled to recite in a loud voice all the misdeeds of his past life. Then, with no possessions but one rough mantle, bought for a few pence, he was shipped on board a vessel bound for the coast of Africa. At what port soever the ship touched he was constrained to go on shore and beg for a crust of bread or a few obols from the passers-by. Such was the fall of the man whose wealth had been counted by millions, and who had once been practically lord of Asia. Still, even in his abject misery, he cherished his old dreams of coming empire, and in fact, after seven years of exile, he was, upon the death of Theodora, recalled by her husband to the capital. He regained, however, none of his former honors, but spent the rest of his life in obscurity, and died a simple presbyter.

The help which Antonina had given to the Empress in this deadly duel with the Prefect made the former one of the most important personages in the State. Theodora was not ungrateful, and her influence, now all-powerful, was thrown enthusiastically into the scale on behalf of her new ally. Hence, to go back to the dreary domestic history of Belisarius, it is easy to understand why the General was prevented from inflicting punishment on his faithless wife. Antonina's petition for help reached the ears of Theodora. She was herself delivered from her prison, Photius was tortured (but in vain) to make him reveal the place where Theodosius was confined, and then thrown into a dark dungeon. He made two attempts to flee, after each of

which Theodora caused him to be dragged away from the Holy Table itself, under which he had taken refuge. At length, however, he escaped to Jerusalem, where, taking the habit of a monk, he, by a life of obscurity and hardship, succeeded in evading the further persecutions of his unnatural mother and her Imperial ally.

The Empress at length succeeded in discovering the retreat of Theodosius, and, as if she were performing the most meritorious of actions, restored him to the arms of Antonina. Belisarius, cowed and spirit-broken by the malice of two wicked women, was forced humbly to beg forgiveness from the wife who had so deeply wronged him. Tortures, banishment, loss of property, were the punishments showered upon the unhappy dependents of Belisarius and Photius, who had sided with their masters against the adulteress. The guilty intimacy of Antonina and her lover was soon dissolved by the death of Theodosius, who fell a victim to an attack of dysentery; but from this time onwards the General was made to feel that he was an outcast from the Imperial favor, and that only as Antonina's husband was he to expect even toleration at the hands of Theodora.

Such was the reward which services, perhaps the most brilliant and the most faithful which ever were rendered by a subject to his sovereign, received at the Court of Byzantium.

The year 541, which saw the fall of John of Cappadocia, was also memorable in the history of the Roman State, as witnessing the death of that venerable institution, which had survived the storms of ten centuries and a half, the Roman Consulship. For some years the nominations to this high office had been scanty and intermittent. There were no consuls in 531 and 532. The Emperor held the office alone in 533, and with a colleague in 534. Belisarius was sole consul in 535. The two following years, having no consuls, of their own, were styled the First and the Second after the Consulship of Belisarius. John of Cappadocia gave his name to the year 538, and the years 539 and 540 had again consuls, though one only for each year. In 541 Albinus Basilius sat in the curule chair, and he was practically the last of the long list of warriors, orators, demagogues, courtiers, which began (in the year 509 *BC*) with the names of Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus. All the rest of the years of Justinian, twenty-four in number, were reckoned as 'Post Consulatum Basillii'. Afterwards, each succeeding Emperor assumed the style of consul in the first year of his reign, but the office, thus wholly absorbed in the sun of Imperial splendor, ceased to have even that faint reflection of its former glory, which we have traced in the fifth and sixth centuries. The pretext for abolishing a dignity so closely connected with the remembrance of the heroic days of the Roman State was, that the nobles upon whom it was conferred frittered away their substance in pompous shows exhibited to the people. The real reason doubtless was that precisely by means of those glorious associations it kept alive in the minds of men some remembrance of the days when the Emperor was not all in all, nay, was not yet even heard of. Consuls, as the centuries rolled on, had found their power encroached upon and limited by the Dictators, who seemed to be imperatively called for by the disorders of the Roman State. The temporary figure of the Dictator had given way to the Emperor, the Princeps invested with Tribunician powers, the undefined All-ruler who was yet only first citizen in the commonwealth, the wonderful Republican Autocrat whom Julius and Augustus had imagined and had bodied forth. Gradually the Emperor had become more of a king and less of a citizen, till under Diocletian the adoring senators, the purple sandals, all the paraphernalia of Eastern royalty, marked him out as visibly supreme. Still, many remains of the old Roman constitution, especially the venerable magistracy of the Consulship, subsisting side by side with the new dominion, bore witness to the old order out of which it sprang. Now, the last remains of the withered calyx fell away, and the Imperial dignity exhibits itself to the world, an absolute and undisguised autocracy. The Emperor is the sole source of power; the people have not to elect, but to obey.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ELEVATION OF TOTILA.

No stronger proof of the superiority of Belisarius, both as a general and a ruler, could be afforded than the disasters which befell the Imperial cause in Italy after his departure. There can be little doubt that Justinian's chief reason for recalling him was the fear that he might listen to some such proposition as that made to him by the Goths during the siege of Ravenna and might claim independent sovereignty. The fact that he was not sent against Chosroes till the spring of 541 proves that jealousy was Justinian's main motive, and heavily was he punished for that jealousy by the subsequent course of the war. Italy appeared to be recovered for the Empire when Belisarius entered Ravenna in triumph. Six months more of the great General's presence in the peninsula would probably have turned that appearance into a reality. But as it was, the stone of Sisyphus had only just touched the topmost angle of the cliffs. When Belisarius went, it thundered down again into the plains. The struggle had all to be fought over again, and twelve years of war, generally disastrous to the Imperial arms, had to be encountered before Italy was really united to the Roman Commonwealth.

The officers who accompanied Belisarius on his return to Constantinople were Ildiger his son-in-law, Valerian, Martin, and Herodian. All of these generals except Herodian, who was speedily sent back to Italy, distinguished themselves in the Persian war.

The chiefs of the army who were left in Italy were John the nephew of Vitalian, John 'the Glutton', Bessas the Goth, Vitalius, and Constantian 'the Count of the Imperial Stables'. The last two had commanded in Dalmatia, till the cessation of the Gothic resistance in that quarter allowed them to be transferred to Italy.

Among all these generals there was none placed in supreme command. Constantian as commandant of Ravenna, and Bessas, either at this time or soon after governor of Rome, were placed in two of the most prominent positions in the country. John's military record was the most brilliant, and probably with all his faults he would, if appointed General-in-chief, have soon brought the war to a successful termination. But no—the studious Emperor was not going to encounter again the same agony of jealous apprehension which had caused each successive bulletin from Belisarius to be like a stab in his heart. Forgetful therefore of the fine old Homeric maxim,

“Ill is the rule of the many: let one alone be the ruler”

he left the generals with an equality of authority to hold and govern Italy each according to his own ideas. Naturally, these ideas were in each case to plunder as much and to fight as little as possible. The bonds of discipline were soon utterly relaxed, and the rapacious, demoralized army of the Emperor became formidable to the peaceful provincials, but to no one else.

Now too the power of that terrible engine of oppression, the Byzantine taxing-system, began to make itself felt in Italy. Justinian's first care with all his conquests was to make them pay. With an extravagant wife, a pompous and costly court, with that rage for building which seems to be engendered by the very air of Constantinople, with multitudes of hostile tribes hovering round his frontiers who required constant bribes to prevent them from exposing the showy weakness of his Empire, with all these many calls upon him Justinian was perpetually in

need of money; and the scourge, the rack, the squalid dungeon, as we have seen in the last chapter, were freely used in order to obtain it. That odious analogy to a great Roman household which had now thoroughly established itself in the once free commonwealth of Rome, and which made the Emperor a master and his subjects slaves, seemed to justify any excess of rapine. If we could scrutinize the heart of the Dardanian peasant's son who sat on the throne of the Caesars, we should probably find that his secret thought was something like this : "It is the business of my generals to conquer for me new provinces. The inhabitants of those provinces become my slaves, and must pay whatever I command them. It is my privilege to spend the money which I condescend to receive from them exactly for such purposes as I choose"

With these high notions of prerogative in his mind, Justinian became one of the most ruinous governors to his Empire that the world has ever seen. The reader need not be reminded of the dreary story of fiscal oppression which in Constantinople, in Africa, in Lydia, has already met his view. The eighteen new taxes with fearful and unheard-of names, the stringently-exercised rights of preemption, the cruel *angaria* which, like the French *corvées*, consumed the strength of the peasant in unremunerated labor, all these made the yoke of the Emperor terrible to his subjects. And yet, as was before pointed out, notwithstanding this extreme rigor in collecting the taxes, the reproductive expenditure of the Empire was not attended to : the aqueducts were not kept up, the *cursus publicus* or public post, the best legacy received from the flourishing days of the Empire, was suffered to fall into irretrievable ruin. Everywhere the splendor of the reign of Justinian—and there was splendor and an appearance of prosperity about it—was obtained by living upon the capital of the country. Everywhere, by his fiscal oppression as well as by his persecuting attempts to produce religious conformity, he was preparing the provinces of the East, pale, emaciated, and miserable, for the advent of the Moslem conquerors, who, within a century of his death, were to win the fairest of them, and were to hold them even to our own day.

In order to deal with the fiscal questions arising in the newly-recovered provinces, Justinian appears to have created a special class of officers, who bore the name of Logothetes, and whose functions correspond to those which with us are exercised by an auditor or comptroller. Doubtless some such machinery was necessary to enable the Emperor to take up the financial administration of two great countries, somewhat entangled by the supremacy of Vandal and Ostrogothic kings (however true it might be that the subordinate officers in the revenue department had remained Roman), and also to appraise at their just value, often to reduce, the large claims which the soldiers by whom the conquest had been wrought would make against the Imperial treasury. Some such machinery was necessary, but it should have been worked with a due regard to the eternal principles of justice and to the special and temporary expediency of winning the affections of a people who for two generations had not seen the face of an Imperial tax-gatherer.

Both justice and expediency, however, were disregarded by the freshly appointed Logothetes, and especially by the chief of the new department. This man, Alexander by name, received the surname 'the Scissors', from a bitter joke which was current about him among the oppressed provincials, who declared that he could clip the gold coins that came into his hands without injuring their roundness, and reissue them without risk of detection. He, like all the other Logothetes, was paid by the results of his work, receiving one-twelfth of all that by his various devices he recovered for the Imperial Treasury. From a very humble station in life he soon rose to great power and accumulated enormous wealth, which he displayed with vulgar ostentation before the various classes of men whom his exactions were grinding into the dust.

The first of these classes were the soldiers, for the Logothete was the natural enemy of the soldier, and Justinian deemed himself now secure enough in his hold on Italy to kick down the ladder by which he had risen. Every offence against the public peace—and the wild swarms of

Huns, Isaurians, Heruli, whom Belisarius had brought into Italy, when his strong hand was removed, no doubt committed many such offences—had to be atoned for by a heavy fine to the Imperial treasury, one-twelfth of which went into the coffers of Alexander the Logothete. The endeavor to punish was praiseworthy, but it would have been wise to employ some sharp military punishment in cases of signal offence, and above all, to make the generals feel that they were responsible for the good conduct of their men, rather than to create the general feeling that while the Logothete was rolling in wealth the soldiers whose stout hearts had reconquered Italy were shrinking into a poor, despised, and beggared remnant, and would undertake no more daring deeds for the Emperor who had requited them with such ingratitude.

Not in Italy only, but throughout the Empire, another form of embezzlement practiced by the Logothetes told terribly upon the efficiency of the army. The system of payment of the soldiers at this time was one of advance according to length of service. The young soldier received little, perhaps nothing besides his arms and his rations. The man who had seen some years' service and who was half way up on the rolls of the legion was more liberally dealt with. The veteran who would shortly leave the ranks received a very handsome salary, out of which he was expected to provide for his superannuation fund and to leave something to his family. Of course, promotion to these more favored positions depended on the retirement or death of those who occupied them. But the Logothetes, intent on curtailing the soldier's allowances for the Emperor's profit and their own, hit upon the expedient of keeping the highly paid places full of phantom warriors. A veteran might have died a natural death, retired from the service, or fallen in battle, but still his name was borne on the rolls of his legion; and thus an excuse was afforded for keeping the middle-aged and elderly combatant still upon the lowest scale of pay. Procopius hints that Justinian himself connived at a system so grossly unfair to the soldiers and so absurdly deceptive as to the real strength of the army.

Among the various frivolous pretences for abridging the soldier's pay or cancelling his right to promotion we hear with surprise that one was derived from their Greek nationality. "They were called Greeks, as if it was quite out of the question for one of that nation to show anything like high courage". This passage shows us, what we might have expected, that these exactions were tried more frequently on the docile native soldier than on the fiery and easily unsettled barbarian auxiliary. It also brings before us the officials of the great monarchy by the Bosphorus, men who were themselves Greek in their names, their language, and their ideas, still acting the part of pure-blooded Roman governors, and affecting to speak of the men who were in fact their countrymen with the old Roman disdain, the disdain which was not altogether unreasonable in the conquerors of Pydna and Cynoscephalae.

Having filled the soldiery with a burning sense of wrong, Alexander proceeded to alienate thoroughly as possible the Roman inhabitants of Italy, whose good-will had so greatly aided the progress of Belisarius. All Italians who had had any pecuniary transactions with the Gothic kings, or had held office under them, were called upon to produce a strict account of all moneys had and received, even though such moneys had passed through their hands forty years ago in the early days of Theodoric. Very possibly the easy-tempered King and his Gothic nobles had not been served with absolute fidelity by the sharp Italian officials. "But what concern is that of yours?" they naturally enquired. "It is not the Emperor who suffered : nay, rather, we might have thought that we were serving the Emperor by every *aureus* that we withheld from the most powerful of his foes". But now was again exemplified the elasticity which marked all the reasonings of the Imperial cabinet on the subject of the Gothic domination in Italy. When that domination appeared to be hopelessly overthrown, Byzantium reverted to the theory which it had so often played with, that Theodoric and his successors had been the lawful governors of Italy under Anastasius, Justin, and Justinian, that they had been by no means usurpers, but regular vicegerents, and therefore that an action for embezzlement

would lie in the Emperor's name against all officials of the Ostrogothic Kings who had not faithfully discharged their trust. But this theory was not popular in Italy; and enforced as it was by grasping Logothetes, regardless of all principles of justice as to the kind of evidence which they required for transactions long past and forgotten, it swelled the chorus of discontent which was arising in all parts of the peninsula against the tyrant who had been hailed as a deliverer.

By all these causes the smoldering embers of the Gothic resistance were soon fanned into a flame. When Belisarius left Italy, Ildibad held only one city, Pavia, and had but one thousand soldiers. Before the year was ended, all Liguria and Venetia, that is all Italy north of the Po, recognised his sway, and an army of considerable size (largely composed of deserters from the Imperial standard) was under his orders. All the generals but one watched this sudden development of the Gothic power with apathy. Vitalius alone, who was lately commanding in Dalmatia and now in Venetia, moved with his hordes of Herulian auxiliaries against Ildibad. A great battle followed near Treviso—not many miles from the little trembling colony of salt-manufacturers at Venice—and this battle was disastrous for the Imperialists. Vitalius himself with difficulty escaped. Theudimund son of Maurice and grandson of Mundus the Gepid, a young lad who thus represented three generations of Imperial defeat, was in imminent peril of his life, but just succeeded in escaping, along with Vitalius. Visandus, King of the Heruli, lay dead upon the field.

The tidings of this victory, which were soon carried to Constantinople, made the name of Ildibad of great account in the mouths of all men. Domestic dissensions, however, soon cut short a career which promised to be of great brilliance. Uraias the nephew of Witigis could forget, his wife could not, that the Gothic crown had been offered to him and that Ildibad reigned by virtue of his refusal. This lady, who was conspicuous among all her countrywomen for beauty and for the wealth which she lavishly displayed, was one day proceeding to the baths with much barbaric pomp of raiment and retinue. At the same moment the wife of Ildibad happened to pass, in mean attire and with scant attendance; for Ildibad had lost his possessions as well as his children by the fall of Ravenna, and there had been no time as yet to form another royal hoard. The wife of the chief who would not reign offered no obeisance to the wife of the actual King, and even allowed it to be seen that she was jeering with her attendants at that honorable poverty. The insult, and the burning tears with which his wife told the tale, maddened the heart of Ildibad. He began to traduce his benefactor, accusing him of disloyalty to the national cause, and before long caused him to be assassinated.

From that day Ildibad's hold on the hearts of his countrymen was gone, and he also soon fell a victim to the hand of the assassin. One of his guards, named Wilas, a Gepid by birth, was betrothed to a young maiden whom he loved with passionate ardor. During his absence on some military duty, the King, either from forgetfulness or caprice, conferred the hand of the damsel on another of his followers. From the moment that he heard the tidings, Wilas, maddened with the wrong, vowed his master's death; and he found many willing accomplices, for the blood of Uraias cried for vengeance. There came a day when Ildibad was feasting right royally in his palace, with all his guards in bright armor standing round him. The King stretched forth his hand to grasp some delicate morsel; but, overcome apparently by the wine that he had drunk, fell forward on the couch. Wilas saw his opportunity, stepped forward, drew his sword, and severed his master's neck at one blow. With amazement and horror the bystanders saw the head of Ildibad roll upon the festive board, even while his fingers yet clutched the morsel that was never to be eaten. Nothing is said as to any punishment of the murderer.

The death of Ildibad occurred about May, 541, a year after the departure of Belisarius and six years from the commencement of the war. He was succeeded by Eraric the Rugian, whose precarious royalty was, however, never fully acknowledged by the remnant of the Gothic

nation. It will be remembered that a part of the Rugian people had followed the standards of Theodoric into Italy and had shared his victories and his revenge over their deadly enemy Odovacar. Notwithstanding the subsequent treachery of Frederic their King, the bulk of the little nation remained faithful subjects of the Ostrogothic royalty, but though they loyally did his bidding in battle they remained a separate nationality, marrying only the women of their own tribe, and probably having justice administered by their own chiefs. This fragment of a nation, in the distress and discouragement of their Gothic friends, aspired to give a king to the whole confederacy: a pretension almost as audacious as if in the party disputes at the close of the reign of Queen Anne the Huguenot refugees had signified their willingness to place one of their number on the throne of Great Britain.

Eraric reigned only five months, during which time he performed not a single noteworthy action against the enemy, but devoted his chief energies to those illusory negotiations with Constantinople which were the natural resource of a barbarian king doubtful of the loyalty of his subjects. He called together a general assembly of the Goths, and proposed to them to send ambassadors to Justinian, offering peace upon the same terms which had been suggested to Witigis: all Italy south of the Po to be the Emperor's, the rest to belong to the Goths. The assembly approved, and the ambassadors set forth on their journey; but it is scarcely necessary to state that they bore also a secret commission by virtue of which Eraric offered to sell his people and the whole of Italy to Justinian upon the usual terms, the Patriciate, a large sum of money, and a splendid establishment at Constantinople. But in the mean time the hearts of all the Gothic people, sore for the loss of Ildibad, from whose mighty arm they had expected deliverance, and impatient at the feeble gropings after a policy of this Rugian kinglet whom accident had set over them, were turning with more and more of hope and loyalty to one still remaining scion of the house of Ildibad. This was his nephew Baduila, a man still young for command, but one whose courage and capacity had already much talked of at the council-table and the banquet. At the moment of his uncle's murder he was in command of the garrison at Treviso: and when he heard the tidings of that lamentable event, thinking that it was all over with Gothic freedom, he sent, messengers to Ravenna offering to surrender his stronghold on receiving pledges from Constantian for the safety of himself and his soldiers. The offer was gladly accepted, the day for the surrender fixed, the Roman generals looked upon Treviso as already theirs, when the whole aspect of the case was changed by a deputation from the discontented Goths offering the crown to Baduila. The young chief told them with perfect openness all that had passed between him and Constantian, but agreed, if the Rugian adventurer were removed before the day fixed for his capitulation, to cancel his agreement with Ravenna and to accept the dangerous honor of the kingship. The negotiations of Eraric with the Emperor, both those which were avowed and those which were only suspected, no doubt hardened the hearts of the Gothic patriots against him and quickened their zeal: and thus it came to pass that in the autumn of 541, long before the messengers had returned from Constantinople, Eraric had been slain by the conspirators and the young Baduila had been raised on the shield as King.

The unanimous testimony of the coins of the new King proves that Baduila was that form of his name by which he himself chose to be known. From some cause, however, which has not been explained, he was also known even to the Goths as Totila, and this name is the only one which seems to have reached the ears of the Greek historians. It is useless now to attempt to appeal from their decision, and the name Totila is that by which he will be mentioned henceforward in this history.

The new King wielded the Ostrogothic scepter for eleven years, a longer period than any of his predecessors since the great Theodoric. Coming to the help of his countrymen when their cause seemed sunk below hope, he succeeded in raising it to a height of glory such as even

under Theodoric himself it had scarcely surpassed. Though almost the last, he was quite the noblest flower that bloomed upon the Ostrogothic stem, gentle, just, and generous, as well as a valiant soldier and an able statesman. Though he first appears before us, engaged in somewhat doubtful transactions, breaking his agreement with Constantian and counseling the death of Eraric, he is upon the whole one of the best types of the still future age of chivalry that the Downfall of the Empire can exhibit: and in fact we may truthfully say of him in the words of Chaucer—

“He was a very perfect gentle knight”.

The tidings of the ill-success of the Imperial arms and of the death of Eraric were conveyed to Justinian, who sent a severe reprimand to the generals for their supineness and misgovernment. Stung by this rebuke, having assembled a council of war at Ravenna, at which all the chief generals were present as well as Alexander the Logothete, they resolved to besiege Verona, the key to Totila's Venetian province, and as soon as that city was taken to press on to Pavia and extinguish the Gothic monarchy in its last asylum. The plan was strategically sound, and its failure was only due to the really ludicrous rapacity of the generals. An army of 12,000 men, under the command of eleven generals, advanced into the wide and fertile plains south of Verona, where their cavalry could operate with great advantages against the enemy. Moreover, a nobleman of the province of Venetia named Marcian, who dwelt near to Verona and favored the Imperial cause, sent word to the generals that he had bribed one of the sentinels to open a gate of that city to the Imperial forces. The generals, not feeling absolutely sure that this offer was made in good faith, invited volunteers for the dangerous task of commanding a small picked force, which should advance in front of the army and be admitted under cover of night within the walls of Verona. No one was willing to undertake the duty but Artabazes, a Persian, who in the Eastern campaign of 541 had attached himself to the fortunes of Belisarius and had been sent by him to serve in the Italian war. Having selected one hundred and twenty of the bravest men in the army he advanced at dead of night to the walls, and was admitted inside the gate by the sentinel, faithful in his treachery: his followers then slew the surrounding guards and mounted to the battlements. The Goths, finding out what had happened, threw up the game, retired through the northern gate to one of the hills overlooking the town, and there passed the night.

With the smallest fraction of military capacity the important city of Verona would now have been recovered for the Emperor. But the eleven generals, having started with the bulk of the army at the appointed time, began, when they were still five miles distant, to dispute as to the division of the spoil. The quarrel was at length adjusted, but meantime the sun had risen, and there was broad daylight over the old amphitheatre, over the swirling Adige, over the streets and market-places of Verona. The Goths from their hill-side took in the whole position of affairs, and saw by what an insignificant band they had been ousted from the city. Bushing in again by the northern gate, of which they had not given up possession, they drove Artabazes and his band to take refuge behind the battlements of the southern portion of the wall. At this moment the Roman army and the eleven generals arrived under the walls and found all the gates barred, and all the circuit of the city, except one small part, occupied by their foes. Vainly did Artabazes and his friends shout to them for help. They withdrew with all speed, and the little band whom they thus left to their fate had no resource but to leap headlong from the battlements. The greater number were killed by the fall. A few who had the good-fortune to alight on smooth soft ground escaped. Among these latter was Artabazes, who, when he reached the camp, inveighed bitterly against the cowardice and incapacity of the generals, which had brought so promising an enterprise to disaster.

Recognizing the failure of their design to reconquer Venetia, the whole army crossed the Po and mustered again near Faventia, a town on the Emilian Way, about twenty miles southwest of Ravenna. This place still survives in the modern Faenza, a bright little city of the plain, nestling under the shadow of the Apennines. Its early advances in the ceramic art have made the name of *faience* familiar to all French dealers in earthenware.

When Totila learned what had passed at Verona he set forth with his whole army in pursuit of the Roman generals. So dwindled, however, was the Gothic force, that those words 'the whole army' still described a force of only five thousand men. While he was still on the northern bank of the Po, Artabazes, who had not ridden in vain beside Belisarius to battle, and who is the only soldier whose deeds shed a brief luster across this part of the annals of the Imperial army, implored his brother generals to attack the barbarians in the act of crossing, so that they might have only one part of the Gothic force to deal with at once. He truly said that they need not trouble their minds about the alleged in-gloriousness of such a victory. In war success was everything, and if they defeated the foe, men would not narrowly scrutinize the means by which they had overcome. But the generals, having each his own scheme for conducting the campaign, could accept no common plan of action, not even the obvious one suggested by Artabazes, but remained inactive in the plain of Faenza, for which course they had, it must be admitted, one excuse, in that they thereby barred the Emilian Way against the southward progress of the invader.

Here then Totila, having crossed the Po without opposition, met the many-generalled forces of the enemy. In a most spirit-stirring speech he called upon his soldiers for one supreme effort of valor. He did not dissemble the difficulties of their situation. The Romans if defeated could take shelter in their fortresses, or could await reinforcements from Byzantium; but they had no such hope. Defeat for them meant ruin, the utter ruin of the Gothic cause in Italy. But, on the other hand, victory earned that day would bring with her every promise for the days to come. Blundering and defeat had reduced the army of the Goths from two hundred thousand men to one thousand, and their kingdom from the fair land of Italy to the single city of Ticinum. But then, one victory gained by the gallant Ildibad had multiplied their numbers five-fold, and had given them for one city all the lands north of the great river. Another victory now, with the blessing of God on their endeavours, with the favor and sympathy of all the Italians wearied out by the exactions of the Byzantine tax-gatherers, might restore to them all that they had lost. And such a victory they might surely win against the recent dastards of Verona.

After this harangue Totila selected three hundred men, who were to cross the river at a point two miles and a-half distant and fall upon the rear of the enemy when the battle was joined. Then the two armies set themselves in battle array; but before the fight began, one of those single combats in which the barbarians in both armies delighted, and which seem more congenial to the instincts of mediaeval chivalry than to the scientific discipline of the old Imperial legion, occupied the attention of both armies. A Goth, mighty in stature and terrible in aspect, Wiliaris by name, completely armed, with helmet and coat of mail, rode forth into the space between the two armies, and, Goliath-like, challenged the Romans to an encounter. All shrank from accepting the challenge except the gallant Persian, Artabazes. Couching their spears at one another the two champions spurred their horses to a gallop. The Persian's spear penetrated the right lung of the Goth. Instant death followed, but the spear in the dead man's hand, having become jammed against a piece of rock below him, prevented him from falling and gave him still the erect attitude of life. Artabazes pressed on to complete his victory, and drew his sword to smite his enemy through his coat of mail, but in doing so, by some sudden swerve of his horse, his own neck was grazed by the upright spear of the dead Wiliaris. It seemed a mere scratch at first, and he rode back in triumph to his comrades : but an artery had

been pierced, the blood would not be stanch'd, and in three days the gallant Artabazes was numbered with the dead. Thus did a dead man slay the living.

While Artabazes, out of the reach of bow-shot, was vainly endeavoring to stanch his wound, the battle was going ill with the Romans. Totila's three hundred men appearing in the rear were taken for the vanguard of another army, and completed the incipient panic. The generals fled headlong from the field, one to take refuge in one city, another in another. Multitudes of the soldiers were slain, multitudes taken prisoners and sent to a place of safety; and all the standards fell into the hands of the enemy, a disgrace which, Procopius assures us, had never before befallen a Roman army.

Totila now found himself strong enough to strike boldly across the Apennines, probably taking, not the Flaminian but the Cassian Way, and so try to gain a footing in Tuscany. With this view he sent a detachment of soldiers to besiege Florence. Fiesole, on its inaccessible height, he probably deemed too difficult for his little army. Justin, who had distinguished himself in these regions three years before, was now commandant of the Imperial garrison of Florence; but, fearing that he was too weak in men and provisions to hold out long, he sent messengers by night to Ravenna to ask for relief. A force, probably a strong force, was sent to his aid under the command of his old friend and colleague Cyprian, together with John and Bessas. At the approach of this large body of troops the Goths raised the siege of Florence and retreated northwards up the valley of the Sieve, which still bears in popular usage the name by which Procopius calls it, the valley of Mugello. It was thought unadvisable by the Imperial generals to risk an engagement with their whole force in the gorges of the mountains, and it was decided that one of their number, with a picked body of troops, should seek out and engage the Goths, while the rest of the army followed at their leisure. The lot fell on John the venturesome and precipitate, who, nothing loth, pushed on up the rocky valley. The Goths had stationed themselves on a hill, from which they rushed down with loud shouts upon the foe. There was a little wavering in the Roman ranks. John, with loud shouts and eager gestures, encouraged his men, but one of his guardsmen, a prominent figure in the ranks, was slain; and in the confused noise of the battle it was rumored that John himself had fallen. Then came wild panic: the Roman troops swept down the valley, and when they met the solid squadrons of their fellow-soldiers, and told them the terrible tidings of the death of the bravest of the generals, they too caught the infection of fear and fled in disgraceful and disorderly flight. Many were slain by the pursuing Goths. Some having been taken prisoners, were treated with the utmost kindness by the politic Totila, and even induced in large numbers to take service under his standard. But others went galloping on for days through Italy, pursued by no man, but bearing everywhere the same demoralizing tidings of rout and ruin, and rested not till they found themselves behind the walls of some distant fortress, where they might at least for a time breathe in safety from the fear of Totila.

Such, according to Procopius, was the battle, or rather the headlong rout, of Mugello. He was not an eye-witness of the scene, and one is inclined to conjecture that he has overrated the element of mere panic and underrated the strategic skill of the Goths, who had apparently posted themselves on some coign of vantage among the hills from which they could inflict deadly injury on the foe, themselves almost unharmed. But, whatever were the details of the fight, it seems to have opened the whole of Central and Southern Italy to Totila. Cesena, Urbino, Montefeltro, Petra Pertusa, all those Umbrian fortresses which it had cost Belisarius two years of hard fighting to win, were now lost to Justinian. Totila pressed on into Etruria. There no great fortress seems to have surrendered to him, and he would not repeat the error of Witigis by dashing his head against the stone walls of Rome. He therefore crossed the Tiber, marched southwards through Campania and Samnium, easily took Beneventum, and razed its walls, that no Byzantine host might shelter there in time to come. The stronghold of Cumae

with a large store of treasure fell into his hands. In the same place was a little colony of aristocratic refugees, the wives and daughters of the Senators. Totila treated them with every mark of courtesy, and dismissed them unhurt to their husbands and fathers, an act of chivalry which made a deep impression on the minds of the Romans. All the southern provinces of Italy, Apulia, Calabria, Bruttii, and Lucania, were overrun by his troops. Not all the fortresses in these parts were yet his, but he collected securely and at his ease both the rent of the landowner and the revenue of the Emperor.

The oppressions of the Logothetes had revealed to all men that one great motive for the Imperial reconquest of Italy was revenue; and Totila, by anticipating the visit of the tax-gatherer, stabbed Justinian's administration in a vital part. The barbarian auxiliaries could not be paid: desertions from the Imperial standard became more and more frequent; all the prizes of valor were seen to glitter in the hand of the young Gothic hero, who, encouraged by his marvelous success, determined to wrest from the Emperor the first fruits of Belisarius's campaigns in Italy. He sat down before the walls of Naples, which was held by a garrison of a thousand men, chiefly Isaurians, under the command of Conon.

This sudden transformation of the political scene took place in the summer of 542. And what meanwhile were the Imperial generals doing? Without unity of action or the semblance of concerted plan they were each cowering over the treasure which they had succeeded in accumulating, and which was stored in the several fortresses under their command. Thus Constantian had shut himself up in Ravenna; John, not slain but a fugitive from Mugello, in Rome; Bessas at Spoleto; Justin at Florence (which had not, after all, fallen into the hands of the Goths); and his friend Cyprian at Perugia. Like islands these high fortresses occupied by the Imperial soldiers stand out above the wide-spreading sea of Gothic reconquest. Even the victorious Totila will not be safe till he has reduced them also to submission.

The terrible news of the re-establishment of the Gothic kingdom in Italy filled Justinian with sorrow at the thought of all his wasted men and treasure. Not yet, however, was he brought to the point of entrusting the sole command to Belisarius: that remedy still seemed to him worse than the disease. He would end, however, the anarchy of the generals by appointing one man as Praetorian Prefect of Italy, who should have supreme power over all the armies of the Empire within the peninsula. This was a wise measure in itself, but the holder of the office was badly chosen. Maximin, the new Prefect, was quite inexperienced in war, of a sluggish and cowardly temper; and though the generals under him, Herodian the commander of the Thracians and Phazas nephew of Peranius, who came from the gorges of the Caucasus and commanded a brave band of Armenian mountaineers, knew somewhat more about the business of war, their martial energy was deadened by the feebleness of their chief.

This new appointment was made apparently in the autumn of 542. The timid Maximin, afraid to face the unquiet Adriatic in November, lingered, upon one pretence or another, on the coast of Epirus. All the time the distress of Conon and the beleaguered garrison of Naples was growing more severe. Demetrius, another officer of the old army of Belisarius, who had been dispatched from Constantinople after Maximin, perhaps to quicken his movements, sailed to Sicily and there collected a large fleet of merchantmen, which he filled with provisions, hoping by the mere size of his armament to overawe the Goths and succeed in revictualling Naples. Had he sailed thither at once his bold calculation would probably have been verified: but unfortunately he wasted time in a fruitless journey to Rome, where he hoped to enlist volunteers for the relief of the besieged city. The discontented and demoralized soldiers refused to follow his standard, and after all he appeared in the Bay of Naples with only his provision-ships and the troops which he himself had brought from Constantinople.

When the fleet of Demetrius was approaching the bay a little boat appeared, in which sat his namesake, another Demetrius, a Cephalonian seaman whose nautical skill had been of the

highest service to Belisarius in his Italian and African voyages. This man was now Financial Administrator of the city of Naples for the Emperor. He had good reason to wish for the success of his namesake the general, since when Totila first summoned the citizens to surrender he had assailed the stately and silent barbarian with such a torrent of voluble abuse as only a foul-mouthed Greek could utter. He had now come, at great hazard of his life, to inform the general of the distress of the beleaguered city and to quicken his zeal for its relief.

But, during the ill-advised journey to Rome, Totila also had obtained information of the movements and character of the relieving squadron. He had prepared a fleet of cutters, lightly loaded and easily handled, and with these he dashed into the fleet of heavy merchantmen as soon as they had rounded the promontory of Misenum and entered the Bay of Naples. The unwieldy and feebly-armed vessels were at once steered for flight. All of the ships, all of their cargoes, most of the men on board, were taken. Some of the soldiers were slain; a few who were on board the hindermost vessels of the fleet were able to escape in boats. Among these fugitives was Demetrius the general. His namesake, the unhappy sailor-orator, fell into the hands of Totila, who ordered his abusive tongue and the hands that had been probably too greedy of gold to be cut off, and then suffered the miserable man to go whither he would. A cruel and unkingly deed, not worthy of the gallant Totila.

Meanwhile the Prefect Maximin arrived with all his armament in the harbor of Syracuse. Having reached the friendly shore he would not again leave it, though all the generals sent messages urging him to go to the assistance of Conon. But, at length, fear of the Emperor's wrath so far overcame his other fears that he sent his whole armament to Naples under the command of Herodian, Demetrius, and Phazas, tarrying himself quietly at Syracuse. By this time the winter was far advanced and sailing was indeed dangerous. A tremendous storm sprang up just as the fleet entered the Bay of Naples, Phazas the Armenian seems to have at once abandoned all hope, and fled before the storm. The rowers could not draw their oars out of the water, the deafening roar of the wind and waves drowned the word of command if any officer had presence of mind enough to utter it, and, in short, all the ships but a very few were dashed on shore by the fury of the gale. Of course in these circumstances their crews fell a helpless prey to the Goths who lined the coast.

Herodian and Phazas with a very few others escaped. Demetrius, this time, fell into the hands of the enemy. With a halter round his neck he was led in front of the walls of the city, and was then compelled—but a man who called himself the countryman of Regulus should not have yielded to such compulsion—to harangue the citizens in such words as Totila dictated. The speech was all upon the necessity of surrender, the impossibility of resisting the Goths, the powerlessness of the Emperor, whose great armament had just been shattered before their eyes, to prepare another for their deliverance. Cries and lamentations filled all the city when the inhabitants, after their long sufferings bravely borne, heard such counsels of despair coming from the lips of a Roman general standing in such humiliating guise before them. Totila, who knew what their frame of mind must be, invited them to the battlements and there held parley. He told them that he had no grudge in his heart against the citizens of Naples, but, on the contrary, would ever remember their fidelity to the Gothic crown and the stout defence which they had made against Belisarius seven years before, when every other city in Italy was rushing into rebellion. Neither ought they on their part to bear any grudge against him for the hardships which the siege had caused them, and which were all part of the kindly violence by which he would force them back into the path of happiness which they had quitted. He then offered his terms: leave to Conon and his soldiers to depart whithersoever they would, taking all their possessions with them, and a solemn oath for the safety of every Neapolitan citizen.

The terms were generous, and both citizens and soldiers, pressed by hunger and pestilence, were eager to accept them. Loyalty to the Emperor, however, made them still

consent to the surrender only in the event of no help reaching them within thirty days. Totila, with that instinct of repartee which shone forth in him, and which was more like a Greek than a Goth, replied, "Take three months if you will. I am certain that no succors in that time will arrive from Byzantium". And with that he promised to abstain for ninety days from all attacks upon their fortifications, but did not repeat the blunder of Witigis, in allowing the process of revictualling to go forward during the truce. Disheartened and worn out with famine, the citizens surrendered the place long before the appointed day, and Naples (May, 543) again became subject to Gothic rule.

On becoming master of the city, Totila showed a thoughtful kindness towards the inhabitants, such as, in the emphatic words of Procopius, could have been expected neither from an enemy nor a barbarian. To obviate the evil consequences of overfeeding after their long abstinence, he posted soldiers in the gates and at the harbor with orders to let none of the inhabitants leave the city. Each house was then supplied with rations of food on a very moderate scale, and the portion given was daily and insensibly increased till the people were again on full diet.

Conon and his soldiers were provided with ships, which were ordered to take them to any port that they might name. Fearing to be taunted with their surrender if they went to Constantinople, they elected to be taken to Rome. The wind, however, proved so contrary that they were obliged to return on shore. They feared that the Gothic King might regard himself as now absolved from his promises and might treat them as foes. Far from it: he summoned them to his presence, renewed his promises of protection, and bade them mingle freely with his soldiers and buy in his camp whatever they had need of. As the wind still continued contrary, he provided them with horses and beasts of burden, gave them provisions for the way, and started them on their road for Rome, assigning to them some Gothic warriors of reputation by way of escort. And this, though his own heart was set on taking Rome and he knew that these men were going to swell the ranks of her defenders.

In conformity with his uniform policy (borrowed perhaps from the traditions of Gaiseric), he then dismantled the walls of Naples, or at least a sufficient portion of them to make the city, as he believed, untenable by a Roman army. For he preferred ever to fight on the open plain, rather than to be entangled in the artifices and mechanical contrivances which belong to the attack and defence of besieged cities.

About this time an event happened which showed in a striking light the policy of Totila towards the Italians. A countryman of Calabria appeared in the royal tent, demanding justice upon one of the Gothic King's body-guard who had violated his daughter. The offence was admitted, and the offender was put in ward till Totila, should decide upon his punishment. As it was generally believed that this punishment would be death, some of the men of highest rank in the army came to implore the King not to sacrifice for such a fault the life of a brave and capable soldier. With gentle firmness Totila refused their request. He pointed out that it is easy to earn a character for good-nature by letting offenders go unpunished, but that this cheap kindness is the ruin of good government in the state, and of discipline in the army. He enlarged on his favorite theme, that all the vast advantages with which the Goths commenced the war had been neutralized by the vices of Theodahad; and on the other hand, that, by the Divine favor and for the punishment of the rapine and extortion of their foes, the Gothic banner had in a marvelous way been raised again from the dust in which it had lain drooping. Now, then, let the chiefs choose which they would have, the safety of the whole Gothic state or the preservation of the life of this criminal. Both they could not have, for victory would be theirs only so long as their cause was good. The nobles were convinced by his words, and no murmurs were heard when, a few days after, the ravisher was put to death and his goods bestowed on the maiden whom he had wronged.

Such was the just rule of the barbarian King. Meanwhile the so-called Roman officers, shut up in their several fortresses, seemed intent only on plundering the country which they could not defend. The generals feasted themselves at gorgeous banquets, where their paramours, decked with the spoils of Italy, flaunted their mercenary beauty. The soldiers, dead to all sense of discipline, and despising the orders of such chiefs, wandered through the country districts, wherever the Goths were not, pillaging both *villa* and *praedium*, and making themselves far more terrible to the rural inhabitants than the Goths from whom they professed to defend them. Thus was the provincial, especially he who had been a rich provincial, of Italy in evil case. Totila had appropriated his lands and was receiving the revenues which they furnished, and all his moveable property was stolen from him by the soldiers of John or Bessas.

The state of the country became at length so intolerable that Constantian, the commandant of Ravenna wrote to the Emperor that it was no longer possible to defend his cause in Italy; and all the other officers set their hands to this statement. Of this state of discouragement among his enemies Totila endeavored to avail himself by a letter which he addressed at this time to the Roman Senate. "Surely", he said, "you must in these evil days sometimes remember the benefits which you received, not so very long ago, at the hands of Theodoric and Amalasantha. Dear Romans, compare the memory of those rulers with what you now know of the kindness of the Greeks towards their subjects. You received these men with open arms, and how have they repaid you? With the griping exactions of Alexander the Logothete, with the insolent oppressions of the petty military tyrants who swagger in your streets. Do not think that as a young man I speak presumptuously, or that as a barbarian king I speak boastfully when I say that we are about to change all this and to rescue Italy from her tyrants. I make this assertion, not trusting to our own valor alone, but believing that we are the ministers of Divine justice against these oppressors, and I implore you not to side against your champions and with your foes, but by such a conspicuous service as the surrender of Rome into our hands to wipe out the remembrance of your past ingratitude"

This letter was entrusted to some of the captive Romans, with orders to convey it to the Senate. John forbade those who read the letter to return any answer. Thereupon the Gothic King caused several copies of the letter to be made, appended to them his emphatic assurances, sealed by solemn oaths, that he would respect the lives and property of such Romans as should surrender, and sent the letters at night by trusty messengers into the City. When day dawned the Forum and all the chief streets of Rome were found to be placarded with Totila's proclamation. The doers of the deed could not be discovered, but John, suspecting the Arian priests of complicity in the affair, expelled them from the City.

Finding that this was the only answer to his Rome and appeal, Totila resolved to undertake in regular form the siege of Rome. He was at the same time occupied in besieging Otranto, which he was anxious to take, as it was the point at which Byzantine reinforcements might be expected to land, in order to raise the standard of the Empire in Calabria. He considered, however, that he had soldiers enough for both enterprises, and, leaving a small detachment to prosecute the siege of Otranto, he marched with the bulk of his army to Rome.

Now at length did Justinian, with grief and sighing, come to the conclusion that only one man could cope with this terrible young Gothic champion, and that, even though the Persians were pressing him hard in the East, Belisarius must return to Italy.

But, before we begin to watch the strange duel between the veteran Byzantine General and the young Gothic King, before we turn the pages which record another and yet another siege of Rome, we must devote a little time to the contemplation of the figure of one who, more powerfully than either Belisarius or Totila, moulded the destinies of Italy and Western Europe. The great Law-giver of European monasticism died just at this time. Let us leave for a

space the marches and counter-marches of Roman and Barbarian, and stand in spirit with the weeping monks of Monte Cassino by the death-bed of Benedict of Nursia.

CHAPTER XVI

SAINT BENEDICT

(480 – 547)

By devious ways, and through a tangle of forgotten or but half-remembered names, we are come to a broad highway trodden by the feet of many reverent generations and made illustrious by some of the best-known figures in the history of mediaeval Christianity. Even in the annals of monasticism the saintly Severinus of Noricum, the studious Cassiodorus of Squillace, are but faintly remembered; but everyone who knows anything of the spirit of the Middle Ages is familiar with the name of Benedict of Nursia. His face and the faces of his sister Scholastica, and his pupils Maurus and Placidus, portrayed by some of the greatest painters whom the world has known, look softly down from the walls of endless Italian galleries. His great monastery on Mount Cassino was for centuries, scarcely less than Rome and Jerusalem, the object of the reverent homage of the Christian world. More than either of those two historic cities did it enshrine a still existing ideal for the formation of what was deemed the highest type of human character. In the ninth century the great Emperor Charles ordered an enquiry to be made, as into a point requiring abstruse and careful research, "Whether there were any monks anywhere in his dominions who professed any other rule than the rule of Saint Benedict".

And so it continued to be, till in the thirteenth century those great twin brethren, Francis and Dominic, rose above the horizon, and the holiness of the reposeful Monk paled before the more enthusiastic holiness of the Friar. But during the intervening centuries, from the ninth to the thirteenth, all Western-monks, from Poland to Portugal and from Cumberland to Calabria, looked with fond eyes of filial obedience and admiration to that Campanian hill on which their founder had fixed his home and of which a monastic Isaiah might have prophesied, "From Cassino shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from the mountain of Benedict".

The life of Saint Benedict was written in Latin by Pope Gregory the Great, whose birth-year was perhaps the same as the death-year of the Saint. Such a book, the biography of the greatest Monk, written by the greatest Pope, obtained of course a wide and enduring popularity in the West; and in order that the East might share the benefit, a later pope, Zacharias, translated it into Greek. It is entitled "The Life and Miracles of the Venerable Benedict, Founder and Abbot of the Monastery which is called (of) the Citadel of the Province of Campania". As we might have expected from the title, supernatural events occupy a large place in the narrative, and we find ourselves at once confronted with one of those problems as to the growth of belief which so often perplex the historian of the Middle Ages. We have not here to deal with the mere romancing of some idle monk, manufacturing legends for the glory of his order about a saint who had been in his tomb for centuries. Pope Gregory was all but a contemporary of St. Benedict, and he professes to have derived his materials from four disciples and successors of the Saint, Constantine, Valentinian, Simplicius, and Honoratus. In these circumstances the merely mythical factor seems to be excluded from consideration; and there is something in the noble character of Gregory and of the friends of Benedict which makes a historian unwilling to adopt, unless under absolute compulsion, the theory of a pious fraud. Yet probably not even the most absolutely surrendered intellect in the Catholic Church accepts all the marvels here, recorded as literally and exactly true. It is useless to attempt to rationalize them down into the ordinary occurrences of everyday life. Yet in recounting them one would not wish to seem either to sneer or to believe. Our best course doubtless is to give

them in Pope Gregory's own words, studying them as phenomena of the age, and remembering that whatever was the actual substratum of fact, natural or supernatural, this which we find here recorded was what one of the greatest minds of the sixth century, the architect of the medieval Papacy and the restorer of the Christianity of Britain, either himself believed or wished to see believed by his disciples.

In the high Sabine uplands, nearly two thousand feet above the sea-level, under the shadow of the soaring Monti Sibellini, which are among the highest peaks of the Apennine range, lies the little city of Norcia, known in Roman days as the *municipium* of Nursia, and familiar to diligent students of the Aeneid as 'frigida Nursia'.

A little stranded city, apparently, in its sequestered Apennine valley: its nearest point of contact with the world of politics and of war would be Spoleto, about twenty miles to the west of it on the great Flaminian Way, and Spoleto was eighty miles from Rome. Here then in "frigid Nursia", about four years after Odovacar made himself supreme in Italy, was born to a noble Roman a son who received the prophetic name of Benedict, "the blessed one". He was sent as a boy to Rome to pursue his studies, and when there he probably saw the statues of Odovacar overthrown and the Forum placarded with the proclamations of the new ruler of Italy, Theodoric. But the young Nursian was thinking, not of the rise and fall of empires, but of the salvation of his own soul. He was horrified by what he saw of the wickedness of the great city; he feared that if he became imbued with what there passed for wisdom he too should one day rush headlong into all its vices: he elected rather to be poor and ignorant, and decided on quitting Rome and assuming the garb of a monk. He set out for "the desert" that is, for the wild, thinly-peopled country, by the upper waters of the Anio, and (pathetic evidence of the still tender years of the fervid anchorite) the faithful nurse who had come with him to Rome insisted on following him to his retirement.

Before they reached the actual mountain solitudes they came to the little town of Efide (the modern village of Affile), and there finding many devout men who listened with sympathy to his sorrows and aspirations, he yielded to their advice and consented to take up his abode near them, in some chamber attached to the church of St. Peter. While he was dwelling here the first exhibition of his miraculous powers made him famous through all the surrounding district and drove him into yet deeper solitude. His faithful nurse had borrowed from some neighbors a sieve to sift some corn with, and this sieve, made not of wood but earthenware, had been carelessly left on the table, by a fall from which it was broken in two. The nurse wept over the broken implement, and the youthful saint, taking the fragments from her hand and retiring for prayer, found when he rose from his knees the sieve so restored that no trace of the fracture could be discerned. So great was the admiration of the inhabitants at this marvel that they hung up the miraculous sieve at the entrance of the church, and there it remained for many years, till it perished, like many more precious treasures, in the waves of the Lombard invasion.

The fame of this miracle brought to Benedict more visitors and more of the praise of this world than he could bear. His mind reverted to its original design, he determined to be absolutely unknown, and flying secretly from his nurse, he crossed the little ridge of hills which separates Affile from Subiaco and from the deep wild gorge of the Anio. Subiaco, the Sublacus or Sublaqueum of the Romans, derives its name from the lakes which had been formed there by Nero, whose stately villa was mirrored in those artificial waters.

We have already had occasion to notice it in connection with the story of the Roman aqueducts. It was about three miles above the place where the turbid waters of the Anio Novus were diverted from the river-bed into the aqueduct which bore that name, and some twelve miles above the more serene and purer fountains of the Claudia and the Marcia. Situated about forty-four miles from Rome, in a precipitous and thickly-wooded valley, Sublaqueum was the sort of place which an artistic Emperor like Nero, who tried to make a solitude even round his

golden house in Rome, might naturally resort to in the First Century, even as Popes made it the scene of their *villeggiatura* in later centuries, and even as artists from all countries now throng to it to transfer to their canvas the picturesque outlines of its rocks, its woods, and its castles. But during the convulsions of the Fifth Century, when wealthy pleasure-lovers were few, it might easily sink into solitude and decay: and hence no doubt it was that when Benedict, somewhere about the year 495, sought its recesses, a few rough peasants and some scattered anchorites formed its whole population, and his retirement thither could be spoken of by his biographer as a retreat into the desert.

Here he was met by a monk named Romanus, who, hearing of his desires after a solitary life, bestowed upon him the monastic habit and led him to a narrow cave at the foot of a hill, where the delicately nurtured youth spent the next three years, hidden from the eyes of all men, and with the place of his retreat known only to the faithful Romanus. This only friend dwelt in a monastery not far off, on the table-land overlooking the river. With pious theft he abstracted a small portion from each monastic meal, and on stated days hastened with his store to the brow of the hill. As no path led down to the cave of the recluse, the basket of provisions was tied to the end of a long rope, to which a bell was also attached, and thus the slowly-lowered vessel by its tinkling sound called the Saint from prayer to food. "But one day the Ancient Enemy [the Devil], envying the charity of one brother and the refreshment of the other, when he saw the rope lowered, threw a stone and broke the bell. Romanus, however, still continued to minister to him at the stated hours.

After a time, from some unexplained cause, the ministrations of Romanus ceased, and the Saint, insensible to the wants of the body, might easily have perished of hunger. But a certain Presbyter living a long way from Subiaco, having prepared for himself a hearty meal for the next day, the festival of Easter, saw the Lord in a night vision and heard him say, "While thou art preparing for thyself these delicacies, a servant of mine in a cavern near Sublaqueum is tortured with hunger". The Presbyter rose at once and set off on that Easter morning with the provisions in his hand. Up hill and down dale he went, till at last, scrambling down the face of the precipice, he found the cave where dwelt the holy man. After they had prayed and talked together for some time the Presbyter said to the Hermit, "Rise and let us eat: today is Easter-day". Benedict, who in his solitude and his perpetual fastings had long lost count of Lent and Easter-tide, said, "An Easter-day to me truly, since I have been allowed to look upon thy face". The other answered, "In very truth this is the Easter-day, the day of the Resurrection of the Lord, upon which it becomes thee not to keep fast. Eat then, for therefore am I sent, that we may share together the gifts of the Lord Almighty". So they ate and drank together, and after long converse the Presbyter departed.

It was soon after this that some shepherds of the neighborhood discovered the cave, and found what they at first supposed to be a wild beast coiled up among the bushes. When they found that a man, and a holy man, was enveloped in that garment of skins, they listened eagerly to his preaching: and from this time forward he was never left in want of food, one or other of the shepherds bringing him such victuals as he needed, and receiving in return, from his lips, the message of eternal life.

After the unnatural calm and utter absorption in the contemplation of heavenly things which had marked the Saint's first sojourn in the cave, there came a storm of terrible temptation. In those years of abstraction the dreamy child had grown into a man, with the hot blood of Italy in his veins; and his imprisoned and buffeted manhood struggled hard for victory. Soft birdlike voices sounded in his ears, the form of a beautiful woman rose before his eyes, everything conspired to tempt him back from that dreary solitude into the sweet world which he had quitted before he knew of its delights. He had all but yielded to the temptation, he had all but turned his back upon the desert, when a sudden thrill of emotion recalled him to

his old resolve. Bent on punishing the rebellious body which had so nearly conquered the soul, he plunged naked into a dense thicket of thorns and nettles, and rolled himself in them till all his skin was torn and smarting. The pain of the body relieved the anguish of the soul, and, according to the lovely poetical fancy of after ages, when seven centuries later his great imitator St. Francis visited the spot, the thorns which had been the instrument of St. Benedict's penance were miraculously turned to roses.

From a hint which the Saint himself has given us, we may infer that his own mature judgment condemned his early impetuosity in facing while yet a boy the hardships and temptations of an anchorite's life in the wilderness. He says in the first chapter of his Rule, 'Hermits are' [by which he evidently means 'should be'] men who are not in the first fervor of their noviciate, but who having first learned by a long course of monastic discipline and by the assistance of many brethren how to fight against the Devil, afterwards step forth alone from the ranks of their brethren to engage him in single combat, God himself being their aid against the sins of the flesh and thoughts of evil.

The fame of the young Saint was now spread abroad throughout the valley, and the inmates of the convent of Varia (now Vicovaro), about twenty miles lower down the stream, having lost their abbot by death, besought Benedict to come and preside over them. Long he refused, feeling sure that his ways of thinking and acting would never agree with theirs. For these monks evidently belonged to that class which he in after days described as "the evil brood of the Sarabaitae". This name, of Egyptian origin, denoted those who had turned back from the rigor of their monastic profession while still wearing the monastic garb. "Their law", as he said, "is the gratification of their own desires. Whatever they take a fancy to they call holy: the unlawful is that to which they feel no temptation".

These men, in a temporary fit of penitence and desire after better things, chose Benedict for their his Abbot, and he at length yielded to their will. But soon the passion for reform died away. They found it intolerable to be reprimanded at each little deviation to the right hand or to the left from the path of ascetic virtue.. Angry words were bandied about in whispers, as each accused the other of having counseled the mad design of making this austere recluse from the wilderness their Abbot. At length their discontent reached such a height that they resolved on poisoning him. When the cup containing the deadly draught was offered to the reclining Abbot he, according to monastic usage, made the sign of the cross in act of benediction. The moment that the holy sign was made, as if a stone had fallen from his hands, the cup was shattered to pieces and the wine was spilt on the ground. Perceiving at once the meaning of the miracle, Benedict arose and addressed the pallid monks with serene countenance: "Almighty God pity you, my brethren. Why have ye designed this wickedness against me? Said I not unto you that my ways and yours could never agree? Go and seek an Abbot after your own heart, for me ye shall see here no more". And with that he arose and returned to the wilderness.

But Benedict's fame was now so far spread abroad that it was impossible for him any longer to lead the life of an absolutely solitary recluse. During the first twenty years of the sixth century (AD 501-520), men anxious to commence the monastic career under his training were flocking to him from all parts of Italy. So numerous were these that he established no fewer than twelve monasteries in the neighborhood of Subiaco; to each of which he assigned a superior, chosen from among his intimate friends. While probably exercising a general superintendence over all these religious houses, he himself dwelt with a few of his friends in a small house reared above his cave, the predecessor of the present *Convento del Sacro Speco* at Subiaco.

Now too the nobles of Rome began to bring him their sons for education, and for dedication if they should still after needful probation desire it, to the untroubled life of a coenobite. The most celebrated among these noble novices were Maurus and Placidus, sons of

Aequitius and the Patrician Tertullus. They came about the year 523, Placidus a mere child, Maurus a bright, earnest lad, already able to enter into some of the thoughts of his revered master and to be the instrument of his rule over the brethren. In the splendid series of frescoes by Signorelli and Sodoma which line the cloisters of the great Benedictine monastery of Monte Oliveto, none is more interesting than that which depicts the arrival of young Maurus and Placidus, brought by their fathers, richly dressed and with a long train of horses and servants and all the state of a Roman noble as imagined by a mediaeval painter. Almost pathetic are the immediately following pictures, in which the little heads are already marked with the tonsure and the youthful faces already wear an aspect of too reposeful, unboyish holiness.

One of the most noteworthy and perplexing miracles of the Saint is connected with these, his young disciples. One day the little Placidus having gone to draw water from the neighboring lake, stooping too far forward fell in and was swept by the swift current far from the shore. Benedict, who was praying in his cell, suddenly called out, "Brother Maurus! run! That child has fallen into the water and is being carried away by the stream". Maurus asked and received a hurried blessing, hastened to the margin of the lake, ran over its surface with rapid course, not perceiving that he trod on water, pulled his companion up by the hair, and hastily returned. When he had reached the shore he looked back over the lake and then saw for the first time, with trembling, what he had done. He returned and related the event to Benedict. "It is a miracle" said he, "granted to thee as a reward of thy prompt obedience". "Not so" said the youth, "it is a miracle wrought by thy prayers". The friendly controversy was settled by the testimony of the rescued Placidus, who declared that when he was being drawn out of the water he saw the hood of Benedict waving above him, and felt that it was by Benedict's arm that he was delivered.

The rivalry between the monks and the parish priests, between the regular and the secular clergy, as they were afterwards called, which was to reappear in so many forms in after ages, already began to show itself. Florentius, the priest of a neighboring church, filled with jealousy at the increasing fame and influence of the Saint, endeavored by slander and misrepresentation to draw away his disciples from following him. As years went on and still the fame of Benedict increased, while Florentius remained obscure, the character of the priest underwent an evil change, and from slanderous words he proceeded to murderous deeds. He sent, according to a not uncommon custom, a piece of bread to Benedict as a token of brotherhood. The morsel was, however, a poisoned one, or at least the Saint believed it to be so, though, as he commanded a crow which was accustomed to feed out of his hand to bear it away into a desert place and there deposit it where it could be found of no man, it is difficult to see what evidence existed of the wicked designs of Florentius. The next step taken by the priest, who sent seven women of evil life to the monks' cells, was so outrageous and threatened such ruin to the community if this was to be the permitted manner of warfare, that Benedict resolved to withdraw from the conflict, and, leaving his twelve monasteries under the rule of their respective heads, sought a new home for himself and his chosen friends fifty miles to the southward, in the countries watered by the Liris. We may fairly conjecture that the enmity of Florentius was not the sole cause that urged him to this migration. His was one of those characters which require solitude, leisure, liberty, in order to attain their true development. At Subiaco he found himself no longer a recluse, but the centre of a great system of administration, his name a battle-cry, himself the leader of a party. Leaving those to strive and conquer who would, he bowed his head to the storm and again sought the freedom of the desert. Scarcely, however, had he started on his southward journey when a messenger from the faithful Maurus reached him with the tidings of the death of his enemy. The balcony on which Florentius was standing, to watch and to gloat over the departure of his foe, had given way, and the wicked priest had been killed by his fall. Benedict burst into loud lamentations over his

death, inflicted penance on the messenger, who seemed to exult in the tidings which he bore, and continued his journey towards the Campanian lands. Evidently the enmity of Florentius, though it might be one cause, was not the sole cause of the great migration.

The new home of the Father of Monks was erected upon a promontory of high table-land, just upon the confines of Latium and Campania, which then overlooked the Via Latina, as it now overlooks the modern railway between Rome and Naples, from a point a little nearer to the latter city than to the former. Here, round the Citadel of Campania, grew the shady groves in which, two hundred years after Constantine, a rustic multitude, still, after the manner of their forefathers, offered their pagan sacrifices to the statue of Apollo. At the command of Benedict the statue was ground to powder, the woods were cut down, and where the altar of the Far-darting god had stood, there rose, amid much opposition from unseen and hellish foes, two chapels to St. Martin and St. John, and, hard by, the new dwelling of the Coenobites. It was a memorable event in the history of the valley of the Liris, which turned the obscure *Castrum Casinum* into the world-renowned, the thought-moulding, the venerated monastery of Monte Cassino

The migration from the Anio to the Liris occurred about 528, and fifteen years were passed by the Saint in his new citadel-home. The record of these years, as of those passed at Subiaco, is chiefly a record of miracles. Some of the chief characteristics of this miraculous history may be here briefly touched upon.

Least interesting to us, because most obviously artificial in their character, are those wonders recorded of the Saint in which there is an obvious desire to emulate the miraculous deeds of Elijah and Elisha. When Benedict goes forth into the fields with his disciples to work, and by his prayers restores the dead son of a peasant to life; when he heals a leper; when a miraculous supply of oil bubbles up in the cask and runs over on the convent floor; when he provides the monks of Subiaco with an easily-accessible spring of sweet water, we feel that whether to the Saint himself or to his biographers, the idea of these supernatural occurrences was suggested by what they had read in the Books of Kings.

Childish as some of them may seem to us, there is a greater psychological interest in those stories which describe the Saint as struggling for victory against the wiles and stratagems of the Devil. The Power of Evil is almost uniformly spoken of by Gregory as "the Ancient Enemy" (*antiquus hostis*), and the minute acquaintance which is shown with his works and ways, the comparative ease with which his plots are foiled and himself brought to confusion, remind us rather of the way in which a hostile politician is spoken of by the admirers of his rival than of the dark and trembling hints dropped in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures concerning the mysterious Being who for ever sets his will against the will of the Most High. When the monastery was being built at Cassino hard by the old idolatrous grove, the '*antiquus hostis*' continually appeared to the fathers in their dreams; he filled the air with his lamentations; he once stood in bodily presence before the Saint, with flaming eyes, calling "Benedict! Benedict", and when he refused to answer, cried out "Maledict! not Benedict. what hast thou to do with me? Why wilt thou thus persecute me?" A stone which the builders wished to raise to its place in the new building was made immovable to all their efforts by reason of the Ancient Enemy sitting upon it, till Benedict by his prayers caused him to depart. The kitchen of the monastery appeared to the brethren to be on fire, and the work of building was interrupted by their causeless panic, till again by the prayers of the Saint their eyes were opened, and they saw that the imagined fire was no fire at all, but only a figment of the Ancient Enemy. At one time the Enemy appeared in the strange guise of a veterinary surgeon, and, visiting one of the monks who was drawing water, afflicted him with some strange disorder of a hysterical kind, which was cured by a sharp buffet from the hand of Benedict. At another time a monk was afflicted with an unaccountable love of roving, which always led him to go

forth from the monastery just when the brethren were engaged in prayer. Admonitions from his own abbot (for he was not under the immediate supervision of Benedict) were in vain. The Saint, being sent for to heal him, clearly perceived a little black boy tugging at the fringe of the monk's habit, and thus coaxing him to leave the chapel. The Saint saw it, and on the following day his friend Maurus also saw it; but to the eyes of Pompeianus, abbot of the monastery, the black imp remained invisible. Sharp strokes of the rod corrected the wandering spirit of the monk, who thenceforward sat quietly in the chapel to the end of the service.

We are here, manifestly, in presence of the Medieval figure of the Devil. This is the being who, according to the belief of the Middle Ages, furnished the design for the Bridge of St. Gotthard and for the Cathedral of Cologne; the being who is always on the point of outwitting, but is generally in the end outwitted by, the sons of men; the being at whom Luther, monk in heart if reformer in brain, threw his inkstand when he sat in the little chamber at the Wartburg.

Are we not justified in saying that this conception of the character of man's unseen Foe has more than an accidental connection with the monastic system with whose birth it is contemporaneous? Assuredly those protracted fasts, those long and lonely vigils of anchorite and coenobite, had something to do with bringing the Devil of the Middle Ages into the field of human imaginings.

Some of the histories recounted of the Saint Social bring vividly before us the social conditions of the the age in which he lived, conditions of which probably no one had a wider or more accurate knowledge than the Superior of a great Monastery. Into that safe fold came men from all ranks and all stations in life, the lofty and the lowly, some seeking shelter, some solace, some rest from the hopeless distractions of a turbulent age; and the spiritual father was bound to listen to the tale of each, to sympathize with the sorrows of all. St. Benedict himself in his rule, while insisting on the duty of the abbot's avoiding all respect of persons, hints at the difficulty of its fulfillment. "Let good deeds and obedience be the only means of obtaining the abbot's favor. Let not the free-born man be preferred to him who was a slave before he entered the convent, unless there be some other reason for the preference". Distinguished merit may lead to promotion out of the order of seniority, "but if otherwise, let each keep his proper place [in that order], since, whether slaves or free, we are all one in Christ, and, under the same Lord, wear all of us the same badge of service".

In St. Benedict's case, Goth and Roman, peasant and noble, the son of the tax-ridden *Curialis*, and the son of the lordly *Defensor*, were all subject to his equal sway. Near to his monastery, and in some measure subject to his oversight, dwelt two noble ladies who had vowed themselves to a life of holiness. A monk, of lower social condition, who performed menial offices for these ladies, was often vexed by the sharp words which they used towards him, mindful rather of the past difference in their positions, than of their present equality in Christ. On hearing the good man's complaints St. Benedict visited the ladies, and told them that if they did not keep their tongues in better subjection he should be compelled to excommunicate them. Peevish and froward, however, and probably suffering in health by reason of the change from a palace to a cell, the noble ladies abated none of their scolding words. In no long time they both died, and were buried within the precincts of the church. There was a strange sight seen by their nurse, when she attended, according to custom, to bring an oblation for her dead mistresses, at the solemnization of the mass. When the Deacon called out "Let all who do not communicate depart", two dim figures were seen to rise out of the floor and steal away from the sacred building. Seeing this happen more than once, and remembering the threatened excommunication of the Saint, which evidently had power beyond the limits of this life, the faithful nurse sought the cell of Benedict and told him the marvelous tale. He gave her an oblation from his own hand to offer on their behalf, in proof that he no longer

excommunicated them. The oblation was duly made, and thereafter the souls of the harassed harassers had peace.

Once, at evening, the venerable Father was sitting at table, partaking of the bread and cooked vegetables which formed his frugal repast. Opposite him, according to the rule of the monastery, stood a young monk, holding the lamp and ready to do the Abbot's bidding. It chanced that he who upon this evening performed this lowly duty was a young noble, son of one of the Imperial Defensors, whose father therefore was one of the most important personages in the state. Suddenly the thought flashed through his mind, "Who is this man who sits here eating his evening meal, upon whom I am waiting like a slave, holding the lamp, handing him the dishes? And what am I, I the Defensor's son, that I should condescend to such drudgery?". Not a word did the young noble utter, but the Saint, who read his proud thought, said suddenly, with voice of stern rebuke, "Seal up thy heart, my brother. What is that which thou art saying? Seal up thy heart". He called in the other brethren, bade the young man hand the lamp to them and retire for an hour of silent meditation. The monks afterwards asked the culprit what he had done to awaken such wrath in the Saint's mind. He told them, not what he had done, but what he had thought; and they all recognized that nothing could escape the venerable Benedict, in whose ear men's thoughts sounded like spoken words.

Whatsoever among the miracles attributed to the founder of Cassino we may feel bound to reject, we can hardly refuse to him an extraordinary, perhaps a supernatural power of reading the human heart. The story just told is one of the most striking instances of this power. Other cases are recorded, as when he rebuked some monks who, contrary to the rule, had partaken of refreshment in a religious woman's house, outside of the monastery, when he reminded another monk of an offence which he had himself forgotten, the acceptance of some handkerchiefs from the inmates of a nunnery to whom he had been sent to preach,—or when he detected the dishonesty of a young monk who, when entrusted with two bottles of wine for the use of the monastery, had delivered one only.

This power of penetrating the secret thoughts of those who came into his presence was remarkably exemplified in St. Benedict's interview with Totila; an interview which took place, probably, in the year 542, when the Gothic King was on his march to the siege of Naples. Pope Gregory, as the champion of orthodoxy and of the Roman nationality, naturally represents the Arian and barbarian King somewhat less favorably than he deserves. Still, even in the Papal narrative (which it will be well to give in a literal translation), something of the nobleness of Totila's character may be discerned.

"Chapter XIV. How the feigning of King Totila was discovered.

In the times of the Goths, Totila their King having heard that the holy man possessed the spirit of prophecy, and being on his way to the monastery halted at some distance and sent word that he would come to him. Having sent this message, as he was a man of unbelieving mind, he determined to try whether the man of God really possessed the prophetic spirit. There was a certain sword-bearer of his, named Riggo, to whom he lent his [purple] buskins and ordered him to put on the royal robes and to go, personating him, to the man of God. To aid the deception he also sent three counts, who before all others were wont to attend upon his person, namely Vuld [or Vultheric], Kuderic, and Bliidi. These were to keep close by the side of Riggo, to whom he assigned other guards and other marks of honor, with the intention that by these and by the purple raiment he might be taken for the King. When this same Riggo, thus arrayed and thus accompanied, had entered the monastery, the man of God was sitting afar off. But seeing him coming, as soon as his voice could be heard he cried out, saying, "Put off, my son, put off that which thou wearest; it is not thine". Thereat Riggo fell straightway to the earth, struck with terror because he had presumed to mock so great a man; and all who had come with

him to the man of God groveled on the ground. Then arising, they did not dare to approach, but hurrying back to their King told him how speedily they had been detected”

“Chapter xv. Of the Prophecy which was made concerning the same King.

Then, in his own person, the same Totila approached the man of God, but when he saw him sitting afar off he did not dare to come close, but cast himself upon the ground. Then, when the man of God had twice or thrice said to him “Rise”, but still he did not dare to raise himself from the earth, Benedict the servant of Jesus Christ condescended himself to approach the prostrate King and cause him to arise. He rebuked him for his past deeds, and in few words told him all that should come to pass, saying,

"Much evil hast thou done,
 Much evil art thou doing.
 Now at length cease from sin.
 Thou shalt enter Rome:
 Thou shalt cross the sea.
 Nine years shalt thou reign,
 In the tenth shalt thou die."

When he had heard these words, the King, vehemently terrified, asked for his prayers and withdrew; and from that time forward he was less cruel than aforesaid. Not long afterwards he entered Rome, and crossed to Sicily. But in the tenth year of his reign, by the judgment of Almighty God, he lost his kingdom with his life.

Moreover, the priest of the church of Canusium was sent to visit the same servant of God, by whom, for his meritorious life, he was held in great affection. And once when they were talking together concerning the entry of King Totila and the destruction of the city of Rome, the priest said, “By this King that city will be destroyed so that it shall be no more inhabited”. To whom the man of God made answer, “Rome shall not be exterminated by the barbarians, but, wearied with tempests, lightnings, whirlwinds, and earthquakes, it shall consume away in itself”. The mysteries of which prophecy are now made clearer than the daylight to us, who see in this city, walls shattered, houses thrown down, churches destroyed by the whirlwind, and the great edifices of the city loosened by long old age falling around us in abounding ruin”. So far Pope Gregory.

These two scenes, the unmasking of the false King and the prediction of the future fortunes of the true one, are vividly portrayed, not only by Signorelli at Monte Oliveto, but also by Spinello Aretino on the walls of the large square sacristy at San Miniato. Especially well rendered is the dismay of the detected impostor. Riggo’s knees are loosened with terror, and he turns sick with fear as he meets the stern mildness of Benedict’s gaze and hears that voice of command, “My son, put off, put off that which thou wearest, for it is not thine”.

Within a year, probably, from the interview with Totila, St. Benedict was dead. The little that has got to be told about him is a history of farewells. First came the death of his sister Scholastica. She had been from infancy dedicated to the service of God, and had apparently inhabited a cell not far from his monastery, first at Subiaco and then at Monte Cassino. Once a year the Saint used to come and visit his sister in her cell, which, though of course outside the gates of the monastery, was within the limits of the modest monastic estate. When the time for the last yearly visit was come, Benedict with a little knot of his disciples went down to his sister’s cell and spent the whole day in religious conversation and in singing with her the praises of the Most High. The evening was come; they were seated at supper; it was time for Benedict to depart, but still the stream of conversation, which perhaps deviated sometimes from the near joys of heaven to the far distant past of their common infancy in upland Nursia, seemed unexhausted. Scholastica pressed her brother to stay that they might on the morrow

resume their celestial converse. "What dost thou ask me, my sister", said he; "I can by no means pass the night outside of my cell". At this time the evening sky was bright and clear, and not a cloud was visible. Scholastica clasped her hands tightly together and bowed her head in silent prayer. After a time she looked up again. The lightning was flashing, the thunder was pealing, and such torrents of rain were descending, that neither Benedict nor his companions could stir across the threshold of the cell. "Almighty God have pity on thee" said Benedict. "What is this that thou hast done?". "My brother", she answered, "I asked thee and thou wouldest not hear. Then I asked my Lord, and he heard me. Now depart if thou canst: leave me alone and return to thy monastery". Benedict recognised and bowed to the divine answer to prayer. He passed the night in his sister's cell, and they cheered one another with alternate speech upon the joys of the spiritual life. In the morning he departed to his own cell, and three days after, when he was standing therein, lifting up his eyes he saw a white dove rising into the sky. Then he knew that his sister Scholastica was dead, and sent some of the brotherhood to bring her body and lay it in the prepared sepulcher, where it should wait a little season for his own.

It was not long, apparently, after this event that the Saint received a visit from his dear friend Servandus, the head of a neighboring monastery founded by Liberius the Patrician, probably the same with whom we have already made acquaintance as the faithful servant of Odovacar and Theodoric. After spending the evening in that kind of conversation which was the highest mental enjoyment of these venerable men, they retired to rest. Benedict in the topmost chamber of a tall tower overlooking all the buildings and courtyards of the monastery, his guest in a lower story of the same tower, the disciples of both below. Benedict rose, while all others still slept, before the appointed hour of vigils (two o'clock in the morning). While he stood at his window and looked south-eastwards over the Campanian plain, suddenly the darkness of the night was scattered; a radiance as of the sun filled the deep Italian sky, and under that strangely flashing light it seemed to him that the world was made visible as it was to Christ upon the Specular Mount, all illumined by one ray only from the sun. While he was still fixing his earnest gaze on that heavenly radiance, behold a sphere of fire, in which he saw the soul of his friend Germanus, Bishop of Capua, being borne by angels to heaven. Thrice with a loud voice he called on Servandus, sleeping below, to arise and see the marvel: but when Servandus stood beside his friend at the window, the fiery sphere had vanished, the vision of the world was ended, and only

"The few last rays of that far-scattered light"

were yet discernible. St. Benedict sent a brother at once to Capua to enquire as to the welfare of the Bishop, and learned that on that same night, at the very moment of the heavenly vision, Germanus had given up the ghost.

And now did Benedict's discourse often turn upon his own approaching end, telling those about him under the seal of confidence when it should be, and sending word to his absent disciples by what signs they should be made certain of his decease. Six days before his death he ordered his grave to be dug. After this he was seized with a sharp attack of fever, which grew daily more severe. On the sixth day he bade his disciples carry him into the oratory, fortified himself for death by receiving the body and blood of the Lord, and then, leaning his weak limbs upon the arms of his disciples, he stood with his hands upraised to heaven, and thus passed away in the act and attitude of prayer.

That same day two of his disciples, one in his cell at Monte Cassino and another in a distant monastery, saw the same vision. To each it seemed that a pathway strewn with bright robes and gleaming with innumerable fires stretched eastwards from Benedict's cell and upwards into the depth of heaven. Above stood a man of venerable aspect and radiant

countenance, who asked them if they knew what that pathway was which they beheld. They answered, "No"; and he replied, "This is the path by which Benedict, beloved of God, hath ascended up to heaven"

He was buried side by side with his sister in the place where he had overthrown the altar of Apollo, and within the walls of the new oratory of St. John.

Returning now to the line of thought indicated at the beginning of this chapter, if we ask why has the fame of St. Benedict so entirely eclipsed that of all other Western monks, the answer is undoubtedly furnished to us by the one literary product of his life, his *Regula*. This *Rule*, extending only to seventy-three short chapters (many of them very short), and not probably designed by its author for use much beyond the bounds of the communities under his own immediate supervision, proved to be the thing which the world of religious and thoughtful men was then longing for, a complete code of monastic duty. Thus by a strange parallelism, almost in the very year when the great Emperor Justinian was codifying the results of seven centuries of Roman secular legislation for the benefit of the judges and the statesmen of the new Europe, St. Benedict on his lonely mountain-top was unconsciously composing his code for the regulation of the daily life of the great civilizers of Europe for seven centuries to come. The chief principles of that code were labor, obedience, and a regulated fervor of devotion to the Most High. The life prescribed therein, which seems to us so austere, so awfully remote from the common needs and the common pleasures of humanity, seemed to him, and was in reality, gentle and easy when compared with the anchorite's wild endeavors after an impossible holiness, endeavors which had often culminated in absolute madness, or broken down into mere worldliness and despair of all good. It is therefore in no spirit of affectation that Benedict in his Preface to the Rule uses these remarkable words: "We must therefore establish a school of service to our Lord, in which institution we trust that nothing rough and nothing grievous will be found to have been ordained by us"

It is, however, the man himself rather than the vast system almost unconsciously founded by him that it has seemed necessary at this point to bring before the mind of the reader. St. Benedict died only ten years before the extreme limit of time reached by this volume. Later on, when we have to deal with the history of the Lombard domination in Italy, our attention will be attracted to the further fortunes of Monte Cassino, ruined, restored, endowed with vast wealth, all by the same Lombard conquerors. For the present we leave the followers of the Saint engaged in their holy and useful labors, praying, digging, transcribing. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose". The *scriptorium* of the Benedictine monastery will multiply copies not only of missals and theological treatises, but of the poems and histories of antiquity. Whatever may have been the religious value or the religious dangers of the monastic life, the historian at least is bound to express his gratitude to these men, without whose life-long toil the great deeds and thoughts of Greece and Rome might have been as completely lost to us as the wars of the buried Lake-dwellers or the thoughts of Paleolithic Man. To take an illustration from St. Benedict's own beloved Subiaco, the work of his disciples has been like one of the great aqueducts of the valley of the Anio,—sometimes carried underground for centuries through the obscurity of unremembered existences, sometimes emerging to the daylight and borne high upon the arcade of noble lives, but equally through all its course bearing the precious stream of ancient thought from the far-off hills of time into the humming and crowded cities of modern civilization.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RETURN OF BELISARIUS.

At the point where we left the narrative of the fight for the possession of Italy the struggle had been proceeding for nine years. We had reached the spring months of 544. Totila, in the two years and a-half of his kingship, had beaten the Imperial generals in two pitched battles by land, and in one engagement by sea had opened to himself the Flaminian Way by the capture of Petra Pertusa, could march freely from one end of Italy to the other, had taken Naples and Benevento, and was threatening the southern port of Otranto. The Roman generals, without concert or courage or care for their master's interests, were shut up in Rome, in Ravenna, in Spoleto, and a few other still untaken strongholds, more intent on plundering the wretched Italians than on defending the Imperial cause.

At this point of the struggle the Emperor, with a heavy heart, recognized the truth of what all his subjects had doubtless for many months been saying, that the only hope of saving any part of his Italian conquests lay in employing the man who had first effected them. Belisarius, now no longer Master of the Soldiery, but only Count of the Sacred Stable, was to be relieved from the comparatively useless work of superintending the Imperial stud and sent to reconquer Italy. But the Belisarius who came back to the peninsula in 544 to measure swords with Totila was a different man from the triumphant and popular hero who had sailed away from Ravenna in the spring of the year 540. First came the certainty of Antonina's unfaithfulness, the attempt to punish her, the sacrifice of his brave helper Photius, the unworthy and hollow show of reconciliation forced upon him by the imperious Theodora; a reconciliation which left husband and wife still strangers to one another, rival and hostile powers though dwelling in the same palace. These events, the bitter fruit of the year 541, had already aged and saddened Belisarius. Then in the year 542 he lost even the semblance of his master's favor, and became an utterly broken and ruined man.

It was in that year that a pestilence, one of the most terrible that have ever devastated the East, visited Constantinople. It arose in Egypt, and in its leisurely course sought out and ravaged every corner of the Roman and Persian worlds, not sparing the new barbarian kingdoms. For four months it hung heavily over Constantinople, the number of deaths rising at one time to five thousand daily. The markets were deserted, all ordinary crafts were abandoned, the cares of tending the patients in their terrible delirium and of burying the dead overtaxed the energies of their unstricken relatives. The work of burial had at length to be undertaken by the Emperor, who employed all the household troops for the purpose. Even so, it was impossible to dig graves fast enough to supply the terrible demand, and at length they were satisfied with stacking the corpses in a large and deserted fortress, which was roughly roofed over when it would hold no more. A sickening odor filled all Constantinople when the wind happened to set towards the city from this horrible charnel-house.

Justinian himself was one of those who were struck down by this terrible pestilence, and for a time it seemed that he, like the great majority of those attacked, would fall a victim to the disease. The situation of Theodora was full of peril. The victims of her cruelty and avarice had left avengers who were all eager for her blood. The life of that weak, plague-stricken, probably delirious patient was all that intervened between her and death at the hands of an infuriated populace; unless, indeed—and this seemed the desperate woman's only chance of retaining life and power—the imminent death of her husband could be concealed long enough to give her

time to assemble the senate in the palace, and to have some pliant nephew, or some popular general, who would promise to make her his wife, clothed in the purple and presented to the Romans in the amphitheatre as the new Augustus.

Such were the calculations of Theodora, as, under that form of government, they were sure to be the more or less avowed calculations of every ambitious and childless Empress. There was still, however, the army to be reckoned with, that supposed embodiment of the Roman people in arms by which in old time the title Imperator had been exclusively conferred. The Eastern army was jealous and uneasy. A rumor reached it that Justinian was already dead : and at a hastily-summoned military council some generals were heard to mutter that if a new Emperor were made at Constantinople without their consent they would not acknowledge him. Suddenly the whole aspect of affairs was changed by the unlooked-for recovery of Justinian. The ulcer, which was the characteristic mark of the disease, probably began to suppurate freely, and the other dangerous symptoms abated: such, at least Procopius tells us, was the almost invariable course of the malady in the small number who recovered. Now were all other voices hushed in a chorus of servile loyalty to Justinian and Theodora; and the officers who had been present at that dangerous council hastened to clear themselves of suspicion by each accusing someone else of treason to the present occupants of the throne. Two parties soon declared themselves. On the one side were John surnamed the Glutton, and Peter; on the other, Belisarius and a general named Buzes, a greedy and self-seeking man, but one who had held the high offices of Consul and *Magister Militum per Orientem*.

Theodora ordered all the generals to repair to the capital, caused a strict enquiry to be made into the proceedings at the so-called treasonable council, and decided, whether rightly or wrongly we cannot say, that Belisarius and Buzes had acted in opposition to her interests. Her vengeance on Buzes was swift and terrible. Summoning him to the women's apartments in the palace, as if she had some important tidings to communicate, she ordered him to be bound and conveyed to one of her secret dungeons. "Dark, labyrinthine, and Tartarean" says Procopius, were the underground chambers in which she immured her victims. Here, in utter darkness, unable to distinguish day from night, with no employment to divert his thoughts, dwelt for twenty-eight months the former Consul and Master of the Host. Once a day a servant entered the prison, forbidden to hear or utter a word, and cast his food down before the captive as to a dumb brute, dumb as a brute himself. Thus he remained, men generally supposing him to be dead and not daring to mention his name, till Theodora, taking pity on his misery, in the third year of his imprisonment released him from his living tomb. Men looked upon him with awe, as if he had been the ghost of Buzes. His sight was gone and his health was broken, but we hear of him again, three years after his liberation, as commanding armies and as a person of importance at the Imperial court.

As for Belisarius, it was not thought desirable to proceed to such extreme lengths in his punishment, and there was probably even less evidence against him than against Buzes of having discussed the succession to the throne in a treasonable manner. There was, however, a charge, which had been vaguely hanging over him for years, of having appropriated to himself the lion's share of the treasures of Gelimer and Witigis, and having brought only a remnant of those treasures into the palace of the Emperor. His recent Eastern campaigns, too, though they had not added greatly to his fame, were reported to have added unduly to his wealth. The law or the custom which regulated the division of such booty was perhaps not book very clearly defined, and it might be urged with some reason that such splendid successes as those of Belisarius, achieved against such overwhelming odds, made him an exception to all rules. It is admitted, however, by Procopius that his wealth was enormous and worthy of the halls of kings; and from the way in which the subject is handled by this historian, for so many years his friend and follower, we may fairly infer that this charge was substantially a just one. The chief

blot upon the character of Belisarius, as upon the character of the general who in modern times most resembles him, Marlborough, was avarice. Unlike Marlborough, however, he was lavish in the spending, as well as greedy in the getting of money. His avarice was the child of ostentation rather than of mere love of hoarding. To see himself surrounded by the bravest warriors in the world, to look at their glittering armor, to feel that these men were his dependants, and that the world said that his household alone had delivered Rome, this was the thought dearest to the heart of Belisarius. For this he labored and heaped up treasure, not always perhaps regarding the rule of right.

All this splendor of his, however, was now shattered at a blow. If it was not safe to shut up Belisarius in a Tartarean dungeon, it was safe to disgrace him, and it was done thoroughly. The command of the army of the East was taken from him and given to his old lieutenant, Martin, the same who galloped with Ildiger along the Flaminian Way, bearing the General's message to Rimini, the same who was sent with Uliaris to relieve Milan, and who failed so disgracefully in his mission. Not only was the command taken from Belisarius, but, by an unusually high-handed exercise of power, his splendid military household was broken up. All those valiant life-guardsmen, both horse and foot-soldiers, taken from the master whom they had served with such loyal enthusiasm, were divided by lot among the rival generals and the eunuchs of the palace. The glittering armor and gay accoutrements of course went with the wearers. Some portion of the treasure of the chief, that which he had brought home from the Eastern campaign, was conveyed by one of the Empress's eunuchs to her own palace. All the band of devoted friends who had hitherto crowded round the steps of Belisarius were now forbidden even to speak to him. As Procopius, himself no doubt one of these forcibly silenced friends, has said, "A bitter sight in truth it was, and one that men would have scarce believed possible, to see Belisarius walking about Byzantium as a common man, almost alone, deep in thought, with sadness in his face, ever fearing death at the hands of an assassin".

All this time Antonina dwelt with him in the same house as a stranger, mutual resentment and suspicion separating the hearts that had once been so fondly united. Now came out the better side of Theodora's character in the scheme which she devised to reconcile these two divided souls, and at the same time to repay some part of her debt of gratitude to Antonina by restoring to her the love of her husband. Those who prefer it may accept the theory of Procopius, that the whole humiliation of Belisarius had been contrived by the cruel ingenuity of the Empress for the sole purpose of bringing him helpless and a suppliant to his wife's feet. To me it seems more probable that the disgrace of the General was, at least in appearance, justified by his questionable conduct concerning the treasure; that it was partly caused by the unslumbering jealousy of Justinian, and partly by Theodora's resentment for some incautious words of his at the military council; but that the idea of introducing Antonina's name into the settlement of the dispute, and reconciling Belisarius by one stroke both to his wife and to the Emperor, was due to some unextinguished instinct of good in the heart of the cruel Empress, and should not be set down against her on the page of history.

One morning Belisarius went early to the palace, as was his wont, attended by a few shabbily-dressed followers. The Imperial pair appeared to be in no gracious mood towards him; the *valetaille* of the palace, taking the cue from their masters, flouted and insulted him. After a day thus drearily spent, dispirited and anxious, he returned to his palace, looking this way and that, to see from which side the dreaded assassins would rush forth upon him. "With this horror at his heart he went into his chamber and sat there upon the couch alone, revolving no noble thoughts in his heart, nor remembering the hero that he once had been, but dizzy and perspiring, full of trembling despair, and gnawed with slavish fears and mean anxieties". So writes Procopius, somewhat forgetful of the difference between physical and moral courage, and, for private reasons of his own, unnecessarily severe on these

‘Fears of the brave and follies of the wise’

Antonina was walking up and down in the atrium, feigning an attack of indigestion, apparently longing to comfort her lord, but too proud to do so unasked. Then, just after sunset, came a messenger from the palace, named Quadratus, who, rapidly crossing the court, stood before the door of the men’s apartment and called in a loud voice, “A message from the Empress”. Belisarius, who made no doubt that this was the bearer of his death-warrant, drew his feet up on the couch and lay there upon his back, with no thought of self-defense, expecting death. His hopes revived at the sight of the letter which Quadratus handed to him, and which ran thus:

“Theodora Augusta to the Patrician Belisarius .

What you have done to us, good Sir, you know very well. But I, on account of my obligations to your wife, have resolved to cancel all these charges against you for her sake, and to make her a present of your life. Henceforward, then, you may be encouraged as to the safety of your life and property, but it rests with you to show what manner of husband you will be to her in future”.

A rapture of joy thrilled the heart of Belisarius as he read these words. Without waiting for the departure of the messenger he ran forth and fell prostrate before Antonina. He kissed her feet, he clasped her robe; he called her the author of his life and his salvation; he would be her slave, her faithful slave henceforward, and would forget the name of husband. It was unheroic, doubtless, thus to humble himself at the feet of the woman who had so deeply wounded his honor; but it was love, not fear, that made him unheroic. It was not the coward’s desire of life, it was the estranged lover’s delight in the thought of ended enmity that unmanned Belisarius. For two years he had bitterly felt that

‘To be wroth with one we love
Both work like madness in the brain’

And now that a power above them both had ended this agony, he forgot the dignity of the Patrician and the General in the almost hysterical rapture of the reconciled husband.

That reconciliation was an abiding one. Whatever were the later sins of Antonina, we hear no more of discord between her and Belisarius, rather of his infatuation in approving of all her actions. But the friends who had helped the injured husband in his quarrel found themselves the losers by this ‘renewing of love’. Photius, obliged to hide himself in the squalid habit of a monk at Jerusalem, called in vain for aid to his mighty father-in-law. Procopius probably found his career of promotion stopped by the same disastrous reconciliation, and now began to fashion those periods of terrible invective which were one day to be stored in the underground chambers of the *Anecdota*, menacing ruin to the reputations of Antonina, of Theodora, of Justinian, even of the once loved Belisarius.

Out of the sequestered property of the General the munificent Empress made a present to her husband of thirty hundred-weight of gold, restoring the rest to its former owner. In order that her family might become possessed of the rest by ordinary course of law, she began to arrange a marriage between her grandson Anastasius and Belisarius’s only daughter Joannina.

The entreaties of Belisarius that he might be allowed once again to lead the Eastern army against Chosroes were disregarded, partly on account of the remonstrances of Antonina, who passionately declared that she would never again visit those countries in which she had undergone the cruel indignity of arrest and imprisonment. The ‘respectable’ but not ‘illustrious’ office of ‘Count of the Sacred Stable’ was conferred upon him, to show that he was again received into some measure of Imperial favor. When it became more and more clear that the divided and demoralized generals in Italy would never make head against Totila, the Emperor graciously assigned him the task of repairing all the blunders that had been committed

in that land since he left it four years previously. At the same time a promise (so it is said) was exacted from him that he would ask for no money from the Imperial treasury for the war, but would provide for its whole equipment at his own expense. Thus feebly supported by his master, with his splendid band of household troops dispersed among the eunuchs of the palace, with his own spirit half broken by all the sorrows and humiliations of recent years, he was not likely to threaten the security of Justinian, nor to be heard of as Emperor of the West. Whether this needy and heart-broken man would cope effectually in war with the young and gallant Totila was another question, and one which will be answered in the following chapters.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECOND SIEGE OF ROME.

Belisarius, on receiving the charge of the Italian war, tried to persuade some of the soldiers enlisted for the Persian campaign to serve under his banners, but the magic of his name was gone, and all refused. He therefore had to spend some time moving to and fro in Thrace, where, by a large expenditure of money—his own money probably—he succeeded in raising some young volunteers.

Vitalius, whose commands had been hitherto chiefly in Dalmatia and Venetia, and who now held the high position of *Magister Militum per Illyricum*, met him at Salona; but the united forces of the two generals numbered only 4000 men. The first expedition directed by them was a decided success. The garrison of Otranto, hard pressed by the besieging Goths, had consented to surrender on a certain day if no help arrived previously. Valentine, whom the reader may perhaps remember as the groom of Photius who was raised from the ranks as a reward for his splendid bravery during the siege of Rome, was now sent by sea to relieve the outworn and enfeebled defenders of Otranto, and to substitute fresh and vigorous soldiers in their place. Arriving only four days before the stipulated day of surrender, and falling suddenly on the unsuspecting Goths, he succeeded in cutting his way through them to the citadel. The disappointed besiegers shortly after raised the siege and returned to Totila. Valentine also, having accomplished his commission and having left a whole year's supply of provisions in the lately beleaguered town, returned to Salona. Belisarius now moved up the coast to Pola in Istria, and from thence crossed to Ravenna. His own opinion was in favor of an immediate march to Rome, but Totila's forces were interposed in a menacing manner along the back-bone of Italy from Campania to Calabria, and Vitalius persuaded him against his better judgment to make Ravenna his base of operations; Ravenna, which alike in the days of Honorius, of Odovacar, and of Witigis, had been proved to be admirable as a hiding-place, but poor as a basis for offensive war.

Totila meanwhile, who, by means of a fictitious deputation bearing letters professedly written in the name of the Roman commander of Genoa and asking for help, had cleverly, if somewhat unscrupulously, obtained information as to the real size of the new army of reconquest, felt that he could afford to despise it, and proceeded in a leisurely manner to tighten his grasp on Rome. Tivoli was taken, owing to some dispute between the inhabitants and the Isaurian garrison, and all the citizens, as we hear with regret, were put to the sword, the massacre being accompanied by circumstances of unusual atrocity. The Tiber was watched to prevent provisions being borne down its stream into the city: and a fleet of small swift sailing ships, stationed at Naples and the Lipari Islands, captured nearly all the vessels which from the south sought to make the harbor of Ostia, bringing corn to Rome.

Belisarius, on entering Ravenna, (an entry how unlike that moment of supreme triumph when he marched into the same city four years previously), delivered an address to the inhabitants, Gothic as well as Roman, in which, while freely admitting the mistakes that had been made since his departure from Italy, he expressed the Emperor's unabated kindness and love towards all his subjects of whatever race, and earnestly entreated them to use all their influence with their friends to induce them to leave the service of the 'tyrant' Totila. The harangue, however, fell flat upon the listeners, who had learned in the last few years how little

the kindness of the Roman Emperor was better than the tyranny of the barbarian. No defections from Totila's army resulted from this appeal.

Thorimuth, one of the guardsmen of Belisarius—we again begin to hear of the military household of the General—was next sent into the province of Aemilia, to try his fortune with the cities in that rich and populous district. Vitalius with his Illyrian troops accompanied him, and for a time their efforts were successful. Fort after fort surrendered, and they were able to take up a strong position (probably their winter-quarters) in the important city of Bologna. Then a strange event took place, and one which well illustrates the intrinsic worthlessness of these Justinianic conquests. The Illyrians determined that they would serve no longer in Italy, and, withdrawing with swift secrecy from Bologna, marched back into their own land. The Emperor was very wroth, but after their ambassadors had set their case before him he could hardly retain his anger. They had in fact two excellent reasons for deserting. They had served for years in Italy without receiving any pay from the bankrupt treasury; and a great army of Huns was at that very moment wasting their homes and carrying off their wives and children into slavery. Totila, hearing of the defection of the Illyrians, tried to intercept the retreat of Vitalius and Thorimuth, but was out-generalled and sustained a trifling defeat. None the less, however, had Bologna, and probably the whole province of Aemilia, to be evacuated by the Imperial troops.

The same brave guardsman Thorimuth, with two comrades Ricilas and Sabinian, was next sent at the head of 1000 men to relieve the garrison of Osimo, which rock-cradled city was now being held as stubbornly for the Emperor as, six years before, it had been held for Witigis. They succeeded in entering the city by night, and apparently in supplying it with some fresh store of provisions. Ricilas however, in a fit of drunken hardihood, threw away his life in a fight which he had foolishly provoked, and from which he was somewhat ignobly trying to escape. Then came the necessary work of withdrawing from the city, in order not to aid the blockaders by adding to the number of mouths to be fed within its walls. Totila was informed by a deserter when the withdrawal was to take place, occupied an advantageous position about three miles from Osimo, fell upon them in the confusion of their midnight march, slew two hundred of them, Thorimuth and Sabinian in the number, and captured all their baggage and beasts of burden. The rest of the relieving army escaped across the mountains to Rimini.

Procopius forgets to inform us of the after-fortunes of the garrison of Osimo. They must, however, have surrendered, eventually, to the Goths, since seven years later the place was undoubtedly held by Gothic soldiers.

The next exploit of Belisarius was a clever reconstruction of the defenses of Pesaro. This little Hadriatic city, eighteen miles south of Rimini, had, together with her sister city of Fano, been dismantled by Witigis in order to prevent its occupation by the Byzantines. The gates had been destroyed and half of the circuit of the walls pulled down. Now, however, Belisarius, who was anxious to secure the town for the sake of the good foraging-ground for cavalry which surrounded it, sent messengers by night to take exact measurements of the height and width of the gateways. Gates made to fit these openings and bound with iron were then sent by sea from Ravenna, and were soon erected by the soldiers who had been recently commanded by Thorimuth. The walls were rebuilt in any fashion, stones or clay or any other material that was at hand being used for the purpose, and Pesaro was once more a walled city, which Totila assaulted, but assaulted in vain.

A twelvemonth had now elapsed since Belisarius received the charge of the Italian war, and what results had he to show? Otranto and Osimo relieved, and Pesaro refortified: this was not a very splendid account of a year's work of the famous Belisarius: and against these successes had to be set Tivoli captured and the strings of the net drawn perceptibly tighter round Rome by the leisurely operations of the contemptuous Totila. Belisarius keenly felt the

impotence to which he was reduced, and broke his promise to Justinian to ask for no money for the war,—if such a promise was ever made,—by sending to Constantinople the following piteous epistle:

“I have arrived in Italy, O best of Emperors! in great want of men, of horses, of arms, and of money. A man who has not a sufficient supply of these will hardly, I think, ever be found able to carry on war. It is true that after diligent perambulation of Thrace and Illyria I was able to collect some soldiers there; but they are few in numbers, wretched in quality, have no weapons in their hands worth speaking of, and are altogether unpracticed in fighting. As for the soldiers whom I found in this country, they are discontented and disheartened, cowed by frequent defeats, and so bent on flight when the foe appears that they slip off their horses and dash their arms to the ground. As for making Italy provide the money necessary for carrying on the war, that is impossible; to so large an extent has it been reconquered by the enemy. Hence we are unable to give to the soldiers the long over-due arrears of their pay, and this consciousness of debt takes from us all freedom of speech towards them. And you ought, Sire! to be plainly told that the larger part of your nominal soldiers have enlisted and are now serving under the banners of the enemy. If then the mere sending of Belisarius to Italy was all that was necessary, your preparations for the war are perfect: but if you want to overcome your enemies you must do something more than this, for a General without subordinates is nothing. First and foremost, it behoves you to send me my own guards, both mounted and unmounted; secondly, a large number of Huns and other barbarians; and thirdly, money to pay them withal”.

This letter, so pathetic, but yet so outspoken, was sent to Constantinople by the hands of John the nephew of Vitalian, who solemnly promised a speedy return. Everything, however, seemed to combine against the unfortunate commander of the Italian war. John saw a favorable opportunity for advancing his own interests by a brilliant marriage, and while Belisarius languished at Ravenna, the Byzantine populace were admiring a splendid pageant, the wedding festival of John and the daughter of Germanus, the great-niece of the Emperor Justinian.

So the year wore on. Belisarius felt more keenly than ever the mistake which he had made in shutting himself up in Ravenna, far from Rome, the real key of the position. Leaving Justin (who seems to have quitted his charge at Florence or possibly had been unable to hold that city against the Goths) to take the chief command at Ravenna, the General recrossed the Adriatic to form a new army at Durazzo. There, in course of time, he was met by the bridegroom John, raised doubtless above all fear of rebuke for his tardiness by the splendor of his new connection. With him came the Armenian General Isaac, and they brought under their standards an army, apparently a considerable army, of Romans and barbarians.

Meanwhile Totila, in this year 545, was steadily steady advancing, strengthening his position in Central Italy, tightening his grip on Rome.& Fermo and Ascoli, two cities of Picenum, were taken; Spoleto, perhaps the most important city on the Flaminian Way, was surrendered by its governor Herodian; men said too easily surrendered, because Herodian feared an investigation which Belisarius was about to institute into some irregularities of his past life. Assisi (how little did the men of that day think of the wealth of associations which in after ages would cluster round the name!) was more loyally defended for the Emperor by the valiant Goth, Siegfried, but he was slain in a sally and Assisi opened its gates to Totila. The neighboring citadel of Perugia still held out, but its garrison was weakened and discouraged by the assassination of their brave commander Cyprian by one of his bodyguard, who, if Procopius's story be correct, was bribed by Totila to commit this crime. Uliphus, the murderer, took refuge in Totila's camp. We shall meet with him once again, in the last days of the war, and mark his punishment.

At length, in the autumn probably of 545, Totila marched to Rome and formally commenced the siege of the city. Both in the Campagna and everywhere else throughout Italy he was careful to respect the property of the tillers of the soil. All that he expected of them was that they should pay into his hands the rent which the Colonus would otherwise have remitted to his patron, and the taxes which the free husbandman (if such there were) would have paid to the Imperial logothete. No money was to be sent to Constantinople; all that would have gone thither was to go to the Gothic King; and in return for this, the corn and the cattle of the peasant were to be left untouched, the honor of his wife and his daughter to be held inviolate. Such was the motto of Totila, and it is not surprising that the Italian peasant viewed with indifference, if not with actual pleasure, the extension of his kingdom, nor that his own army, paying for everything which it consumed, lived in comparative comfort, while Famine was coming ever nearer and nearer before the eyes of the inhabitants of the beleaguered City.

A sally, against the orders both of Bessas the Commandant of Rome and of Belisarius himself, had been undertaken by Artasires the Persian and Barbarian the Thracian (two of the General's guardsmen whom he had sent to Rome in order to keep up the spirits of the inhabitants), but had completely failed, and great discouragement was the result. Already perhaps a movement was being begun to escape from the hardships of a long siege by an early surrender. At least we are told that Cethegus, a man holding the rank of Patrician and *Princess Senatus*, was brought before a council of generals, charged with treasonable designs. Nothing apparently could be proved against him, but he was permitted, or ordered, to depart from Rome, and repaired to Civita Vecchia.

The year 546 had probably begun when Belisarius, still unable himself to repair to the scene of action, sent Valentine to Porto, at the mouth of the Tiber, to assist the troops which were posted there under the command of Innocentius in harassing the besieging army, and to clear the river for the passage of provision-ships up to Rome. With Valentine was sent Phocas, one of the General's mounted guards, and an exceedingly brave and capable soldier. They had five hundred men under their command. It was decided that these new troops should make an attack upon the camp of the enemy, which was to be seconded by a simultaneous sally from the city. Bessas however, the Imperial Commandant of Rome, though warned of the intended movement, refused to allow any of the three thousand men under his command to join in it. The attack therefore, though fairly successful, achieved nothing, and the assailants returned to Porto neither the better nor the worse for what they had done. They sent an upbraiding message to Bessas, and warned him that on a given day and hour they would repeat the attack, which they implored him to support by a vigorous sortie. Bessas, however, whose understanding of his duty seems to have been entirely summed up in the modern phrase 'masterly inactivity', again refused to imperil any of his men for such an enterprise. A deserter from the army of Innocentius warned Totila of the coming attack, and consequently, when the Imperialist troops issued from the walls of Porto, they soon found themselves in a Gothic ambush. Most of the five hundred fell, and their leaders with them. So perished the brave groom of Photius, whom we first saw stemming the tide of battle which surged round Belisarius and his dark roan horse, hard by the Milvian Bridge. Since then his name has been much in the mouths of men. Now his aforesaid master, an emaciated and heart-broken monk, kneels beside the cradle at Bethlehem, and he lies upon the desolate Campagna, outside the walls of Porto, cloven by a Gothic broadsword.

Soon after this, some ships laden with corn for the Roman people were sent by Pope Vigilius, who was at this time, for reasons which will afterwards appear, residing in the island of Sicily. The Goths saw the ships coming, and guessing their errand arranged an ambush, probably from that side of the Tiber which washes the Isola Sacra, between Porto and Ostia. The Romans from their battlements saw the whole stratagem—everyone who has climbed the

bell-tower of Ostia or of Porto knows how far the sight can travel over that unbroken alluvial plain—and made vigorous signs, by waving their garments and pointing with their hands, to prevent their friends from choosing that channel and urge them to land at some other point of the coast. Unfortunately the signals which were meant to discourage were interpreted as enthusiastic encouragement and acclamation. The corn-ships came sailing on, right into the Portensian channel, and close past the Gothic ambushade. They were at once boarded, their cargoes appropriated for the Gothic army, and a bishop who was on board, and whose name by a curious coincidence happened to be also Valentine, was straitly interrogated as to the position of affairs in Sicily. Detecting him in returning false answers to his questions, the King, with a flash of barbarian rage blazing out from beneath the restraints of reason and self-discipline, ordered the lying ecclesiastic's hands to be cut off and let him go whither he would.

About this time, two years after the re-appointment of Belisarius, the important city of Placentia, one of the keys of the Emilian Way, was surrendered to the Goths after nearly a year's siege, in which the defenders had endured terrible hardships from famine, being at length reduced, it was whispered, to feed upon human flesh. The reduction of the important city of Placentia was a great gain to Totila, who could now move his troops freely between Pavia, the heart of the Gothic resistance, and the valleys of the Arno and the Tiber.

By this time in Rome also the pressure of famine was beginning to be sorely felt, and the citizens—perhaps without the knowledge, perhaps against the wish of Bessas—decided to send an embassy to Totila, to see if terms could be arranged for a truce, and for the eventual, surrender of the City, if help came not by a given day. The envoy chosen was the deacon Pelagius, a man who had resided long in Constantinople on terms of close friendship with the Emperor, who had recently returned to Rome with large stores of wealth, which he had generously employed in relieving the distresses of the poorer citizens. Nine years after this time, on the death of Vigilius, he was to be installed in the chair of St. Peter. Already during the long absence of Vigilius he wielded an influence little less than Papal in the Eternal City.

Totila received the generous deacon with great outward show of reverence and affection, but before he began to set forth his request, addressed him with courteous but decided words:

“We Goths feel as strongly as the Romans the duty of showing every possible respect to the office of an ambassador. In my opinion, however, that respect is better shown by an early and frank statement of what can and what cannot be conceded, than by any number of honeyed words, holding out hopes which the speaker does not mean to gratify. Let me therefore at once and plainly tell you that there are three things which it is useless for you to request. On any other subject I will hear you gladly, and if possible grant your petition.

“The first is pardon for the inhabitants of Sicily. It is impossible for us to forget the flourishing condition of that island, the very granary of Rome, which Theodoric, in reliance on the honor of its people and in answer to their earnest request, consented to leave unoccupied by Gothic garrisons. What was the reward of this generous confidence? As soon as the Imperial armament appeared in the offing, an armament which it was easily within their power to have resisted, they sent no tidings of its approach to the Goths, they did not occupy one of the strong places in the island, but at once, like runaway-slaves seeking a new master, they crowded down to the shore with suppliant hands and said: ‘Our cities are yours, we are faithful subjects of the Emperor’. This was the turning-point in the fortunes of our nation. It was from this island that the enemy sallied forth as from a fortress to occupy any part of Italy that they pleased. It was by the assistance of the Sicilians that they gathered those vast stores of corn which enabled them for a whole year to stand a blockade in Rome. These are not injuries which the Goths can ever forget: therefore ask for no pardon for the Sicilians.

“The second point is the preservation of the walls of Rome. Behind these walls our enemies sheltered themselves for a year, never venturing to meet us in the open field, but

wearing out our noble army by all sorts of tricks and clever surprises. We should be fools to allow this kind of stratagem to be practiced against us hereafter: and moreover, the citizens of Rome will gain by the demolition of their walls. No more deadly assaults, no more of the yet deadlier blockades for them in future. Safe and quiet in their unwalled city they will await the arbitrament of battle, which will be waged on some other field between the opposing armies.

“The third point is the surrender of the slaves who have fled to us from their Roman owners. We have received these men on a solemn promise that we will never give them up to their former masters. We have allowed them to stand alongside of us in the battle. If after all this we were to abandon them to the mercy of their lords, you yourselves would know that there was no reliance to be placed on the promises of men so faithless and so ungrateful.”

Such in substance was the speech of Totila, a speech which, though too vindictive in its reference to the Sicilians, contained much unanswerable argument from the Gothic stand-point. The Deacon Pelagius did not attempt to answer it, but made a short and ill-tempered speech to the effect that courtesy to an ambassador was only a mockery if he had no chance of obtaining what he asked for. For himself he would rather receive a slap in the face and return to those who sent him with some one of his requests granted, than be received with ever so great a show of politeness and return unsuccessful. He declined to make any request whatever to Totila, in face of the prohibition to touch on the three reserved points, and would only remark that if the King determined to wage a truceless war on the unhappy Sicilians, who had never borne arms against him, there was little hope of mercy for the Romans in whose hands he had seen the spear. He would have nothing more to do with the embassy, but would leave the matter in the hands of God, who was not unaccustomed to punish those who behaved themselves arrogantly towards a suppliant. With heavy hearts the Roman citizens saw Pelagius return from the mission which his own peevishness had made a fruitless one. In large numbers they thronged to the house—perhaps the Pincian Palace, perhaps one of the old Imperial Palaces overlooking the Forum—which served as a Praetorium, and where abode the representatives of the Emperor. The council of officers before whom they laid their sad case was presided over by Bessas and Conon; Bessas the Thracian Ostrogoth who had defended the Porta Maggiore against his countrymen in the earlier siege, Conon the leader of Isaurians, who three years before had found himself forced by pressure, such as the citizens were now bringing to bear, to surrender Naples to Totila. In terms of abject misery the citizens of Rome put up their prayer to these iron-hearted men. “We do not appear before you as your fellow-countrymen, as members of the same great commonwealth, as men who willingly received you within our walls, and have fought side by side with you against a common enemy. Forget all this: imagine that we are captives taken in war, imagine that we are slaves. Yet even the slave is fed by his master. And only for this do we pray, for food enough to keep us alive. If you cannot or will not do this, manumit us, give us leave to depart hence, and so save yourselves the trouble of digging graves for your servants. If that again be impossible then kill us outright. Sudden death will be sweet in comparison with this lingering torture, and you will be quit of many thousand murmuring Romans by one blow”.

Bessas and the generals round him gravely replied to this passionate outburst, that they could adopt none of the three courses suggested: that it was quite impossible to supply rations to the non-combatant dwellers in Rome, that it would be prejudicial to the Emperors interests to allow the citizens to depart, and that to kill them all would be an unholy deed. Belisarius and the new army from Constantinople would reach Rome before long, and they must patiently await their arrival.

It was evidently the determination of Bessas and his brother officers, who, it must be remembered, were for the most part men of barbarian origin themselves, to look with absolute indifference on the misery of the mere citizens of Rome, nay, even to trade upon it for their

own advantage. A large supply of corn had been accumulated in the magazines, but this was all strictly reserved for the soldiers. A wealthy Roman, however, might buy at famine prices from a soldier such part of his ration as he did not require, nay, it was believed that even Bessas and Conon were not above enriching themselves by this ungenerous traffic. The quotations in this terrible market rose and rose, till at last the Roman patrician had to pay at the rate of four hundred and forty-eight shillings for a quarter of wheat. The less wealthy middle-class citizens paid a fourth of this price for bran; and, made Spartans by necessity, looked upon the coarse bread into which it was baked as the sweetest and most delicate of food. Animal food was of course hardly ever to be procured. Once some men of the life-guard of Bessas found an ox outside the walls, which they sold for the comparatively moderate price of £30 sterling. Fortunate was the Roman deemed who came upon the carcass of a horse or other beast of burden, and could thus once more have the delight of chewing flesh. For the great mass of needy citizens the staple article of food was the nettles which grew freely under the walls and in the many ruined temples and palaces of Rome. To prevent the leaves from stinging the lips and throat, they were cooked with great care, and in this way a tantalizing semblance of nourishment was given to the craving stomach. These nettles before long became the universal food of all classes. No more *aurei* were left in the girdle even of the patrician, no household goods which he could barter for food, and, worst of all, even the soldiers' rations were growing scantier, so that neither buyers nor sellers existed to form a market. The flesh of the citizens was all wasted away, their skin was dark and livid, they moved about like specters rather than men, and many while still walking among the ruins and chewing the nettles between their teeth suddenly sank to the earth and gave up the ghost.

One unhappy Roman, the father of five children, found himself surrounded by his little ones, who plucked at his robe and uttered those two terrible words, "Father! Bread!". A sudden and terrible serenity came over his face, and he said to them, "My children! follow me". They followed in the hope that he had some unknown store of food. He walked rapidly to one of the bridges over the Tiber, mounted the parapet, veiled his face with his robe, his children all the while looking on, and plunged headlong in the stream. Death, even a coward's death, leaving his little ones alone with their misery, was better than hearing any longer that heart-rending cry.

At length, when creatures generally deemed unfit for food, such as dogs and mice, had become unattainable luxuries; when men were staying the hunger-pang with the most loathsome substances; when stories of cannibalism were becoming more and more frequent and well-authenticated, and when still Belisarius came not; at length the hard heart of Bessas relented, and he agreed for a large sum of money to allow the non-combatants to leave Rome. A few escaped unhurt through the enemy's outposts. Many were pursued and slain. Yet more perhaps died of the effects of the famine, on the road or on ship-board, before they had arrived at their journey's end. "To so low a point" says Procopius, thinking doubtless of the four fateful letters which were once carried in triumph round the world, "to so low a point had fallen the fortunes of the Senate and the People of Rome!"

What meanwhile delayed the advance of Belisarius to the relief of the beleaguered city? In the council of war which was held at Durazzo he had earnestly pleaded that this was the most pressing duty of the Imperial generals, and that in order to effect it they should embark the whole army on ship-board, when with a favoring breeze they might in five days reach the mouth of the Tiber. His rival John, on the other hand, pointed to the insecure tenure by which the Goths held Calabria and the South of Italy, and maintained that their true policy was to land at one of the southern ports, receive those countries back again into the Imperial allegiance, and then by a rapid march through Samnium and Campania take Totila in the rear and raise the siege of Rome. As neither general could convince the other, and Belisarius could not force the

husband of Justinian's great-niece to obey him, a compromise was agreed upon, which was perhaps worse than either plan pursued singly. While Belisarius and the Armenian Isaac with one part of the troops set sail for the Tiber, John with the remainder was to prosecute the campaign in Calabria and, as soon as might be, meet his comrades under the walls of Rome.

Belisarius first set sail for the Tiber, and meeting with contrary winds, was forced to take shelter in the harbor of Otranto. The Goths, who had returned to the siege of that place, fled when they saw his fleet approaching, and halted not till they reached Brindisi, at the distance of fifty miles. From thence they sent messengers to tell their King of the invasion of Calabria. Totila sent word to them to hold on as long as they could, but meanwhile relaxed not the vigilance of his blockade of Rome. Soon the wind changed, and Belisarius, after a favorable voyage, reached Portus at the mouth of the Tiber.

Soon afterwards John crosses the Adriatic Gulf, and, as good luck would have it, landed not far from Brindisi. A Gothic scout who had been taken prisoner begged for his life, and promised in return to guide him to the enemy. "First of all" said the Imperial General, "show me where the horses pasture". Accordingly the man led him to a green plain where the horses of the Goths were feeding. On each horse's back leaped a Byzantine foot-soldier, and then they galloped to the camp of the unsuspecting foe. An utter rout followed, and this defeat opened the whole province of Calabria to the Imperialists. Canusium opened its gates to them, and hither came Tullianus son of Venantius, long ago governor of Bruttii and Lucania under Theodoric. Tullianus fearlessly spoke of the oppressions wrought by the Emperors' generals in Italy, oppressions which had compelled the inhabitants of these provinces, much against their will, to accept the yoke of the Goths, Arians and barbarians though they were, as the less intolerable of the two evils. Now, however, if John would promise to prevent the ravages of his soldiery, Tullianus would use his influence to obtain the speedy submission of the two provinces. The promise was given, and by the good Bruttii and offices of Tullianus, Bruttii and Lucania were recovered speedily for the Empire.

Here, however, John's advance towards Rome stopped. Three hundred horsemen sent by Totila towards Capua were sufficient to check his further progress, notwithstanding the urgent messages of Belisarius, who bitterly complained that he who had been allowed to select the bravest men in the army, "and all of them barbarians", should allow himself to be checked by a little body of three hundred men. The qualification thus emphasized by Belisarius shows clearly enough how little the citizens of the Roman Empire had to do with winning the Empire's battles. John now turned southward and inflicted a crushing defeat on Recimund, who with an army of Goths, Moors, and deserters from the Imperial ranks, was holding Reggio for Totila, to prevent any succors being sent from Sicily to the mainland. But this victory had little effect on the main course of the war. While the great duel was going on around the towers of Rome, John in his Apulian camp was only a listless spectator of the agony of the Empire.

The narrative now turns to Belisarius, who, from Porto as his base of operations, is about to make an attempt for the relief of Rome. At the risk of a little repetition it will be well to give a somewhat detailed description of the two harbors of Rome, which, after several alternations of prosperity and decay, are both now practically deserted, Portus and Ostia.

Let us take Ostia first, though it makes the less conspicuous figure in our present narrative. It is situated on the south of the Tiber, on the left bank, that is to say, of the left-hand channel of the stream. The excavations of recent years have been fruitful in results for the archaeologist, and it may be doubted whether any other ruins, except those of Pompeii, enable us more vividly to reproduce the actual appearance of a Roman city. We see the broad road lined with tombs, leading up to the city-gate: we see the narrow streets paved with large flat stones on which the wheel-marks of the Roman *biga* are yet visible: we see the semicircular area and columns of a theatre: we see the steps and part of the portico of the stately Temple of

Vulcan : we see the chambers of an Imperial palace in which Antoninus Pius perhaps spent his summers, and among them one little chapel, dedicated, probably in the second century, to the worship of Mithras, the Eastern Sun-god. Almost more interesting, as enabling us more vividly to picture the commercial life of the city, are the magazines, in one of which are still to be found some dozen or so of *dolia*, earthenware hogsheads once filled with wine or oil, now empty and buried up to their necks in the fine sand of the Tiber. Here too is a well-preserved gateway once leading into a courtyard lined with warehouses, and bearing on the keystone of the arch the sculptured resemblance of a Roman *modius* (peck-measure), as a reminder, perhaps, to the merchant, of the duty of giving just measure to all his customers. Not far off is a stone on which some public notice, possibly for the regulation of the market, has been affixed. Everywhere we feel that we are tracing the lineaments of a great city of commerce, though one that has been dead for centuries.

One thing disappoints us in Ostia, and yet in our disappointment helps to explain its present desolation. We miss the sea. We have read in Minucius Felix how at Ostia the three friends Alteration who were about to hold high converse on Fate and Providence and the nature of the gods, first walked along the yielding sand, and watched the boys playing "duck and drake" with their smooth stones rebounding from the Mediterranean waves. We have read how three centuries later Monica and Augustine sat upon the same shore and gazed over the same expanse of sea, as the mother talked with her recovered son of the joys of the heavenly kingdom. But the Ostia of today gives us no help in picturing either of these scenes. The sea has retreated to a distance of three miles from its walls: we see only the flat and desolate Campagna, the muddy Tiber, the grass-grown mounds of the deserted city.

Now let us leave Ostia and turn our steps to Portus. A ferry-boat takes us across the Fiumara, as the broad, sluggish, turbid southern channel of the Tiber is called. Then a walk of two miles across the sandy expanse of the Isola Sacra brings us to the northern channel. The island called the Isola Sacra, which is now, owing to the recession of the coast-line, five or six times as large as it was in the days of Procopius, was then, though solitary, fair as the garden of Venus, full of roses and all fragrant flowers, says an enthusiastic geographer of the fourth century. Now, a few low trees provide the inhabitants with fire-wood, and a poor and coarse grass affords pasture to the not always inoffensive herds of buffaloes. A celebrated temple stood here dedicated to the Great Twin Brethren, but even its site is now forgotten. At the end of the path however, just opposite Porto, we come to the ancient tower which marks the spot where once stood the church of Saint Hippolytus, the cathedral church of Portus, separated from the city by the Tiber channel, and rightly named after the most famous bishop of that see, whose great work, a *Refutation of all Heresies*, has in our own day been recovered for ecclesiastical literature.

Again crossing in a ferry-boat the waters of the Tiber, but this time the northern channel, we reach the village of Porto Moderno. The modern successor to Portus as a Mediterranean harbor is the little town of Fiumicino, two miles further down the stream. There we find a small wooden pier projecting into the sea, a few ships discharging their cargoes, a row of tall lodging-houses, all filled during a few weeks in spring by the crowd of bathers from Rome, all empty and deserted in September from fear of the everywhere brooding malaria. Here, in this so-called Porto Moderno, which was really called into existence by Pope Gregory IV a few years before the birth of Alfred the Great, hard by the then ruined Portus of the Emperors, there are a modernized church, a mediaeval castle, in one room of which are collected the Latin inscriptions discovered in the neighborhood: not much else to interest the archaeologist, except a fallen column, once no doubt forming part of the elder Portus, on which, rudely carved perhaps by the knife of one of his soldiers, appear five letters of the name of the glorious Vandal, Stilicho.

We take a few steps northwards and find ourselves looking upon a piece of water which as it recedes from us becomes shallower, changes into rushes, into marsh, into firm land. We soon observe a certain regularity about its sides, and find that it is in fact a regular hexagon, each side nearly 300 yards long. Yes, this is the celebrated hexagonal harbor of Trajan. Long rows of massive warehouses, in which were stored the rations of Egyptian and Sicilian corn for all the people of Rome, were once mirrored in its waters : even yet some huge blocks of masonry remain to show how solid was their building. The greatest ships of the ancient world, ships of commerce and of war, laden with corn or with legions, have glided in by the deep canal which is now represented only by a little brook that a child could step over, and have maneuvered easily in the capacious dock which is now a reedy fish-pond. At each angle of the hexagon rose a column, crowned with a statue. On our right hand, full fronting the opening by which the ships entered the basin, stood a colossal statue of the founder himself, the mighty Emperor Trajan. Now, almost on the same spot, one may see the neat villa of the present owner of Portus and Ostia and all the intervening and surrounding country, the Prince Torlonia. A fine herd of horses grazes on the margin of the pool: the frogs fill the air with their harsh melody: other signs of life there are none.

Outside of the hexagonal basin, that is to the north-west of it, was formerly the yet larger harbor of Claudius, with a pier curving round to the north-east, the work of Theodoric. This is now even more blended with the desolate Campagna than the work of Trajan. The name of Claudius is great at Portus as it is in the valley of the Anio. It was from this port that his fleet sailed for the conquest of the almost 'world-severed' island of Britain. The northern channel which he cut for the river had the double effect of making the new harbor possible and of removing the inundations with which Father Tiber had been wont to visit the city of his sons. A fair inscription, which was found some fifty years ago in the excavations of Cardinal Pallavicini and has been placed by his orders on the side of the modern carriage-road to Porto, records these beneficent labors of the dull-witted Emperor.

We have yielded perhaps too long to the melancholy fascination of these scenes, once filled with the lively hum of commerce, echoing to the voice of sailors from every country on the Mediterranean, and now abandoned to the bittern and the cormorant. We must return to the sixth century and look upon them as they were seen by Belisarius. Ostia in his time was no doubt far fallen from her former greatness, impoverished by five centuries of competition with the superior advantages of Portus; but it was still a considerable commercial city: and Portus, except so far as the war itself had injured its commerce, was probably well-nigh as busy as in the days of Claudius. The great magazines stood there, all waiting for the corn-supplies of the Roman people, if only the light cruisers of Totila would allow them to be filled. The walls with which Constantine had enclosed the city and harbor, now mere grass mounds over which the horses gallop in their play, were then defensible fortifications, probably from twelve to fifteen feet high. Within the enclosure of these walls, which were about a mile and a-half in length, and flanked by the river and the sea, lay the army of Belisarius, who now again, as in his earlier campaigns, was accompanied by the martial Antonina. It is important to remember the difference between the position of the combatants in 537 and in the present siege. Then, Ostia was held by the Romans, and Portus was a Gothic stronghold. Now, Portus is the one place of vantage left to the Romans in the neighborhood of the capital, and Ostia is occupied by a Gothic garrison.

The town of Portus was nineteen Roman miles from Rome. About four miles above it, where the river was narrowest, Totila had caused a boom to be placed to block the passage of ships bearing provisions to the starving City. This boom consisted of long beams of timber lashed together and forming a kind of floating bridge. It was protected by a wooden tower at either end, and was yet further strengthened by an iron chain stretched across from shore to

shore a little below it, in order to prevent the boom from being broken by the mere impact of a hostile vessel.

The counter-preparations of Belisarius were very complete. Having lashed together two broad barges, he erected a wooden tower upon them sufficiently high to overtop the bridge. Trusting nothing to chance, he had the measurements of the bridge taken by two of his soldiers who feigned themselves deserters. To the top of the tower a boat was hoisted filled with a combustible mixture, pitch, sulphur, rosin, an anticipation of the dreaded 'Greek fire' of later ages. Surrounding the barges, and partly towing them, was a fleet of two hundred swift cutters laden with corn and other necessaries for the starving Romans, but also bearing some of the bravest of his soldiers, and turned into ships of war by high wooden ramparts on the decks, pierced with loop-holes for the archers. Detachments of infantry and cavalry were also stationed at all the points of vantage on the bank to support the operations of the ships, and especially to prevent any advance of the enemy upon Portus.

Having made these preparations, Belisarius entrusted the defence of the sea-port, containing as it did all his stores, his reserve troops, and above all his wife, to Isaac of Armenia, with a solemn charge that come what might, and even should he hear that Belisarius himself had fallen before the foe, under no conceivable circumstances was he to leave the post thus committed to him. At the same time he sent word to Bessas to support his movements by a vigorous sortie from the city against the Gothic camps. This message however, like so many others of the same kind, failed to shake the 'masterly inactivity' of the governor of Rome. The Goths had full leisure that day to concentrate their whole attention on the operations of Belisarius.

With some labor the rowers urged the laden cutters up the river. The Goths, confiding in the strength of their bridge and chain, remained quiet in their camps. Soon they found out their error. The archers from the cutters dealt such havoc among the Gothic guards on either shore that resistance was quelled and they were able to sever the chain and sail on in triumph up to the bridge. Now the Goths perceived the danger and swarmed down upon the bridge. The fighting here became terrific. Belisarius, watching his opportunity, steered the floating tower close up to the Gothic fort commanding the north end of the bridge, which stood close to the water's edge. The boat laden with Greek fire was set alight and skillfully thrown into the very middle of the fort, which was at once wrapped in flames. In the conflagration two hundred of the Gothic garrison, headed by Osdas, the bravest of the brave, all perished. Encouraged by this success, the archers on board, the *dromones*, sent a yet thicker shower of arrows at the Goths on the shore. Terror seized the barbarian ranks; they turned to flee; the Romans began to hew the timbers of the bridge to pieces; the revictualling of the hungry city seemed already accomplished.

Seemed only. By one of those tricks of Fate upon which our historian delights to moralize, the very moment when he seemed to have won her, Victory flitted away out of the grasp of Belisarius. A rumor, perhaps a premature rumor, of the success of the morning's operations, especially of the severing of the chain, reached the ears of Isaac at Portus. Forgetful of his general's solemn charge, and only envious at having no share in the glory of the triumph, he sallied forth with a hundred horsemen, crossed the *Insula Sacra*, and suddenly attacked the Gothic garrison of Ostia, who were commanded by the gallant Roderic. In the first skirmish Roderic was wounded, and his soldiers, whether from fear or guile, turned and fled. The Imperialists entered the camp, and found a store of money and other valuables therein, which they began to plunder. While they were thus engaged the Goths returned in greater numbers, easily overpowered the hundred Romans, slew the greater number of them, and took the rest, among whom was Isaac himself, prisoners.

The mere failure of this foolish attack would have been in itself no great disaster. But as adverse Fortune would have it, a messenger escaped from the field and bore the tidings to Belisarius at the bridge, "Isaac is taken". "Isaac taken" thought the General: "then Portus and Antonina are taken too". At this thought, says the historian, "he was bewildered with fear, a thing which had never happened to him in any previous peril". Yet even this bewilderment is for us the most convincing proof that they were chains of love, not of fear, which yet bound him to Antonina. He at once gave the signal for retreat, in the hope that by a speedy return he might surprise the victorious barbarians and rescue Portus from their grasp. When he reached the seaport (which it is to be remembered was only four miles from the scene of action), found all safe there, and recognized by what folly of his subordinate and what misreading of the game by himself he had been cheated out of an already-assured victory, he was seized with such deep chagrin, that his bodily strength, perhaps already weakened by the unwholesome air of the Campagna, quite broke down. He sickened with fever, which at one time caused his life to be despaired of, and for some months he was unable to take any active share in the conduct of the campaign.

Two days after this battle Roderic the governor of Ostia died, and Totila, enraged at the loss of his brave comrade, put his feeble Armenian captive to death—a deed not worthy of his fame.

Meanwhile, in Borne, there was a daily increasing demoralization among the soldiers of the garrison. Procopius attributes this entirely to the avarice of Bessas, who according to him was so intent on his traffic in corn at famine-prices to the few still remaining citizens, that he neglected all the duties of a general, and purposely refused to co-operate with Belisarius, knowing that the more the siege could be prolonged, the richer he would grow. It is almost certain that there is some exaggeration here. Bessas was a sufficiently capable soldier to know that if no watch were kept on the walls the city would be taken, and that then even the treasure for the sake of which he had committed so many crimes would with difficulty be saved from the enemy. Perhaps the true explanation of his conduct is this. He saw the fame which Belisarius had acquired by his year-long defence of Rome and determined to rival it. The secret of that success had been the refusal to spend the strength of the soldiers on useless sorties, and Bessas showed that he had laid that lesson to heart. But there were two reasons for his failure. In Totila he had to deal with a very different adversary from the blundering Witigis, with an adversary who was also determined to waste none of his strength on useless assaults, who never hurried himself, but who by a slow, patient, scientific blockade consumed the life of Rome. And, what was even more important, the noble heart of Belisarius had saved him from that crime of callous indifference to the sufferings of non-combatants which Bessas forsooth gloried in, as showing his soldier-like disregard of all that did not bear on the success of the great game, but which really lost him the great game itself. No doubt he enriched himself by sales of corn at famine-prices to the Senators. None of these barbarian and semi-barbarian generals of Byzantium had any refined feelings of honor where money was concerned. But this can hardly have been his sole thought. He had a plan for the defence of Rome which he thought he could work out independently of the welfare or the sufferings of the citizens. And in that thought he was wrong even from the military point of view. Without the loyal help of the great mass of citizens it was impossible to keep the vast circuit of the walls effectually guarded, and one unguarded spot, on one dark night, might make all other precautions useless.

So much by way of necessary protest before quoting the words of Procopius. "Neither in the attack on the bridge, nor at any previous time, would Bessas assist as he was required to do. For he had still some corn stored up, since the supplies previously sent to Rome by the magistrates of Sicily had been intended both for the soldiers and the citizens; but he, giving forth a very small quantity to the citizens, kept the largest part concealed, nominally on behalf

of the soldiers, but really that he might retail it to the Senators at a high price. Of course therefore the end of the siege was the thing which he least desired. By his transactions in corn Bessas was growing ever richer, since the necessity of the buyers allowed him to fix the price according to his own fancy. Being wholly immersed in this business, he took no thought as to the watch upon the walls or any other measure of precaution, but if the soldiers chose to be remiss he allowed them to be so. Hence there were but few sentinels on the walls, and those very careless about their duty. The sentinel on guard at any given time might indulge, if he pleased, in long slumbers, since there was no one set over him to call him to account. There were none to go the rounds, as aforesaid, to challenge the sentinels and ascertain what they were doing. Nor could any of the citizens assist in this work of vigilance; for, as I have said, those who were now left in the City were very few in number and terribly reduced in strength”.

According to the view suggested above, these last words of the historian contain the gist of the whole matter. The rest of the description does but portray the condition of a garrison demoralized by being set to perform a duty hopelessly beyond their powers.

The Asinarian Gate—by which it may be remembered Belisarius entered Rome in December 536—yet stands, with its two round towers, behind the Church of the Lateran, one of the finest monuments of the great defensive work of Aurelian and Honorius. The gateway itself is blocked up, and the mediaeval Porta S. Giovanni, a few yards to the east of it, now opens upon the great highway to Albano, Capua, and Naples. Notwithstanding this alteration, however, there is still a lofty and well-preserved piece of the ancient wall, and nowhere do we find a better specimen than here, of the galleries through which the sentinels went their rounds, of the loopholes through which the archers shot, of the battlements by which the more exposed warriors above were partially defended. Upon this part of the wall there was a *vigilia* of four Isaurian soldiers, who, tired of the siege, disgusted with their failing food, and mindful very probably of the kindness with which Totila had treated them after the capture of Naples, resolved to betray the City to the Gothic King. Letting themselves down by ropes from the battlements, they sought the camp of the barbarians and unfolded their design to Totila. He thanked them warmly, offered them large sums of money if the City should be put in his power, and sent two of his guards to view the place where the Isaurians kept watch. The men climbed up by the ropes, inspected the fortifications, heard all that the Isaurians had to say, and returned to report favorably of the project.

There was something about the Isaurians' demeanor, however, which had roused the King's suspicion, and a second and even a third visit from them (their return being each time accompanied by some of his own followers to examine the walls) was necessary before he would trust his army in their hands. This extreme caution on the part of the daring Totila had well-nigh proved fatal to the scheme. It chanced that the Roman scouts brought as captives into the City ten Gothic soldiers, who, being interrogated as to what Totila was meditating next, were foolish enough or disloyal enough to disclose, what had now become the talk of the camp, that he hoped to get possession of the city by the help of some Isaurians. Happily, however, Bessas and Conon paid no further attention to the story, which was perhaps too vague to guide them to the very Isaurians who were meditating treason.

When the third deputation, headed by a kinsman of Totila himself, had returned, reporting favorably of the Isaurians' proposal, the King at length made up his mind to accept the venture. At nightfall the whole Gothic host, fully armed, was drawn up outside the Asinarian Gate. Four Goths, men conspicuous for valor and strength, mounted by ropes to the place where the friendly Isaurians were on guard, the other Roman sentinels being all wrapped in slumber. As soon as they were within the walls they hastened to the gateway. With rapid well-directed blows from their axes they severed the great bar of wood which kept the gates closed, and shattered the iron locks, the keys of which were of course in other keeping. The work must

have been speedily done, for the noise of blows like those would break the sleep of even the most over-wearied sentinels. Then they opened wide the gates, and without difficulty or opposition, without striking a blow except at bolts and bars, the whole Gothic army marched in.

After all, it seemed, the hundred and fifty thousand warriors who in the long siege left their bones under the grass of the Campagna had not died in vain. The 'hoarded vengeance' of ten years might at length be reaped. The Goths were again in Rome.

CHAPTER XIX.

ROMA CAPTA.

When the Goths had entered by the Asinarian Gate, Totila, still fearful of some treachery, caused them all to halt in good order till day-light dawned. Meanwhile, universal uproar and confusion reigned in the panic-stricken City. The three thousand Imperial soldiers streamed out of the Flaminian Gate, even as the Gothic garrison had done ten years before. Bessas and Conon were mingled with the crowd of fugitives, not being compelled by any exaggerated sense of honor to die upon the scene of their discomfiture. The best proof that Bessas was indeed taken unawares is furnished by the fact that all the treasure which he had accumulated at the cost of so much human suffering was left behind in his palace and fell into the hands of the Gothic King. Before the night had ended a messenger came in haste to tell the King of the flight of the Governor and his army. "Excellent tidings!" said Totila. "No! I will not pursue after them. What more delightful news could anyone wish for than to hear that his enemies are fleeing?". Of the Roman nobles, a few who were fortunate enough to possess horses accompanied the flight of the army: the rest sought shelter in the various churches. Among the refugees we find the names of Decius and Basilius, the former perhaps descended from the Emperor and from the great Decii of the Republic, the latter probably the same nobleman whom we have already taken note of as the last Roman Consul. Among the suppliants at the altars the names of Maximus, Olybrius, and Orestes also remind us, truly or falsely, of men eminent in the struggles of the preceding century.

When day dawned, Totila proceeded to St Peter's basilica to return thanks to God for his victory. His soldiers roamed through the city, slaying and plundering. One horror usually accompanying the sack of a captured city was absent. No Roman maid, wife, or widow suffered the least insult from any of the Gothic soldiery, so strict were the orders of Totila on this point, and so little did his subjects dare to disobey him.

The plunder of the Roman palaces was, however, freely permitted to them, on the somewhat ambiguous condition that the most valuable of the property—meaning probably silver, gold, and jewels—was to be brought to the King to form the nucleus of a new great Gothic hoard.

Thus then, amid the noise and confusion of the plunder of a mighty city, amid the shouts of the slayers and the groans of the dying, Totila proceeded to the great basilica on the Vatican. Arrived there, he found the deacon Pelagius awaiting him, bearing a roll of the Sacred Scriptures and expressing in every gesture the humility of a suppliant. "Spare thine own subjects, O our Master!!" said the submissive ecclesiastic. With a scoff which he could not forbear at the haughty demeanor of Pelagius on the occasion of their last meeting, Totila said, "Now, then, thou art willing to make requests of me". "Yes" said Pelagius, "since God hath made me thy slave. But spare thy slaves, Master! Henceforward". Totila listened to the request, and at once sent messengers all through the City, saying that, though the plunder might continue, no more blood was to be shed. Already, twenty-six soldiers and sixty citizens had fallen under the swords of the Goths. The smallness of these numbers points rather to the depopulation of the City than to the humanity of the conquerors. Procopius was informed that only five hundred citizens were left in Rome, the greater part of whom had fled to the churches; nor does there seem any reason for supposing that he has underestimated this number, notwithstanding the vast contrast with the many myriads who once thronged the streets of the Eternal City.

The condition of the survivors of the Roman people was so miserable that death from the Gothic broadsword might seem in comparison scarcely an evil to be dreaded. Proud Senators and their delicately nurtured wives, clothed in the garb of peasants and of slaves, wandered about from house to house, knocking at the doors and craving from the charity of the Gothic warriors a morsel of food to keep the life within them. Among these abject suppliants was one whose tale seems to carry us back for two generations. Rusticiana, the daughter of Symmachus and the widow of Boethius, yet lived, and in these darkest days of her country she had distinguished herself by the generosity with which she had devoted her wealth to the relief of her starving fellow-citizens. She too was now a humble petitioner for a morsel of bread. When the Goths discovered who she was, many of them clamored that she should be slain, the chief crime of which she was accused being that she had given money to the Roman generals as the price of their consent to the destruction of the statues of Theodoric. Her resentment against the sovereign who had put her husband and father to death is easily understood : but it is not probable that either Belisarius or Bessas would require much persuasion to induce them to sanction the destruction of the visible emblems of the great Ostrogoth. True or false as the story might be, Totila refused to allow Rusticiana to be molested on account of it, and gave strict orders that the venerable lady should be treated with all courtesy. We hear nothing more concerning her, and with this incident the family of Boethius passes out of history.

On the day after the capture of the City, Totila addressed two very different harangues to two very different audiences. The Goths were all gathered together, surely in the same Forum which once echoed Cicero's denunciations against Catiline, and Antony's praises of the murdered Julius: and here their King congratulated them on an event which he almost described in Cromwell's words as "a crowning mercy" so urgently did he insist on the truth that it was not by human strength, but by God's manifest blessing on the righteous cause, that the victory had been won. "At the beginning of the war, 200,000 valiant Goths, rich in money, in arms, in horses, and with numbers of prudent veterans to guide their counsels, lost empire, life, liberty, to a little band of 7000 Greeks. Now, from more than 20,000 of the same enemies, a scanty remnant of the nation, poor, despised, utterly devoid of experience, had wrested the great prize of the war. Why this difference? Because aforetime the Goths, putting justice last in their thoughts, committed, against the subject Romans and one another, all sorts of unholy deeds: but now they had been striving to act righteously towards all men". In this resolution, even at the risk of wearying them, he besought them to continue. For if they changed, assuredly God's favour towards them would change likewise, since it is not this race or that nation, as such, on whose side God fights, but He assists all men everywhere who honor the precepts of eternal righteousness.

It is not without a feeling of pain that we pass from the Forum to the Senate House, and listen to the bitter words with which the Gothic King; rebuked the cowering Senators of Rome. He reminded them of all the benefits which they had received at the hands of Theodoric and Athalaric; how these Kings had left in their keeping all the great offices of state and had permitted them to accumulate boundless wealth; and yet after all this they had turned against their benefactors and brought Greeks into the common fatherland. "What harm did the Goths ever do you? And now tell me, what good have you ever received from Justinian the Emperor? Has he not taken away from you almost all the great offices of state? Has he not insulted and oppressed you by means of the men who are called his Logothetes? Has he not compelled you to give an account to him of every solidus which you received from the public funds even under the Gothic Kings? All harassed and impoverished as you are by the war, has he not compelled you to pay to the Greeks the full taxes which could be levied in a time of profoundest peace?". With words like these, the boldness of which astonishes us in a subject of Justinian, though he does put them into the mouth of a Gothic King, did Totila lash the wincing

Senators even as an angry master scolds his slaves. Then, pointing to Herodian, the former Roman General, and to the four Isaurian deserters, "These men" he said, "strangers and aliens, have done for us what you our fellow-citizens failed to do. Herodian received us into Spoleto, the Isaurians into Rome. Wherefore they, our friends, shall be received into the places of trust and honor, and you henceforward shall be treated as slaves". Not a single Senator dared to make an answer to this torrent of upbraiding. Pelagius, however, soothed the wrath of Totila, begged him to have compassion on the fallen, and obtained from him a promise of kinder treatment than his speech had foreshadowed. The Deacon, who had evidently acquired considerable influence over the mind of Totila, was now (after solemnly swearing speedily to return) sent to Constantinople, in company with a Roman orator named Theodore, to propose terms of peace.

The letter which they bore was in the following words: "I shall keep silence about the events which have happened in the City of the Romans, because I think you will have already heard them from other quarters. But I will tell you shortly why I have sent these ambassadors. I pray you to secure for yourself and to grant to us the blessings of peace. You and I have excellent memorials and models in Anastasius and Theodoric, who reigned not long ago, and who filled their own lives and those of their subjects with peace and all prosperity. If this request should be consented to by you, I shall look upon you as a father, and gladly be your ally in whatsoever expedition you may meditate". The written courtesies of the letter were supplemented by a verbal threat, that if the Emperor would not consent to peace, the Eternal City should be razed to the ground, and Totila, with his triumphant Goths, would invade the provinces of Illyricum. The only reply, however, which Justinian deigned to make to either courtesies or threats was that Belisarius had full powers for the conduct of the war and any proposals for peace must be addressed to him.

Meanwhile the war in Lucania, under the guidance of Tullianus, who had gathered the peasants of the province round him, was being prosecuted with some vigor. Three hundred Antae, wild mountaineers from the hills of Bosnia, were holding the fastnesses of the Apennines against all comers, and successfully repulsed some followers of Totila who were sent to dislodge them. The Gothic King was desirous to transfer his operations to the South of Italy, but feared either to weaken his army by leaving a garrison in Rome, or to give Belisarius, still lying sick at Portus, the chance of recovering it if left ungarrisoned. In these circumstances, from no blind rage against the prostrate City, but simply as a matter of strategy, he decided to make it untenable and uninhabitable. He threw down large portions of the walls, so that it was roughly computed that only two-thirds of the line of defence remained standing. He was about to proceed to burn all the finest buildings in Rome, and turn the City by the Tiber into a sheep-walk, when ambassadors were announced who brought a letter from Belisarius.

"Fair cities" said the General, "are the glory of the great men who have been their founders, and surely no wise man would wish to be remembered as the destroyer of any of them. But of all cities under the sun Rome is confessed to be the greatest and the most glorious. No one man, no single century reared her greatness. A long line of kings and emperors, the united efforts of some of the noblest of men, a vast interval of time, a lavish expenditure of wealth, the most costly materials and the most skillful craftsmen of the world, have all united to make Rome. Slowly and gradually has each succeeding age there reared its monuments. Any act, therefore, of wanton outrage against that City will be resented as an injustice by all men of all ages, by those who have gone before us, because it effaces the memorials of their greatness, by those who shall come after, since the most wonderful sight in the world will be no longer theirs to look upon. Remember too, that this war must end either in the Emperor's victory or your own. If you should prove to be the conqueror, how great will be your delight in having preserved the most precious jewel of your crown. If yours should turn out to be the losing side,

great will be the thanks due from the conqueror for your preservation of Rome, while its destruction would make every plea for mercy and humanity on your behalf inadmissible. And last of all comes the question what shall be your own eternal record in history, whether you will be remembered as the preserver or the destroyer of the greatest city in the world”.

Belisarius, in writing this letter, had not miscalculated the temper of his antagonist. Totila read it over and over again, laid its warnings to heart, and dismissed the ambassadors with the assurance that he would do no further damage to the monuments of the Eternal City. He then withdrew the greater part of his troops to Mount Algidus, a shoulder of the high Alban mount, about twenty miles south-east of Rome, and marched himself into Lucania to prosecute the war against John and his eager ally Tullianus. The Senators had to follow in his train, unwilling hostages. Their wives and children were sent to the chief cities of Campania. Rome herself, though not ruined, was left without a single inhabitant.

The archaeologist who reads how narrowly Rome thus escaped destruction at the hands of Totila may, at first, almost regret that he was prevented from carrying his purpose into effect. There would then, so he thinks, have been one mighty conflagration, in which all that was of wood must have perished, but which the mighty walls of temple and palace would assuredly have survived. Then the City would have become a wilderness of grass-grown mounds, amid which the shepherd of the Campagna might have wandered while his goats nibbled the short grass in the halls of Emperors and Consuls. The successive sieges by Lombard, Norman, and German, the havoc wrought by ignorant feudal barons, the yet worse havoc of statue-hunting Papal Nephews, the slow but ceaseless ruin effected by the ‘little citizens’ of Rome, whose squalid habitations burrowed into the foundations of temple and forum and theatre, the detestable industry of the lime-kilns, which for ten centuries were perpetually burning into mortar the noblest monuments of Greek and Roman art,—all this would have been avoided, and the buried city might have lain hidden for twelve centuries, till another Layard or another Schliemann revealed its wonders to a generation capable of understanding and appreciating them.

But no: this could never have been. The religious memories which clustered around Rome were too mighty to allow of her ever being thus utterly deserted. If Rome herself in the plenitude of her power could not obliterate Jerusalem, much less could the Northern barbarians cause Rome to be forgotten. The successor of St. Peter must inevitably have come back to the tombs of the Fisherman and the Tent-maker; pilgrims from all the countries of the West must have flocked to the scenes of the saints’ martyrdoms; convents and hostelries must again have risen by the Tiber; and in the course of centuries, if not of a few generations, another city, not very unlike the Rome of the Middle Ages, would have covered the space of the marble-strewn sheep-walk left by Totila.

CHAPTER XX.

THE RE-OCCUPATION OF ROME.

After the capture of Rome a space of a month or two elapsed marked by no great operations on either side. Totila, as has been said, marched into Lucania dragging the Senators in his train. By their orders the peasants (*coloni*) upon the senatorial estates laid down their arms, and Lucania was for a time recovered by the Goths. The Senators were then sent to rejoin their wives and children in the cities of Campania, where they dwelt under a strong Gothic guard. Totila pitched his camp first on the high hill of "windy Garganus" jutting out into the Adriatic Sea. Here, according to Procopius, he occupied the very same lines of entrenchment which had been defended by the troops of Hannibal during the Second Punic War.

Spoletto, which had been won by the treachery of Herodian, was lost to the Goths by the treachery of Martian, a feigned deserter who won the favour of Totila, obtained the command of the fortress which had been made out of the amphitheatre adjoining the town, and handed it over to some Imperial troops invited thither from Perugia. By the loss of this position the Goths' free use of the Flaminian Way was doubtless somewhat interfered with.

John sallied forth from his stronghold at Hydruntum and occupied Tarentum, which, though situated on the sea-coast, by its position at the head of its own gulf afforded nearer access into the heart of Apulia. He prudently narrowed his line of defence, abandoning all that part of the town which lay outside the isthmus, and here took up a position of considerable strength. Totila, as a countermove, quartered four hundred men at Acherontia, a high hill-city on the borders of Lucania and Apulia, a well-chosen position for the overawing of both provinces. He then marched away towards the north, to menace Ravenna, but was soon recalled by tidings as unwelcome as they were unexpected.

For the space of six weeks or more after its evacuation by Totila, Rome had been left, we are told, absolutely empty of inhabitants. Few comparatively of the cities and towns in her worldwide dominion had to pass through this strange experience of an absolute cessation of the life which had beat in them for centuries. This breach in the continuity of her history, short as it was, makes Rome the companion in adversity of Eburacum and Deva and the other 'waste Chesters' of England, and puts her to that extent in a different category from cities like Paris, Lyons, and we may perhaps add Augsburg and Cologne, in which the daily routine of civil life has gone on without interruption from the first or second century after Christ till modern days.

As soon as Belisarius was able to rise from the bed on which his fever had prostrated him at Portus, he was possessed with a desire to see for himself the extent of ruin at Rome; and then there gradually took shape in his mind a scheme for the recovery of the City, so bold and original that it at first seemed like a dream of delirium, but was soon recognized by those who beheld its accomplishment as a master-stroke of genius. His first reconnaissance of the City, made with only one thousand soldiers, was interfered with by the Goths from Mount Algidus, who were, however, defeated in the skirmish which followed. On his second visit, made with all the troops under his command, except a small garrison left at Portus, the march was accomplished without any such interruption. He had decided in his own mind that the rents in the line of defence made by Totila, though great, were not irreparable. All his own soldiers, and all the people from the country round who flocked into Rome, attracted both by the spell of her undying name and by the abundant market for provisions which the General immediately established there, were set to work to rebuild the breaches in the walls. There was no lime;

there could be no pretence of regularity in the work. Great blocks of tufa from the old wall of Servius, where these were nigh at hand, where they were not, rubble of any kind that could be had, were thrust into the interstices. The fosse which had been dug for the first siege was fortunately still unfilled, and a rough palisade of stakes was now added to the fosse. So eagerly did all work that in the space of fifteen days the whole circuit of the walls was in some fashion or other repaired; only the gates which Totila had destroyed could not be replaced for want of skilled workmen in the City. So great and so rapid a work of national defence, accomplished by the willing labor of soldiers and citizens, had perhaps never been seen, since Dionysius in twenty days raised those mighty fortifications which we still see surrounding, but at how great a distance, the dwindled city of Syracuse.

When Totila heard the news of the re-occupation of Rome he marched thither with all the speed of anger and mortification. His army bivouacked along the banks of the Tiber, and at sunrise on the day after their arrival, with wrath and clamor attacked the defenders of the wall. The battle lasted from dawn till dark, and was fought with all the obstinacy which the one party could draw from their rage, the other from their despair. To make up for the absence of gates, Belisarius stationed all his bravest champions in the gateways, there, like Horatius, to keep the foe at bay by the might of their arms alone. His less trustworthy troops, and perhaps some of the civic population, were ranged upon the walls, and from their superior elevation dealt deadly damage on the barbarians. When night fell the besiegers withdrew from the attack, forced to confess to one another that it was a failure. While they were tending their wounded, and repairing their broken weapons, the Romans were further strengthening their defence by planting caltrops (*tribuli*) in all the gateways. These instruments, minutely described by Procopius, were made of four spikes of wood or iron, so fastened together at one end that however the *tribuli* was thrown, there would always be three of the spikes resting securely on the ground and the fourth projecting upwards—an effectual precaution, as Robert Bruce proved at Bannockburn, against a charge of hostile cavalry.

Next day the Goths again made a fierce assault, and were again repulsed. The besieged made a vigorous sally, but pursuing too far were in some danger of being surrounded and cut to pieces. They were rescued, however, by another sally ordered by Belisarius, and the barbarians retired.

Some days passed, and again the Goths rushed with fury to the walls. Again the Roman champions sallied forth—from the absence of gates it was probably hard to resist without making a sortie—and again they got the best of the conflict. The standard-bearer of Totila fell stricken by a mortal blow, and the royal ensign drooped in the dust. Then followed a Homeric combat round the dead man's body. The barbarians by a sword-stroke through the wrist succeeded in rescuing the left hand, which still grasped the standard, and was adorned with a gay armlet of gold. The rest of the body was seized and stripped of its armor by the Romans, who retired with little loss to the City, while the Goths fled in disorder.

It was too clear that Rome was indeed lost. The fateful City was again held by the invincible General, and all the past labors of the barbarians were in vain. Bitterly did the Gothic chiefs now reproach their King for not having either razed the City to the ground or occupied it in force. A few weeks before they had all been chanting the praises of the wise, the unconquered King, who took city after city from the Romans, and then marring their defenses, sprang forth again like a hero to fight in the open field. Such however, as the historian sadly remarks, is the inconsistency of human nature, and it is not likely that men will ever act more nobly.

Slowly and reluctantly did Totila leave his rival in undisputed possession of the great prize. He retreated to Tivoli, breaking down all the bridges over the Tiber to prevent Belisarius from following him. The city and citadel of Tibur which the Goths had before destroyed were

now rebuilt by them, and received their arms and their treasure. If Rome could not be retaken, at least Belisarius might be kept in check from this well-placed watchtower. Possibly while the bulk of the Gothic army took up its quarters on the hill, in sight of the Sibyl's Temple and within hearing of the roar of Anio, their King may have lodged in the vast enclosure in the plain below, a city rather than a palace, which goes by the unpretending name of "the Villa of Hadrian"

Meanwhile Belisarius, free from molestation, caused gates to be prepared and fitted into the empty archways round Rome. They were bound with iron and fitted with massive locks, the keys of which were sent to Constantinople. Amid all his anxieties Justinian could once more feel himself Emperor of Rome. And so (May, 547) ended the twelfth year of the war and the third year of the second command of Belisarius.

There are times when the Muse of History seems to relax a little from the majestic calm with which she tells the story of the centuries. A smile appears to flicker round her statuesque lips as she tells of Cleon forced to go forth to war against Sphacteria, and returning, contrary to the expectation of all men, with his three hundred Spartan prisoners; of the Genoese besieging Venice, and themselves sealed up in Chioggia; of the leaders of the Fourth Crusade setting out to fight with the infidels and destroying the Christian Empire of Constantinople. With even such a quiver of amusement in her voice does she describe Belisarius slipping, like a hermit-crab, into the shattered shell of Empire which was called Rome, and making it in so few days into a fortress which he could hold against all the onsets of the angry Totila. It seems doubtful, however, whether the exploit was worth all the trouble and risk which attended it. The importance now attached to the possession of Rome was chiefly a matter of sentiment: its reoccupation had little practical effect on the fortunes of the war.

It may be fairly inferred, from the not very Roman precise information given us by Procopius, that at this time the north and centre of Italy were almost entirely in the possession of the Goths. The only exceptions appear to have been Ravenna and Ancona on the northern Adriatic, Perugia in Tuscany, Spoleto in Umbria, and Rome with her neighbor Portus. Samnium, Campania, and Northern Apulia were for the most part strongly held by the Goths. Calabria was so far dominated by the ports of Otranto and Taranto that it might be considered as a possession of the Emperor's. In Lucania, the hostile family of Venantius were perpetually endeavoring to rekindle the flames of loyalty to the Empire. Bruttii probably, and Sicily certainly, obeyed the generals of the Emperor.

One reason for the languid and desultory character of the war was the determination of the Emperor to spend no more money upon it than he could possibly help. From the slender remains of loyal Italy, Belisarius had to squeeze out the funds necessary for the support of his own army and that of John, not neglecting, it is to be feared, to add to his own stores in doing so. Another cause was the evident want of hearty co-operation between the two generals, due to the fact that one belonged to the party of Germanus and the other to that of Theodora, at the court of the Emperor. This discord between John and Belisarius was referred to with satisfaction by Totila in a long harangue which he delivered to his soldiers before marching off to form the siege of Perugia. In it he frankly admitted that he knew that they looked upon him with dissatisfaction for not having hindered the re-occupation of Rome; confessed, in substance if not in express words, that this was a blunder; but pleaded that he had not shown himself deaf to the teachings of experience, and urged that the step taken by Belisarius was one of such extreme rashness, that, though it had been justified by success, he could not, by the laws of war, have been expected to anticipate it.

Not long after this harangue the Gothic King lost his other great prize of war, the Senator-hostages in Campania. John, who had for some time been vainly besieging Acherontia, made a sudden dash into that province, marching night and day without stopping. He had reached

Capua, and might have effected his purpose without bloodshed, had not Totila, with a kind of instinctive apprehension of some such design, also sent a detachment of cavalry into Campania. The Gothic horsemen, who had been marching rapidly, reached Minturnae (close to the old frontier of Latium and Campania and about forty miles from Capua), but were in no fit state for marching further that day. The least fatigued of the horsemen—about four hundred in number—were mounted on the freshest of the horses and pushed forward to Capua, where they stumbled unawares upon the whole of John's army. In the skirmish that ensued this little band was naturally worsted. The survivors, few in number, galloped back to Minturnae, scarcely able to describe what had befallen them, but the streaming blood, the arrows yet fixed in the wounds, told the tale of defeat plainly enough. Hereupon the whole body of cavalry retreated in all haste from Minturnae, and when they reached Totila, gave him an exaggerated account of the number of the enemy, in order to excuse their own precipitancy.

John meanwhile proceeded, unhindered, to liberate the Senators and their wives from captivity. Of the senatorial ladies and their children he found the tale complete: but many of the fathers and husbands had escaped to Belisarius at Portus, and consequently needed no deliverance. There was one Roman noble, Clementinus by name, who fled to a church in Capua for refuge from the unwelcome rescuers. He feared the vengeance of the Emperor for his too ready surrender to the Goths of a fort in the neighborhood of Naples, and absolutely refused to accompany the army of John. Another Roman, Orestes by name, who had filled the office of Consul, and whom we heard of at the capture of Rome as a refugee at the altar of St. Peter's, longed to accompany the array of deliverance, but could not, being unable to find a horse to bear him to their camp. All the rescued prisoners were straightway sent to the safe harborage of Sicily, together with seventy Roman soldiers, formerly deserters to the army of Totila, who had now returned to their old allegiance.

Great was the vexation of Totila when he learned that he had lost these valuable hostages. Determining at least to be revenged, and knowing that John, who had retreated into Lucania, would carefully watch all the roads leading to his camp, he marched rapidly along the rugged heights of the Apennines, till at nightfall he was close to the camp of the enemy. He had ten thousand men with him, John but one thousand. If he could but have restrained his impatience till daybreak, he might have enclosed his enemy as in a net: but in his rage and haste he gave the signal for attack at once, and thereby lost much of the advantage of his superiority in numbers. About a hundred of the Romans were slain, some of them still only half-awake, but the rest escaped. Among the latter were John and the Herulian chief Arufus, who seems to have been his right hand in this enterprise. Among the few prisoners was an Armenian general, Gilacius by name, who, though in the service of the Emperor, knew no tongue but his native Armenian. The soldiers, fearful in the confusion of the night of killing one of their own friends, asked him who he was, to which he could make no reply but *Gilacius Strategos* (Gilacius the General), over and over again repeated. By often hearing the honorable title *Strategos*, he had just succeeded in learning the name of his own dignity. The Goths, who soon perceived that he was no officer of theirs, took him prisoner; and we regret to find that, not many days after, the unfortunate Oriental, who knew neither the Greek nor the Latin nor the Gothic language was put to death by his Teutonic captors. John with the reremains of his army succeeded in reaching Otranto, and again shut himself up in that stronghold.

For two years after this skirmish no event of great importance occurred, but, as far as we can judge from the not very lucid narrative of Procopius, the Imperial cause slowly receded. Justinian sent indeed fresh troops to Italy, but only in driblets, and commanded by incapable generals. Incapable through want of self-restraint was the fierce Herulian Verus, who was constantly in a state of intoxication. He landed at Otranto, marched with his three hundred followers to Brindisi, and encamped near to that town. Seeing his force thus encamped in an

undefended position, Totila exclaimed, "One of two things must be true. Either Verus has a large army, or he is a very unwise man. Let us go, either to make trial of his strength or to punish him for his folly". He advanced, easily routed the little band commanded by the drunken Herulian, and would have driven them into the sea but for the sudden and accidental appearance of Byzantine ships in the offing, bearing Warazes and eight hundred Armenians.

Incapable, from utter lack of courage and every soldierly quality, was Valerian, who had held the high post of *Magister Militum* in Armenia, but was transferred to Italy with more than one thousand men to cooperate with John and Belisarius. He lingered for months at Salona, afraid of the storms of the Adriatic. Then, when a council of war was held at Otranto, and a march northwards into Picenum was resolved upon, he would not face the perils and hardships of the march, but took ship again and sailed tranquilly to Imperialist Ancona, where he shut himself up and hoped for better days. Evidently he was one of those generals whose chief care is to keep their own persons out of the stress of battle.

The only interest of these two campaigns lies in the defence of Roscianum (now Rossano). The story of this place takes us back—it is true, by a circuitous route—to the very dawn of Hellenic history. At the westernmost angle of that deep hollow in the foot of Italy which is named the Gulf of Tarentum stood, in the eighth century before the Christian era, the mighty Achaian city of Sybaris. The wealth derived from the splendid fertility of her soil (though now her ruins lie hidden in a fever-haunted morass), as well as from a profitable commerce with the shepherds on the Apennines behind their city, enabled the aristocrats of Sybaris early to acquire that reputation for unbounded luxury which has made their name proverbial. It was Smindyrides, a citizen of Sybaris, who was the first utterer of the complaint concerning the crumpled rose-leaf in his bed, and who declared that the sight of a peasant working in the fields overwhelmed him with fatigue. The neighbor and rival of Sybaris was the city, also populous and powerful, of Crotona, which stood at the south-east angle of the Gulf of Tarentum. Thither, in the sixth century before Christ, fled the languid aristocrats of Sybaris, expelled by a popular rising, and by a tyrant the child of revolution. That tyrant, Telys, insolently demanded the surrender of his enemies, but the demand was refused by the citizens of Crotona, trembling indeed before the power of Sybaris, but nerved to great deeds in the cause of hospitality by the exhortations of their guide and philosopher, Pythagoras. In the battle which ensued, the multitudinous host of the Sybarites was defeated by the army of the southern city, commanded by the mighty Milo of Crotona, famous for ever as an athlete, and yet also a disciple of Pythagoras. The Crotoniates advanced, sacked the rival city, and, so it is said, turned the river Crathis over its ruins, that none might know where Sybaris had stood.

All this happened in the year 510 BC, the same year in which, according to tradition, the Tarquins were driven from Rome.

Nearly seventy years later (BC 443) the Athenians, on the earnest entreaty of the descendants of the Sybarites, sent a colony to the desolate spot; and in the near neighborhood of the obliterated city rose the new settlement of Thurii, best known in history from the fact that Herodotus was one of its original colonists and spent his old age within its walls. But either because the mouth of the river Crathis had become unnavigable, or for some other reason, it had been found necessary to establish the docks and harbor of Thurii close to the promontory of Roscia, twelve miles south of the old city. In the hills, some seven or eight miles west of these docks, the Romans built a strong fortress which bore the name of Roscianum, and is represented by the modern city of Rossano, with an archbishop and twelve thousand inhabitants.

In Roscianum was now collected a considerable number of wealthy and noble Italians, refugees from that part of Italy which was occupied by the barbarians. Conspicuous among them was Deopheron, son of Venantius and brother of Tullianus, a member of a family

animated by bitter hostility to the Gothic rule. John had sent from his army for the defence of Roscianum three hundred Illyrians, under the command of Chalazar the Hun, an excellent soldier, who seems to have been recognized as head over the whole garrison. Belisarius had only been able to spare one hundred foot-soldiers for the same service.

Early in 548 Belisarius, who with his martial wife had sailed round to Crotona, sent a further detachment of soldiers to relieve Roscianum. They met, apparently by accident, a smaller force sent by Totila to attack it. In the skirmish which followed the Goths were completely defeated and fled, leaving two hundred of their number dead upon the plain. While the victors were lapped in all the security of success, leaving the passes unguarded, pitching their tents wide at night, and wandering afar for forage by day, suddenly Totila, with three thousand men, burst upon them from the mountains. Vain was the might of Phazas, the brave Iberian from Caucasus, upon whose quarters the blow first descended, to turn the tide of battle. He fell fighting bravely in the midst of a band of heroes. Much fear came upon the Romans when they knew him to be dead, for they had expected great exploits from him in the future. Barbatian, one of the body-guard of Belisarius, who had shared the command with Phazas, fled with two of his comrades from the field, and brought the grievous news to his master. Belisarius, who seems to have been alarmed for the safety of Crotona itself, leaped on shipboard, probably Antonina accompanied him, and sailed for Messina, which, so fair was the wind, he reached in one day, though distant ninety miles from Crotona.

Hard pressed by Totila after this ineffectual attempt to relieve them, the garrison at length agreed to surrender Roscianum if no help should reach them by the middle of summer (548). The appointed day had just dawned, when they saw on the horizon the friendly sails of the Byzantine ships. Belisarius, John, and Valerian had met in council at Otranto, and had decided to send a fleet to the help of the beleaguered city. The hopes of the garrison being raised by this sight, they refused to fulfill their compact. A storm, however, arose, which the captain dared not face on that rock-bound coast, and the ships returned to Crotona. Many weeks passed, and again the Byzantine ships appeared in the offing. The barbarians leaped upon their horses and moved briskly along the shore, determined to dispute the landing. Totila placed his spearmen here, his bowmen there, and left not a spot unoccupied where the enemy could land. At that sight the Romans' eagerness for the fight vanished. They let down their anchors; they hovered about, beholding the docks and Roscianum from afar: at length they weighed anchor and sailed back to Crotona.

Another council of war was held. The generals resolved to try to effect a diversion. Belisarius was to revictual Rome, the others were to march into Picenum and attack the besieging armies there. It was upon this occasion that Valerian distinguished himself by not marching, but sailing to the friendly shelter of Ancona. But all these operations were in vain. Totila refused to be diverted from the siege of Roscianum; and the unfortunate garrison, who had only been tantalized by all the attempts to succor them, sent Deopheron and a Thracian life-guardsmen of Belisarius named Gudilas to cry for Totila's mercy on their unfaithfulness. To Chalazar the Hun, whom he looked upon as the chief deceiver, the King showed himself un pitying. He cut off both his hands and inflicted on him other shameful mutilations before he deprived him of life. The rest of the garrison were admitted to the benefit of the old capitulation. The lives of all, and the property of as many as chose to accept service under the Gothic standard, were left uninjured. The result was that all the late defenders of Roscianum, but eighty, gladly enlisted with the barbarians. The eighty loyal soldiers made their way in honorable poverty to Crotona. Not one of the Italian nobles lost his life, but the property of all was taken from them.

Belisarius had now been for more than four years in Italy, and, chiefly on account of the miserable manner in which his efforts had been seconded by his master, he had but a poor

account to render of his exploits during that time. "He had never really grasped the land of Italy during this second command" says Procopius, who cannot forgive the triumph of Antonina, and who seems to delight in trampling on the fragments of his broken idol. "He never made a single regular march by land, but skulked about from fortress to fortress, stealing from one point of the coast to another like a fugitive; and thus he really gave the enemy boldness to capture Rome, and one might almost say the whole country". His one really brilliant exploit, the re-occupation of Rome, had not, as we have seen, materially affected the fortunes of the war. It was time certainly that he should either be enabled to achieve something greater, or else quit Italy altogether. Antonina accordingly set out for Constantinople to obtain from her patroness an assurance of more effectual succor than the Imperial cause in Italy had yet received. When she arrived she found that an event had occurred which changed the whole aspect of affairs at the court of Justinian. On the 1st of July, 548, Theodora, the beautiful and the remorseless, died, after a little more than twenty-one years of empire. When we read that the cause of her death was cancer, of an exceptionally virulent type, even our remembrance of the misdeeds of Theodora is well-nigh swallowed up in pity for her fate.

Antonina, on arriving at Constantinople and hearing of the death of her Imperial friend, once decided on the necessary changes in her tactics. For the last six or seven years tedious negotiations had been carried on between the two ladies for the marriage of a grandson of Theodora with Joannina, only child of Belisarius, and heiress of all his vast wealth Long had Antonina, while seeming to consent to this match, secretly opposed it. And now, though her daughter's heart was entirely given to her young betrothed, perhaps even her honor surrendered to him, the cold schemer relentlessly broke off the engagement. We hear nothing more of the fate of either of the lovers; but it seems probable that the daughter of Belisarius died before her father.

As for the Italian expedition, Antonina recognized the impossibility of now obtaining from the parsimonious Emperor the supplies of men and money without which success was impossible. Germanus, noblest and most virtuous of all the Emperor's nephews, would be now indisputably the second person in the state, and if any laurels were to be gathered in Italy they would without doubt be destined for him. She confined herself therefore to petitioning the Emperor for the lesser boon of the recall of her husband, and this favor was granted to her. Early in the year 549 Belisarius returned to Constantinople, with wealth much increased but glory somewhat tarnished by the events of those five years of his second command.

Justinian, upon whom the hand of Chosroes was at that time pressing heavily, had some thought of employing him again in the Persian War, but though he was named Master of the Soldiery *per Orientem* we find no evidence of his having again taken the field for that enterprise. He also held the rank of general of the household troops and he took precedence of all other Consuls and Patricians, even those who had held these dignities for a longer period than himself.

To end our notice of the career of the great General it will be necessary to travel a little beyond the period properly covered by this volume. In the year 559 great alarm was created in the provinces of Moesia and Thrace by the tidings that the Kotrigur Huns had crossed the frozen Danube. What relation the tribe who were called by this uncouth name may have borne to the countrymen of Attila it might be difficult to say. They seem to have acknowledged a closer kinship with the Utigur Huns who dwelt alongside of them north of the Danube than with any other race of barbarians; but the attitude of the two clans to one another was not friendly, and the favor shown by the authorities at Constantinople to the Romanizing Utigurs was one of the pretexts upon which the more savage Kotrigurs took up arms against the Empire.

Under the command of their King Zabergan the horde of savage horsemen swept across the ill-defended plains of Moesia and through the Balkan passes into Thrace. Thence, like Alaric of old, Zabergan sent one division of his army southwards to the cities of Greece, the inhabitants of which were dwelling in fancied security. Another division ravaged the Chersonese, and hoped to effect a passage into Asia. The third division dared to move towards the Imperial City itself. To their own astonishment doubtless they found their progress practically unopposed. The wall of Anastasius, the breakwater which has so often turned back the tide of barbaric invasion, was not at this time in a state capable of defence. Earthquakes had leveled parts of it with the ground, and the Emperor, who had dispatched conquering expeditions to Carthage and Rome, and imposed his theological definitions on a General Council, wanted either the leisure or the money needful for the obvious duty of repairing this line of fortifications. Over the crumbling heaps pressed King Zabergan and his seven thousand horsemen. Wherever they went they spread terror and desolation. Two captives of illustrious rank fell into their hands,—Sergius, the *Magister Militum per Thracias*, and Ederman, son of that Grand Chamberlain Calopodius whose name twenty-seven years before had been uttered with shouts of execration by the Green party in the Hippodrome at Constantinople. On the ordinary inhabitants of this district—the Rome Counties as we should say of the Byzantine Empire—the hand of these savage spoilers fell very heavily. A vast crowd of captives were dragged about with them in their wanderings. Nuns torn from the convent had to undergo the last extremity of outrage from their brutal conquerors. Pregnant women, when the hour of their distress came upon them, had to bring forth their little ones on the highway, untended, unpitied, and unsheltered from the gaze of the barbarians. The children born in these terrible days were left naked on the road as the squalid host moved on to some fresh scene of devastation, and were a prey to dogs and vultures.

Amid such scenes of terror the savage Kotrigurs reached the little village of Melantias on the river Athyras, eighteen miles from Constantinople, a point on the road to Hadrianople about seven miles further from the capital than the celebrated suburb of San Stefano, to which in our own time the invaders from across the Danube penetrated. There was universal terror and dismay in the sovereign city, and men eagerly asked one another what force there was to resist the invader. The mighty armies of the Empire, which in her prosperous days had amounted to six hundred and forty-five thousand men, had dwindled in the time of Justinian to one hundred and fifty thousand. And of this diminished force some were in Italy, some in Spain; some were watching the defiles of the Caucasus, and some were keeping down the Monophysites in Alexandria. The number of real fighting men available for the defence of the capital was so small as to be absolutely contemptible. There was, however, a body of men, the so-called *Scholarii*, the Household Troops of the Empire, who, like the life-guards of a modern sovereign, should have been available for the defence not only of the palace, but of the capital also. But eighty years of indiscipline had ruined the efficiency of a body of troops which under Theodosius and his sons had contained many men, of barbarian origin indeed, but the bravest soldiers in the army. Zeno, we are told, had commenced the downward course by filling the ranks of the *Scholarii* entirely with his own pampered Isaurian countrymen. Since then the process of decay had continued. To wear the gorgeous costume of a *scholarius*, to have access to the palace, and to be employed about the person of the Emperor had seemed so desirable to the rich citizens of Constantinople that they had offered large sums to have their names entered on the muster-rolls. The Emperors, especially Justinian, hard pressed for money, had gladly caught at this means of replenishing their coffers: and thus it came to pass that at this crisis of the nation's need a number of splendidly-dressed luxurious citizen-soldiers, entirely unused to the hardships and the exercises of war, were, with one exception, all that could be relied upon to beat back the wild hordes of Zabergan.

That exception was a little body of veterans, not more than three hundred in number, who had served under Belisarius in Italy. To them and to their glorious commander all eyes were now turned. The Emperor, now probably in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and no longer sustained by the proud spirit of the indomitable Theodora, was seized, apparently, with such fear as had prostrated him during the insurrection of the Nika. He gave orders that all the vessels of gold and silver should be stripped from the churches in the suburbs and carried within the City. He bade the *Scholarii*, and even the Senators themselves, assemble behind the gates of the wall with which Theodosius II had encompassed Constantinople. And, last mark of the extremity of his fear, he consented to invest Belisarius with the supreme command, notwithstanding the unslumbering jealousy with which he regarded the greatest of his servants.

Belisarius, who seems, notwithstanding his illustrious offices, to have been virtually living in retirement since his return from Italy, accepted the charge laid upon him and donned the breastplate and helmet which had been for ten years unworn. Though still only in middle life (for, if our computation of his birth-year be correct, he was but fifty-four, and he cannot possibly have been more than two or three years older), he seemed to those around him already outworn with age. The terrible anxieties of even his most triumphant campaigns, the strain of the long siege of Rome, the fever at Portus, above all the exquisite misery of the quarrel with Antonina, had aged him before his time.

But with the familiar sensation of the helmet and the breastplate worn once more came back much of the martial energy of former days. Leaving perhaps the dainty *Scholarii* to man the walls of Constantinople, he went forth with his three hundred veterans, with all the horses that he could collect from the Circus and from the Imperial stables, and with a crowd of rustics eager to taste what they supposed to be the pleasures of war under the command of the unconquered Belisarius. The General accepted their service, determining to avail himself of their numbers to strike terror into the enemy, but to give them no chance of actually mingling in the fray. He pitched his camp at the village of Chettus, bade the peasants draw a deep ditch round it, and, as of old at the relief of Rimini, kindled his watch-fires on as broad a line as possible, that the barbarians might form an exaggerated idea of his numbers. Seeing that his veterans were indulging in too contemptuous an estimate of their enemy, and already counting the victory as won, he addressed them in a military harangue, in which he explained that while he fully shared their conviction that victory was possible, it was so only on the condition of strict obedience to his orders. Nothing but Roman discipline strictly observed could enable their little band to triumph over the savage hosts of Zabergan.

Still intent on deceiving the enemy as much as possible, he ordered his rustic followers to cut down trees and trail them about in the rear of every column of his troops, so raising a cloud of dust which masked their movements, and gave them the appearance of a mighty multitude. Then, when two thousand of Zabergan's horsemen advanced towards him, by a skillful disposition of his archers in an adjoining wood, he so galled the enemy with a well-directed shower of arrows on both flanks, that he compelled them to narrow their front and charge him at that part of his line where he knew that his hardy veterans would repel them. And during the whole time of the engagement the rustics and the citizens of Constantinople were ordered, not to fight, but to keep up such a shouting and such a clash of arms against one another as might convey to the minds of the barbarians the idea that a desperate encounter was going on somewhere near them.

These tactics, quaint and almost childish as they victory seem to us, proved successful. The advancing Huns were vigorously repulsed by the handful of Italian veterans; they were dismayed by the shouting and the clash of arms; they turned to fly, and in flight forgot their Parthian-like accomplishment of discharging arrows at a pursuing foe. Belisarius did not dare to follow them far lest he should reveal the weakness of his little band; but four hundred

slaughtered Huns, and the hot haste in which Zabergan returned to his camp, sufficiently showed that victory rested with the Imperial troops. Constantinople at any rate was saved. The Huns marched back to the other side of the wall of Anastasius, and renounced the hope of penetrating to the capital. The victory might have been made a decisive one had Belisarius been continued in the command, but as soon as Constantinople was delivered from its pressing danger, that jealousy of the great General, which had become a second nature with the aged Emperor, resumed its sway. Belisarius was curtly and ungraciously ordered to return to the City, and the Kotrigurs, as soon as they heard that he was no longer with the army, ceased to retreat. The rest of the Hunnish campaign need not here be described. It was ended by the payment of a large sum of money by Justinian, nominally as ransom for Sergius and the other captives, but really as a bribe to induce the Kotrigurs to return to their old haunts by the Danube. Their hostile kinsmen the Utigurs fell upon them in their homeward march, and inflicted upon them such grievous slaughter that they never after ventured on an invasion of the Empire. Both of these offshoots of the great Hunnish stock were in fact soon uprooted and destroyed by the irruption of the terrible Avars.

Belisarius on his return to Constantinople was hailed with shouts-of joy by the common people, who beheld in him their deliverer from all the horrors of barbarian capture. For a little time his appearance in the streets and in the Forum was as veritable a triumph as when he returned from the siege of Ravenna. Soon, however, the jealous temper of the sovereign, the calumnies of the courtiers, the envy of the nobles, who seem never to have been reconciled to his rapid elevation, prevailed over the enthusiasm of the populace, and Belisarius became again, as he had been for ten years previously, a man who, though possessed of wealth, of renown, and of nominal rank, was devoid of any real influence in State affairs.

Three years after his victory over Zabergan, Belisarius was accused& of connivance at a conspiracy against the life of Justinian. The conspiracy, which was set on foot by one Sergius, (a person of obscure rank, and not to be confounded with the *Magister Militum* who had been taken captive by the Huns), was apparently an affair of no political importance, a mere villainous scheme to murder a venerable old man during his siesta : and being revealed by a loquacious confederate to an officer of the Imperial house-hold, was suppressed without difficulty. In their fall, however, the detected murderers endeavored to drag down the great General. They declared that Belisarius himself had been aware of the existence of the conspiracy, and that his steward, Paulus by name, had taken an active part in their deliberations. The accused men being arrested, and probably put to the torture, confessed that Belisarius was privy to the plot. On the fifth of December the Emperor convoked a meeting of the Senate, to which he proceeded in state, accompanied by the Patriarch Eutychius. He ordered the confessions to be read in the presence of the assembly. Belisarius, on hearing himself accused, showed not so much of indignation as of misery and self-abasement. Justinian, though his anger was hot against the accused General, suffered him to live, but took away his guards and his large retinue of servants, and ordered him to remain in his house under surveillance. This state of things lasted for seven months. On the nineteenth of July in the following year the veteran General was restored to all his former honors and emoluments, and received again into the favor of Justinian, who had probably satisfied himself that the accusation which he had previously believed was a mere calumny invented by ruined and desperate men.

Nearly two years after this, Belisarius died, preceding his jealous master to the grave by about eight months. His wife Antonina, according to one late and doubtful authority, also survived him, but retired after his death into religious seclusion. His property, that vast wealth for the sake of which he had endured so much humiliation and allowed so many stains to rest

on his glory, was appropriated, perhaps after the death of his widow, to the necessities of the Imperial Treasury.

Such, as far as we can now ascertain it, is apparently the true story of the disgrace of Belisarius and his final restoration to the favor of Justinian. But another story, that which represents him as blinded and reduced to beggary, and sitting as a mendicant at the gates of Constantinople, or even of Rome, has obtained very wide currency, partly through the genius of Marmontel, who naturally laid hold of so striking a reverse of fortune to give point to the romance of *Belisaire*. The authority for this story is of the poorest kind, and dates only from the eleventh or twelfth century. It is a very probable suggestion that in the five or six hundred years which intervened between the hero's death and the first appearance of this story in literature, popular tradition had confounded his reverses with those of his contemporary John of Cappadocia, who was really reduced to beggary, but not to blindness. Yet the idea of so terrible a fall from so splendid a position has fastened itself too deeply in the popular mind to be ever really eradicated, let it be disproved as often as it may. In the future, as in the past, for one reader who knows of the capture of Gelimer or the marvelous defence of Rome, there will be ten who associate the great General's name with the thought of a blind beggar holding a wooden box before him, and crying in pathetic tones "*Date obolum Belisario*'

CHAPTER XXI.

THE THIRD SIEGE OF ROME.

Belisarius left the Imperial cause in Italy capture of in a miserable condition. The garrison of Perugia, who for three years and more, notwithstanding the murder of the gallant Cyprian had resisted the arms and the solicitations of Totila, were now overmastered, and before Belisarius reached Constantinople that high Etrurian fortress, taken by storm, not yielding to a surrender, had passed into the power of the Goths.

At Rome, the soldiers who had been placed in charge of the recovered City, with long arrears of pay due to them from the treasury, could endure no longer the spectacle of Isaurian Conon, their commandant, renewing as they believed the greedy game of the corn-traffic by which he and Bessas had enriched themselves during the second siege, and thus thriving upon their misery. Having risen in mutiny and slain their general they sent some of the Roman clergy as their ambassadors to Constantinople, claiming a full amnesty for their crime and discharge of the arrears of pay due to them from the State. Should these demands not be complied with, they declared that they would at once surrender the City to the Goths. Of course the Emperor had no choice but to comply, and to promise to pay from his exhausted treasury the money kept back by fraud and reclaimed by massacre.

This mutiny occurred several months before the recall of Belisarius. Now, after that event, Totila began to press the garrison of Rome more vigorously than he had done for the past two years. The cause which suddenly endowed the ancient capital of the world with so great importance in his eyes was a singular one, namely, his suit for the hand of a Frankish princess. Ever since the death of Clovis, and preeminently since the break of the Gothic war, the Frankish Kings had been advancing steadily towards a position of greater legitimacy than any of the other barbarian royalties; and this pretension of theirs had been upon the whole acquiesced in by the Eastern Emperor, anxious above all things to prevent the weight of the Frankish battle-axe from being thrown into the scale of his enemies. Thus Justinian had formally sanctioned the cession made by the Ostrogoths of the south-east corner of Gaul to the Franks, and in doing so must inevitably have waived any shadow of claim which the Empire might still have been supposed to possess to the remaining nine-tenths of Gaul, the territory wrested from Syagrius, Alaric, and Godomar. Secure in this Imperial recognition of their rights and in the loyal support which, as professors of the Athanasian form of Christianity, they received from the Catholic clergy, the Frankish partnership of kings clothed the substance of their power with more of the form of independent sovereignty than any of the Teutonic conquerors, whether at Toulouse or at Ravenna, had yet cared, or dared, to assume. Sitting in the Emperor's seat in the lordly amphitheatre of Arles, the long-haired Merwing watched the chariot-race and received the loyal acclamations of the people. Now too the sons of Clovis began to coin golden money bearing their own image and superscription, whereas hitherto all the barbarian monarchs (including, says Procopius, even the King of Persia himself) had been content to see their effigy on coins of silver, while upon the *solidi* of the nobler metal appeared the rude resemblance of the Caesar of Byzantium. It is singular to find already working in the middle of the sixth century a thought as to the superior legitimacy of Frankish conquest, which was not to bear fruit in visible deeds till two hundred and fifty years later, when Frankish Charles was hailed by the people of Rome as Imperator and Augustus.

While these ideas of a right, in some way differing from the mere right of conquest, were working in the minds of the bishops and counselors of the Frankish Courts, came Totila's messengers to one of the kings of the Franks, probably Theudebert of Metz, asking on behalf of their master for his daughter's hand in marriage. The Frankish King refused the request, saying that that man neither was nor would ever be King of Italy who, having once been in possession of Rome, could not hold it, but destroyed a part of the city and abandoned the rest to his enemies. What became of Totila's matrimonial suit in after days we know not: but at any rate the taunt stung him to the quick, and he determined that the world should recognize him as master not only of Italy, but of Rome.

The garrison of Rome now consisted of three thousand picked soldiers commanded by Diogenes, one of the military household of Belisarius, who had distinguished himself in sallies and on the battlements during the first siege of Borne. Under his able generalship the utmost force of the garrison was put forth to repel the foe. Assault after assault was repulsed, and the baffled Totila was obliged to convert the siege into a blockade. Having taken Porto, he was able to make this blockade more rigorous than any which had preceded it. On the other hand, in the very depth of her recent fall, the Eternal City found a new source of safety. Diogenes had sown great breadths of land within the walls with corn. The great City, once brimming over with human life and filled in Horace's days with the babble of all human tongues, was now a little, well-ordered, and prosperous farm. In the summer of 549, when Totila stood before her walls, the golden ears were waving to the wind on the heights of the lordly Palatine and along the by-ways of the crowded Suburra.

Notwithstanding this advantage, however, the desperate bankruptcy of Justinian's government played the game of Totila. Either the arrears stipulated for by the murderers of Conon had not been sent, or they had not been fairly divided among the soldiers. The little band of Isaurians who kept guard at the Porta San Paolo (the archway which spans the road to Ostia) deeply resented the withholding of their pay, which, as they declared, was now several years in arrears. Deeply too had sunk into their hearts the story of the splendid rewards given by Totila to those of their countrymen who three years before had betrayed the City to the Goths. Even now from the walls they could see these men arrayed in splendid armor riding side by side with the Gothic captains. Accordingly they opened secret negotiations with the besiegers, and promised on a certain night to open the Gate of St. Paul. Totila, who knew that he could reckon on no such sleepy supineness among the besieged as had enabled him to effect his previous entry, resorted to a stratagem. When the fated night came, he put a party of trumpeters on board two little boats, and ordered them, before the first watch was over, to creep up the river and blow a loud blast from their trumpets as near as possible to the centre of the City. They did so. The Romans, not doubting that an attack was being made by the way of the river (perhaps just below the northern end of the Aventine Mount), left their various posts and all hurried to the threatened quarter. Meanwhile the Isaurian deserters opened the Pauline Gate, and the Gothic host, without trouble or loss of life, found themselves once more inside the City.

Of the garrison, many were slain by the Gothic soldiers in the streets, some fled northwards and eastwards, and succeeded in escaping from the sword of the barbarians; some, probably the most warlike of the host, headed by the brave Diogenes, rushed forth by the Porta San Pancrazio and along the Aurelian Way, hoping to reinforce the garrison which at Centumcellae (Civita Vecchia) was defending the last stronghold now left to the Empire in Central Italy. Totila, who anticipated this movement, had stationed a party of his best warriors in ambush on this road. The fugitives rushed headlong into the snare, and a fearful slaughter of them followed, from which only a very few escaped to Civita Vecchia. Among the few, however, was he whom Totila most desired to capture, their valiant leader Diogenes.

One of the bravest soldiers, first of Belisarius and then of Diogenes, a cavalry officer named Paul (who like his great namesake was a native of the province of Cilicia), collected a band of four hundred horsemen, and with them occupied the Tomb of Hadrian and the bridge of St. Peter which was commanded by it. Statueless, battered by the storm of war, and bereft of nearly all its Imperial adornment, but still

‘A tower of strength
That stood four-square to every wind that blew’

rose the mighty Mausoleum. As soon as day dawned, the Goths advanced to the attack of the fortress, but owing to the peculiar character of the ground, could effect nothing, and perished by handfuls in the narrow approaches, where their crowded masses were exposed without cover to the shower of the Roman missiles. Seeing this, Totila at once called off his men, forbade all direct assault upon the Tomb, and gave orders to wait the surer work of hunger. Through the rest of that day and the following night the gallant followers of Paul remained without food. The next day they determined to kill some of the horses and feed upon their flesh; but repugnance to the strange banquet kept them till twilight still unfed. Then they said one to another, “Were it not better to die gloriously than to linger on here in misery, and surrender after all?” They resolved accordingly to burst forth suddenly upon the besiegers, to slay as many of them as possible, and die, if they must die, in the thick of the battle. These strong men then, with sudden emotion, twined their arms around one another, and kissed one another’s faces with the death-kiss, as knowing that they must all straightway perish. Totila, seeing these gestures from afar and reading their import, sent to offer honorable terms of surrender. Either the garrison might depart unharmed to Constantinople, leaving their horses and arms behind them, and having taken an oath never again to serve against the Goths; or, if they preferred to keep their military possessions, and would enter his service, they should be treated in all things as the equals of their conquerors and new comrades. The despairing soldiers heard this message with delight. At first they were all for returning to Constantinople: then when they bethought them of the shame and the danger of returning unarmed and on foot over all the wide lands that intervened between them and the Emperor, and remembered how that Emperor had broken his share of the compact by leaving their pay so long in arrear, they changed their minds and elected to serve under the standards of the gallant Totila. Only two men remained faithful to the Emperor, Paul himself, and Mindes the Isaurian. They sought the King's presence and said, “We have wives and children in our native land, and without them it is not possible for us to live. Send us therefore to Byzantium”. Totila knew them for true men, and giving them an escort and necessaries for the journey, started them on their road. There were still three hundred Roman soldiers, refugees at the various altars in the City. To them also Totila offered the same terms, and all accepted service under him.

There was no talk now of destroying, but only of keeping and embellishing Rome. Totila caused abundance of provisions to be brought into the City. The scattered remnants of the Senatorial families were brought back from their Campanian exile and bidden to inhabit their old homes without fear. As many as possible of the buildings which he himself had hewn down and burned with fire were raised up again. And when the Gothic King sat in the podium of the Circus Maximus, dressed in his royal robes, and gave the signal for the charioteers to start from the twelve *ostia*, he doubtless remembered the taunt of the Frankish King, and felt with pardonable triumph that he was now at least undoubted King of Italy.

Totila then sent a Roman citizen named Stephen to Constantinople to propose terms of peace and alliance between the two nations, which had now been for near fifteen years engaged in deadly struggle: but the Emperor, immersed in theology and still unwilling to own himself defeated, did not even admit the ambassador to an interview. On hearing of this rebuff Totila

marched first to Centumcellae and summoned it to surrender, offering the garrison the same terms which had been granted to the defenders of Hadrian's Tomb. Diogenes replied that it was not consistent with his honor to surrender the stronghold entrusted to him, for so little cause shown, but that if by a given day he had received no succors from his master, Centumcellae should be evacuated. Thirty hostages were given on each side for the fulfillment of this compact, the Goths being bound not to attack during the stipulated interval, and the Romans not to defend beyond it; and then the Gothic army, accompanied by the Gothic fleet, consisting of four hundred cutters and many larger vessels captured from the Imperialists, moved off to the south.

Vengeance upon ungrateful Sicily was the great desire of Totila's heart, as it had been three years before when he forbade the Roman deacon Pelagius even to name her pardon. Some work, however, had yet to be done on the mainland. Reggio, which was under the command of Thorimuth, one of the former defenders of Osimo, was assaulted, but so bravely defended that the siege had to be turned into a blockade. Tarentum was easily taken. In the north, Rimini, once so stubbornly defended by John, was now betrayed into the hands of the Goths. From Ravenna, Verus the Herulian, whose drunken hardihood had once moved the mirth of Totila, made another of his wild sorties, in which he fell with many of his followers.

Just at the end of 549, or the beginning of 550, Reggio fell, the garrison being compelled by famine to surrender. Even before this town, nearly the last stronghold left to the Empire in Southern Italy, had been won, Totila had crossed the Straits of Messina into Sicily. His campaign here was one of plunder rather than conquest. All the chief cities of the island, Messina, Syracuse, Palermo, seem to have resisted his arms; and only four fortresses, the names of which are not given, submitted to him. But far and wide through the island the villas of the Roman nobles bore witness to the invader's presence. The whole of the year 550 and (apparently) part of 551 were occupied by these devastations. At the end of that interval the King, collecting all his booty, large troops of horses and herds of cattle, stores of grain, fruit, and every other kind of produce of which he had despoiled the Sicilians, loaded his ships with the plunder and returned to Italy. It was said that he had been partly persuaded to to abandon Sicily by his own Quaestor, a citizen of Spoleto named Spinus, who had the misfortune to be taken prisoner at Catana. This man, of Roman, not Gothic kin, persuaded his captors to consent to his being exchanged for a noble Roman lady who had fallen into Totila's hands. They at first scouted the idea of so unequal a bargain, but consented upon his promising to do his best to induce Totila to depart from the island. On being liberated he painted to his master in lively colors the danger that the Imperial armament then assembling on the other side of the Adriatic might make a sudden swoop upon the coast in the neighborhood of Genoa and carry off the Gothic women and children tranquilly abiding in those northern regions and supposed to be out of the reach of war. Totila listened to the advice, which was probably sound enough, with whatever motive given, and desisting from his work of plunder, returned to his true base of operations in Italy, leaving garrisons in his four Sicilian fortresses.

Meantime the appointed day for the surrender Diogenes of Centumcellae had come and gone. Diogenes hearing, as everyone else in Italy had heard, rumors of the great army collected in Dalmatia under the Emperor's nephew Germanus, considered himself absolved from his promise, and refused to surrender the Mediterranean fortress. The thirty hostages who had been mutually given and received, returned in safety to their friends. Of the further fortunes of the valiant governor we have no information. Centumcellae was certainly surrendered to the Goths, probably not later than the spring of 551: but Procopius has omitted to tell us the story of its final surrender and to inform us—what we would gladly have known—whether Diogenes experienced the generosity or the hot wrath of Totila.

All these expectations, however, of help from Byzantium were for the present disappointed. Belisarius was recalled, as we have seen, early in 549. During all the rest of that year and the next, and until the middle of 551, nothing effectual was done for the relief of the Italians, who were still loyal to the Empire. Strange weakness and vacillation marked the counsels of the Emperor. The elderly Patrician Liberius, formerly ambassador from Theodahad to Justinian, a man of pure and upright character but quite unversed in war, was appointed to the command of the relieving army. Then his appointment was cancelled. Some months afterwards he was again appointed, and actually set sail for Syracuse, where he succeeded in effecting some temporary relief for the city, straitly besieged by the Goths. He had accomplished this work, and had sailed away to Palermo, before he learned that the wavering Emperor had again revoked his commission and entrusted the command of the Sicilian army to Artabanes the Armenian prince, though, as we shall shortly see, he had little reason for trusting his loyalty. The ships of Artabanes were dispersed by a fierce storm while they were rounding the promontories of Calabria, but the General himself with one ship succeeded in making his way through the tumultuous seas to the island of Malta .

Then for a time all other names were merged in the renown of Germanus, the nephew of Justinian, who collected a great army at Sardica, and from whom all men either hoped or feared a triumphant ending to the Italian war. How these expectations were disappointed, and what were some of the causes of the strange but not inexplicable vacillation of Justinian during these years of Totila's victorious progress, must be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE EXPEDITION OF GERMANUS.

The noblest and probably the eldest-born of the character nephews of the childless Emperor, he who, as far as anyone could be said to inherit in an elective monarchy, might be called the heir-presumptive of Justinian, was Germanus. An active and warlike general, he had struck terror into the Slavonian marauders by the striking success of his campaign against them in the year of his uncle's accession. He had afterwards, as we have seen, been successfully engaged in quelling the mutiny in Africa. In his civil career he had equally won the approbation of his countrymen. Of a grave and dignified demeanor, both in the Palace and the Forum, yet ever ready to listen to the cry of the needy, and willing to give freely or to lend large sums without interest as the nature of the case required; an upright judge, a gracious and courteous host, keeping open house every day for the foremost citizens of Byzantium, yet studiously separating himself from the factions of the Circus and the Agora; such, according to Procopius (who, after his quarrel with Belisarius, transferred all his devotion to the Imperial nephew), was the warrior and statesman Germanus. By his wife Passara, who had died several years before the time which we have now reached, he had two sons, Justin and Justinian. The former was Consul in 540, the year of the fall of Ravenna, and while clothed with that dignity followed his father to battle against Chosroes. The latter, like his brother often employed against the Slavonian and Gepid troublers of the Empire, was also a valiant soldier and the useful lieutenant of his father.

But Germanus, though thus richly endowed with all qualities which should have made him a pillar of the throne of Justinian, perhaps we should rather say, because endowed with those qualities, was annoyed by a perpetual, if petty, persecution on the part of the Empress Theodora. The military talents of his sons were seldom made use of; those who wished to stand well at Court avoided his friendship; his daughter remained unmarried till the rough soldier John dared to incur a temporary displeasure for the sake of so brilliant an alliance and married the great-niece of the Emperor. The most recent grievance of Germanus had reference to the wealth of his lately deceased brother Boraides, who, leaving to his widow and only daughter so much only as was absolutely necessary to prevent his testament from being declared invalid, directed that all the rest of his large property should pass to Germanus. This disposition was probably made in order to strengthen the claims of that branch of the family on the succession to the Imperial throne: and, probably for the very same reason, Justinian, or Theodora, intervening, ordered that the widow and daughter should be the sole legatees.

The death of Theodora might have been expected at once to place her enemy Germanus in a position of undisputed eminence at Court. Just at this time, however, some of the stored-up resentments of earlier years fermented into a conspiracy which well-nigh brought about the ruin of Germanus. There were at Constantinople two natives of Persarmenia, princes of the Arsacid line, who had risen high in the Imperial service, but each of whom had his own bitter grievance against Justinian and Theodora. Artabanes, who in 545 stabbed the usurper Gontharis at Carthage and restored Africa to the Emperor, claimed one reward for his conspicuous services, the hand of Justinian's niece Præjecta, whom he had both avenged and rescued by his daring deed. She, in her gratitude, was willing, nay, eager thus to reward him, but there was one fatal obstacle. Artabanes had a wife already, whom he had put away and

well-nigh forgotten, but who, now that his fortunes were brightening, showed no sign of forgetting him. This woman sought the succor of Theodora, whose chief redeeming virtue it was that she could not close her ears to the cry of a woman in distress. Theodora insisted upon Artabanes taking back his long discarded wife, and gave Praejecta to another husband. The tall, stately, silent Armenian rose high in the favor of the Emperor; he became Magister Militum in Praesenti, General of the Foederati, and at last Consul; but all these honors and emoluments could not deaden his sense of the wrong which he conceived himself to have endured, in that he had lost the woman whom he loved and was daily in the company of the woman whom he hated.

While Artabanes, as all men knew, was thus brooding over his matrimonial grievance, his fellow-countryman Arsaces diligently fanned the flame of his resentment. The reasons for the discontent of Arsaces were more discreditable than those which had alienated Artabanes. He had been detected in treasonable negotiations with Chosroes, and had been punished, not by the sentence of death which he richly deserved, but by a slight flogging and by being paraded through the City on a camel with the marks of his chastisement still upon him. This clemency was wasted on the fierce Oriental, and he now was forever at the ear of Artabanes, accusing him of inopportune bravery, and timidity which a woman would be ashamed of. "You slew Gotharis though he was your friend and you were a guest at his banquet. And now you scruple about killing Justinian, the hereditary enemy of your race, and him who has done you this grievous wrong. And yet to anyone who will reflect on the matter for a moment, the assassination of Justinian will seem to be a very simple and easy action, and one that no one need fear to attempt. There he sits till far into the night in his unsentinelled library, with a few dotting priests around him, wholly intent on turning over the precious rolls which contain the Christian oracles. You have nothing to fear from the relatives of the Emperor. Germanus, the most powerful of them all, is smarting under wrongs more grievous even than ours; and he and his gallant young sons, I doubt not, will eagerly join in our conspiracy". By such arguments as these, Artabanes was at length induced to enter into the plot, which was then communicated to another Armenian, Chanaranges by name, a handsome and volatile young man, who had no particular grievance against the Emperor, but was willing to join with a light heart in this glorious scheme for murdering an unguarded and elderly man in the midst of his theological studies.

The next step was to secure the adhesion of Germanus and his family, and for this purpose the elder son Justin, a youth with the first manly down upon his lips, was sounded by Arsaces. After swearing a tremendous oath that he would reveal what was about to be told him to no man save his father only, the young man was first artfully reminded of all the grievances which his father, his brother, and he had received at the hands of Justinian, ending with the crowning injustice of withholding from them the inheritance of his uncle Boraides. "Nor", said Arsaces, "are these injuries likely soon to come to an end. Belisarius, your enemy, is ordered home from Italy. He is reported to be even now half-way through Illyria. When he comes, you will find that you are treated even more contemptuously than before". And with that, Arsaces in a whisper revealed to him the design to kill his uncle the Emperor; and gave the names of Artabanes and Chanaranges as already privy to the plot.

The young Justin turned giddy with contending emotions as the deed, so wicked and yet opening up the possibility of such a welcome change in his condition, was disclosed to him; but the nobler passion of horror at the crime prevailed, and in a few curt words he told the tempter that neither he nor his father could ever be accomplices in such a deed. He then departed and told his father what he had heard. Germanus, perplexed at the tidings and seeing danger round him on every hand, violated his son's oath by unfolding the whole matter to his friend Marcellus, Captain of the Palace-guards.

Marcellus was a man of somewhat austere character, careless of money, of pleasure, and of popularity, but a lover of justice; one whom his natural taciturnity and almost churlishness of temper made a singularly faithful confidant. The advice, the dangerous advice, as it proved, which he gave, was not to hurry the conspirators into crime, nor to run the risk of a counter-accusation by making an immediate disclosure to the Emperor, but to draw them on to a confession of their villainy in the presence of an unsuspected witness, and thus to make certain that punishment should fall only on the guilty. This treacherous scheme of unmasking treachery was accordingly adopted. The young Justin was told to re-open the negotiations which he had abruptly closed. Arsaces was now dumb concerning the plot, but Chanaranges, full of eagerness for the conspiracy, desired nothing better than to have a conversation first with Justin and then with his father respecting it. On a given day, therefore, he repaired by appointment to the palace of Germanus. In the *triclinium* where they met, a thick muslin curtain hung from the ceiling to the floor, veiling the couch on which the master of the house was wont to recline at the banquet. It veiled also, though Chanaranges knew it not, the crouching form of Leontius, a man with the highest reputation for justice and truthfulness—according to the standard of Byzantium in the sixth century—who had been selected, apparently with no reluctance on his part, for the honorable office of eaves-dropper.

This was the purport of the conversation of Chanaranges as to the plans of the conspirators. “We have reflected that if we slay Justinian while Belisarius is still on his way to Constantinople, we shall be no nearer our purpose of setting you, O Germanus! on the throne. For Belisarius will then certainly collect an army in Thrace to avenge the murder of the Emperor, and when he appears before the gates of the City we shall have no means of repelling him. We must therefore wait till he has actually arrived, and is closeted with the Emperor in the palace. Then, late in the evening, we will resort thither with daggers in our hands and slay Justinian, Belisarius, and Marcellus all at once. After that we can dispose of matters as we will”.

When Marcellus heard from Leontius of this atrocious proposition, he still, for some mysterious other reason, postponed reporting it to the Emperor. Germanus however, truly perceiving that the mere fact of listening unmoved to such a conversation must subject him to the most odious imputations, took two other great officials into his confidence. These were Constantian, late general in Dalmatia and governor of Ravenna, and Buzes, the unhappy ex-consul who had been kept for twenty-eight months in a dark dungeon by Theodora, but who appears to have been still loyal to her Imperial spouse.

Tidings soon came of the near approach of the returning Belisarius. Then at length the taciturn Marcellus informed his master of the danger impending over both their lives. Artabanes and some of his confidential officers were put to the torture, and the Senate was summoned to the Palace to read and to deliberate upon the depositions thus obtained. Of course the names of Germanus and Justin were among the first mentioned by the criminals in their agony. When these names were read out, many faces in the assembly were turned with horror and amazement to Germanus; and it seemed as if nothing could save him from immediate condemnation. When he told the whole story, however, and called on Marcellus, Leontius, Constantian, and Buzes as vouchers for its truth, the tide of opinion turned, and the Senate by an unanimous vote acquitted Germanus and his son of all evil designs against the Republic.

Not so, however, the Emperor. When the Senators went in to the Presence Chamber to report the result of their deliberations, he burst into a torrent of angry invective against his nephew for his tardiness in bringing him tidings of the plot. Two of the nobles, in order to curry favour with the Emperor, affected to sympathize with his views, and thus hounded him on to yet more violent expressions. The rest of the Senate stood trembling and silent, ashamed to condemn and afraid to acquit Germanus. At this crisis the stern rugged character of

Marcellus shone forth in all its nobleness. He loudly asserted that all the blame, if blame there was, for the delay must rest upon his shoulders; that Germanus had consulted him at the earliest possible moment, and that he from motives of policy had insisted that Justinian should not then be told of the plot. He thus at length succeeded in mollifying the wrath of the Emperor against his nephew, earning himself great praise from all men for his fearless truthfulness.

The clemency of Justinian's nature was shown in a conspicuous manner towards those who had planned his murder. Artabanus was for the time deprived of his office, but, as we have seen, received next year an important command in Sicily. All the conspirators were kept for a time in honorable confinement in the Palace, not in the public gaol, and even this punishment was probably not of long duration.

A ruler who knew that his life was in danger from plots such as that of Arsaces might be excused for some vacillation in the choice and the promotion of his generals. Other cares were also pressing upon the wearied brain of Justinian, and making even the recovery of Italy seem a light matter in comparison with them. The sneer of the Armenian about the midnight hours spent in turning over theological treatises in the company of doting priests was not undeserved. Justinian was now, and had been for the last five years, deep in the controversy of 'The Three Chapters'. When Pope Vigilius, who had been summoned to Constantinople for this very purpose, together with the other Roman refugees, the Patrician Gothigus at their head, pressed upon him the necessity of a vigorous effort for the deliverance of Italy, he replied, in substance, that the affairs of Italy should have his attention when he had succeeded in reconciling the contradictions of Christians as to their common faith. A long adjournment certainly of his performance of the humbler duties of a ruler.

There were also other wars going on in the Empire, some much nearer home than that of Italy, which distracted the energies of Justinian. The eternal contest with Persia was at this time transferred to the eastern end of the Black Sea, to the region now known as Mingrelia, where from 549 to 557 what was called the Lazic war was being waged with varying fortunes, but upon the whole with a preponderance of success on the side of the Romans.

North of the Danube there was discontent, and a dangerous spirit of enterprise abroad among the fierce neighbors of the Empire. Where the Drave and the Theiss flow into the Danube, the Gepidae and Lombards were fiercely disputing with one another, imploring the intervention of Justinian, and then joining to attack his general when he invasion of entered their land. Further east in the country which we now call Wallachia, the Slavonians, long despised and comparatively harmless, were becoming a terrible scourge of the Empire. In the year 549 three thousand of these barbarians crossed the Danube, marched to the Hebrus, defeated Roman armies more numerous than their own, took captive the Roman General Asbad—one of the sumptuously-equipped *Candidati*, the pampered guardsmen of the Emperor—and after cutting off long strips of skin from his back, burned the miserable man alive. Then they pressed on to Topirus on the coast of the Aegean, nearly opposite the isle of Thasos, and only twelve days' journey from Constantinople. They drew forth the garrison by a feigned flight, took the city, ransacked its treasures, slew the men to the number of fifteen thousand, and carried off all the women and children into captivity. Thus they spread throughout Illyria and Thrace, ravaging the lands and torturing the inhabitants with fiendish cruelty. The terrible punishment of impalement, with which the Danubian lands have since been fatally familiarized, inflicted by men of another race than the Slavonian, now makes its appearance, and is described by Procopius with ghastly accuracy and vivid power. At length, drunk with their debauch of blood, the Slavonians retreated across the Danube, driving the endless files of their weeping captives before them, and leaving all Thrace and Illyria full of unburied corpses.

Two more invasions of these barbarians followed in the next year. It was thought by some that Totila had hired them to harass Justinian and prevent his attending to the affairs of Italy: but men who had been able to gratify their savage passions with so little labor or danger to themselves were not likely to require much pressing to undertake another raid into the feebly-defended Empire.

It will thus be seen that there was some reason why Justinian (stripped as he was by death of his bold and strenuous partner Theodora) should hesitate and delay and waver in his counsels with reference to the war in Italy. The name of Germanus as commander-in-chief for this war had been proposed shortly after the recall of Belisarius. Then the Emperor changed his mind and appointed the elderly and unwarlike Liberius. This appointment, as we have seen, had soon been cancelled, again made and again revoked. Now, probably at the beginning of 550, Justinian, while sending Artabanus to Sicily, took the bold and wise step of declaring Germanus, as Belisarius had been declared, commander with absolute powers for the whole war against Totila and the Goths. He gave him a large army, and instructions to add to it by raising new levies in Thrace and Illyria. More to the surprise of his councilors, he unloosed his purse-strings and sent his nephew a large store of treasure. To this Germanus, whose heart was set on restoring Italy, as he had already restored Africa after the rebellion of Stutza to the obedience of the Empire, added large sums from his own private fortune. The fame of so popular a commander, and the unwonted abundance of money at head-quarters, soon attracted large numbers of eager recruits, especially from among the barbarians of the Danube. All these flocked to Sardica (now the Bulgarian capital, Sophia), where Germanus had set up his standard. His son-in-law, the valiant and unscrupulous John, was of course with him. With him too were his martial sons Justin and Justinian, eager to embrace the long-desired opportunity of showing their prowess in war. There was Philemuth King of the Heruli, who had fought under Belisarius in his first Italian command: and there—a name of ill-omen for the Roman power in Italy—were one thousand heavy-armed soldiers of the Lombard nation.

The most potent, however, of all the allies of Germanus, the one who most daunted the hearts of the Goths, already dispirited at the thought of so great a commander coming against them, was his newly-wedded wife. This was none other than Matasuentha, widow of King Witigis and granddaughter of the great Theodoric. Again was the Amal princess married to a husband considerably older than herself; but there are some slight indications that this union was more to her taste than that with the humbly-born Witigis. At any rate, she was now a member of the Imperial family, and, as her countryman Jordanes proudly records, a legitimate Patrician. The three references made to this marriage by the Gothic historian, who wrote within two years after its consummation, show the great importance attached to it by his nation, and entirely confirm the statement of Procopius as to the depression which came over the soldiers of Totila at the thought of fighting with one who was now in a certain sense a member of the family of the great Theodoric.

Both hopes and fears, however, springing out of the appointment of Germanus to the supreme command were alike to be proved vain. The first of the two Slavonic invasions of the year 550, in which the marauders penetrated as far as Naissus in Servia, alarmed the Emperor, who sent orders to Germanus to suspend his westward march and succor Thessalonica, which was threatened by the barbarians. The terror of his name, and the remembrance of the great deeds which he had wrought twenty years before in the Danubian lands, sufficed to turn the Slavonians from their purpose and to divert their march into Dalmatia. In two days more the army would have resumed its interrupted journey towards Italy: but suddenly Germanus was attacked by disease—possibly a fever caught during his marches over the corpse-strewn valleys of Thrace—and after a very short illness he died.

The picture drawn of this prince has necessarily been taken from the pages of his partisan Procopius, who very likely has painted in too bright colors the character of his patron: but after making all necessary allowance for this partiality, it seems impossible to deny that here was a man of great gifts, of many noble qualities, and of splendid possibilities. As with a rising English statesman who dies before he attains 'Cabinet-rank', the premature death of Germanus has prevented him from leaving a great name in history. Had it fallen to his lot to defeat Totila, to restore the Western Empire, to bequeath its crown to a long line of descendants boasting a combined descent from Theodoric and Justinian, the name of Germanus might be at this day one of the most familiar land-marks on the frontier line between ancient and modern history.

In a few lines we must trace the subsequent history of the family of Germanus, since that is now the sole remaining branch of the family of Theodoric. After the death of her husband, Matasuentha bore a son, who was named after his father, Germanus. In this infant the hopes of Jordanes were centered when he wrote his Gothic history. It has been suggested that there was a scheme on the part of a nationalist Italian party headed by Vigilius to proclaim this infant as heir to Theodoric, or Emperor of the West, and obtain his recognition by Justinian, wearied out as he was by the war. The *'De Rebus Geticis'* of Jordanes is thus supposed to have been a sort of political pamphlet written in the interest of this combination. The theory is an ingenious one, but seems to lack that amount of contemporary evidence which would make it anything more than a theory. In any case, however, it is interesting to note that we have now reached the date of the composition of the treatises of Jordanes, with the contents of which we have become so familiar. The death of Germanus and the birth of his posthumous son are the last events of importance recorded by that writer, and it is clear that both the *'De Regnorum Successione'* and the *'De Rebus Geticis'* or, as Mommsen prefers to call them, the *'Romana et Getica Jordanis'*, were written in the year 551.

As for Germanus Postumus, the child of Matasuentha, he appears to have played a respectable, if not a highly distinguished part, as a great nobleman of Constantinople. His daughter married Theodosius, son of the Emperor Maurice; and the tumults which ended the reign of that Emperor, the popularity of Germanus caused him to be spoken of as a suitable candidate for the Imperial purple. The rumor of such a project nearly cost him his life, owing to the suspicious fears of Maurice. On the fall of that Emperor, the fierce and illiterate soldier who succeeded him, Phocas, made a show of offering the diadem to Germanus, but the latter, knowing well how precarious would be the life of an Emperor elected under such conditions, wisely declined the proffered dignity. When the cruel character of the tyrant who thereupon ascended the throne had exhibited itself, and his unfitness for the diadem was made clear to all men, Germanus made two attempts to dethrone him, by reviving the old loyalty of the Blue Faction to the house of Maurice, and appealing to the compassion of the populace on behalf of Constantina, widow of that Emperor. The first of these attempts cost him his official position, for he was ordered to cut off his hair and become a priest. The second cost him, and those on whose behalf he was conspiring, their lives. Constantina and her three daughters were slain with the sword upon the very spot where Maurice and his five sons had been put to death three years before; and Germanus with his daughter (the widow of the young Theodosius) were beheaded upon the little island of Prote in the Sea of Marmora, five miles south of Chalcedon. There, within sight of the towers and domes of Constantinople, associated for ever with the fame of Justinian, so often gazed upon with wonder by the young Theodoric, perished the two in whose veins flowed the blended blood of Emperor and King, the last descendants that History can discern of the glorious lineage of the Amala.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SORROWS OF VIGILIUS.

Before we sit as spectators to watch the last act of the drama of Imperial Restoration in Italy, we must study for a short time one of the most perplexed and entangled passages in Papal History, that which relates to the Pontificate of Vigilius. The story is made difficult partly by the fact that it is a battle-ground for the champions and the opponents of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, a doctrine which a secular historian may claim the privilege of passing by in silence, refusing to be drawn by the course of his narrative into the attitude either of a denier or of a maintainer of its truth. But the character of Pope Vigilius himself, and the bitter theological controversies in which he was involved, and in which it was his fate to please neither of the two contending parties, cause the contemporary notices of his life to be obscure and contradictory beyond the ordinary quality even of ecclesiastical history.

Let us briefly recapitulate what has been already said concerning the early career of this Pontiff. That he belonged to one of the great official families of Rome is proved by the fact that the Senator Reparatus was his brother. Throughout his life we may perceive some indications that his natural sympathies were with the aristocracy and the Court, and that some of his difficulties arose from a vain attempt to reconcile these aristocratic instincts with the bold part which a Pope in the Sixth Century was expected to play on behalf of the people and the popular enthusiasm of the lesser clergy. His unsuccessful attempt to obtain the first place in the Roman Church by the mere nomination of Pope Boniface II (an attempt which perhaps indicates the disposition of the Roman nobles to make the Papacy the exclusive possession of their own order) left Vigilius in the humiliating position of a defeated intriguer. Henceforward he probably knew that he had no chance of obtaining the Pontificate by a fair vote of the clergy and people of Rome. The influence which, as an ecclesiastic, member of a great Roman family, he still possessed, and which was sufficient to obtain for him the important position of Nuncio (Apocrisiarius) at the Court of Constantinople, must therefore be used in a different and less open manner. In his official intercourse with the great personages of that Court he had abundant opportunity for observing how the heart of Theodora was set on the restoration of the Monophysites to high places in the Church, and how seldom that upon which Theodora had set her heart failed to be granted in the end by her Imperial consort.

Hence came those secret negotiations with the Empress which have been already referred to, and which led to the downfall of the unhappy Silverius. We view with some distrust the circumstantial statements of historians as to conversations and correspondence which must necessarily have been known to extremely few persons; but, according to these statements, the terms of the bargain were that Theodora should address a letter to Belisarius directing him to make Vigilius Pope, and should also present to the new Pontiff 700 lbs. weight of gold. Vigilius on his part undertook to overthrow the authority of the Council of Chalcedon, and to write to Theodosius, Anthimus, and Severus, the Monophysite Patriarchs of Alexandria, Constantinople, and Antioch, acknowledging them as brethren in the faith.

Armed with this letter from the all-powerful Theodora, Vigilius sailed for Rome and sought an interview with Belisarius. Handing him the Empress's mandate he promised the General 200 lbs. weight of gold as the price of his assistance in procuring the coveted dignity. The result of this interview was, if we are to believe the biographers, the accusation against Silverius, the summons to the Pontiff to appear in the Pincian Palace, Antonina's insolent

demeanor, the pallium stripped from off the Pope's shoulders, and the coarse monastic garb hung round them in its stead.

This deposition of a Pope by the authority of the Emperor was a high-handed, probably an unpopular act; but there is no reason to doubt that it was acquiesced in by the clergy and people of Rome, and that Vigilius was regarded as his lawful successor. The accusation against Silverius was a political one. Not heterodoxy in doctrine, but a treacherous scheme for opening the gates of the City to the Goths, was the charge on account of which he met with such rough handling in the Pincian Palace; and of such an offence the Emperor or his deputy seems to have been considered a competent judge. The deposition of Silverius comes therefore under the same category with the deposition of the Byzantine Patriarchs, Euphemius and Macedonius; and is chiefly noteworthy as showing how dangerous to the independence of the Papacy was that Imperial authority which the Popes had with so light a heart brought back into the circle of Italian politics.

When the new Pope was firmly seated in his throne, the two authors of his elevation naturally called upon him to fulfill his share of the compact with each of them. Avarice made him unwilling to perform one of his promises; the loyalty to Chalcedon which seemed to nestle in the folds of the Papal pallium, indisposed him to perform the other. As we have seen, he pleaded to Belisarius that unless Silverius were surrendered to him he could not pay the promised purchase-money. Whether, upon the surrender and death of his predecessor, the two hundredweight of gold were transferred from the vaults of St. Peter's to the head-quarters of Belisarius, history does not inform us; but the Pope does seem to have attempted, in a half-hearted clandestine way, to fulfill his contract with Theodora. As for over-throwing the Council of Chalcedon, that was absurdly impossible; but he did write a letter addressed "To my Lords and dear Brethren in the love of Christ our Savior, the Bishops Theodosius, Anthimus, and Severus". In this letter he said, "I know that your Holinesses have already heard the report of my faith; nevertheless, to meet the wishes of my glorious daughter, the Patrician Antonina, I write these presents to assure you that the same faith which you hold I hold likewise, and have ever held. I know that your Brotherhood will gladly receive these things which I write. At the same time it is necessary that this letter should not be read by any one, but rather that your Wisdom should still profess to regard me as chief among your opponents, that I may the more easily carry through to the end the things which I now undertake. Pray God for me, my dear Brethren in Christ". To this letter was appended a confession of faith which, if not actually Monophysite, went, in the opinion of his contemporaries, perilously near to the edge of that heresy.

For a time this secret recognition of her partisans may have satisfied Theodora, but as the years went on and still Anthimus remained in exile and apparently under the ban of St. Peter, she pressed for a public fulfillment of the bargain by virtue of which Vigilius had become Pope. But Vigilius was now firm in his seat and could assume the attitude of unbending orthodoxy. The letter which he now sent was of this purport. "Be it far from me, Lady Augusta, that I should do this thing. Aforetime I spoke wrongly and foolishly: but now will I in no wise consent to recall a man that is an heretic and under anathema. And if it be said that I am an unworthy Vicar of the blessed Apostle Peter, yet what can be said against my holy predecessors Agapetus and Silverius, who condemned Anthimus?"

The anger of Theodora against her rebellious accomplice was quickened, and apparently justified, by the accusations which reached Constantinople, preferred by the Roman commonalty against their haughty and passionate Pope. It was not only the old charge of procuring the deposition and conniving at the death of Silverius that was now brought up against him. Other strange charges were made, which at least seem to indicate the violent temper of the aristocratic Pontiff. "We submit to your Piety", said the Roman messengers, "that

Vigilius is a homicide. He was seized with such fury that he gave a blow on the face to his notary, who shortly after fell at his feet and expired. Also upon some offence committed by a widow's son he caused him to be arrested at night by his nephew Vigilius, son of the Consul Asterius, and beaten with rods till he died”.

“On the receipt of these tidings” says the Papal biographer, “the Augusta [Theodora] sent Anthemius the Scribe to Rome with her orders and with special commission, saying: Only if he is in the Basilica of St. Peter refrain from arresting him. For if you shall find Vigilius in the Lateran or in the Palace [adjoining it], or in any church, at once put him on ship-board and bring him hither to us. If you do not do this, by Him who liveth for ever I will have you flayed alive. Then Anthemius the Scribe, coming to Rome, found him in the church of St. Cecilia on the 10th of the Kalends of December [22 November, 545J It was then his birthday, and he was distributing presents to the people: but Anthemius, arresting him, took him down to the Tiber and placed him on board ship. The common people followed him, begging in a loud voice that they might receive his prayers. When he had uttered his prayers all the people answered Amen, and the ship moved off. But when the Romans saw that the ship which bore Vigilius was really on her way, then they began to throw sticks, stones, and potsherds, and to shout: Hunger go with you: mortality be with you. You have wrought evil for the Romans: may you find evil wherever you go”. Nevertheless, some men who loved him followed him forth from the church.

In this picture of a haughty and unpopular Pope, crouched to by the mob so long as he is still on shore, and the receiver of their missiles and their taunts as soon as his ship is under way, there is something which looks like the handiwork of a contemporary. Yet it is not very easy to fit in the details here given with what we know, of the life of Vigilius. He was certainly not taken straight to Constantinople and at once exposed to the wrath of Theodora. On the contrary, he seems to have spent the following year in Sicily, not in close custody, but an honored and important guest. From thence, as we have already seen, in the early part of 546 he dispatched a number of corn-ships to Rome, a charitable return for the muttered execrations of the crowd (which perhaps had not reached the ears of his Holiness)—“May hunger go with you and death overtake you”.

This mysterious residence of a year in Sicily was ended by an invitation, not from Theodora, but from Justinian, in obedience to which Vigilius sailed for Constantinople, arriving at that city on the 25th January, 547. The petition previously urged by Theodora for the recognition of Anthimus seems now to have been tacitly dropped. The whole efforts, both of the Imperial pair and of all who were like-minded with them in the East, were now devoted to procuring the Pope's assent to the condemnation of the Three Chapters.

The theological controversy which is labelled by this strangely-chosen name is one of the paltriest and least edifying that even the creed-spinners of the Eastern Church ever originated. Gladly would a modern historian leave it undisturbed in the dust which, for a thousand years and more, has gathered over it. But this cannot be. Even as Monophysitism, by loosening the hold of the Empire on Syria and Egypt, prepared the path of the Companions of Mohammed, so the schism of the Three Chapters loosened the hold of the Empire on recovered Italy, and made smooth the path of the invading Lombards. As the student of the Thirty Years' War in Germany must compel himself to listen to the disputes between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches; as the student of the history of Holland must have patience with the squabbles of Calvinists and Remonstrants; as the student of our own Civil War must for the time look upon Prelacy and Presbytery as opposing principles for whose victory or defeat the universe stands expectant; so must we, at any rate for a few pages, watch narrowly the theological sword-play between Emperor and Pope beside the graves of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodore and Ibas.

In the whispered conversations of Arsaces and Artabanus we caught a glimpse of the Emperor as he appeared at this time to his subjects, a grey-bearded theologian, sitting in the library of his palace till far on into the night, conversing with monks and bishops, and endlessly turning over with them the rolls of the Christian Scriptures or the Fathers' comments upon them. In these theological conferences Justinian discovered, or was taught to recognize, three defects in the proceedings of the venerated Council of Chalcedon.

1. Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia, was the teacher of Nestorius, and one of the strongest maintainers of the doctrine that the divine Logos, distinct from the human personality of Christ, dwelt therein as Jehovah dwelt in his temple at Jerusalem. This doctrine had been emphatically condemned at the successive Councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451): but Theodore himself, whose death happened three years before the former Council, had been allowed to sleep quietly in his tomb and had hitherto escaped anathema. This omission Justinian now proposed to remedy. Theodore had been dead for more than a century, but his name must now be struck out of the diptychs, and his person and writings visited with the unsparing anathema of the Church.

2. Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrhus in Syria (with whom we have already made some acquaintance as an ecclesiastical historian), was a friend and fellow-pupil of Nestorius, and therefore in the charitable judgment of the orthodox could easily be accused of sharing his heresy. Modern enquirers, however, incline to the conclusion that he was no Nestorian, but a man, clearer-sighted than some of his contemporaries, who began, earlier than they, the contest against the arrogant Monophysitism of the Alexandrian Church. However in this contest he had published treatises sharply attacking both Cyril, who was accounted orthodox, and the Council of Ephesus, to whose authority the whole Church bowed. Justinian did not seek for an anathema on the person of Theodoret, who after years of excommunication had been replaced in his bishopric by the Council of Chalcedon; but he claimed that these special writings against Cyril and against the Third Council should be branded as heretical, a claim which was legitimate according to the ecclesiastical ideas of the day, but which opened an endless vista of future disputation if there was to be practically no 'Statute of limitations' in theological controversy.

3. Ibas of Edessa was, like the two last-named prelates, a Syrian bishop, and belonged to the school of Theodore of Mopsuestia. He, like Theodoret, had been deposed from his see during the short interval between the Third and Fourth Councils in which the Monophysites virtually reigned supreme in the Church; and like Theodoret, he had been reinstated by the Council of Chalcedon. The chief offence now alleged against him was a letter written by him to a certain Maris, Bishop of Hadaschir in Persia, in which he described the acts of the Council of Ephesus in a tone of violent hostility and denounced Cyril as a heretic. Although Ibas himself, even at this period of his life, does not seem to have fully accepted the teaching of Nestorius, and afterwards at the Council of Chalcedon joined in the anathema against that theologian, there can be no doubt that some of the expressions used in this letter wore a Nestorian color, and that if Cyril was to be venerated as a saint, it was hard to defend the orthodoxy of Ibas. What rendered the affair peculiarly difficult, and should have made Justinian peculiarly unwilling to disinter it from the oblivion in which it was entombed, was that the Council of Chalcedon itself, the venerable Fourth Synod, had listened to the reading of this semi-Nestorian epistle and allowed it to be entered upon its minutes without manifesting its disapproval; nay, that the Papal Legates had expressly declared, 'after the reading of this letter we pronounce Ibas orthodox, and give judgment that he be restored to his see'

These, then, were the three points in which the lawyer-like intellect of Justinian had detected imperfection in the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon, and in which he considered that a tacit reversal of the action of that Council might be made, in order to

conciliate the prejudices of the Monophysites. The object which he had in view, and which was that which Zeno and Anastasius had sought to obtain, was a desirable one. The deep and increasing alienation of the Monophysites of Egypt and Syria was, in the existing condition of the Church's relations to the State, a real danger to the Empire, a danger the full extent of which was manifested in the following century, when the hosts of Omar and Amru invaded those two provinces. But the expedient devised by Justinian, though not devoid of cleverness, was too small and subtle to succeed. The stern Monophysites of Alexandria were not to be drawn back into union with Constantinople by the excitement of hunting three heretics who had been dead for a century. And, on the other hand, Italy, Africa, and Gaul felt that when the Sacred Council of Chalcedon was touched the Ark of God was in danger. By whatever external professions of respect the insult might be veiled, the new ecclesiastical legislation was an insult to the authority of Chalcedon and was resented accordingly.

The attempt to procure the condemnation of the persons or the writings of these three Syrian theologians occupied the best energies of Justinian during ten years of his reign, and perhaps somewhat consoled him for the loss of the Monophysite partner of his throne, who died when he was but half-way through the battle. It was probably towards the end of 543, or early in 544, that 'Imperator Caesar Philochristus, Justinianus, Alamannicus, Gothicus, Francicus, Gennanicus, Anticus, Alanicus, Vandalicus, Africanus, the pious, the fortunate, the renowned, the victorious, the triumphant, the ever-venerable, the august' issued in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost his edict to the whole body of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. This edict is lost, but from a second edict which was published about eight years later, and which was probably a somewhat expanded edition of the first, we may form a conjecture as to its contents. This latter edict (which with its Latin translation fills fifty large octavo pages) begins by an elaborate statement of Christian doctrine according to the Creed of Nicaea. In ten short sections or 'chapters' the errors of the Arians, the Apollinarians, the Eutychians, and the Nestorians are stamped with the Imperial anathema. Then come the celebrated Three Chapters, of which for the next century the world was to hear more than enough. In the eleventh chapter, Theodore of Mopsuestia, his person, his writings, his defenders are all anathematized. In the twelfth the same stigma is affixed to the writings of Theodoret on behalf of Nestorius and against Cyril and the Council of Ephesus. In the thirteenth, everyone who defends the impious epistle of Ibas to the Persian heretic Maris, everyone who says that that epistle or any part of it is sound, everyone who refuses to anathematize it, is himself declared to be anathema. Then follows a long argument vainly endeavoring to prove that this 'impious epistle' met with no approval at the Council of Chalcedon. The question whether it be right to anathematize Theodore after his death is discussed, and decided in the affirmative on the authority of St. Augustine, and also on the ground that if the Church might not condemn heretics after their death, neither might she liberate after death those who, like St. Chrysostom, have passed away loaded with an unjust anathema. At length the Imperial theologian concludes with an appeal for reunion to the Monophysite sectaries: "If therefore, after this true confession of faith and condemnation of the heretics, any one shall separate himself from the holy Church of God for the sake of words and syllables and quibbles about phrases, as if religion consisted in names and modes of speech and not in deeds, such an one will have to answer for his love of schism, and for those who have been or shall be hereafter deceived by him, to the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ in the Day of Judgment. Amen"

Throughout the whole of this long edict is heard a tone of calm superiority which reveals the presence of the ecclesiastical legislator who deems that he is settling once and for ever the controversies that have distracted the Church. It does not need the repetition of the titles of Justinian to assure us that we are listening to the same mouth which gave forth the *Codex* and

the *Institutiones*. But beside this, we may perhaps discern a spirit of rivalry with Pope Leo and an endeavor to imitate the style of the majestic *Tome* which had been accepted by all Christendom as the true definition of the faith with regard to the union of the two natures in Christ. If it was the hope of the Emperor that he might go down to posterity as the successful competitor of that great Pontiff, he has been signally disappointed. True, he did with infinite labor and difficulty persuade a General Council to ratify his censures against the three Syrians, but the prevalent feeling even of his own age was probably that he was meddling with matters beyond his range, as it must have been the earnest desire of his successors that he would have left the Three Chapters in oblivion.

The edict thus prepared in the Imperial cabinet was laid before the Patriarchs of the East. Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria all at length signed, some after much hesitation, and the first only on condition that if Rome did not agree his assent should be accounted as withdrawn. Once having signed, however, they were led by an instinct of self-preservation to compel their suffragan bishops to the same course, and thus it came to pass that before long, probably before the end of 544, all the dioceses of the East had condemned the Three Chapters. Not so, however, in the West. Everywhere, in Gaul, in Illyricum, in Italy, but pre-eminently in the province which had Carthage for its capital, a spirit of jealous alarm for the honor of the Fourth Council was aroused by the Imperial edict. Datus of Milan (the prelate whom we have seen actively promoting the restoration of his province to the obedience of Justinian) stoutly refused in Constantinople itself to append his signature to the edict, and returned to the West in order to arouse in the Pope the same spirit of opposition. The forced departure of Vigilius himself from Rome was perhaps really owing to this controversy; and according to one well-informed writer, the populace of Rome, instead of shouting out ‘Hunger and mortality go with thee!’ really exclaimed, ‘Do not condemn the Three Chapters!’; and the Bishops of Africa, Sardinia, and Illyricum accosted him on his journey with a similar request. However this may be, it is evident that the increasing opposition of the Western Bishops to the Imperial theology made Justinian even more anxious to have the successor of St. Peter close to his own residence and amenable to his own powers of persuasion or terror. Vigilius received an imperative summons to Constantinople, set sail from Sicily, and arrived at the capital on the 25th of January, 547.

The Pope was received in that city, which he already knew so well, with every outward demonstration of respect. His first acts, however, seemed to show that the shouts of the Roman populace, ‘Condemn not the Three Chapters!’ were still ringing in his ears. He condemned Mennas, the Patriarch of Constantinople and all the other Bishops who had subscribed the Edict, to exclusion for four months from the Communion of the Church: and this ecclesiastical courtesy was repaid by Mennas with a sentence of precisely the same length upon the Bishop of Old Rome. According to Pope Gregory the Great, Vigilius at this time also laid his anathema on the Empress Theodora.

This mood of stern antagonism to the Court did not last for many months. Justinian seems to have tried both flattery and menaces to shake the decision of the Pontiff: and if the menaces of imprisonment and hardship elicited only the spirited reply, “You may keep me in captivity, but the blessed Apostle Peter will never be your captive”. On the other hand the invitations to the Imperial Palace, the visits from great personages in the state, the entreaties that he would not disturb the harmony of anathema which existed everywhere but where his power prevailed, were more successful. Vigilius renewed friendly relations with the Patriarch Mennas. He summoned the Western Bishops who were in Constantinople to a series of conferences, in which he discussed with them the possibility of gratifying the wishes of the Emperor. At length, on the 11th of April 548, he published to the world the solemn *Judicatum*, in which, summing up as judge the result of these episcopal conferences, he declared that, acting in

obedience to the Apostolic command, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good", he had examined the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and finding many things in them contrary to the faith, he anathematized him and all his defenders. Similarly did he anathematize those writings of Theodoret in which he attacked the propositions of St. Cyril. Also the impious epistle said to have been written by Ibas to Maris the Persian. But in all this, as Vigilius with fourfold emphasis asserted, no disrespect was intended to the Council of Chalcedon, and anathema was pronounced on any one who should seek to impair its eternal and unshaken authority.

This saving clause was not sufficient to induce the Bishops of the West to acquiesce in the *Judicatum*. All men who were undazzled by splendor and unterrified by the frowns of the Court could see that the new anathemas did deal a heavy blow at the authority and reputation of the Fourth Council. Even in Constantinople itself Datius of Milan, hitherto the trusty ally of the Pope, expressed his profound dissatisfaction with the *Judicatum*. It is true that Rusticus, a deacon and nephew of Vigilius, who was tarrying with his uncle at the capital, at first expressed unbounded enthusiasm on behalf of the *Judicatum*, busied himself in transmitting copies of it through the Empire, and declared that not only ought the name of Theodore of Mopsuestia to be anathematized, but his very bones dug up and cast out of holy ground. So too a young and restless ecclesiastic named Sebastian. Sebastian (also a deacon of the Roman Church), at first hailed the *Judicatum* as a direct message from Heaven. Soon, however, they were carried away with the tide of Western feeling, everywhere ebbing away from Vigilius and his new friends. They sent letters to Sicily, to Italy, to Africa, declaring that the Pope had betrayed the Council of Chalcedon; letters which, coming from Roman deacons and men of his immediate retinue, did infinite harm to the Papal cause. Vigilius, either in petulance or in self-defense, retaliated by deposing them and six of their 'fellow-conspirators' from their various offices in the Church.

These repressive measures could not silence the voice of real alarm and indignation in the Western Churches. Facundus, the African Bishop to whom we owe the fullest account of this tedious controversy, had been present at Constantinople through all the conferences which led up to the *Judicatum*, and had done his utmost to prevent its being issued. Returning now to his native province he gave such an account of the recent proceedings of the Pope that the Bishops assembled in Council resorted to the extreme measure of formally excommunicating the occupant of the Chair of St. Peter.

Vigilius saw that he had strained the allegiance of his Western suffragans too far, and with hesitation and awkwardness began to retreat. He asked Justinian's permission to withdraw the *Judicatum*, and the Emperor, who began to perceive that he and the Pope alone could not carry the whole Church with them, consented. It was decided that a General Council should be convened, and in order that the matter should be left open for that Council's decision, the Pope's *Judicatum* was to be considered as withdrawn. In private, however, the Pope had to swear to the Emperor that he would do his utmost to secure the condemnation of the Three Chapters, would enter into no secret compact with their defenders, and would disclose to the Emperor the name of anyone who should seek to draw him into any plots, on behalf of the Chapters or against the State. Justinian on his part swore that he would keep this engagement secret, and would not visit with the penalty of death the persons whom Vigilius under his compact might be compelled to denounce.

The proposed Council now occupied the minds of all the great dignitaries of Church and State at Constantinople. But as the months passed over, it became more and more clear that the Council would not heal the schism which Justinian had with so light a heart created. He was using his power with a heavy hand against his theological opponents, extruding Bishops their sees, especially in Africa, with a harshness which would have seemed more to befit an Arian

Vandal than an Orthodox Emperor: but neither from Africa nor Illyria, from Italy nor Gaul would the Bishops come to do his bidding in Council by condemning the Three Chapters. The Eastern Bishops, more subservient and less fanatically Chalcedonian, were willing to do all that the Emperor required of them. Now then, if Vigilius was to fulfill his oath to the Emperor, he must take his place at the head of these Eastern Bishops, and formally anathematize the Chapters which his own clergy and well-nigh all the Bishops of the West were passionately defending.

The situation was a cruel one, and might well make Vigilius curse the day when he began to intrigue for the Chair of St Peter. As if to complicate matters still further, the Emperor, without waiting for the assembling of the Council, put forth a second edict containing his authoritative definition of the essentials of the Christian faith, and anathematizing the Three Chapters. An assembly of all the Eastern and Western prelates who were at that time to be found in Constantinople was convened in the palace of Placidia, where the Pope was then dwelling. The professional jealousy of all the Bishops seems to have been aroused, and not even Theodore Bishop of Caesarea, the Emperor's chief adviser and right hand in all that concerned the condemnation of the Chapters, durst oppose the unanimous voice of the assembly, expressed by Datus of Milan and Vigilius of Rome, that an ecclesiastic who should celebrate mass in any of the churches where the Emperor's edict was publicly exhibited was a traitor to the brotherhood of the Church.

Notwithstanding this solemn prohibition, Theodore before many days were over solemnly celebrated mass in one of the contaminated churches, and prevailed upon Zoilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, who had been hitherto considered somewhat of a Papal partisan, to be present likewise. Indignant at this open act of disobedience to the successor of St. Peter, Vigilius, with the concurrence of Datus and twelve other Western Bishops, chiefly from Italian cities, published a solemn sentence of degradation from every ecclesiastical function against Theodore of Caesarea; and waxing bolder at the sound of their own voices, included in it also Mennas, Patriarch of Constantinople.

This daring blow, struck under the very eyes of the Emperor against his chief religious adviser and the ecclesiastical head of his own city, so exasperated Justinian that Vigilius and Datus found it necessary to fly for their lives to the asylum of the great basilicas. Vigilius chose for his place of refuge the Basilica of St. Peter, rightly judging that the sanctity of that place would be more efficacious than any other for the successor of the Apostle. Justinian however, who seems to have been in a state of frenzy at the insults offered to his vanity as a theologian and to his power as an Emperor, sent the Praetor to arrest him in the Basilica itself. This Praetor, the head of the City police, 'to whom' as the adherents of Vigilius indignantly asserted, 'thieves and murderers rightly belonged' came with a large number of soldiers bearing naked swords and bows ready strung in their hands. When he beheld them Vigilius fled to the altar, and clung to the columns on which it was supported. The deacons and other ecclesiastics who surrounded the Pope were first dragged away by the hair of their heads, and then the soldiers seized Vigilius himself, some by the legs, some by the hair, and some by the beard, and endeavored to pull him from the altar. Still, however, with convulsive grasp the Pope clung to the pillars, and still the soldiers strove to drag his tall and portly form away from the place of refuge. In the scuffle the pillars of the altar were broken, and the altar itself was only prevented by the interposed hands of the ecclesiastics from falling on the Pope's head and ending his Pontificate and his sorrows at one blow.

The sight of a chief of police and his satellites grasping the successor of St. Peter by the legs and trying to drag him forth from the shelter of St. Peter's own basilica was too much for the religious feelings of the people of Constantinople. Loud and menacing murmurs arose from the spectators who had crowded into the church. Even some of the soldiers audibly expressed

their disapproval of the work upon which they were engaged: and soon the Praetor with his retinue vanished from the sacred building, leaving Vigilius still under its safeguard.

The Emperor now tried another method. A deputation of the most important personages of postulate the Empire was sent to argue calmly with Vigilius Pope. and persuade him to abandon an attitude of needless hostility and distrust. The persons who composed this deputation are all of them interesting to us for other reasons. First and foremost was Belisarius (now probably in the forty-sixth year of his age), the instrument by whom Vigilius had been raised to the Papacy. With him came his fellow-patrician Cethegus, the exile from Rome, formerly Princeps of the Roman Senate, a man once accused of treachery to the Emperor, but now apparently restored to full Imperial favor. The other envoys were Justin the son of the lately-deceased Germanus, who had been Consul eleven years previously, and who now held the high office of Master of the Household; Peter, once the bold ambassador to Theodahad, now Patrician and Master of the Offices; and Marcellinus the Quaestor, apparently the same literary courtier of Justinian who under the title of Marcellinus Comes has, by his useful Chronicle, filled so many gaps in our knowledge of the history of the fifth and sixth centuries. This deputation was instructed to invite the Pope to come forth from his asylum on receiving a solemn oath for his personal safety, and to inform him that, if he would not accept these terms, measures should again be taken for his forcible removal. After some little bargaining as to the forms of the oath, Vigilius consented to these conditions. The memorandum containing the terms of agreement was laid upon a cross containing a fragment of the true wood of the Cross of Calvary, above the keys of St. Peter, and upon the iron grating which fenced in the altar of the Apostle. When all these arrangements had been made, to give greater efficacy to the compact the five noblemen took their 'corporal oath' for the safety of the Pontiff, and Vigilius, emerging from his hiding-place, returned to the palace of Placidia.

Notwithstanding all this solemn swearing, the situation of the Pope after his return became daily more intolerable. His servants and the ecclesiastics who remained faithful to him were publicly insulted; every entrance to the palace was blocked by armed men; he had reason to think that a violent attack was about to be made upon his person. After making a vain appeal to the Imperial envoys whose plighted oath was thus being violated, he quitted the palace again by night two days before Christmas-day. The shouts of the men-at-arms penetrated even into his bedchamber, and only this urgent terror, as he himself says, could have impelled him to the hardships and dangers of a nocturnal expedition. He fled this time, not to his old asylum at St. Peter's, but across the Bosphorus to Chalcedon. There, in the renowned sanctuary of St Euphemia, in the very church where, just one century before, the great Council of the Six Hundred and Thirty Fathers had been held, the hunted Pope, the champion of that Council's authority, took refuge.

In such a place it would have been dangerous for the Emperor to repeat the scenes of violence which had profaned the basilica of St. Peter. After a month's interval he sent the same five noblemen who had composed the previous deputation, with an offer of new and perhaps more stringent oaths of protection if the Pope would again return to his palace. The answer of Vigilius was firm and dignified: "For no private or pecuniary reason have I sought shelter in this church, but solely in order to avert the scandal to the Church which was being perpetrated before all the world. If the Emperor is determined to restore peace to the Church, as she enjoyed it in the days of his uncle and pious predecessor, I need no oaths, but come forth from my asylum at once. If this be not his intention, oaths are also needless, for I shall not leave the basilica of St. Euphemia".

The Pope now proceeded, or threatened to proceed, to publish the excommunication of Theodore and Mennas, which had before been privately served upon them. On his part the Emperor sent by the hands of Peter the Referendarius a letter which Vigilius alleges to have

been so full of insults and misstatements, that he is certain it can never have been written by the Emperor. This, however, is of course only a figure of speech to enable him to criticize it without open disrespect. There can be no doubt that it was Justinian's own composition, and we can easily imagine its purport—an unsparing exposure of the past vacillations, intrigues, and broken promises of the Roman Pontiff.

To this document and to the Emperors proposals for peace Vigilus replied by a long letter, the '*Encyclica*', containing his account of the controversies of the past year, and offering, upon receiving proper oaths for their safety, to send Datius of Milan and certain other of the ecclesiastics who shared his seclusion, to treat, with full powers from him, for the restoration of the peace of the Church. It is from this *Encyclica* that we derive the greater part of our information as to the embittered strife between Pope and Emperor.

That strife which for the past six months had assumed an acute type and had seemed likely to end in bloodshed, now relapsed into its tedious chronic condition. Death removed some of the combatants from the scene. Datius of Milan died in June; two months afterwards, Mennas of Constantinople. It was clear that Justinian had succeeded in tying a knot which only a Fifth General Council could untie, and to that Council, which at length on the fifth of May, 553, assembled in Constantinople, all eyes, at least the eyes of all Oriental Christians, were now directed. The Western prelates still kept aloof. It was one thing to summon them to Constantinople, and another thing to induce them to visit a capital where the venerable Datius, and Vigilus successor of St. Peter, had been treated with such discourtesy and had encountered so much actual peril.

The Emperor naturally desired that the presidency of the Council should be vested in the Bishop of Old Rome; and Eutychius the new Patriarch of Constantinople, a man apparently of gentler disposition than Mennas, voluntarily offered to concede the first place to Vigilus. The Pope, however, did not choose to preside in a Council composed almost entirely of Eastern Bishops. For the matter in debate he perhaps cared little, but he rightly dreaded again placing himself in opposition to the general voice of the Western Church. There were long negotiations between Pope and Emperor as to the composition of the Council. Vigilus proposed that four Easterns and four Westerns should meet and that their decision should be accepted as final. Justinian was willing to concede that four Bishops from each of the three Eastern Patriarchates should meet Vigilus and three of the Bishops in his obedience; but this the Pope would not accept. Thus the negotiations broke down: and in truth a small committee of the kind indicated by these proposals would have been a poor substitute for the great ecclesiastical Parliaments which had met at Nicaea and Chalcedon.

Eventually when the Council, consisting of one hundred and thirty-nine Bishops from the East and six from the West, met in the Metropolitan Church of Constantinople, the throne prepared for Vigilus was vacant. Some sittings were spent in fruitless endeavors to induce the Pope to join the assembled Prelates, Belisarius and Cethegus being again vainly sent by the Emperor on this errand: and then the Council, under the presidency of Eutychius, proceeded to its main business. There was little discussion, apparently no opposition. The bishops had, probably, each already condemned the Three Chapters in their individual capacity, and now shouted 'Anathema to Theodore; long life to the Emperor' with edifying unanimity.

When Vigilus was invited to join the Council he replied with a demand for a delay of twenty days to enable him to prepare a written statement of his Judgment on the Three Chapters. The Emperor answered, with some justice, that it was not his individual sentence, but his voice and vote at the Council that was required; but the Pope persisted in his project, and by the 14th of May had drawn up a document called the *Constitutum*, containing his own judgment and that of nineteen Bishops of the West and deacons of Rome concerning the matters in dispute. In this document, while examining at great length the writings and severely

condemning the errors of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and while reiterating his own profession of faith, so as to show that he himself was utterly untainted with Nestorianism, Vigilius condemned all the proceedings of those who were now agitating for the condemnation of the Three Chapters; grounding his opposition chiefly on the familiar arguments of the impropriety of anathematizing the dead, and the fact that, as far as Theodore and Ibas were concerned, the cause had been already decided in their favor at Chalcedon. He concluded in the tone of an autocrat of the Church, forbidding any person who held any ecclesiastical dignity whatever to put forth any opinion concerning the Three Chapters contrary to this *Constitutum*, or to raise any further question concerning them. Any action which might be taken by such ecclesiastical persons in opposition to this decree was declared beforehand to be made null and void "by the authority of the Apostolic See over which by the grace of God we preside".

The members of the Fifth Council, at whom of course this *Constitutum* was chiefly aimed, went on their way disregarding it; and at their seventh and last sitting, after completing all their other anathemas, struck the name of Vigilius out of the diptychs. This was done at the express and urgent entreaty of Justinian. Thus had the nephew of Justin, the mainstay of that Imperial house whose great glory it had once been to bring about the reconciliation with the Roman See, himself imitated the audacious act of Acacius, by excommunicating the successor of St. Peter.

Sentence of banishment was passed on all the opposers of the Fifth Council, and in this banishment Vigilius, already in a certain sense an exile, had doubly to share. He was conveyed to the little island of Proconnesus, near the western end of the Sea of Marmora, closely guarded, and given to understand that so long as he refused to accept the authority of the Fifth Council, he had no hope of revisiting Rome. Not only so, but the Emperor appears to have determined to order a new election to the Papal Chair, superseding Vigilius by a more pliable pontiff as Theodora had superseded Silverius by Vigilius. Under these hard blows, with the prospect of yet harder to come, and with his health undermined by that cruel disease the agony of which has crushed the strongest hearts, the spirit of Vigilius gave way. After six months of banishment he wrote a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople, in which he lamented the misunderstandings which, by the instigation of the Devil, had arisen between himself and his brother bishops dwelling in the Royal City. Christ, the true Light of the World, had now removed all darkness from the writers mind and recalled the whole Church to peace. Following the noble example of St. Augustine, who feared not in his *Retractationes* to own the mistakes in his previous writings, Vigilius would now acknowledge that, having with renewed care examined the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, he found therein many things both blasphemous and absurd which he was now ready unhesitatingly to condemn. With equal clearness could he anathematize all that Theodoret had written against the true faith, against the Council of Ephesus, and the twelve chapters of Cyril. Lastly, he anathematized the letter, full of profane blasphemies, which Ibas was said to have written to the Persian heretic Maris. No point was left uncovered. The Pope had surrendered to his enemies at discretion.

Two months later, Vigilius addressed, probably to the Bishops of the West, a long *Constitutum*, in which, going over all the weary controversy, he in fact retracted whatsoever he had previously advanced as to the impropriety of condemning the Three Chapters. The only novelty in the document, and a perilous one, was a long piece of special pleading (which seems to have convinced no one either in its own or succeeding ages) on behalf of the proposition that the so-called letter of Ibas was never written by that ecclesiastic.

After this complete capitulation the Pope was suffered to return to Italy. Great events had meanwhile been happening there, events which made his return at this time eminently opportune. The Roman clergy had petitioned for his restoration, to which step Justinian may perhaps have given somewhat of the character of an act of amnesty; though indeed the

Emperor had so completely vanquished the Pope, that no reason for quarrel any longer existed between them.

But Vigilius was not after all to see again the Church of the Lateran, for the sake of the first place in which he had done so many misdeeds and endured so many hardships. His health, which had been failing ever since his flight to Chalcedon, and which had no doubt suffered from his banishment to Proconnesus, now became rapidly worse. He could proceed no further on his way than to Sicily, and died there on the 7th January, 555. He was succeeded, after a vacancy of a little more than three months, by the deacon Pelagius, who had served under Vigilius at Constantinople through all the recent controversy, and had shared his hardships and his perils.

As far as Emperor and Pope were concerned, thus closed the controversy of the Three Chapters. Justinian had undoubtedly gathered all the laurels that could reward such a petty and ignoble contest. He, the amateur theologian, after a struggle as long as the siege of Troy, had imposed his definition of the right faith on all the four Christian patriarchates, and had bound those who believe in the infallibility of General Councils to accept it henceforward as an essential article of the Christian creed that the soul of Theodore of Mopsuestia suffers eternal torment. As a statesman his success was not perhaps equally brilliant. He did not by his maneuvers secure the loyalty of a single disaffected Monophysite; and he raised up a generation of bitter schismatics in Italy who were to persist for a century and a half, preferring even the rule of the savage Lombard to communion with the Church which anathematized the Three Chapters. As a guide and counselor of the Church the half-heathen Constantine certainly presents a fairer record than the highly-trained controversialist Justinian.

The unhappy Vigilius, in the course of this controversy, had to drink the cup of humiliation to the dregs. Deeply offending both parties, he has found champions in neither; and in consequence posterity has been perhaps unduly severe upon his memory. Travelling as he did at least four times from one point to the diametrically opposite point of the theological compass, he deeply injured the credit of the Roman See, which now passed through half a century of obscurity till the arising of the first and greatest Gregory. He must certainly be held to have been an unsuccessful general of the forces of the Papacy, but there is no proof that he was a coward, and his censors have perhaps hardly enough considered whether at his particular point in the campaign success was possible. For six years he had to dwell at the seat of the rival Patriarch, daily beholding the majesty of the Emperor and begirt by evidences of his power. To resist the commands of this omnipotent Caesar, from a modest dwelling within a mile or two of his palace, was a task which required much more hardihood than merely hurling spiritual thunderbolts from the Lateran or the Vatican at some unseen and unknown Frederick or Henry on the other side of the Alps.

Then the theological battle-field was ill-chosen for the interests of the Papacy. To say nothing of the dismal unreality of the controversy (though Vigilius was probably acute enough to perceive and to be disheartened by this unreality), there can be no doubt that the pedantic, lawyer-like mind of Justinian had detected a flaw in the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon. His determination to publish his discovery to an admiring world placed Vigilius in a pitiable dilemma, one from which even a Leo or a Hormisdas would have found a difficulty in escaping. If he defended the Three Chapters he was looked upon as tainted with Nestorianism and false to the Council of Ephesus. If he condemned them he seemed to be dallying with the Monophysites and disloyal to the Council of Chalcedon. Certainly to adopt both courses alternately, and to do this twice over, was about as disastrous a policy as he could possibly have adopted. But even as to this vacillation the harshness of our censure would be abated if we grasped fully the enormous difficulty of his position. He, like Justinian, was striving, and could not but strive, for an unattainable object. The Emperor was compelled to

struggle for the restoration of the old boundaries of the Roman Empire. The Pope was bound to wrestle for the preservation of the unity of the Christian Church. A decree against which they were powerless to contend had gone forth that the East and the West should be parted asunder, politically, religiously, and intellectually. But they knew not this; and the luckless Vigilius, laboring to prevent the Eastern and Western Churches from being rent asunder by this miserable question about the damnation of Theodore, was like a man who, standing on shipboard, reaches out his hand to a friend standing on the pier, and not unclasping it quickly enough, is swept from his place by the motion of the vessel and falls headlong into the sea.

But assuredly the wonderful political instinct of the Roman Church was at fault when she allied herself with Constantinople against Ravenna. Already have two Popes—Silverius and Vigilius—found the little finger of Justinian thicker than the loins of Theodoric.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NARSES AND TOTILA.

Immersed in theology and intent on the damnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia, Justinian would gladly have forgotten the affairs of Italy. Sixteen years ago he had sent his soldiers and his invincible General on an expedition which he perhaps hoped would prove, like the Vandal campaign, not much more than a military promenade. Victory had come far more slowly in Italy than in Africa, and in the very moment of his triumph the prize had slipped from his grasp and the whole work had to be done over again. Ever since Totila was raised upon the shields of the Goths, ill-success, scarcely varied by one or two streaks of good-fortune, had attended the Imperial arms, and now only four points on the coast—Ravenna, Ancona, Hydruntum, Crotona—owned allegiance to the Empire. As a source of revenue, the country for whose re-annexation such large sums had been expended was absolutely worthless; and on the other hand, whenever the Imperial wished to erect a new church or fortress in Thrace or Asia Minor to commemorate his name and to be described with inflated rhetoric in the *De Aedificiis* of Procopius, the finance-minister, if he were an honest man, was sure to remind him of the long arrears of pay due to the starving troops in Italy, and of the absolute necessity that any money that could be spared should be remitted to Ravenna. Thus it came to pass that Justinian already in 549 was sick of the very name of Italy, and would have been willing to sit down satisfied with its loss, but that, as already stated, Vigilius and the other Roman refugees incessantly pressed upon him with their petitions for help, and their not unreasonable complaints of the ruin which his policy, if it was to stop short at this point, would have brought upon them.

There was, then, to be another expedition to Italy. Germanus being untimely dead and Liberius hopelessly incapable, the question arose who should be the new commander of the forces. John the nephew of Vitalian, who had passed the winter of 550 at Salona, had the military talent necessary for the post, but, notwithstanding his recently-formed connection with the Imperial house, he was still too little superior to the other generals by character or position to make it probable that they would accord to him that unquestioning obedience, the want of which had already proved so fatal to the Emperor's interests.

In these circumstances Justinian decided to offer the command of the new Italian expedition to his Grand Chamberlain Narses, who eagerly accepted it. The choice of this man, an eunuch, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, one whose life had been spent in the enervating atmosphere and amid the idle labors of an Imperial presence-chamber, would have seemed the extremity of madness to the stout soldiers of the Republic by whom the title Emperor had first been worn. Yet, in truth, this choice proved to be another instance of Justinian's admirable knowledge of men, and great power (when he gave his intellect fair play) of adapting his means to the required ends. Narses (who lived for more than twenty years after the date we have now reached), though short in stature and lean in figure, evidently still possessed good health, and faculties quite undimmed by age. In his previous campaign in Italy, fourteen years before, he had shown no small strategic talent, and he had for ever secured the grateful affection of the stout soldier John, who would now willingly concede to him an obedience such as any other general would demand in vain. The two together, Narses as the wily much meditating brain, and John as the vigorous swiftly smiting arm, might be expected to do great deeds against even the gallant Totila. And throughout Italy, wherever the Roman armies might

move, recovering cities or provinces for the Empire, the presence of a man who came straight from the Sacred Majesty of the Emperor, and had been for the past twenty years or more a Cabinet-minister (as we should say) of the highest rank, would command the unhesitating and eager obedience of all that official hierarchy whose instinct it was to obey, if it could only be assured that its orders came direct from Imperial Power.

The announcement that the Eunuch was to command the Italian army was received with a shout of applause by all who hoped to share in the expedition. Narses, unlike many previous eunuchs at the Imperial Court, had always been conspicuous for his free-handed generosity. Many a barbarian soldier of fortune had already found himself opportunely enriched by the Grand Chamberlain's favor. These longed to show their gratitude by the alacrity of their service; while to those who had not yet experienced his benefits the 'lively sense of favors to come' proved an equally powerful stimulus to action. With the zealous Catholics also throughout the Empire the appointment of Narses was in the highest degree popular, since his piety towards God and his devotion to the Virgin Mother were notorious throughout the Court, as they soon became notorious throughout the army. It was believed by his soldiers that the Illustrious *Cubicularius* had supernatural visitations from the Mother of God, and that she announced to him by some secret but well-known sign the favorable moment for his troops to move forward to battle. Such a belief was, in the existing temper of men's minds, by itself a powerful aid to victory.

Above all, Narses, as being one of the innermost governing council of the Empire, could ensure that his expedition should not be starved, as the second expedition of Belisarius had been starved, into failure. There was no talk now, as there had been then, of the General himself providing the sinews of war. The Imperial exchequer was now freely drawn upon. The long-standing arrears of the soldiers' pay were discharged. Liberal offers were made to all new-comers: and soon the usual motley host which called itself a Roman army was gathering round the Eunuch's standards, full of martial ardor for the fray, full of martial cupidity for the plunder of Italy.

It was a satire on the policy of Justinian that Narses, eager to reach Salona on the Adriatic coast and there assemble his army, was actually stopped at Philippopolis in Thrace by a horde of Hunnish savages—probably the Kotrigur Huns whose raids have been already alluded to—who had penetrated into the Empire and were ravaging far and wide the Thracian villages. Fortunately, however, for the Italian expedition, the Hunnish torrent parted itself into two streams, one of which pursued its journey towards Constantinople, while the other moved south-westward to Thessalonica. Between the two hordes Narses adroitly made his way across Macedonia to Salona, where he spent the remainder of the year 551 in organizing an army for the invasion of Italy.

The news that this supreme effort was to be made for his overthrow quickened the energy of Totila, and at the same time increased his efforts to win the favor of the Roman people. While closely pressing both by sea and land the siege of Ancona, in order that the Imperialists might have no base of operations in all the long interval from Ravenna to Crotona, he also, as has been already said, brought back many of the captive Senators to Rome, and encouraged them to repair the desolations which he had himself caused, and which, we are told, were most conspicuous in the part of the City that lay on the west of the Tiber. The King's care for the rebuilding of the City gained him some little favor from the Romans, who, in the estimation of Procopius, surpassed all other populations in love for their City and pride in its adornment; but the Senators, paupers and still feeling themselves like captives, wandered ghost-like amid the scenes of their vanished splendor, and had neither the spirit nor the resources to assist, themselves, in the work of restoration.

As we have seen in previous chapters, Totila had paid more attention to his fleet than any of the Ostrogothic Kings who preceded him, and was by no means disposed tamely to yield to Byzantium the dominion of the seas. Three hundred ships of war were sent by him to cruise off the western coast of Greece, omitting no opportunity of plundering and distressing the subjects of the Empire. Their crews ravaged the island of Corcyra and the little islets near it, landed in Epirus, and laid waste the territory round the venerable fane of Dodona and Augustus's more modern City of Victory, and then, cruising along the coast, fell in with and captured some of the ships that were carrying provisions to the army of Narses at Salona.

The siege of Ancona was, however, the chief operation in which Totila's forces were engaged: and that city, sore pressed both by sea and land, saw itself apparently on the eve of surrender to the Goths. Valerian, who seems to have been responsible for the government and defence of Ancona, was at this time staying at Ravenna, and finding himself unable to afford any effectual help with the forces which he had collected there, sent messengers to John at Salona with an earnest exhortation to avert the ruin to the Emperors affairs which must result from the capture of so important a sea-port. John was convinced, and ventured, in defiance of the express orders which he had received from the Emperor, to dispatch a squadron for the relief of Ancona. Valerian met him at Scardona on the coast of Ulyria, and concerted measures for the coming expedition, and soon the two generals, with fifty ships under their orders, crossed the Adriatic and anchored off the little town of Sena Gallica (the modern Sinigaglia), sixteen miles north-west of Ancona. On the other side the Goths had forty-seven ships of war, which they filled with some of their noblest soldiers and with which they sailed to meet the enemy, under the command of two admirals, Giblas and Indulph. The latter officer was one who had once been a soldier in Belisarius's own bodyguard, but, like so many of his comrades, disgusted by the Imperial ingratitude, had deserted to the standards of Totila. Scipuar, who had been joined in command with these two officers, remained with the rest of the army to prosecute the siege of Ancona by land.

Off Sinigaglia then the two fleets anchored, and both sides prepared for action. John and Valerian haranguing their troops insisted on the immense importance of raising the siege of Ancona and the hopelessness of their own position if they allowed the Goths on this day to obtain the command of the sea. Indulph and Giblas scoffed at the new audacity of the accursed Greeks who had at last ventured forth from the creeks and bays of Dalmatia in which they had so long been hiding. A feeble and unwarlike race, born to be defeated in battle, this sudden display of rashness on their part was the result of mere ignorance, but must be at once repressed by Gothic valor before it had time to grow to a dangerous height.

Notwithstanding these vaunting words, the Greeks, those children of the sea, who, from the days of Cadmus, had spread their sails to every breeze that ruffled the Aegean, vanquished the Goths, those hereditary landmen, whose forefathers had roamed for centuries in the Sarmatian solitudes. The wind was light, and as ship grappled ship the battle assumed the appearance of a hand-to-hand encounter by land rather than a sea-fight. But the Goths, deficient in that instinctive sympathy between the sailor and his ship which belongs to a nation of mariners, failed to keep their vessels at proper distances from one another. Here a wide-yawning interval invited the inroad of the enemy; there several ships close together became a terror to their friends, and lost all power of maneuvering. The orders of the generals became inaudible in the hubbub of angry voices as each Gothic steersman shouted to his fellow to leave him ampler sea-room. Intent on averting collision with their countrymen by poles and boat-hooks, the Goths were unable to attend to the necessities of the battle. Meanwhile the Imperial mariners, who had kept their ranks in perfect order, were perpetually charging into the gaps in the line of the barbarians, surrounding and cutting out the ships which were left defenseless, or keeping up a storm of missiles on those parts of the line where the hostile ships

were thickly entangled with one another, and where the interlacing masts showed like net-work to the eye of a beholder. The barbarians fell into the torpor of despair, and saw the chance of victory float away from them without making an effort to turn the tide. Then to torpor succeeded panic, and they steered their ships for headlong flight, flight which delivered them yet more utterly into the hands of the Romans. Indulph indeed with eleven of his ships succeeded in escaping from the scene of action; but, despairing of further resistance by sea, landed his men in the first harborage and burned his ships to prevent their falling into the power of the enemy. All the other Gothic ships were either sunk or taken by the Romans, and Giblas himself was taken prisoner.

The Goths who had succeeded in escaping from the scene took the dismal tale of defeat to the army before Ancona, who at once raised the siege and retreated to the shelter of rock-built Osimo. John and Valerian then appeared upon the scene, occupied and perhaps plundered the recent Gothic camp, abundantly revictualled Ancona, and then returned to Salona and Ravenna respectively, having by this achievement struck a heavy blow at the power and yet more at the self-confidence of the Goths in Italy.

About the same time another disaster befell the Gothic cause. The respectable but feeble Liberius was removed from the government of Sicily, and Artabanes the Armenian was appointed in his stead. Avenger of Areobindus, governor of Carthage, Master of the Soldiery, aspirant to the hand of Justinian's niece, conspirator against Justinian's life, in all the varied phases of his career, whether loyal or disloyal, Artabanes had always shown courage and capacity; and he now abundantly justified the generous confidence reposed in him by the forgiving Emperor. He attacked the Gothic garrisons in Sicily with such vigor and blockaded so effectually those who would not meet him in the field that they were all speedily forced to surrender, and Sicily was lost to the Goths.

John, the governor of Africa, endeavored to rival the exploits of Artabanes by sending an expedition to subdue Corsica and Sardinia. These islands, on account of their long subjection to the Vandals, were looked upon as forming part of the African province and as naturally following its fortunes, but the result of the maritime supremacy of Totila during the last few years had been to annex them to the Ostrogothic kingdom. The armament which the Carthaginian governor now dispatched to Sardinia commenced in regular form the siege of Cagliari; but the Gothic garrison, which was a powerful one, sallied forth from the city and inflicted such a severe defeat on the besiegers that they fled headlong to their ships, and the reconquest of the two islands had to be for the time abandoned.

Notwithstanding this slight gleam of success, the defeat at Sinigaglia, which left the Imperial fleet mistress of the sea, and the loss of Sicily, threw Totila and his nobles into a state of deep dejection. We learn at this point of the story that their hold upon the north of Italy had for some years been insecure, if it had not been altogether lost. The Franks of the Sixth Century, according to Procopius, adopted the ungenerous policy of always turning their neighbors' troubles to profitable account, by seizing their most precious possessions when they were engaged in a life and death struggle with some powerful enemy. In pursuance of this policy Theudibert, grandson of Clovis, had descended into the valley of the Po (probably in the early years of Totila's heroic reign), and had annexed to his dominions, or at least had made subject to tribute, the three provinces of Liguria, Venetia, and the Cottian Alps, or, to speak in the language of modern geography, the whole of Piedmont and Lombardy. The Goths, knowing that it was hopeless for them to contend at once against the Empire and the Franks, acquiesced for a time in this usurpation, and even made a kind of league of amity with Theudibert, the question of the precise apportionment of his Italian territory being by common consent adjourned till the war with the Empire should be ended.

Gladly would Totila now have ended that war by some peaceful compromise. With Northern Italy in the power of the Franks, with Central and Southern Italy reduced well-nigh to a desert by seventeen years of war, he was prepared to relinquish all claim to the comparatively uninjured provinces of Sicily and Dalmatia, to pay a large tribute for the portion of Italy which was left to him, and to form a league of perpetual alliance with the Empire. It can hardly be doubted that for the Eastern Emperors themselves, from the mere Byzantine point of view, as well as for Italy and the world, such an arrangement would have been better than what was really in store for them if it was rejected,—the truceless enmity of the savage Lombard. But Justinian, even when most weary of his Italian enterprise, would listen to no proposals for abandoning *de jure* any one of his claims. He hated the very name of the Goths, and longed to extirpate them from the soil of the Empire. Thus all the many embassies of Totila, whatever the terms proposed, never returned with a message of peace.

About this time, however, the Emperor himself had recourse to an embassy in order to detach the Franks from the Gothic alliance. King Theudibert was now dead, having been accidentally killed while hunting wild bulls in a forest; and to his son Theudibald, a feeble and sickly youth, Leontius the senator, ambassador of Justinian, addressed his remonstrances and his requests. And certainly the complaints of their former ally, addressed to the Franks of that day, seem to have had some foundation in truth. “Justinian”, said the ambassador, “would never have undertaken his enterprise against the Goths without the promise of your cooperation, for which he paid large sums of money. You refused your promised assistance and stood aside while we with vast labor and peril conquered the country, which you then most unjustly invaded, appropriating some of its provinces. We might blame, but we rather beseech you for your own sakes to depart out of Italy; for ill-gotten gains such as these will bring you no prosperity. You say that you are in alliance with the Goths: but the Goths have been your enemies from the beginning, and have waged against you one unceasing and unrelenting war. Just now, through fear, they condescend to be your flatterers, but if they once get clear of us, you will soon find out what is their feeling towards the Franks. The ambassador concluded by exhorting Theudibald to undo what his father had done amiss, by firmly renewing the former alliance between the Franks and the Empire.

Theudibald piteously replied that his father could not have been the clever robber of his neighbors’ property whom the ambassadors described since he himself was by no means wealthy. He thought the Emperor would have been rather pleased than otherwise to see his enemies the Goths despoiled of three important provinces, and he could truly say that if he could be proved to have taken anything from the Empire he would straightway restore it. He then commissioned a Frank named Leudard to return as his envoy with Leontius to Constantinople; but nothing seems to have resulted from the visit of the ambassador.

With these negotiations the winter of 551 wore away. Early in the spring of 552 occurred the relief of Crotona, so long the base of the Imperial operations in the south of Italy. Its garrison, hard pressed by the Goths, sent a message to Artabanes, the governor of Sicily, that unless speedily relieved they must surrender the city. Artabanes at the time was unable to help them, but Justinian himself, hearing of their distress, sent orders to the detachment which guarded the pass of Thermopylae to set sail with all speed for Italy and raise the siege of Crotona. Strange to say, so great was their dispatch and so favorable the breezes that they appeared in the bay before the arrival of the day fixed for the surrender of the city. The sight of the ships filled the besiegers with terror. They fled in all directions, eastwards to Tarentum, and southwards to the very edge of the Straits of Messina; and the Gothic governors of some of the other towns of Southern Italy, Tarentum itself and the ‘lofty nest of Acherontia’ began to treat for the surrender of those places to the Imperial generals.

Deep discouragement everywhere was creeping -over the hearts of the defenders of the throne of Totila, and meanwhile the great and well-equipped host which Narses had been so long preparing at Salona was at last on its way. The sum total of the Imperial army does not seem to be given us by our historian, but we hear something of the multifarious elements of which it was composed. The two armies of John and of his father-in-law Germanus formed the nucleus of the host, but besides these there was the other John, nicknamed the Glutton, with a multitude of stout Roman soldiers. There was Asbad, a young Gepid of extraordinary bravery, with four hundred warriors, all men of his own blood. There was Aruth, a Herulian by birth but Roman by training, by inclination, and by marriage, who led a large band of his countrymen, men who especially delighted in the perils of the fight. Philemuth, also a Herulian, perhaps of purer barbaric training, who had served in many previous campaigns in Italy, was followed by more than three thousand men of the same wild and wandering race, all mounted on horseback. The young Dagisthaeus, probably also of barbarian origin, was released from the prison into which he had been thrown on account of his miserable mismanagement of the war waged with Persia in the defiles of Mount Caucasus, and was allowed to have another chance of vindicating his reputation as a general and his loyalty as a subject of the Emperor. In the same army was to be found a Persian prince himself, Kobad, nephew of Chosroes, grandson and namesake of the great King who had waged war with Anastasius. This prince, whom in his youth conspirators had sought to seat on the throne of the Sassanids, had been condemned to death by his merciless uncle, and had been only saved by the humane disobedience of the General in Chief (or Chanaranges) to whom the murderous order had been entrusted, and who eventually paid for his compassion with his life. Many of his countrymen, refugees like himself from the tyranny of Chosroes, followed Kobad to the war in a strange land and in defence of a stranger's claims.

We have left to the last the most important in the eyes of posterity of all this motley horde of army of chieftains. Audoin, King of the Lombards, rode in the train of Narses at the head of two thousand five hundred brave warriors, who had for their personal attendants more than three thousand men also skilled in war. The mention of these two classes shows us that we are already approaching the days of the knights and squires of chivalry. We hear not much, it is true, of the actual deeds of Audoin in the following campaign, but his importance for us consists in the fact that he is the father of the terrible Alboin, who, sixteen years after the time which we have now reached, will on his own account be crossing the Alpine wall and descending with his savage horde into that fertile plain which thenceforward will to all ages be known as Lombardy. Thus continually do we see the Roman *foederatus* becoming the conqueror of Rome. Thus did Theodosius lead Alaric in his train over the Julian Alps and show him the road to Italy.

Huns in great numbers, squalid and fierce as ever, but useful soldiers when deeds of daring and hard endurance were needed, urged on their little steeds at the sound of the Imperial bugles. It was indeed a strange army to be charged with asserting the majesty of the Roman Empire and reuniting to it the old Hesperian land. Could a Cincinnatus or a Regulus have looked upon those wild tribes from beyond the Danube and those dark faces from beside the Euphrates, all under the supreme command of an eunuch from under the shadow of Mount Ararat, he would assuredly have been perplexed to decide whether they or the soldiers of Totila had less claim to the great name of Roman.

But ethnological considerations such as these were beside the mark. A common passion, the hope of the spoil of Italy, fused all these discordant nationalities into one coherent whole. The purse-strings of the Emperor were loosened; and over the whole army hovered the genius of the deep-thoughted Narses, willing to part freely with the treasures of his master, and his

own, if only his shaking hand might pluck the laurels which had been denied, in the vigor of middle age, to the mighty Belisarius.

Imperial army marched round the head of the Adriatic Gulf: but when it came to the confines of Venetia it found the passage barred by order of the Frankish King. The real reason for this hostile procedure was that for the moment it seemed a more profitable course to keep, than to break, the oaths which the Franks had sworn to the Goths; but the pretext alleged, namely, the presence of the Lombard auxiliaries, foes to the Frankish name, in the army of Narses, had probably also some genuine force. Already these races, which for the following two centuries were to contest with one another the right to plunder Italy, eyed one another with jealous hostility, each foreseeing in the other an unwelcome fellow-guest at the banquet.

Nor were the Franks the only enemies who intervened between the Imperial host and the friendly shelter of Ravenna. More to the west, Teias, one of the bravest of the young officers of Totila, barred the way at Verona against any invader who should seek to enter by the Pass of the Brenner. At the same time, as he hoped, he had so obstructed the bridges over the intricate rivers and canals of Lombardy as to make it impossible for Narses to pass him without fighting a pitched battle.

Narses, as Totila was well aware, did not possess a sufficiently large flotilla to transport his army directly across the head of the Adriatic Gulf from the mouth of the Isonzo to Classis; but in his perplexity his skillful lieutenant, John, who was well acquainted with the country between Aquileia and Ravenna, suggested to him an expedient by which the few ships which he had might render signal service to the army. The scheme was this: for the soldiers to march close to the sea, where the country, intersected as it is by the mouths of the Piave, Brenta, Adige, and Po, would offer no field for the hostile operations of the Franks, and to use the ships, which were to accompany them within signaling distance, for the transport of the soldiers across the river-estuaries, perhaps also in some cases across the actual lagoons. This difficult operation was successfully effected; the flank, both of the Frankish generals and of Teias, was turned, and Narses with all his army reached Ravenna in safety. Justin, who had been left in charge of Ravenna by Belisarius, and Valerian, the recent victor at Sinigaglia, joined their forces, which were apparently not very numerous, to those of Narses.

After a trarriance of nine days at Ravenna there came an insulting message from Usdrilas, who was holding Rimini for the Goths: "After your vaunted preparations, which have kept all Italy in a ferment, and after trying to strike terror into our hearts by knitting your brows and looking more awful than mortal men, you have crept into Ravenna and are skulking there, afraid of the very name of the Goths. Come out, with all that mongrel host of barbarians to whom you want to deliver Italy, and let us behold you, for the eyes of the Goths hunger for the sight of you". Narses, on reading these words, laughed at the insolence of the barbarian, but set forward nevertheless with the bulk of his army, leaving a small garrison under Justin at Ravenna. On his arrival at Rimini he found that the bridge over the Marecchia—that noble structure of Augustus which was described in an earlier chapter—was effectually blocked by the enemy. While the soldiers of Narses, some of whom had crossed the river, were looking about for a ford convenient for the passage of the bulk of the army, Usdrilas, with some of his followers, came upon them. A skirmish followed, in which, by a rare stroke of good fortune, the Herulians in the Imperial army slew Usdrilas himself. His head, severed from his body, was brought into the camp of Narses, and cheered both General and soldiers by this apparent token of divine favor upon their enterprise. The General, however, determined not to stay to prosecute the siege of Rimini, but availed himself of the discouragement of the enemy, caused by the death of Usdrilas, to throw a pontoon bridge across the Marecchia and proceed on his march southwards. "For he did not choose", says Procopius, "to molest either Ariminum or any other post occupied by the enemy, in order that he might not lose time and fail in his most

important enterprise by having his attention diverted to minor objects... After passing Ariminum [and, we may add, Fanum,] he departed from the Flaminian Way and struck off to the left. For the position of Petra Pertusa, which have described in a previous book of my history, and which is exceedingly strong by nature, having been occupied long before by the enemy, rendered the Flaminian Way altogether impassable to the Romans. Narses, therefore, being thus obliged to quit the shortest road, took that which was available”.

We see, from this passage of Procopius, that again, as in previous stages of the war, the possession of Petra Pertusa (the Passo di Furlo) exercised an important influence on the movements of the combatants. As it was now in the hands of the Goths, Narses was compelled to leave the broad highway of Flaminius and to keep southwards along the Adriatic Gulf till he could find a road which would take him into the Via Flaminia at a point on the Romeward side of the Passo di Furlo. Such a road, as I read his movements, he found before he reached Sinigaglia. Taking a sharp turn to the right near the mouth of the Sena (Cesano), he would be brought, by a march of about thirty-six miles up the valley formed by that stream and across the uplands, to the town of Cales (Cagli). Here the Imperial army would be once more upon the great Flaminian Way, having in fact turned the fortress of Pertusa, but they would be still among narrow defiles, where the road is often carried by narrow bridges over rocky streams. An attack at this part of their course might have easily thrown the army into disorder, and we may be sure that Narses and his chief officers would breathe more freely when, after fourteen miles' march up a sharp ascent crossing and recrossing the torrent of the Burano, they came at length, at the posting-station Ad Ensem, to the crest of the pass, and saw a broader and less difficult valley spreading below them to the south. Somewhere in the neighborhood of this posting-station (represented by the modern village of Scheggia), Narses probably encamped and prepared for battle, being aware of the near neighborhood of the Gothic host. The words of Procopius, who states that the camp was pitched “upon the Apennine mountains” and yet “upon a level spot” describe with great accuracy the exact situation of Scheggia.

Meanwhile Totila, after receiving the news of the untoward events which had happened in Venetia, tarried for some time in the neighborhood of Rome to give the soldiers of Teias, now outflanked and useless, time to rejoin his standards. When all but two thousand of these had arrived he started upon the northward march, through Etruria and Umbria. His movements were quickened by hearing of the death of Udrilas and the ineffectual attempt of the garrison of Rimini to arrest the progress of the invaders. Knowing that the pass of Furlo was blocked, he was probably uncertain as to the precise point at which Narses would seek to traverse the great Apennine wall that intervened between him and Rome. Scanning doubtless with eagerness every possible outlet through the mountains, he had reached the little town of Tadinum. Further north he had not been able to penetrate, before Narses arrived upon the crest of the pass.

Here then, upon the Flaminian Way, but high up in the heart of the Apennines, must be fought the battle which was to decide once and for ever the embittered quarrel between the nation of the Ostrogoths and Eastern Rome. The place is worthy to be the theatre of great events. It is close to the ‘House of two Waters’ from which flows on one side a stream that eventually swells the waters of the Tiber and passes out into the Tyrrhene Sea, on the other the torrent of the Burano, which pours itself through rocky defiles northwards to the Adriatic. The valley itself is a sort of long trough sloping gradually towards the south. On the eastern side, with their summits for the most part invisible from this point, rise some of the greatest mountains of the Apennine chain, snow-crowned Monte Cucco, Monte Catria with its grand buttress, Monte Corno, Monte Strega looking like a witch's hand with five skinny fingers pointing upward to the sky. On the opposite side of the valley, upon our right as we look towards Rome, rises a lower but more picturesque range of hills. These sharp serrated summits, so clearly defined against the sunset sky, are Monte S. Ubaldo and Monte Calvo, the mountains

of Gubbio. At their base, hidden from us because on the other side of them lies the little city of Gubbio, dear to scholars for its precious Eugubine Tables which enshrine the language of ancient Umbria, and dear to painters for the frescoes of Nelli, one of the most reverent of the artists of Umbria.

The distance between Scheggia and Tadino is about fifteen miles, agreeing closely enough with the distance of one hundred stadia which, according to Procopius, intervened at first between the camps of the two generals. But a more precise identification of the site of the battle I am not able to furnish. I have no doubt that it was fought south of Scheggia and north of Tadino; but Procopius, whose campaigning days were over, and who was evidently not himself present at the battle, does not, I fear, enable us to fix the site more accurately than this.

As soon as Narses had encamped his army he sent an embassy to Totila, strongly recommending him to lay down his arms and abandon the hopeless task of resisting, with his handful of disorderly followers, the whole might of the Roman Empire. If, however, the ambassadors perceived him still bent on battle they were to ask him to name the day. Totila haughtily rejected the counsels of his foe, and when asked upon what day he proposed to fight, replied: "In eight days from this time". Narses suspected a stratagem and prepared for battle on the morrow. He had read his enemy's mind aright. On the very next day Totila suddenly appeared with his whole army and encamped at the distance of two bowshots from the Imperialists.

A hill of moderate height (probably an outlier of the main Apennine range) looked down upon both armies, and commanded a path by which the Imperial host might be taken in rear. The possession of this hill was at once seen to be a matter of great importance to either side, but Narses was beforehand with Totila in seizing this coign of vantage. Fifty picked foot-soldiers were sent to occupy it during the night, and when day dawned the Goths, from their encampment opposite, saw these men drawn up in serried array, and having their front protected by the bed of a torrent running parallel to the only path, before alluded to. A squadron of cavalry was sent to dislodge them, but the Romans kept their rank, and by clashing upon their shields, so frightened the horses of the Goths that they were able to lay low many an embarrassed rider with their spear-thrusts. The cavalry fell into helpless confusion, and retired discomfited. Again and again with fresh squadrons of horse did Totila attempt to dislodge them, but the brave Fifty kept their ground unbroken. The honors of this fight fell pre-eminently to two men, by name Paulus and Ausilas, who stepped forth, Horatius-like, before their comrades to bear the stress of battle. They laid their scimitars on the ground and drew their bows, slaying a horse or a man with each discharge, so long as there was an arrow in their quivers. Then drawing their swords they lopped off one by one the spear-heads which the Goths protruded against them. By these repeated strokes the sword of Paulus was at length so bent as to become quite useless. He threw it on the ground and, with his unarmed hands, seized and broke no fewer than four of the spears of the enemy. This desperate valor more than anything else daunted the Gothic assailants and compelled them to abandon their attempt upon the hill where the Fifty were posted. Paulus was rewarded after the battle by being made one of the guardsmen of Narses.

Now were the two main armies drawn up in battle array, and in that position they were harangued by their respective leaders Narses congratulated his troops on their evident superiority to the band of robbers and deserters who composed the Gothic host; a superiority which, by the Divine favor, was certain to bring them the victory. He reviled the soldiers in the hostile army as the runaway slaves of the Emperor, their King as a leader picked out of the gutter, and declared that it was only by tricks and thievish artifice that they had so long been able to harass the Empire. Lastly, he dwelt upon the ephemeral character of all the barbaric royalties, contrasting them with the settled order, the deep vitality, the *diuturnity* (if such a

word may be allowed us) of the mighty Roman State. Totila, perceiving that a shiver of admiring awe ran through the Gothic lines at the sight of the mighty host of the Empire, called upon his comrades for one last effort of valor, a last effort, since Justinian, like themselves, was weary of the war, and, if discomfited now, would molest them no more forever. "After all, why should any soldier fly? The only motive could be love of life, and he was infinitely safer, to appeal to no higher motive, fighting in the ranks with the enemy than after he had once turned his back before them. Nor were they really the formidable host which they seemed. Huns, and Longobards, and Heruli, a motley horde got together from all quarters, like the miscellaneous dishes of a club-feast, they had no bond of unity, no instinct of cohesion. Their pay was the only inducement to fight that they could understand, and now that they had received that, it would not be surprising if, in compliance with the secret orders of their national leaders, they absolutely melted away from the ranks on the field of undesired battle"

Narses, who had evidently the superiority in numbers as well as in equipment, drew up his troops in the following order. In the centre he stationed his barbarian allies, the Lombards and the Heruli, and, as he was not over-confident of their stability, he directed them to dismount and fight on foot, in order that flight might not be easy if they were minded to fly. All his best Roman troops, with picked men from among the Hunnish barbarians, men who for their prowess had been selected as body-guards, he stationed on his left wing, where he himself and his lieutenant John were in command. This portion of the army was covered by the hill before described, which was held by the fifty valiant men, and which seems to have been 'the key of the position'. Under this hill, and at an angle with the rest of his line, Narses stationed two bodies of cavalry, numbering respectively one thousand and five hundred. The five hundred were to watch the Roman line and strengthen any part which might seem for the moment to be wavering. The thousand were to wait for the commencement of the action, and then to strain every nerve in order to get to the rear of the Goths, and so place them between two attacks. On the left wing were the rest of the Roman troops under John the Glutton, together with Valerian and Dagisthaeus. On each flank was a force of four thousand archers, fighting, contrary to the usual custom of Roman archers in those days, on foot. Looking at the tactics of the Roman general as a whole, we perceive an almost ostentatious disregard of what might happen to his centre. He was determined to conquer with the wings of his army, determined that Totila, not he, should make the attack, and that when the enemy attacked he should be outflanked and surrounded by the picked troops on his right and left. We have no particulars as to the Gothic order of battle. We know only that Totila drew up his troops in the same manner as the enemy had done, that, unlike Narses, he relied a good deal on the effect to be produced by his cavalry, and that he ordered his warriors to use no weapon but the spear, herein, according to Procopius, committing a fatal blunder, and, in fact, handing the game over to the Romans, whose soldiers, more elastic in their movements and trusted with greater freedom by their commanders, might thrust with the spear, transfix with the arrow, or hew down with the broad sword, each as he found he could fight most successfully.

There was a pause, a long pause, before the two armies encountered one another. It was for Totila to commence, and he, knowing that the last two thousand men of the army of Teias were on their way to join him, purposely postponed the signal. Various demonstrations filled up these waiting hours of the morning. Totila rode along his line, with firm voice and cheery countenance, exhorting his men to be of good courage. The Eunuch-General appealed not to the patriotism or the manhood of his miscellaneous horde of warriors, but to their avarice, riding in front of them and dangling, before their hungry eyes, armlets, twisted collars, and bridles, all of gold. "These", said he, "and such other prizes as these shall reward your valor if you fight well today".

Then rode forth Cocas (once a Roman soldier but now serving Totila) and challenged the bravest of the Imperial host to single combat. An Armenian, Anzalas by name, accepted the challenge. Cocas rode impetuously on, couching his spear, which he aimed at the belly of his antagonist. A sudden swerve of the Armenian, made at the right moment of time, saved his life and enabled him in passing to give a fatal thrust at the left flank of his antagonist. With a crash fell Cocas from his horse and a great shout from the Roman ranks hailed this presage of victory.

Still the Gothic two thousand lingered, and in order further to pass the time, Totila, who had been practiced from his youth in all the arts of horsemanship, gratified the two armies with an extraordinary performance. Richly dressed, with gold lavishly displayed on helmet, mail, and greaves, with purple favors fluttering from his cheek-strap, his *pilum* and his spear, he rode forth on his high-spirited horse between the opposed squadrons. Now he wheeled his horse to the right, then sharply to the left. Anon he threw his heavy spear up to the morning breezes, stretched out his hand and caught it by the middle in its quivering fall. Then he tossed the spear from hand to hand, he lay back in his saddle he rose with disparted legs, he bent to one side, then to the other; he displayed in their perfection all the accomplishments of the Gothic *manège*. Strange anticipation of the coming dawn of chivalry! Strange but fatal contrast between the lithe form of the young barbarian hero, rejoicing in his strength, and the bowed figure of the withered and aged Eunuch whose wily brain was even then surely devising the athlete's overthrow. Still further to delay the battle, Totila sent a message to Narses inviting him to a conference; but the Eunuch declined the offer, saying that Totila had before professed himself eager for the fight, and now might have his wish.

At length, just at the time of the noonday meal, the expected two thousand arrived in the camp. Totila, who had drawn back his army within their entrenchments, bade them and the new-comers take food and don armor with all speed, and then led them forth precipitately, hoping to catch the Imperial host in the disorder and relaxation of the midday repast. Not so, however, was Narses to be outwitted. This sudden attack was the very thing which he had looked for, and to guard against its evil consequences no regular luncheon, no noontide slumber, had been permitted to his men. Their food had been served out to them while still under arms and keeping rank, as to the knights of a later day—

‘Who drank the red wine through the helmet barred’.

Moreover, true to his policy of taking the Goths in flank, he had turned his straight line into a crescent, drawing back his barbarian centre and trusting to the eight thousand archers on his wings to give a good account of the enemy.

These tactics were completely successful. Totila's charge of horse failed to reach the Imperial center, and while they were engaged in this hopeless quest, the eight thousand archers kept up a murderous discharge of arrows on their flanks. The Lombards and Heruli also, whose disposition for fighting had been up to the last moment uncertain, threw themselves into the fray with unexpected eagerness, so that Procopius is doubtful whether they or their Roman fellow-soldier displayed the more brilliant valor.

For some time the Gothic mounted spearmen maintained the unequal fight, but when the sun was declining their heavy masses came staggering back towards the supporting infantry. It was not an orderly retreat; there was no thought of forming again and charging the pursuing foe. It seemed to the Romans that the hearts of the Goths had suddenly died within them, as if they had met with an army of ghosts, or felt that they were fighting against Heaven. The flight of the cavalry was so headlong and so violent that some of their own friends were trampled to death under their horsehoofs.

The contagion of fear imparted itself to the supporting infantry. They probably knew themselves outnumbered, they saw themselves outflanked, and they fled in irretrievable disorder. The Imperialists pressed on un pitying, slaying Gothic warrior and Roman deserter

with equal fury. Some of the vanquished cried for quarter and obtained it at the time, but were soon after perfidiously slain by their captors. In all the Gothic army none were saved except by headlong flight.

And where the while was Totila, he of the gold-embossed shield and purple-fluttering spear? One account states that, being disguised as a common soldier, he was wounded by an arrow, shot at a venture, at the beginning of the fight, and that his departure from the field, together with the depression resulting from such an apparent sign of the anger of Heaven, caused the subsequent disorder. Another account, that which Procopius seems to have preferred, related that the Gothic King, still unwounded and possibly in mean disguise, fled at nightfall with four or five followers, on swift horses, from the battlefield. They were closely pursued by some Imperialist soldiers, ignorant of the rank of the fugitive. One of these, Asbad the Gepid, was about to strike Totila in the back with his spear. A young Goth belonging to the royal household cried out, "Dog! what mean you by trying to strike your own lord?". The incautious exclamation revealed the secret of Totila's identity, and of course Asbad thrust in his spear with all the greater vigor. Scipuar (the recent besieger of Ancona) wounded Asbad in the foot, but himself received a stroke which hindered his further flight. The companions of Asbad tarried to dress the wound of their fallen friend. Totila's companions, who thought they were still pursued, hurried him on, though mortally stricken and now scarcely breathing. At length, at the village of Caprae, thirteen miles from the battlefield, they stopped and tried to tend his wound. But it was too late; in a few minutes the hero's life was ended.

The traveler who is journeying from Gubbio to Tadino, when he is drawing near to the latter place, sees from the bridge over the Chiascio a little hamlet among the hills to the right, which bears the mar of Caprara. There seems no good reason for doubting that this is the place, formerly known as Caprae, to which the faithful Goths bore their pallid master, and where they laid him down to die.

According to the other story heard by Procopius, Totila was forced by the intolerable pain of his wound to quit the field of battle, and ride by himself to Caprae, but at that place was compelled to alight and have his wound dressed, in the course of which operation he died.

The Romans had no knowledge of the death of their great enemy till a woman of the Goths informed them of the fact, and offered to show them the grave. They disinterred the dead body, looked at the discolored features, saw that they were indeed those of Totila; then, without offering any further indignity to the corpse, they hurried off with the glad tidings to Narses, who was piously thanking God and the Virgin for the victory.

In the month of August messengers arrived to Constantinople bearing the tidings of victory, attesting them by the bloodstained robe and gemmed helmet of the Gothic king, which they cast at the feet of the Emperor in his stately Hall of Audience.

And thus ended the career of the Teutonic hero Baduila—for we must restore him his own name in death—a man who perhaps more even than Theodoric himself deserves to be considered the type and embodiment of all that was noblest in the Ostrogothic nation, and who, if he had filled the place of Athalaric or even of Witigis, would assuredly have made for himself a world-famous name in European History. If the Ostrogothic Kingdom of Italy might but have lived, Baduila would have held the same high place in its annals which Englishmen accord to Alfred, Frenchmen to Charlemagne and Germans to the mighty Barbarossa.

CHAPTER XXV

FINIS GOTHORUM. THE LAST OF THE GOTHS

The first care of Narses, after the battle was ended and he had expressed his thankfulness for the victory to Heaven, was to remove from Italy as speedily as possible some of the earthly instruments by whom the victory had been won. Of all his wild horde of *Foederati* none were more savage than the Lombards. Every peasant's cottage where they passed was given to the devouring flame, and the hapless women of Italy, torn even from the altars at which they had taken refuge, must needs gratify the lust of these squalid barbarians. By the gift of large sums he persuaded these dishonoring allies to promise to return to their own land; and Valerian, with his nephew Damian, were sent with a body of troops to watch their journey through the Julian Alps, and to see that they did not deviate from the road to engage in the delightful work of devastation. This duty accomplished, Valerian commenced the siege of Verona, the garrison of which soon expressed their willingness to surrender. Now, however, the Frankish generals appeared upon the scene, and in the name of their master forbade Verona to be reunited to the Empire. Owing to the number of fortresses which they now held in Upper Italy, they considered all the land north of the Po to be in fact Frankish territory, and would suffer no city within its borders to surrender to the generals of Justinian. Not feeling himself strong enough to challenge this conclusion, Valerian moved off to the banks of the Po to prevent the Gothic army of Upper Italy from crossing that river and marching to the relief of Rome.

Meanwhile the little remnant of Goths who had escaped from the fatal field on which Totila fell had made their way to Pavia, where, even as it had been twelve years ago after the surrender of Ravenna, the last hope of their race was enshrined. By common consent Teias, son of Fritigern, the bravest of Totila's generals and a man probably still young or in early middle life, was acclaimed as King. The Gothic army was now deplorably weakened, not by deaths only, but probably by desertions also, for the full purse which Narses was ever displaying doubtless drew back many of the former soldiers of the Empire to their old allegiance. Teias accordingly strained every nerve to obtain a cordial alliance with the Franks, without which he deemed impossible to meet Narses in the open field. The royal treasure in the stronghold of Pavia was all expended in lavish gifts to Theudibald and his court to obtain this alliance. The Franks took the money of the dying Gothic nationality, and decided not to give it any assistance, but to let the Emperor and the King to fight out their battle to the end, that Italy might fall an easier prey to themselves.

For some time Valerian seems to have prevented Teias and his little army from crossing the Po; and meanwhile the surrender of Gothic fortresses was going on all over Italy. Narni and Spoleto opened their gates to Narses immediately after the battle of the Apennines. At Perugia a similar event to that which had brought the city into the power of the Goths restored it to the possession of the Emperor. The renegade soldier Uliphus, who eight years before had murdered Cyprian, had since then held Perugia for the Gothic King, having his old comrade and fellow-deserter Meligedius for his second in command. Meligedius now commenced secret negotiations for the surrender of the city to Narses. Uliphus and his party got scent of the intrigue, and endeavored to prevent it by force. A fight of the factions followed, in which Uliphus was killed; and his comrade then without difficulty handed over the Umbrian stronghold to an Imperial garrison.

At Tarentum, strangely enough, the negotiations for surrender which had been commenced by the Gothic governor were not quickened by the battle of the Apennines.

Ragnaris had possibly some dim visions of himself wearing the crown of Totila, and he believed moreover that the Franks allied with the Goths would yet turn the tide of war. He accordingly repented of his promise to the besiegers, and began to cast about him for an excuse to get the hostages whom he had given back into his own power. He therefore sent to Pacurius, governor of Otranto, asking for a few Imperial soldiers to escort him to the latter city. Pacurius, suspecting no evil, fell into the snare, and sent him fifty soldiers, whom Ragnaris at once announced that he should hold as hostages till his hostages were surrendered. Pacurius, enraged, marched with the larger part of his army against Tarentum. The cruel and faithless Ragnaris slew the fifty involuntary hostages, but was himself routed in the battle which followed, and fled to Acherontia. Tarentum opened her gates to the standards of the Empire; and in Central Italy the extremely important position of Petra Pertusa speedily followed her example.

These various sieges and surrenders all over Italy Rome were probably going on throughout the summer and autumn of the year 552; but meanwhile the great prize, which every Imperial general was bound to strive for, had already been won upon the soldier-trampled banks of the Tiber. Having by his orders to Valerian secured himself from an irruption of Teias and his Goths from Upper Italy, Narses marched to Rome with a great army, chiefly composed of archers, and encamped before its walls. The Gothic garrison concentrated their strength on what might be called the city of Totila, a comparatively small space round the Tomb of Hadrian which the young King, after his first destruction of the City, had labored to rebuild and to fortify. The Goths were utterly unable to defend, and even the army of Narses was unable to invest, the whole circuit of the walls, and the fighting which went on was therefore on both sides of a detached and desultory character. At one point the attack was made by Narses himself, at another by John, at a third by Philemuth and his Herulians; but after all, the honors of the siege fell to none of these, but to Dagisthaeus, so lately the inmate of a prison, now again the leader of the legions. With a band of soldiers bearing the standards of Narses and of John, and carrying scaling-ladders, he suddenly appeared before an unguarded portion of the walls, applied his ladders to their sides, mounted his men on the battlements, and hastened at their head through the ruined City to open the gates to his brother generals. The Goths, at the sight of the Imperial soldiers, gave up all hope of holding the City, and fled, some to Porto, some to the Tomb of Hadrian; and even this, their fortress, was soon surrendered on condition that the lives of the garrison should be spared.

The two harbors of Porto and Civita Vecchia before long fell also into the hands of the Imperialists. The keys of Rome were again sent to Justinian; a ceremony which must have brought a smile to the lips of any philosophical observer who remembered that this was the *fifth* capture that Roma Invicta had undergone during the reign of this single Emperor, and who knew what a mere husk of the once glorious City was now dignified with the name of Rome.

Men remarked with wonder, and Procopius with his accustomed comments on the mutability of fortune, that Dagisthaeus had now taken the city which Bessas had lost, while in the East, in the gorges of Caucasus, Bessas had recovered the fortress of Petra which had been lost by the slothfulness of Dagisthaeus.

To the scanty remains of the Roman Senate and people the recovery of the Imperial City brought no good. They were dispersed over Italy, chiefly in Campania, and were lodged in fortresses garrisoned by Goths. The war had now become one of extermination between the two races, and the word went forth to slay them wherever they could be found. Maximus, the grandson of the Emperor, whose life had been spared after Totila's capture of Rome, now fell a victim to the rage of the barbarians; and Teias tarnished his fame as a warrior by putting to death three hundred lads of handsome appearance, sons of Roman nobles, whom Totila had

selected really as hostages, but ostensibly as pages of his court, and had held in safe-keeping in Northern Italy.

Meanwhile the sands of Ostrogothic dominion were running low. With a war of extermination begun, and with the invading race reduced as it now was to a few thousand men, the end could not be long doubtful. The war dwindled down into an attempt on the one part to seize, and on the other to defend, the last remainder of the Gothic treasure. The great hoard at Pavia had nearly all gone to propitiate the faithless Franks; but there was still a yet larger hoard, collected by Totila, deposited in the old fortress of Cumae in Campania, hard by the Lake of Avernus and the Sibyl's Cave. This fortress was commanded by Aligern, the brother of Teias; with whom was joined Herodian, erewhile Roman governor of Spoleto, the greatness of whose crime against the Emperor kept him faithful to the Gothic King. In order to capture the treasure, Narses sent a considerable detachment of his army into Campania. While he himself remained in Rome, trying to bring back something of order into the wilderness-city, he sent John and Philemuth the Herulian into Tuscany to hold the passes and prevent Teias from marching southwards to the assistance of his brother. With much skill, however, Teias contrived, by making a great detour into Picenum and the Adriatic provinces, and twice crossing the Apennines, to march with his little army into Campania. Learning this, Narses summoned his generals from every quarter, John, Philemuth, Valerian, to join him in one great movement southwards, in order to crush out the last remains of Gothic nationality on the Campanian plains.

The rapidity of the movements of the Imperial generals seems to have frustrated the plans of Teias. He was in Campania indeed, but he had not, if I read his movements aright, effected a junction with his brother, nor succeeded in reaching Cumae. He had descended from the mountains near Nocera, some ten miles to the east of the base of Vesuvius, while Cumae, where his brother guarded the great hoard, lay westwards of Naples, fully fifteen miles on the other side of the great volcano.

Here, then, at length Narses and all the best generals of the Empire, with their large and many-nationed army, succeeded in bringing to bay the little troop which followed the last King of the Goths. The small stream of the Draco, now known as the Samo, marked the line between the contending armies, a stream unimportant in itself, but which, working its way between deep and steep banks, offered an effectual opposition to the free movements of cavalry. Behind them the Goths had the lofty mountain-range now known as the Monte S. Angelo which fills up the peninsula of Amalfi and Sorrento, before them the Sarno and the fertile plain which reaches to the base of Vesuvius, and in which are visible in the distance the green mounds of Pompeii.

In this little peninsula the army of Teias stood at bay for two months. Their ships still commanded the sea, and having communication with some harbor in their rear, probably Salerno or Stabia, they freely obtained all the provisions that they required. They had fortified the bridge over the Sarno with wooden towers, upon which they placed *balistae* and other engines of war, thus successfully barring the approach of the enemy. Every now and then, however, a challenge would be given or received, and a Gothic champion would stalk across the bridge to meet some Imperial warrior in single combat. At the end of the two months a traitorous admiral surrendered the Gothic command fleet to the enemy, who had been moreover collecting ships in large numbers from Sicily and all parts of the Empire. The Goths, whose situation was becoming desperate, fell back from their previous line, and took up their position in the Mons Lactarius, an outlier of the St. Angelo range which rises abruptly above the valley of the Sarno. They were safe for the time, since the army of Narses dared not follow them into that rocky region; but they soon repented of their retreat, finding only death by starvation awaiting them in the mountains. With a sudden resolve, and hoping to take the

Imperial army by surprise, they rushed down into the plain, and a battle, the last pitched battle between the Ostrogoths and the armies of the Empire, began.

The Imperialists were to a certain extent caught unawares, but their discipline and superior numbers prevented them from being outmaneuvered. The legions and the bands of the *foederati* could not group themselves in their accustomed order, nor gather round the standards of their respective generals. Each man had to fight how he could and where he could, obeying not the commands of his officer but his own instincts of valor. The Goths dismounted from their horses and formed themselves into a deep phalanx, and the Romans, whether from policy or generosity, dismounted from their horses also and fought in the same formation. It was a battle between despair on the one side, and on the other raging shame at the very thought of being beaten by such a mere handful of antagonists. King Teias stood with a little band of followers in front of the Gothic ranks, and performed, in the judgment of the Greek historian, deeds worthy of the old days of the heroes. Covering his body with his broad Gothic shield he made a sudden rush, now here, now there, and transfixing with his spear many of his foes. Vainly meanwhile were the Roman lances thrust at him, and the Roman arrows did but bury themselves in his mighty buckler. When this, being full of arrows, became too heavy for his arm, an armor-bearer, deftly interposing a new shield, relieved him of the old one.

A third of the day had worn away in this strife of heroes, and now was the buckler of Teias heavy with the weight of twelve hostile arrows hanging from it. Without flinching by a finger's breadth from his post in the forefront of the battle, and standing like one rooted to the ground, the King, still dealing death around him, called eagerly to his squire for another shield. He came, he removed the arrow-laden shield and sought to interpose a fresh one, but in the moment of the exchange a javelin pierced the breast of Teias, and he fell mortally wounded to the ground.

When the Imperial soldiers saw that they had laid their great enemy low, they rushed to the corpse, cut off the head, and carried it along the line of battle to impart new courage to their comrades and strike panic into the hearts of his followers. Yet not even then were the Ostrogoths daunted. They fought on with the courage of despair till night descended; they renewed the battle next day with sore and savage hearts. At length in some pause of the strife, caused by the utter weariness of either army, the Goths sent a message to Narses that they perceived that God was against them, and if they could obtain honorable conditions they would renounce the war. Their conditions were these : —No service under the banners of the hated Empire; leave to depart from Italy and live as free men in some other kingdom of the barbarians; leave also to collect their moveable property from the various fortresses in which it was stored up, and take it with them to defray their expenses on the road.

Narses deliberated on this proposal in a council of war, and by the advice of John, unwilling to goad these men, already desperate, to utter madness, wisely accepted it. His only stipulations were that they should bind themselves to leave Italy and to engage in no future war against any part of the Roman Empire. One thousand Goths refusing to accept these terms, broke out of their camp, escaped the vigilance of the enemy, and under the command of Indulph (the general who commanded in the sea-fight off Sinigaglia) succeeded in marching across Italy to Ticinum. That city, as well as Cumae, held out for a few months longer against the troops of the Emperor, but the story of their final surrender will best be told in connection with the invasion of the Alamannic brethren, whose deeds and whose reverses, though they come in the order of time soon after the death of Teias, seem to belong to another cycle of narrative. All the other Goths—the remnant of that mighty host which, sixteen years before, marched as they thought to certain victory under the walls of Rome—made their way sadly over the Alpine passes, bidding an eternal farewell to the fair land of their birth.

They disappeared, those brave Teutons, out of whom, welded with the Latin race, so noble a people might have been made to cultivate and to defend the Italian peninsula. They were swallowed up in we know not what morass of Gepid, of Herulian, of Slavonic barbarism. There remained in Italy the Logothetes of Justinian.

BOOK V
THE LOMBARD INVASION
553-600

THE four invading nations whose history has been already related left no enduring memorial of their presence in Italy. The Visigoth, the Hun, the Vandal, the Ostrogoth failed to connect their names with even a single province or a single city of the Imperial land. What these mighty nations had failed to effect, an obscure and savage horde from Pannonia successfully accomplished. Coming last of all across the ridges of the Alps, the Lombards found the venerable Mother of empires exhausted by all her previous conflicts, and unable to offer any longer even the passive resistance of despair. Hence it came to pass that where others had but come in like a devouring flood and then vanished away, the Lombard remained. Hence it has arisen that he has written his name for ever on that marvel of the munificence of nature

‘The waveless plain of Lombardy’.

Strange indeed is the contrast between the earlier and the later fortunes of this people, between the misty marshes of the Elbe and the purple Apennines of Italy, between the rude and lightly abandoned hut of the nomadic Langobard and the unsurpassed loveliness of the towers of Verona. From the warriors ‘fiercer than even the ordinary fierceness of the Germans’, what a change to the pale ‘Master of Sentences’, Peter the Lombard, intent on the endless distinctions which made up his system of philosophy. Nay, we may go a step further, and by a kind of spiritual ancestry connect London itself with the descendants of this strange and savage people. There is a street in London bearing the Lombard’s name, trodden daily by millions of hurrying footsteps, a street the borders of which are more precious than if it were a river with golden sands. From the solitary Elbe pastures, occasionally roamed over by some savage Langobardic herdsman, there reaches a distinct historic chain of causes and effects, which connects those desolate moorlands with the fullness and the whirl of London’s Lombard Street.

It was not however till the year 568 that the Lombards entered Italy. Between the defeat of Teias at Monte Lettere and that date, there intervened sixteen years of more or less trouble for Italy, the history of which will be told in the first two chapters of this volume. It will then be our duty to remount the stream of time through several centuries, in order to trace the early history of the Lombards.

CHAPTER I.

THE ALAMANNIC BRETHERN.

The Goths, who had fought under their last king, Teias, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, made, as the reader will remember, a compact with their conqueror Narses that they should receive certain sums of money, and march forth out of Italy to live as free men, somewhere among their barbarian kinsmen. Either similar conditions were not offered to the other Goths scattered up and down through Italy, or having been offered and accepted they had been afterwards repented of, for when the history of Agathias commences, the curtain rises on a number of detachments of Gothic soldiers, some settled in Tuscia and Liguria, some wandering about from city to city of Venetia, all of them bent on remaining in Italy, and equally determined to abjure the service of the Emperor. With this intent, knowing themselves to be too weak to fight the Emperor single-handed, they decided to make one more desperate appeal to the Franks.

As the history of Italy now becomes almost inextricably intertwined with that of the Franks, and will so continue for a large part of the period embraced by this volume, it will be well briefly to summarize some of the chief events in Frankish history during the forty-three years which elapsed after the death of Clovis.

The founder of the Frankish monarchy, dying in 511, was succeeded by his four sons, who divided his unwieldy and ill-compacted kingdom between them. The division was conducted on a most singular plan : all kinds of outlying cities and districts being allotted to each brother. It was perhaps not desired, certainly it was not attempted, to give to each brother a well-rounded territory with a defensible frontier. But a mere approximation to the truth, we may say that the eldest son, Theodoric, received for his portion the country on both banks of the Rhine, Lorraine, Champagne and Auvergne, with the city of Metz for his capital. Chlodomir, from the city of Orleans, ruled the provinces watered by the Loire. Childebert had the country by the Seine, Brittany and Normandy, and Paris was his chief city. Chlotochar, the youngest of the brothers, but the one who was destined one day to reunite the whole inheritance, had his capital at Soissons, and governed the country by the Meuse and the plains of Flanders.

But the sons of Clovis had no intention of remaining satisfied with the ample dominions won by their father. In 523 the three younger brothers invaded the neighbouring kingdom of Burgundy, defeated its king, their cousin Sigismund, and seemed on the point of conquering the country. But the vigour of Sigismund's younger brother, Godomar averted for a time the threatened calamity. In the battle of Vesperonce, Chlodomir, the eldest of the three brothers, was slain, and his fall so discouraged the Franks that they fled from the field, and their army retired from the rescued land.

Then followed a well-known domestic tragedy. The two royal brothers, Childebert and Chlotochar, determined to lay hands on the heritage of the dead Chlodomir, and for that purpose to put his little children out of the way. With cruel courtesy they sent a messenger to their mother, the aged Clotilda, to ask whether she would prefer that her grandchildren should receive the priestly tonsure or be slain with the sword, and when she in her agony cried out, "I would rather see them slain than shorn of their royal locks", they chose to consider this as sanctioning their crime, and slew the children with their own hands, the cold-blooded,

saturnine Chlotchar preventing his brother, the weaker villain of the two, from faltering in the execution of their common purpose.

In 531 Theodoric overthrew the kingdom of the Thuringians, defeating and slaying Hermanfrid, who had married Amalaberga, the niece of the great Theodoric.

In 532 a fresh invasion of Burgundy was begun, Theodoric apparently now joining his younger brothers in the enterprise. This invasion was ultimately, though not immediately, successful. In 534, Godomar was defeated while attempting to raise the siege of Autun, and the Frankish kings divided his dominions between them. Henceforward Burgundy was 'a geographical expression'—of much historical interest indeed, and with wide and varying boundaries—but no longer a national kingdom.

The Frankish tribe had now subjected to themselves almost the whole of the fair land which today goes by their name, together with a vast extent of territory in what we now call Germany. We may omit for the present further reference, to the concerns of western Gaul, not troubling ourselves with the feuds and reconciliations of Childebert and Chlotchar, and may concentrate our attention on the kings of Metz, or, as they were perhaps already called, the kings of Austrasia (Eastern-land).

Theodoric died in 534, apparently before the conquest of Burgundy was completed, and was succeeded by his son Theudebert, who hastened home from his camp when he heard of his father's sickness, and by prompt action and timely liberality to his feudes (the warrior-chiefs who stood nearest to his throne), defeated his uncles' endeavours to possess themselves of his inheritance. For Theudebert was no puny boy, to be thrust contemptuously into a cloister, as had been done with St. Cloud, the only one of the sons of Chlodimir who escaped his uncles daggers. He was a bold and enterprising prince with far-reaching schemes of conquest and government, dreaming of invasions of Moesia and Thrace, accomplishing the subjection of his haughty Frankish warriors to a land-tax, and issuing—the first barbarian king who took so much upon him—gold coins like those of the Emperor, with his own name and effigy.

The sore troubles of the Ostrogothic people, caused by Belisarius' invasion of Italy, brought much increase of power to their Frankish neighbors. We have seen that Witigis in the autumn of 536, or ever he marched to his fatal siege of Rome, ceded to them Provence and all the countries on the lower course of the Rhone, which had formed part of the kingdom of Theodoric, and at the same time handed over £80,000 from the Gothic to the Frankish treasury. At this crisis also we have reason to believe that the protection which the Ostrogothic monarchy had afforded to the Alamanni and the Bavarians in the province of Raetia was withdrawn and that they too were absorbed in the great Frankish monarchy which now stretched over the larger part of southern Germany till it reached the frontier of Pannonia.

The long siege of Rome ended, as we have seen, in the spring of 538, disastrously for the Gothic besiegers. But the one event which shed a momentary gleam of prosperity on their cause was the capture of the great city of Milan (which had welcomed an imperial garrison), after a siege which lasted about half a year. This capture was accomplished by the aid of 10,000 Burgundians, subjects of king Theudebert, whom he had permitted to cross the Alps, and serve under the Ostrogothic standards, while representing to the ambassadors of Justinian that they went of their own free will, and that he was not responsible for their action. The very suggestion of such an excuse shows how little solidarity as yet existed in the great unwieldy mass of the Frankish dominion.

Soon, however, this pretence of feebleness was laid aside, and in the same year which witnessed the fall of Milan, Theudebert descended the Alps with 100,000 men, prepared to make war impartially on both the combatants, shedding Gothic and Greek blood with equal unconcern, but determined to pluck out of their calamities no small advantage for himself. Their savage deeds at Pavia, their rout of both armies under the walls of Tortona, the pestilence

which carried off a third of their number, as they lay encamped on the plains of Liguria, and compelled their return to their own land, have already been described. It seems clear, however, that though Theudebert returned to the north of the Alps, he did not relinquish all the advantages which he had gained. It is true that Witigis in the supreme moment of the Gothic despair, just before the surrender of Ravenna, refused to avoid submission to Justinian by accepting the dangerous help of Theudebert, but that refusal did not compel the entire evacuation of Italy by the Franks. Even Procopius who dislikes that nation and seeks to minimize their success, admits that the larger part of Venetia, a good deal of Liguria, and the province known as Alpes Cottiae were retained by Theudebert.

A king whose unscrupulous energy had so greatly enlarged the borders of his realm, a king who, more than any other of his kindred, reproduced the type of character seen in their great ancestor Clovis, was probably obeyed with enthusiasm by his barbarous subjects, and was disposed to hold his head high among the monarchs of the world. He watched the gallant defence of the Gothic nation made by Totila perhaps with increasing sympathy, certainly with increasing dislike for the arrogant pretensions which, both in victory and in defeat, were urged by Justinian. For Justinian, so Theudebert was truly told, called himself (as in the well-known preface to the *Institutes*) victor of the Franks and the Alamanni, of the Gepidae and the Langobardi, and added many other proud titles derived from conquered and enslaved peoples. Why should this pampered Eastern despot, who had never himself set armies in the field, nor felt the shock of battle, give himself out as the lord of so many brave nations, the least of whose chieftains was a better man than he? Such were the self-colloquies that set the brain of Theudebert on fire. He contemplated a sort of league of the new barbarian kingdoms, Frankish, Gepid, Langobard, to quell the arrogance of the Emperor, and he would probably have led an army into Thrace or Illyria—who can say with what result; but that all his great projects were cut short by his early death. The authorities differ as to the cause of this premature ending of what might have been a great career. Both Procopius and Gregory of Tours attribute it to lingering disease; but Agathias who is singularly well informed on Frankish affairs says that when Theudebert was hunting in the forest, a buffalo, which he was about to pierce with his javelin, rushed towards him, overthrowing a tree by the fury of its onset. Not the stroke of the buffalo's horns, but the crash of a branch of the tree on the king's head, gave him a fatal wound, of which he died on the same day.

But whatever the cause of death, the gallant king of the eastern Franks was dead, and his son, a sickly and feeble child named Theudebald, sat on his throne. To him, as we have seen, Justinian sent an embassy in 551, endeavoring to persuade him to recall his troops from northern Italy. The ambassador, Leontius, returned unsuccessful; but though the Frankish soldiers remained south of the Alps, guarding the territories which they had won, they do not appear to have rendered any effective assistance to Totila or Teias in the last struggle of those brave men for Gothic independence.

And now, in the early months of when Teias had met a warrior's death in sight of the cone of Vesuvius, another embassy came from the slender remnant of the Goths who still held out in Upper Italy, beseeching the Frankish king to undertake the championship of their cause. According to the report of the speech supplied—possibly from his own imagination—by Agathias, the ambassadors implored the Franks in their own interest not to allow this all-devouring Emperor to destroy the last relics of the Gothic name. If they did, they would soon have cause bitterly to repent it, for, the Goths once rooted out, it would be the turn of the Franks next. The Empire would never lack specious pretexts for a quarrel, but would go back, if need were, to the times of Camillus or Marius for a grievance against the inhabitants of Gaul. Even thus had the Emperors treated the Goths, permitting, nay inviting their King Theodoric to enter Italy and root out the followers of Odovacar, and then, 011 the most shadowy and unjust

pretexts, invading their land, butchering their sons, and selling their wives and daughters into slavery. And yet these emperors called themselves wise and religious men, and boasted that they alone could rule a kingdom righteously. 'Help us,' said the Gothic orators, in conclusion, 'help us in this crisis of our fortunes; so shall you earn the everlasting gratitude of our nation, and enrich yourselves with enormous wealth, not only the spoils of the Romans, but the treasures of the great Gothic hoard, which we will gladly make over to you.'

The appeal of the Goths fell on unheeding ears, as far as the Frankish king was concerned. The timid and delicate Theudebald shrank from the hardships of war, and had none of his father's desire to measure his strength against Justinianus Francicus et Alamannicus. But there were two chieftains standing beside his throne, whose eyes gleamed at the mention of the spoils of Italy, and who—so loosely compacted was the great congeries of states which called itself the kingdom of the Franks—could venture to undertake on their own responsibility the war which Theudebald declined. These were two brothers named Leuthar and Butilin who were leaders of that great Alamannic tribe which as we have seen, after being protected by Theodoric against Clovis, had recently received the Frank instead of the Goth for their overlord. A wild and savage people they were, still heathen, worshipping trees and mountains and waterfalls (in those Alamanni who dwelt in Switzerland, such nature-worship was perhaps excusable), cutting off the heads of horses and oxen, and offering them in sacrifice to their gods, but gradually becoming slightly more civilized owing to their contact with the Franks. Deep, indeed, must have been the barbarism of that nation which could gain any increased softness of manners from intercourse with the Franks of the sixth century.

Thus then, with high hopes and confident of victory, the two chiefs at the head of their barbarous hordes rushed down into Italy. Already they saw in imagination the whole fail peninsula their own; they discussed the question of the conquest of Sicily; they marvelled at the slackness of the Goths who had allowed themselves to be conquered by such a delicate and womanish thing, such a haunter of the thalamus, such a mere shadow of a man as the Eunuch Narses. The despised general was, however, meanwhile pressing on the war with the utmost vigour, in order to obtain the surrender of the fortresses still held for the Goths in Etruria and Campania, before their barbarian allies could appeal upon the scene. His chief endeavours were directed to procure the early surrender of Cumae, where Aligern, the brother of Teias, still guarded the Gothic hoard, and in order that no point in the game might be lost, he superintended the siege in person.

The city of Cumae, founded by settlers from Euboea on a promontory just outside the bay of Naples was for many generations the stronghold of Hellenic civilization in southern Italy, and it was from her walls that the emigrants went forth to found that colony of Neapolis which was one day so immeasurably to surpass the greatness of the mother-city. For two centuries (700-500 B.C.) Cumae successfully resisted the attacks of her Etrurian neighbors, but at last (about 420 B.C.) she was stormed by the Samnite mountaineers, and from that day her high place in history knew her no more. Now, after so many centuries, the hall forgotten Campanian city became once more the theatre of mighty deeds; and even as the fortress on the lonely promontory saw the waves of the Mediterranean breaking on the rocks at its foot, so were Narses and his Greek-speaking host now foiled by the very fortress which had once sheltered the Creek against the Etruscan.

The old city of Cumae, which stretched down into the plain, had probably vanished long before the Gothic war began: at any rate it seems to have been the rock-perched citadel, not the city, which Narses had now to besiege. The chief gate of the fortress was situated on its least inaccessible, south-eastern side, and against this the chief efforts of the besiegers were directed. The mighty engines of the Imperial army discharged their huge missiles, but were met by equally formidable preparations on the part of the besieged, who from their ramparts hurled

great stones, trunks of trees, axes, whatever came readiest to hand, upon the ranks of the besiegers. It is strange that we hear nothing of Herodian, that deserter from the Imperial cause, whose utter despair of forgiveness must surely have made him one of the chief leaders of the fierce resistance. Aligern, the youngest brother of Teias, strode round the ramparts, not only cheering on the defenders but setting them an example of warlike prowess. The arrows shot from his terrible bow broke even stones to splinters: and when a certain Palladius, one of the chief officers of Narses, trusting too confidently in his iron breastplate, came rushing to the wall at the head of one of the storming parties, Aligern took careful aim at him from the ramparts, and transfixed him with an arrow which pierced both shield and breastplate.

This long delay before so comparatively insignificant a fortress chafed the Eunuch's soul, and he began to meditate other schemes for its reduction. The trachyte rock on which Cumae stands is still honeycombed with caves and grottoes, and one of these at the south-eastern corner of the cliffs, which bore the name of Virgil's Sibyl, was so situated that the wall of the fortress at that point actually rested on its roof. Into this grotto Narses sent a troop of sappers and miners, who with their mining tools hewed away the rock above them, till the foundation stones of the wall of the fortress were actually visible. They were of course careful to underpin the roof with wooden beams so that no premature subsidence should reveal their operations, and to prevent the noise of their tools from being heard the troops made perpetual alarms and excursions against that part of the wall while the work was proceeding. At length, when all was completed, the workmen set fire to a mass of dry leaves and other rubbish which they had collected within it and fled from the Sibyl's cave. As a piece of engineering the work was successful. The walls began slowly to sink into the ground: the great gate, tightly barred against the enemy, fell, carrying a large piece of the wall with it: base and wall, cornice and battlement, rolled down the cliffs into the gorge below. And yet, when the Imperial troops were hoping to press in through the breach thus made, and capture the fortress as if with a shout, they were baulked of their desire. For such was the nature of the igneous rock on which the citadel was built, so seamed with cracks and fissures, that when this piece of the wall was gone, there was still a narrow ravine, steep and untraversable, intervening between them and the towers in which lay hidden the Gothic hoard.

Foiled in this endeavor and in one more attempt to carry the fortress by storm, Narses was reluctantly compelled to turn the siege into a blockade. He left a considerable body of troops who surrounded the citadel with a deep ditch and watched, to cut off any of the garrison who might wander forth in search of fodder. Narses himself, still anxious to complete as far as possible the subjugation of Italy ere Leuthar and Butilin, who had already reached the Po, should penetrate further into the peninsula, marched into Tuscia to reduce the cities in that province, while he directed the other generals to cross the Apennines, occupy the strongest places in the valley of the Po, and, without risking a general engagement, harass the enemy as much as possible by skirmishing warfare.

These generals were of course chiefly those with whom we have already made acquaintance in the course of the Gothic war.

There was John, the nephew of Vitalian, the old ally of Narses against Belisarius, the kinsman of Justinian through his marriage with the daughter of Germanus. There were the ineffective Valerian, and Artabanes the Armenian prince whom Justinian had so generously forgiven for his share in a foul conspiracy against his life. But there was not the king of the Heruli, Philemuth, whose name had been so often coupled with theirs, for he had died of disease a few days previously and had been succeeded in the command of the 3,000 Herulian *foederati* by his nephew Phulcaris, a brave soldier but an unskillful general.

Most of the cities of Etruria surrendered speedily to the Imperial officers. Centumcellae, 'lordly Volaterrae,' Luna, Florence, Pisa, all opened their gates, on condition that they were to

be treated as friends of their restored lord and not to suffer pillage from his troops. There was one exception which caused the impatient Narses some days of tedious delay. The garrison of Lucca had pledged themselves to surrender their city within thirty days if no succour reached them, and had given hostages for the fulfillment of their promise. But when the specified days had passed, being elated by the hope of the speedy arrival of the Alamannic host, they refused to keep their pledge. At this there were loud and angry voices in the Imperial camp, calling for the slaughter of the hostages. But Narses, though chafing at the delay, could not bring himself to kill these men for the fault of their fellows. He determined, however, to work upon the fears of the garrison and therefore ordered the hostages to be brought out into the plain beneath the city walls with their hands tied behind their backs, their heads bent forward, and all the appearance of criminals awaiting execution. As the threat of punishment did not shake the resolution of the garrison he proceeded to a sham execution of his prisoners. The soldiers on the walls could see their friends kneeling down as if for death, and the executioners with their bright blades standing over each. They could not see, for the comedy was enacted too far from their walls, that each prisoner had in fact a wooden lath fastened to the nape of his neck and covered with an apparent head-dress projecting above his real head. The town would not surrender, the bright swords flashed, the heads of the hostages apparently severed from their bodies: obedient to the word of command they fell prostrate on the ground and after a few well-feigned wriggings all apparently was over.

Then arose from the walls of Lucca a cry of agony and indignation. The hostages were among the noblest of the Gothic host, and while their mothers and wives gashed their faces and rent their garments in their grief, the soldiers, with shrill cries, exclaimed against the hard and arrogant heart of the Eunuch who had put so many brave men to death, and against the disgusting hypocrisy of the votary of the Virgin, who had shed so much innocent Christian blood. Narses there-upon drew near to the walls and severely rebuked the garrison for the breach of faith which had been the cause of this slaughter. 'But even now,' said he, 'if you will repent of your evil deeds and surrender the city according to your promise, no harm shall happen to you, and you shall receive your friends once more alive from the dead'. 'Agreed! agreed!' shouted the garrison, 'the city shall be yours if thou canst call the dead back to life'. With that Narses bade his prostrate prisoners arise and marched them all up to the wall of the city. The garrison, who were dimly conscious of the trick that had been played upon them, again went back from their plighted word and refused to surrender the city. Then Narses, with really astonishing magnanimity, sent the hostages all back, unharmed to their Gothic friends. Even the garrison marveled, but he said to them, 'It is not my way to raise fond hopes and then to dash them to the ground. And it is not upon the hostages that I rely: it is this,' and therewith he touched his sword, 'which shall soon reduce you to submission'. But, in fact, the liberated and grateful hostages, moving about among their fellow-countrymen and telling every one of the courtesy and affability of their late captor and the mingled mercy and justice of his rule, soon formed a strong Imperialist party within the walls of Lucca and familiarized the minds of the garrison with the thought of surrender.

While Narses was still busied with the siege of Lucca, an unexpected disaster elsewhere befell a portion of his army. He had ordered his chief generals, John, Artabanes, Phulcaris, to concentrate their forces for the capture of Parma, in order that, from that strong city, placed as it was right across the great Aemilian Way, they might effectually bar the march of the Franks and Alamanni into central and southern Italy, and cover his own operations before the walls of Lucca. The other generals would seem to have performed at any rate part of their march in safety, but the unfortunate Herulian, Phulcaris, moving blindly forward, without making any proper reconnaissance, fell headlong into a trap prepared for him by Butilin, who had posted a considerable body of troops in the Amphitheatre near the town. At a given signal these men

rushed forth and fell upon the Herulians who were marching along the great highway in careless disorder. Fearful butchery was followed by disgraceful flight: only the brave blunderer Phulcaris and his *comitatus* remained upon the field. They took up a position in front of a lofty tomb which bordered on the Aemilian, as that of Caecilia Metella borders on the Appian Way, and there prepared to die the death of soldiers. They made many a fierce and murderous onslaught on their foes, returning in an ever-narrower circle to the momentary shelter of their tomb. Still flight was possible, and some of the henchmen of Phulcaris advised him to fly. But he, who feared dishonour more than death, answered them, ‘And how then should I abide the speech of Narses when he chides me for the carelessness which has brought about this calamity?’. And therewith he sallied forth again to the combat, but was speedily overpowered by numbers. His breast was pierced by many javelins, his head was cloven by a Frankish battle-axe, and he fell dead upon his unsundered shield. All his henchmen were soon lying dead around him, some having perished by their own swords and some by the weapons of the enemy.

The defeat and death of Phulcaris seemed as if it would turn the whole tide of war. The Franks were beyond measure elated by their success. The Goths of Aemilia and Liguria, who had before only corresponded with them in secret, now openly fell away to the invaders. And the Imperial generals, losing heart when they heard of the Herulian’s misfortune, relinquished the march upon Parma and skulked off to Faventia, some hundred miles or so further down the Aemilian Way and almost in sight of Ravenna. Great was the grief and indignation of Narses when he heard of the death of the brave Herulian and the cowardly retreat of the generals. It seemed as if he might have to raise the tedious siege of Lucca, deprived as he now was of his covering army; and what was worse, the dejection and discouragement of his own soldiers when they heard the fatal tidings, appeared to forebode yet further disasters. But the little withered Eunuch had in him a dauntless heart and was inclined by nature to follow the advice given to Aeneas by the Sibyl of Cumae—

‘The mightier ills thy course oppose
Press the more boldly on thy foes.’

First he called his own troops together and addressed them in tones of rough but spirit-stirring eloquence. He told them that they had been spoiled by an unbroken course of victory, and were now ascribing an absurd importance to one solitary defeat, the result of a barbarian’s neglect of the rules of scientific warfare. Nay, this very disaster if it taught them prudence and moderation in the hour of success would be well worth its cost. The Goths were really already subdued; they had only the Franks to deal with, strangers to the land, ill-supplied with provisions, and destitute of the shelter of fortified towns which the Imperial troops enjoyed. Only let them address themselves with vigour to the siege of Lucca, and they would soon see a satisfactory end to their labours. The words of the general revived the fainting spirits of his army, and the siege was pressed more closely than ever.

At the same time Narses sent a certain Stephanus of Dyrrhachium, with 200 horsemen, brave in battle, to chide the timid generals who were cowering behind the walls of Faventia. Stephanus had been charged with a message of fierce rebuke, and the sights and sounds which he saw as he marched through the devastated land, the ruined homesteads, the felled forests, the wailing of the peasantry, the lowing of the cattle driven from their stalls, all gave vehemence to his discourse: ‘What spell has come upon you, good sirs? Where is the memory of your former deeds? How can Narses take Lucca and complete the subjugation of Etruria while you are selling the passage over Italy to the foe? I should not like to use the words “cowardice” and “treason”, but be assured that others will be less fastidious, and if you do not

at once march to Parma and take your allotted share in the campaign, it is not the indignation of Narses merely, but the heavy hand of the Emperor, that you may expect to encounter.'

The generals faltered out their excuses for their inaction. No pay had been received for the troops, and the entire failure of the commissariat, for which they blamed Antiochus, the Praetorian Prefect, who had not fulfilled his promises towards them, had compelled them to relinquish the camp at Parma. There was apparently some ground for these complaints, and accordingly Stephanus betook himself straightway to Ravenna. Having brought back with him Antiochus, and presumably some of the much needed *aurei*, having composed the differences between the civil and military authorities, and ordered the generals to march without further delay to Parma, Stephanus returned to the camp and assured Narses that he might now prosecute the siege with confidence as the returning generals would effectually secure him from the attacks of the barbarians. The Eunuch brought up his engines close to the walls, and poured a terrible shower of stones and darts upon the garrison who manned the battlements. There was division in the counsels of the besieged, the liberated hostages strongly urging the expediency of surrender to their magnanimous foe, while some Frankish officers who happened to be in the city exhorted the Gothic garrison to resist with greater pertinacity than ever. But the complete failure of a sortie planned by the party of resistance, the terrible gaps made by the besiegers' engines in the ranks of the besieged, and the ruin of a portion of the city wall completed the victory of the party of surrender. Narses received their overtures gladly, showing no sign of resentment at the previous dishonourable conduct of the garrison. The siege, which had lasted three months, was ended; the Imperial troops entered the gates amid the acclamations of the inhabitants, and Lucca was once more a city of the Roman Empire.

The surrender of Lucca was followed by a more important event of the same kind, the surrender of Cumae. In the long hours of the blockade, Aligern had had leisure to reflect on the past and to ponder the future of the Gothic race in Italy, and he perceived more and more clearly that the Frankish alliance which his countrymen were so eager to accept meant not alliance but domination. The part which the great Transalpine nation would play in the affairs of Italy was already marked out for it, not by any great moral turpitude of its own, but by geographical position and by the inevitable laws of human conduct. They would offer themselves as champions and remain as masters, would undertake to free Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic, and would, if they were victorious, make it not free but Frankish¹. Of the two lordships, the choice between which alone lay before him, Aligern preferred that which, though practically wielded from Constantinople, was exercised in the name of Rome, which rested on a legitimate foundation, and was still in accordance with the wishes of the people of the land. Influenced by these selfreasonings he signified to the besieging general his desire to visit Narses. A safe-conduct was gladly granted him and he repaired to Classis, where the Eunuch was then abiding. He produced the keys of his rock-fortress, handed them over to Narses, and promised to become the loyal subject of the Emperor, a promise which he faithfully kept, so that, as we shall see hereafter, in the decisive battle with the Alamannic invaders, Justinian had no braver champion than the Ostrogoth, the brother of Teias.

A portion of the army which had been besieging Cumae was ordered to occupy that fortress, the great Gothic hoard being of course handed over at once to the finance-ministers of the Empire. Aligern received the post of governor of Cesena, which is situated on the great Aemilian Way, about twenty miles south of Ravenna. Narses desired him to show himself conspicuously on the wall, that all men might know and perceive that the former champion of the Goths was now the champion of Rome. An excellent opportunity soon arrived for this display of himself in his new character. The Franco-Alamannic host arrived under the walls of Cesena, marching southward, intent on the plunder of Campania. They beheld to their

astonishment the stalwart figure of Gothic Aligern erect upon the walls of this Imperial city, and heard his words of scorn shouted down from his airy pinnacle:

‘You are going on a fool’s errand, oh ye Franks, and are come a day after the feast. All the Gothic hoard has been taken by the Romans, yea, and the ensigns of the Gothic sovereignty. If we should ever hereafter proclaim a king of the Goths he will wear no crown or torque of gold, thanks to our Frankish allies, but will have to be dressed as a private soldier.’

Then the Franks upbraided him for a deserter and traitor; and they debated among themselves whether it was worthwhile to continue the war; but they decided in the end not to relinquish their project, and marched on for the Flaminian Way and the passage of the Apennines.

Winter was now coming on and the chief care of Narses was to house his troops in the fortified cities of Italy. He knew that he was thus surrendering the open country to the ravages of the Alamannic brethren, but this seemed a lesser evil than keeping his men, children of the south and dependent on warmth, shivering through the winter in the open fields, while the Franks, still fresh from the chilly north and from the marshes of the Scheldt, sustained no inconvenience and felt no hardship. He himself repaired to Rimini with his train of household troops in order to receive the military oath from Theudebald, king of the Warni (a namesake of the young king of the Austrasian Franks), who had just succeeded to the wandering royalty of his father Wakar, a chieftain in the Imperial army. Simultaneously with the administration of the oath, presents were given in the Emperor’s name to the young king, and perhaps a donative to all the tribesmen who followed his standard, and thus the bond (for which it is difficult to find a suitable name) that united these Germans from the distant Elbe to ‘the Roman Republic’ was strengthened and renewed.

While Narses was still quartered at Rimini, a band of Franks, 2,000 in number, horsemen and foot-soldiers combined, poured over the plain busied in their work of rapine. From his chamber at the top of the house Narses, with indignant heart, beheld them ravaging the fields, driving off the oxen (those great dun-coloured oxen which plough the fields of Umbria), and carrying away the spoil from hamlet and villa. At length he could bear it no longer, but mounting his war-horse (high-couraged, but trained to perfect obedience) and gathering round him his followers to the number of 300 horsemen, he rode in pursuit of the marauders. Too wise in war to allow themselves to be vanquished in detail, the Franks left their work of spoliation and formed themselves into a compact mass, the infantry in the centre resting on a dense forest and the cavalry covering the two wings. Narses soon found that his horsemen could make no impression on this small but cleverly posted army, but rather that his own men were suffering from the discharge of the barbed Frankish spears. Hereupon he resorted to a stratagem which his admirer, Agathias, confesses to have been of the barbaric type, and more suited to a Hunnish chief than to an Imperial general. He ordered his men to feign panic and flight, and not to return till he gave the signal. The device, however barbaric, justified itself by its success. The Franks, thinking that they saw a chance of ending the war at one stroke by the capture of the great Imperial general, left the safe shelter of the wood and dashed forward in eager pursuit. When all, cavalry and infantry alike, were hurrying in disorder over the plain, Narses gave the signal for return, and the Franks, dreaming of easy victory, found themselves being butchered like sheep by the well-armed and well-mounted horsemen. The cavalry, indeed, made good their return to the wood, but of the infantry 900 fell and the rest with difficulty escaped, disheartened and panic-breeding, to the camp of their generals.

After this Narses returned to Ravenna, set in order whatever had gone wrong under the feeble rule of Antiochus, and went thence to Rome, where he passed the winter. For a few months, the land, though disquieted by the marauding invaders, had rest from actual war.

The interval of rest was employed by Narses in patient and systematic drill of his troops. The arm on which he most relied seems to have been his cavalry; at least, we hear how his men were taught to spring nimbly on their horses, and to wheel them to the right or to the left. But the pyrrhic dance, of which we also hear, was probably performed by the heavy-armed foot-soldier; and all, horsemen and foot-men alike, raised in unison the *barritus* (that proudly ascending war-song), when the spirit-stirring notes of the trumpet were heard challenging them to this martial melody. Meanwhile the barbarian armies, like two desolating streams of lava, were pouring over the unhappy peninsula. Keeping far from Rome and the fortresses in its neighbourhood, they marched in company as far as Samnium. There they separated, and Butilin, taking the western coast-road, ravaged Campania, Lucania, Bruttii, down to the very Straits of Messina; while Leuthar, marching down by the Adriatic, visited, in his destructive career, Apulia and Calabria, penetrating as far as the city of Otranto. All were bent on plunder, but a difference was observed between the two invading nationalities whenever they drew near to consecrated buildings. The Franks, mindful of their reputation for Christian orthodoxy, did, as a rule, spare the churches, while the heathen or heretic Alamanni seemed to delight in filling the sacred precincts with filth and gore and the unburied of their victims. They stripped off the roofs and shook the foundations of the churches, and the sacred bowls, the chalices, the patens, and the vessels for holy water, which were often of solid gold, were recklessly carried off to minister to the vulgar pomp of some barbarian chieftain.

Seven hundred and sixty-one years before, two brothers (but how different from this pair of blundering barbarians) had led two armies into Italy, hoping, by a combined effort, to crush out the name of Rome. Fortunately for the Imperial cause, the folly and the avarice of the Alamannic brethren brought about now that division of their forces which, in the case of Hannibal and Hasdrubal, was only accomplished by the desperately bold strategy of the consuls who conquered at the Metaurus. Leuthar was anxious to return to his barbarian home (perhaps somewhere in the Black Forest), and there store up in safety the spoils of Italy. Butilin, when he received his brother's message to this effect, refused to return, alleging the specious pretext of the alliance with the Goths, to which their oaths were plighted. The result was that Leuthar set forth on his northward march alone, intending, however, when he had safely housed his captives and his spoil, to return with an army to the help of his brother.

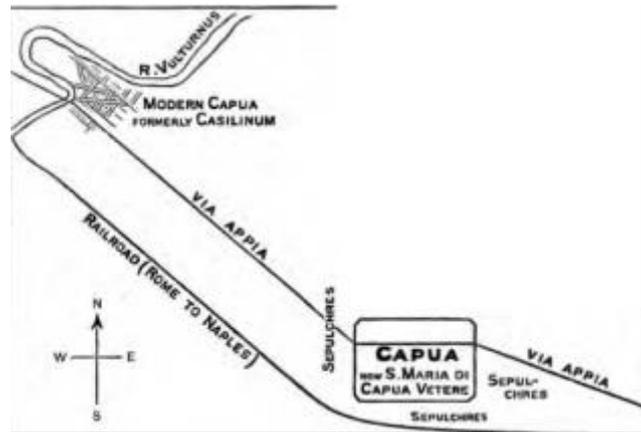
For some distance Leuthar and his army, though encumbered with spoil and captives, marched on in safety; but when they reached the Fane of Fortune, at the mouth of the Metaurus, disaster befell them. The Imperial generals, Artabanes and Uldac the Hun, were quartered in the little town of Pisaurum, about seven miles to the north of Fanum. When these generals saw the van of the Frankish host approaching and making their way with difficulty over the rocky headlands, they fell suddenly upon them, slew many with their swords, and forced the others to scramble down the steep and slippery sides of the cliff. The paths were so precipitous that a great number of the fugitives fell headlong into the Adriatic waves below. The few who did escape rushed back to Fanum and filled all the barbarian camp with their terrified shouts : 'The Romans are upon us'. Leuthar drew out his army in battle array, expecting an attack, but this the Imperial generals did not feel themselves strong enough to make. When, however, the soldiers, renouncing the thought of battle, returned to their quarters, they found that the greater number of their captives had taken advantage of the alarm to decamp, carrying with them no small part of the spoil.

Fearing the Imperial armies stationed in the fortresses of the Adriatic, Leuthar and his men turned inland and pursued their march along the base of the Apennines. At length they crossed the Po, and came into Venetia, which was now a recognized part of the Frankish kingdom. Here, at length, at Ceneda, under the shadow of the dolomites, the baneful career of Leuthar came to a fitting end. His army was attacked by a pestilence—the punishment,

Agathias thinks, of their cruel and sacrilegious deeds. Some showed symptoms of fever, some of apoplexy, some of other forms of brain-disease, but, whatever form the sickness might assume, it was invariably fatal. The leader was attacked as well as his men, and in his case some of the symptoms seem to point to delirium tremens. He rolled himself on the ground, uttering fearful cries; he tore the flesh of his own arms with his teeth; and then, like some savage beast, licked the flowing gore. Thus, in uttermost misery, he died—neither the first nor the last of the invaders upon whom the climate of Italy has taken a terrible revenge for her ravaged homesteads.

We have seen how the debased copy of Hasdrubal suffered defeat by the Metaurus; now we have to mark the reverse which befell the other brother near the equally fatal Capua. The army of Butilin, like that of Leuthar, suffered grievously from pestilence. Summer had now ripened into autumn, and the barbarians, unable to procure wholesome food in their marches—the country having been wasted by order of the provident Narses—partook too freely of the fruit which they found in the orchards and of the must which they pressed for themselves out of abundant clusters of the grapes of Campania. Butilin, seeing that his forces were simply wasting away under the influence of disease, determined to strike a blow for Rome, while he still had something that could be called an army. With this view, he marched northward and fixed his camp on the banks of the Vulturnus, not far from Capua.

A word or two must be said as to the topography of this city, the capital of Campania, once the second city of Italy, and one which, in the days of the Second Punic War, nourished ambitious hopes of outstripping even Rome. The Capua of mediaeval and modern times, the Capua which gave its title to a prince of the Royal Family of Naples, and which is surrounded by lunettes and bastions after the manner of Vauban, is situated close to the Vulturnus, on its left bank. This city, however, corresponds not to the Capua of Hannibal or of Narses, but to the little subject town of Casilinum. The older Capua lay about three miles to the south-east, away from the river, in the midst of the fruitful Campanian plain, and of course upon the great Appian Way. It had two spacious squares,—the Albana, the centre of the political life of the city, which contained the senate house and the place of popular assembly, and the Seplasia, the great commercial centre, where men bought and sold the earthenware, the wine, the oil, and pre-eminently the precious ointments for which Capua was famous on all the shores of the Mediterranean. Just outside the town, at its north-west corner, was the great amphitheatre, built, or, at any rate restored, by Hadrian, with dimensions closely corresponding to those of the Colosseum at Rome, and capable of accommodating 60,000 spectators, but the present ruins of which are less than half the height of the ruins of its Roman rival. All round the town are the multitudinous graves, in which archaeologists have been excavating for a century, leaving many still unexplored. The earthenware vases and ornaments of bronze and gold found in these sepulchres, and bearing witness to the three civilizations—Etruscan, Samnite, Roman—whose influence has passed over Capua, are to be found in large numbers in the museums of England and Italy. The city in old days abounded in temples, and one, the greatest of all, that of Diana, stood on the commanding eminence of Mount Tifata, some two or three miles to the north of Capua. The thick forests which surrounded it have long ago been felled; the substructures of the temple are still visible, but its pillars now (apparently) adorn the very interesting eleventh-century basilica of S. Angelo in Formis, which stands near the site of the ancient temple.



In this neighbourhood then Butilin pitched his camp, but as he was close to the river he was probably nearer to Casilinum (the site of modern Capua) than to Capua Vetere. Though he had 30,000 men under him and the army of Narses numbered only 18,000, he entrenched himself like one in presence of an overwhelming danger. All round his camp, except at one narrow gateway, he planted the heavy waggons which had thus far accompanied his army. To prevent the enemy from putting horses to these waggons and drawing them away, he ordered that they should be banked up with earth as high as the axles of the wheels, and the rude *agger* thus formed was further fortified with stakes. The river guarded his right flank, but in order to defend himself from an attack by way of the bridge he ordered a wooden tower to be erected, which he manned with some of the most warlike of his troops. Having made all these arrangements he waited for the arrival of the brother whom he was never again to behold.

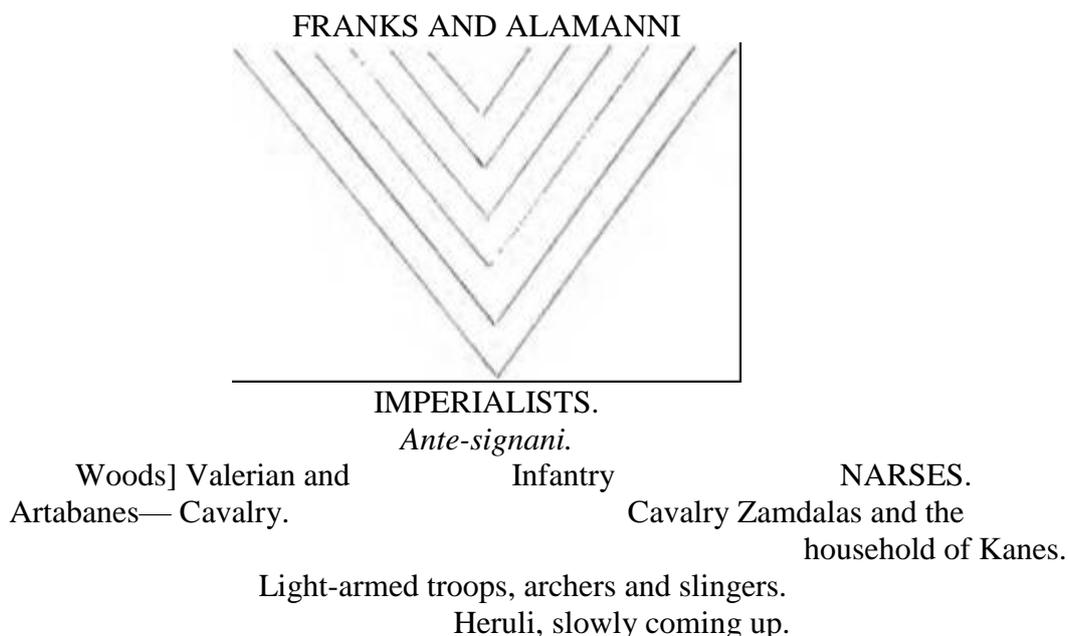
Instead of Leuthar, Narses soon appeared upon the scene, having marched with all his army from Rome. Great was the excitement in both armies at the thought of the now imminent battle. Almost equally great was the excitement throughout the cities of Italy, at the prospect of the speedy decision of the question whether Justinian or Theudebald was to be their future lord. The engagement was hastened by an impulse of generous indignation. Narses could not bear to witness the Frankish ravage of the villages of Campania, and ordered Charanges the Armenian, a brave and war-wise officer, whose tents were pitched nearest to the foe, to chastise their presumption. The horsemen of Charanges easily overtook the creaking wains in which the Alamanni were carrying off the plunder of Campania, and slew their drivers. One of these waggons was filled with very dry hay, and by a happy inspiration Charanges ordered that it should be driven up close to the wooden bridge-tower and then set on fire. The fire caught, the garrison were obliged to evacuate the tower and rush to their comrades in the camp, and the bridge fell into the hands of the Romans. The mingled rage and terror which was thus engendered in the Frankish host compelled their generals to lead them forth to battle at once, though the day had been pronounced unlucky by the Alamannic soothsayers, who predicted, so we are told, that if Butilin fought on that day his troops would perish to a man.

The two armies which were now about to meet in deadly combat were strangely dissimilar in arms and equipments. The Franks were almost entirely infantry-soldiers: while Narses, like Belisarius, relied chiefly on his *Hippotoxotai*, the mounted archers whose Parthian tactics of flight and pursuit so often wrought deadly mischief to the heavy Teutonic hosts. Heavyarmed, however, the Franks and Alamanni were not. Few of them wore either helmet or breastplate, and trousers of linen or leather were the only covering of their legs. A sword hung at each man's thigh and a shield covered his left side. They had neither bows nor slings, but sent their two-edged axes hurtling through the air, and above all they wielded the terrible *ango* of which a description has already been given.

While the two armies were striding to the encounter, Narses performed a signal act of retributive justice, which seemed at first as if it would lose, but which eventually gained him the day. A certain Herulian nobleman among his *foederati* had, for some trifling neglect of duty, put one of his slaves to death with circumstances of savage cruelty. News of the crime was brought to Narses after he had mounted his horse for battle, but wheeling swiftly round he sought the murderer and charged him with the deed. The Herulian neither denied nor excused his offence, but stoutly maintained that in all that he had done he had acted within his rights as a master, and added, that if his other slaves did not take warning by their comrades fate he would mete out to them the same punishment. The cruelty and insolence of the man raised the indignation of Narses, who also felt, moreover, that to shed the blood of such a monster would be an offering acceptable in the sight of heaven. He therefore ordered his guardsmen to slay the Herulian, who at once received a fatal sword-thrust in his side. His countrymen murmured loudly. They hung back from the march, and it seemed as if they would desert on the very eve of battle. Narses, however, would not change his tactics for them. He relied on the protection of Divine Providence, but he also reckoned on the unwillingness of a warlike tribe like the Herulians to melt away from the field of battle, when that battle was even now almost joined.

In arraying his troops for the combat, Narses repeated, perhaps not altogether of his own will, the tactics which had proved so successful in the battle of the Apennines. Again he left his centre weak and trusted to his flanks for victory. The barbarians on the other hand had formed themselves into a solid wedge shape, like a Greek *delta*, and meant to pierce the centre of the Imperial host and so to conquer. They were greatly stimulated to the encounter by the arrival of two deserters of the Herulian tribe, who assured Butilin that he would find the Imperial host all in confusion owing to the determination of the Herulians not to fight under the banners of the man who had slain their comrade.

The disposition of the two armies can be best explained by a diagram.



In the van of the Roman host were the *Ante-signani*, picked troops, clothed in long coats of mail reaching down to their feet, and with stout helmets on their heads. Behind them stood, the light-armed troops, the archers and slingers, but all this centre of the host was weak by reason of the tardy movements of the angry Herulians who should have formed its core of resistance. Narses himself with a strong body of *Hippotoxotai* formed the right wing of the

army; and just behind him stood his Majordomo Zandalas with all the slaves in his warlike household that were apt in war, for the family of Narses, like that of his great rival Belisarius, seems to have been a complete nursery of soldiers. On the left wing, partly resting on a dense wood and partly ambushed behind it, was another strong body of *Hippotoxotai* under Valerian and Artabanus.

The Frankish army came on with a wild cry and with all the dash and impetuosity of their nation. The *Ante-signani* were soon overpowered; the weak place in the centre of the line, where the Heruli should have been, but were not, was easily pierced: even the rear guard was scattered in flight, and the point of the attacking wedge was just touching the Imperial camp. But this apparently easy victory of the barbarians, if it had not been actually contrived by Narses, suited his plans exactly. Tranquilly he ordered his two wings to execute a manoeuvre which enabled them to enfold the barbarian host as in a bag. And now the over-confident Franks and Alamanni found themselves exposed to a destructive discharge of arrows aimed by invisible foes. For the orders given to the *Hippotoxotai* in each wing were to aim not at the breasts of the nearer but at the backs of the more distant enemies, and this they could easily do, because being on horseback they could see over the heads of the barbarian infantry. Thus the *Hippotoxotai* of Narses were raining their deadly shower upon the backs of the men who were fighting with Valerian, and in like manner the *Hippotoxotai* of Valerian were mowing down from behind the antagonists of Narses. In both cases the custom of the barbarians to wear no armour for the back made the manoeuvre more fatal. They could not see the foes by whose arrows they were falling, and even had they been able to confront them, the shorter range of their own missile weapons, the battle-axe and the *ango*, would have made the combat still unequal.

While this was going on in the broad part of the barbarian wedge, which was being rapidly thinned down as rank after rank fell under the back-piercing missiles of the Imperialists, the point of the wedge had also fallen into disaster. For now at last Sindual, king of the Heruli, with his tribesmen had appeared upon the field, to atone for the tardiness of his march by the ferocity of his onset upon the foe. The Franco-Alamannic van perceived that they had fallen into a trap, and rolled back in helpless disorder upon their beaten comrades. A few escaped and made for the river Vulturnus, but perished in its waters. The Roman infantry, both heavy and light-armed, closed in and completed the work of slaughter which had been begun by the *Hippotoxotai*. Soon, over all the battlefield were heard the groans of the dying barbarians. Butilin fell, the Herulian deserters who had fed him with such false hopes fell also. Undoubtedly the destruction of the Frankish host was complete, though we may refuse to give implicit belief to the statement of Agathias that only five men out of Butilin's 30,000 escaped to their own country.

The chief credit of so splendid a victory must undoubtedly be ascribed to Narses, that marvellous being who, after a lifetime spent in an emperor's dressing-room, emerged from an atmosphere of cosmetics and compliments to show himself 'a heaven-born general', a perfect master of tactics and most fertile in resource when the hurly-burly of battle was loudest. But the barbarian chiefs whose strong arms had executed what Narses planned, were deemed also worthy of commendation: and of these the men who most distinguished themselves were Sindual the Herulian and Aligern, brother of Teias, the erewhile enemy of Rome.

Great was the rejoicing in the Imperial host over the victory of Capua. Having buried their slain of the comrades and stripped the corpses of the foe, having swarmed over the waggon-rampart and plundered the Frankish camp, the soldiers marched to Rome, having their heads crowned with garlands and singing incessant paeans of victory. Quartered in Rome and deeming all the dangers and fatigues of war over for a lifetime, they began to abandon themselves to the sensual delights of a soldier's holiday. Here would you see one of the heroes

of the late encounter who had sold his helmet for a lyre, there a brother in arms who had parted with his shield for an amphora of wine.

The general, however, soon perceived the growing demoralization of his troops, and knowing too surely that all danger from the Franks was not at an end, he called them together and addressed them with grave and earnest words, blaming their over-confidence, beseeching them to show themselves Romans, superior to the arrogant elation and panic fears of the barbarians, expressing his belief that the Franks would ere long renew the war, and exhorting them, whether that were so or not, in no case to relax that warlike discipline which alone could ensure success in the hour of danger. The army heard with shame the reproofs of their great commander, and laying aside their careless and self-indulgent ways, 'returned', says the historian, 'to the habits of their ancestors'. Those ancestors were of course supposed to be the men of Rome. It shows what magic yet lay in that mighty name, that this Armenian Eunuch, addressing his motley host of Huns, Heruli, Isaurians, Warni, could win them back from dissipation and self-indulgence by this single argument, 'They are unworthy of your Roman forefathers'.

For the present, notwithstanding the forebodings of Narses, the land had rest from foreign invasion. The sickly child Theudebald, king of Austrasia, died in 555, and his great-uncle Chlotchar, who succeeded to his kingdom, showed no sign of wishing to renew the war for the possession of Italy. Only a little band of Goths, 7,000 in number, who had not, like Aligern, renounced the alliance with the Franks and entered the service of the Emperor, still held out in the mountain fortress of Campsa. Their leader was Ragnaris the Hun, a much-aspiring man, eager to earn notoriety by the arts of the demagogue, by which he stirred up the Goths to continue a hopeless resistance. The fortress of Campsa was strong and the nature of the ground made it impossible to take it by assault, and Narses was therefore compelled to resort to blockade, a tedious process, as the garrison were well provisioned, and a dangerous one, as they showed their resentment by frequent and not altogether unsuccessful sallies.

In this blockade of Campsa the winter months wore away. In early spring Ragnaris called for a parley, and the two chiefs, the courtly old Armenian and the upstart Hunnish adventurer, met under the castle walls. However, the tone of Ragnaris was so arrogant and his demands were so preposterous that Narses soon broke up the conference in wrath. As each party was returning to its quarters Ragnaris stealthily fitted an arrow to the string, turned suddenly round, and discharged it at the Eunuch. But the treacherous heart had ill inspired his aim: the arrow missed Narses and fell harmlessly to the ground. The bodyguards of Narses, enraged at the felon deed, at once discharged their arrows at Ragnaris, who fell, having received a mortal wound. His followers carried him into the fortress, where he died after two days of agony. On his death real negotiations for surrender were begun by the garrison, who stipulated only that their lives should be spared. Narses, whose careful fidelity and his plighted word on all occasions excited the wonder of a degenerate age, would not allow one of the Goths to be put to death, but in order to guard against future disturbance to the peace of Italy, sent them all to Constantinople. Here, though we are not expressly told anything of their further fortunes, we may well imagine that the tallest and most soldier-like men among them would be enlisted in the bodyguards of the aged Justinian. Sixty-six years, or two generations of men, had passed away since Theodoric led his nation-army from Moesia into Italy, and now the last dwindled remnant of the Ostrogoths came back to dwell beside the Euxine of their forefathers and the Bosphorus of their unconquerable foe.

CHAPTER II.

THE RULE OF NARSES.

Of the twelve years during which the Eunuch Narses bore sway in Italy, after the last of the Goths had been driven forth, we possess very scanty memorials.

It was undoubtedly a time of general depression and misery. The fever of war was past, and the pain of Italy, of the sore wounds which twenty years of bloodshed had inflicted upon Italy was felt now perhaps more bitterly than ever. All over the land, doubtless, were cities lying desolate; the chasms still left in their walls, where the Gothic battering-rams had pounded into them; long streets of burnt houses, where the fiery bolts from the catapult had carried the wasting flame. To repair these ruined cities seems to have been the chief work of the busy Eunuch, whose official title seems to have been 'the Patrician'. The great city of Mediolanum, that Milan which has been more than once destroyed, and more than once has arisen in splendour from its ashes, felt especially the benefit of his restoring hand.

The great law-giving Emperor, too, contributed, after his manner, to the healing of the wounds of Italy. On the 13th of August, 554, he put forth a 'Pragmatic Sanction', the object of which was to bring back social peace into the chaos left by the expulsion of the Ostrogoths. All the legislative acts of Theodoric and his family, down to Theodahad, were thereby confirmed: only those of Witigis and his successors (but even these covered a period of sixteen years) were treated as absolutely null and void.

In the year 555, probably soon after his reduction of the Gothic stronghold of Campsa, Narses was called upon to take part in an ecclesiastical ceremony of an extraordinary kind, in connection with the newly consecrated pope, Pelagius I. It will be remembered that at the end of all his vacillations as to the miserable controversy of the Three Chapters, Pope Vigilius submitted himself to the Emperor's will, but there was still considerable delay before he was suffered to depart from Constantinople. After the defeat of Totila, the assembled clergy of Rome sought an audience with Narses, and, while congratulating him on the restoration of the Imperial rule, suggested (apparently) that the return of Vigilius, and of all the bishops who had gone into exile with him for their refusal to condemn the Three Chapters, would be a fitting acknowledgment of the Divine goodness which had thus blessed the arms of the Emperor. Justinian, on receiving this message from Narses, caused the banished bishops to be gathered together from Egypt, from the island of Proconnesus, and from all the various places of their exile, and asked them whether they were willing to recognize Vigilius (now, it must be remembered, a condemner of the Three Chapters) as their pope, or whether they would prefer the archdeacon Pelagius, the only other candidate whom he would permit them to choose. They replied with one accord, 'Restore to us Vigilius ; let him be pope again, and when it shall please God to remove him from this world, then, with your consent, archdeacon Pelagius shall succeed him'.

Then all those bishops were allowed to depart from Constantinople, and, setting sail for Italy, they touched at Syracuse, where, as has been already related, Vigilius died, after suffering much agony from the cruel malady with which he was afflicted, and which, as his biographers thought, was itself caused by his mental misery.

The archdeacon Pelagius, who was, in accordance with the declared wish of the Emperor, consecrated pope in the room of Vigilius, was the same whom we have seen bravely interceding for his fellow-citizens with the victorious Totila at the time of the siege of Rome.

At that critical time he seemed to bear himself like an upright citizen and a patriotic Roman, but there must have been something in his character which suggested to onlookers the idea of a disposition to selfish intrigue. Under the pontificate of Silverius, who had appointed him his apocrisiarius (nuncio) at the Court of Constantinople, he was thought to have caballed with Theodora against that popes; and, under the pontificate of Vigilius, though he had followed that unhappy exile in all his waverings backwards and forwards about the Three Chapters, he was apparently suspected of having been all the while intriguing to supersede him, a suspicion to which the singular proposal of Justinian, which has just been quoted, seems to lend some probability. Now an even darker, and, it would seem, absolutely unjust suspicion of having in some way caused or hastened the death of Vigilius rested upon him. So nearly universal was the dislike and distrust with which he was regarded that only two bishops, John of Perugia and Bonus of Florence, could be found willing to consecrate him; and Andrew, a presbyter of Ostia, had to be joined with them in order to give the rite some semblance of canonical regularity. All the rest of the clergy, all the religious persons who filled the monasteries of Rome, all the more influential nobles of the city, shrank from communion with a man whom they openly accused of being responsible for the death of his predecessor.

In order to silence these calumnies and to reconcile the pontiff with the citizens of Rome, Narses and Pelagius together devised a striking ceremony. Starting from the Church of St. Pancratius on the Janiculan Hill, the two men, the chief of Italy and the chief of the Church, walked in solemn procession till they came to the great basilica of St. Peter. Up the long dim nave, lined with ninety-six columns taken from heathen temples, they proceeded till they came to the semicircular apse where, under the majestic figure of the Christ, displayed in mosaics on the vault, was placed the tomb of his boldest disciple. All the while that they were thus marching, Narses, Pelagius, and such of the priests as had been willing to join them, were chanting solemn litanies. Then Pelagius mounted the hexagonal pulpit or *ambo*, and, taking the Gospels in his hand and putting a cross upon his head, swore an awful oath that he had had neither part nor lot in the death of his predecessor. The earnest adjuration of the pontiff, made more impressive by the presence of the Patrician, who seems to have acted as a kind of compurgator of the accused man, appears to have satisfied the people. Pelagius proceeded to deliver one of those exhortations against simony which were becoming, by reason of the need for them, almost a commonplace in the mouth of an ecclesiastical ruler, and took measures for the restoration to the Roman churches of the golden vessels of which they had been plundered. As far as we can tell, the deep distrust and suspicion of the new pontiff, which had hitherto prevailed, were now laid aside. The chief occupation of his short pontificate was the endeavour to persuade the Western bishops that they might, without derogating from the authority of the Council of Chalcedon, accept the decree of the Council of Constantinople, condemn the Three Chapters, and anathematize the memory of the unfortunate Theodore, Ibas and Theodoret. In this labour, which was the price paid to the Emperor for his nomination to the pontificate, Pelagius was only partially successful, as we shall perceive in a later chapter, when we come to deal with the question of the Istrian schismatics. Though the period of the rule of Narses was generally peaceful, we still hear vaguely of conflicts with barbarian chiefs, the heavings of the ocean after the subsidence of the great storm of the Gothic war. A certain Aming, probably a Frankish chieftain, who had entered Italy in 539 with King Theudebert, returned or remained, and offered his assistance to a Gothic count, named Widin. They fell, however, before the victorious Eunuch. Aming was slain by the sword of Narses, and Widin was sent to Constantinople, whither so many captive barbarian chiefs had preceded him, all ministering to the pride of 'Justinianus Victor et Triumphator, semper Augustus.'

It may possibly have been in connection with this victory over Aming and Widin that, as we are told by Theophanes, 'letters of victory came from Rome, written by Narses the

Patrician, announcing that he had taken two strong cities of the Goths, Verona and Brescia'. This event is placed by the chronicler in the year 563. It is hardly possible that such important cities can have been left untaken for ten years after the defeat of Totila, but either Widin the Gothic count, or some such champion of a lost cause, may have arisen and, collecting the scattered remnants of his countrymen, may have taken Verona and Brescia by surprise and held them for some time against the empire.

Two years later, Sindual, king of the Heruli, whom we last met with making a tardy but effectual charge on the army of Butilin, turned against Narses, from whom he had received many favours, and endeavoured to set up an independent barbarian sovereignty in Italy, or, as the Imperialist writers call it, to establish a 'tyranny'. Against him, too, the star of Narses prevailed. He was vanquished in war, taken prisoner, and hung from a lofty gallows.

This same year (565) witnessed the passing away of two great actors in the drama of the reconquest of Italy. Belisarius, who, after his last glorious campaign against the Kotrigur Huns, had fallen into disgrace at court, being accused of complicity in a plot against Justinian, and had then, after eight months' obscurity, been restored to the imperial favour, enjoyed his recovered honours for something less than two years, and died in the month of March, 565. Of him, as of Wolsey, might the words be used,

'An old man, broken with the storms of state,'

and yet, like Wolsey, he had not reached extreme old age, since, forty years before, he was still spoken of as in early youth

Eight months after Belisarius died his even more famous master. For thirty-eight years Justinian had governed the Roman world, filling a larger space in the eyes of men than any ruler since Theodosius, if not than any ruler since Constantine. He had restored much of the splendour of the Roman name, had reunited Rome and Carthage to the Empire, and had even displayed his victorious eagles on the coast of Spain. He had been an indefatigable student of theology, had called a General Council, and imposed the dogma which was the fruit of his midnight studies upon the conscience of a resisting pope. Above all, he had evoked from the chaos in which the laws of Rome had been tossing for centuries an orderly and harmonious system, which was to make the influence of Roman Law thenceforward coeval and conterminous with European civilization and with all that later civilization which, springing from it, was to overspread four continents. But there was a reverse to this brilliant picture on which perhaps sufficient emphasis has been laid in previous volumes of this book. The conquests of Justinian were not enduring. The financial exhaustion which was the result of his showy and extravagant policy left the provinces weak and anaemic, unable to resist the new forces which were about to be hurled upon them from the deserts of Arabia. The theological activity of the Emperor alienated many of his subjects, both in the East and West, and probably facilitated the conquests of Mohammed. Nor did even the Emperor's own theology, in the later years of his life, escape the charge of heretical error.

But were it good or bad, the work of Justinian was done and a new lord looked forth from the windows of the Anactoron, over the wide Propontis and the beautiful Horn of Gold. That lord was Justin the Second, a nephew of Justinian, who had consolidated his position at Court, and secured his succession to the throne by marrying Sophia, niece of the once all-powerful Theodora. In spite of the praises of the courtly poet, Corippus—who sought to re-awaken the lyre of Claudian and to sing the praises of Justin and his African general John, as the earlier poet had sung the praises of Honorius and Stilicho—the new Emperor was a narrow, small-minded man, just the kind of person who was likely to emerge, safe and successful, from the intrigues of a court like Justinian's, but not the man to guide aright the destinies of a mighty Empire. Moreover, when he had been eight years upon the throne the symptoms of a diseased brain were so manifest that it was necessary to provide him with a colleague, who was in fact a

regent: and it is probable enough that even at the time of his accession he showed some deficiency of mental power. Whatever the cause, the result seems clear, that in the earlier years of the reign, Sophia, not Justin, was the true ruler of the Empire, and that this Empress, who possessed the ambition of Theodora without her genius governed feebly and unwisely, cutting away a branch here and there of the more unpopular parts of Justinian's administration, but neither resolutely upholding nor broadly remodelling the system which he had inaugurated.

It was, no doubt, in accordance with this general plan of change without reform that the Imperial pair decided on the recall of Narses. The popularity which the Patrician had won by the reconquest of Italy he had lost by his ten years' government of the peninsula, but whether justly or unjustly lost, who shall say? The full weight of the misery caused by a prolonged war is often not felt till the war is over, when the fever of fighting is followed by the collapse of bankruptcy and famine. This was the experience of our fathers in the decade which followed Waterloo, and it may well have been the experience of the Italians during the years which intervened between Totila and Alboin. Over such an emaciated and exhausted country Narses had to rule, squeezing out of it by his *rationales* and his *logothetes* the solidi which were to be transmitted to Constantinople—a miserable dividend (if so modest a comparison may be allowed) on the vast sums which Justinian had disbursed for the reconquest of Italy.

But did Narses plunder for his own private account as well as to fill the coffers of his master? That is the more or less open accusation of the later chroniclers, but though it is quite impossible now either to prove or disprove it, the charge does not altogether correspond with what we hear elsewhere of the character of Narses. Ambition rather than avarice seems to have been the master-passion of his soul, and he is represented as a free-handed and generous rewarder of the men who served him well.

But we have had enough of conjecture. Let us listen to the statement, poor and meagre as it is, given us by the Papal biographer, of the events which led up to the recall of Narses.

'Then the Romans, influenced by envy, sent representations to Justin and Sophia, that it would be more expedient for the Romans to serve the Goths than the Greeks. "Where Narses the Eunuch rules", said they, "he makes us subject to slavery. And the most devout Prince is ignorant of this. Either, therefore, free us and the City of Rome from his hand, or else we will assuredly become servants of the barbarians". Which, when Narses heard, he said "If I have done evil to the Romans I shall find myself in evil plight". Then going forth from Rome he came to Campania and wrote to the nation of the Langobardi that they should come and take possession of Italy'.

By the last sentence of this extract we are brought face to face with the accusation which is the heaviest charge that has been made against the character of Narses, the accusation that he, in revenge for his recall, invited the Lombard invaders into Italy. It is easy to show how slight is the basis of trustworthy evidence on which this accusation rests; but in order to show what the accusation is, it will be well to quote it in the fully developed and dramatic form which it assumed, two centuries after the event, in the pages of Paulus Diaconus, the great historian of the Lombard people. After copying the passage just quoted, from the Papal biographer, Paulus proceeds:

'Then the august Emperor was so greatly moved with anger against Narses that he immediately sent Longinus the praefect into Italy that he might take the place of Narses. But Narses, when he knew these things, was much afraid, and so much was he terrified by the same august Sophia that he did not dare to return to Constantinople. To whom, among other [insults], she is said to have sent a message that, as he was an eunuch, she would make him portion out the days' tasks of wool-work to the girls in the women's apartment¹. To which words Narses is said to have given this answer, that he would spin her such a hank that she should not be able to lay it down so long as she lived. Therefore, being racked by fear and

hatred, he departed to Naples, and soon sent ambassadors to the nation of the Langobardi, telling them to leave the poverty-stricken fields of Pannonia and come to possess Italy, teeming as it was with all sorts of wealth. At the same time he sent many kinds of fruit and samples of other produce in which Italy abounds, that he might tempt their souls to the journey. The Langobardi received with satisfaction the glad tidings, which corresponded with their own previous desires, and lifted up their hearts at the thought of their future prosperity'.

Such is, as I have said, the fully-developed story, and that which has succeeded in inscribing itself on the page of history. It contains some obvious improbabilities. The Langobardi, the flower of whose nation had served in Italy only fifteen years before, certainly needed no elaborate information as to the fruits and produce of that country. It would be strange, too, though not impossible, if just before sending so traitorous a message, Narses went southward from Ravenna to Naples, thereby at once adding to the labours of his messengers and lessening his own chances of deliverance from punishment by the hosts of the invading barbarians.

But, moreover, if we trace the tale backwards through the centuries, we shall find, as is so often the case, that the nearer we get to the date of the events, the less do the narrators know of these secret motives which are so freely imputed, and these dialogues of great personages which are so dramatically described. Paulus Diaconus wrote, as has been already said, about the middle of the eighth century. The chronicler, who is incorrectly quoted as 'Fredegarius' (who wrote about 642, and perhaps put the finishing touches to his history in 658), tells the story in nearly the same words, but, while he gives us the golden distaff, he takes away the fruits and other vegetable products. We then come back to the Spanish bishop, Isidore of Seville, who wrote a chronicle coming down to 615. He simply says, 'Narses the Patrician, after he had, under Justinianus Augustus, overcome Totila, king of the Goths in Italy, being terrified by the threats of Sophia Augusta, the wife of Justin, invited the Langobardi from Pannonia, and introduced them into Italy'. This sentence, written probably about fifty years after the recall of Narses, is, after the notice already quoted from the Papal biographer, the strongest support of the charge that Narses invited the Lombards into Italy. And if we accept, as we seem bound to do, the early date of the 'Papal Life,' we shall feel compelled to admit that there was a belief among his contemporaries that Narses had, at the end of his life, proved disloyal to the Empire. Only remembering the parallel case of Stilicho, we shall be careful to distinguish between popular suspicion and judicial evidence of such a crime¹.

Our two best contemporary authorities are Marius of Aventicum and Gregory of Tours, both of whom died (having passed middle age) in or about the year 594. They are, therefore, strictly contemporary authorities for the events of 567. Neither of them makes any mention of Narses' invitation to the Lombards, though the former describes the recall of Narses (with some suppressed indignation at such a reward to so meritorious a servant of the Emperor), and both notice the entry of Alboin and the Lombards into Italy. Equally silent on the subject are the so-called Annals of Ravenna, though the ecclesiastical chronicler, writing in that Imperial capital, was just the person who would have been likely to utter the shrillest notes of execration at so signal an act of treachery by the Patrician towards the Empire.

Upon the whole, then, we conclude that there is hardly sufficient evidence for the far-famed vengeance of the Eunuch on the Empress. His recall, which took place in the year 567, was, probably enough, due to the advice of the ambitious and meddlesome Augusta, and it is in the highest degree likely that the removal of such a man from Ravenna, who had been not only the recoverer of Italy in war, but for twelve years the mainspring of the administrative machine in peace, may have led to a certain amount of confusion and disturbance, during which the barbarians on the north-eastern frontier perceived that their time had come to re-enter the

beautiful land which they had so unwillingly quitted in 552, when Narses informed them that he had no further occasion for their services.

Of the later history of the great Eunuch-Patrician we have scarcely any trustworthy details. The 'Liber Pontificalis,' which, as we have seen, repeats the slander as to the invocation of the Lombards, goes on to describe a mysterious interview between Pope John III and Narses. 'The pope goes in haste to Naples, and asks the ex-governor to return to Rome. Narses says, "Tell me, most holy Pope, what mischief have I done to the Romans? I will go to the feet of him that sent me [the Emperor], that all Italy may know how I have laboured in its behalf." The pope answered, "I will go more quickly than thou canst return from this land." Therefore Narses returned to Rome with the most holy Pope John, and, after a considerable time, he died there; whose body was placed in a leaden chest, and all his riches were brought back to Constantinople. At the same time Pope John died also'

If this note of time is to be relied upon, the death of Narses must have happened about 573, or perhaps a year or two earlier; and, upon the whole, this seems to be the conclusion to which most of the authorities point: that he died in Rome early in the eighth decade of the sixth century. The statements as to his return to Constantinople and recovery of the favour of the Emperor probably proceed from a confusion between him and another Narses, who, thirty years later, was one of the bravest of the Imperial generals on the Persian frontier.

The vast wealth of the Eunuch was perhaps simply confiscated by the Imperial treasury, but in the next generation the following story concerning it reached the ears of Gregory of Tours. Tiberius II (who, as we shall see, was first the colleague and then the successor of Justin II) was a man of generous disposition, and was frequently rebuked for this by his patroness, the Empress Sophia, who declared that he would bring the Imperial treasury to ruin. 'What I,' said she, 'have been many years in collecting, thou wilt disperse in a very short time.' Then he said, 'Our treasury will be none the poorer, but the poor must receive alms and the captives must be redeemed. Herein will be great treasure according to that saying of the Lord, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Now Narses, that great Duke of Italy, who had had his palace in a certain city, went forth from Italy with a mighty treasure and came to the aforesaid city of Constantinople, and there, in a secret place in his house, he dug out great cisterns in which he stored up many hundred thousand pounds weight of gold and silver. Then, having slain all who were privy to his plans, he confided the secret of the hoard to one old man, under a solemn oath that he would reveal it to no man. On the death of Narses these treasures lay concealed under the earth. But when the afore said old man saw the daily charities of Tiberius, he went to him, and said, "If it may profit me, O Caesar, I can reveal to thee a great matter." "Say on, what thou wilt," answered Tiberius. "I have the secret of the hoard of Narses," said he, "and, being now at the extreme verge of life, I can conceal it no longer." Then Tiberius Caesar, being filled with joy, sent some servants, who followed the old man to the place with great astonishment. Having arrived at the cistern, they opened it, and entered within, and found there so great a quantity of gold and silver that it was hardly emptied after many days, though men were carrying it away continually. And after this, the Caesar went on more blithely than before, distributing money to the needy.'

So vanishes from history the mysterious figure of the great Eunuch-general.

CHAPTER III.

THE LANGOBARDIC FOREWORLD.

1.

Early notices of the Langobardi by Greek and Roman writers.

Most writers who have touched upon the early history of the Lombards have been struck with the curious hiatus which exists in the historical notices of that people. At the time of the Christian era, our information concerning them, if not very full, is clear and definite. At intervals throughout the first century their name reappears in the pages of the historians of the Empire, and we have one notice of them, brief but important, towards the end of the second century. From that date (*cir.* A.D. 167) to the reign of the Emperor Anastasius—an interval of more than three centuries—the Roman and Greek historians do not mention the name of the Lombards, and, as will be seen hereafter, we have to go to another source, and one of a very different kind, for any information as to their history during this period of obscurity.

Our chief authorities as to the geographical position of the Lombards, in their first settlement known to history are Strabo (who wrote about A. D. 20), Tacitus (*cir.* 61-177), and Ptolemy (*cir.* 100-161). On the combined testimony of these three authors we are safe in asserting that the Langobardi (such is the earliest form of their name) dwelt near the mouth of the Elbe, in frequent and close relations with the Hermunduri and Semnones, two great Suevic tribes which settled higher up the stream, on its western and eastern banks respectively. There is a little conflict of testimony between Strabo and Ptolemy as to the side of the Elbe on which the Langobardi dwelt. Strabo puts them on the further, Ptolemy on the hither shore. If the authority of the former prevail, we must look upon parts of Mecklenburg and Holstein as their home, if that of the latter, the eastern part of the Electorate of Hanover, from Luneburg to Salzwedel. Possibly enough both may be right for different periods of their history, for Strabo expressly points out that the common characteristic of all the dwellers in this part of Germany was the readiness with which they changed their homes, the result of the simplicity of their diet, and the pastoral rather than agricultural character of their occupations. He compares them herein to the Nomads of Scythia, in imitation of whom, as he says, they were wont to place all their household goods on waggons, and set their faces in any direction that pleased them, driving their cattle and sheep before them.

The Hermunduri and Semnones, the southern neighbours of the Langobardi, were important nations in their day, but their memory has perished, and they have left no lasting trace on the map of Europe. More interesting, at least to us, is the fact that among the neighbours of the Langobardi on the north are enumerated the tribe of the Angli, 'fenced in', as Tacitus says, 'by their forests or by their streams'. He goes on to tell us that the only thing noteworthy about the tribes (seven in number) north of the Langobardi—and the remark may possibly apply to the Langobardi themselves—is the worship which they all paid in common to the goddess Herthal, Mother Earth. Her chariot and her image were hidden in the recesses of a sacred grove, apart in an island of the ocean. Here dwelt the solitary priest who was allowed access to her shrine. At stated times he crossed the sea with the image of the goddess. Placed upon the consecrated chariot and covered by a sacred robe, it was drawn by cows from village to village, along the plains of Holstein. Wherever the sacred image went there was joy and feasting: peace reigned instead of the continual clashing of the swords of the sons of Odin; till at length the goddess, sated with the converse of mortals, returned to her island home. The

chariot, the vest, and (some said) the image of Mother Earth herself, were washed in a sacred lake. The slaves who had been employed in this lustration were then themselves whelmed beneath its waters, and the lonely priest resumed his guard of the lonely deity whom it was death to behold. Such were the rites with which the Angle and the Langobard of the first century after Christ, the ancestors of Bede and of Anselm, of Shakespeare and of Dante, jointly adored the Mother of Mankind.

The origin of the name borne by the Langobardi has been a subject of some discussion. The national historian, as we shall see a little further on, derives it from their long beards, and tells a curious story to account for its first bestowal on the nation. As *bart* or *bard*, in some form or other, is the equivalent of the Latin *barba* in the chief Low-German languages, there can be no objection raised on the score of philology to this derivation. It has been urged, however, that the very fact of its resemblance to the Latin form may have suggested it too easily to an uncritical historian, and that since some other German tribes wore their hair and beards long, it is difficult to understand why the long beards of this one tribe should have been distinctive enough to entitle them to a separate name. It is, therefore, proposed to derive the name from the Old High-German word *barta*, an axe, the root which appears in *halb-ert* and *partizan*. Again, another author argues for its derivation from the root *bord* (which we have preserved in the word sea-board, though custom forbids us to speak of a river-board), and contends that the Langobardi received their name from the long flat meadows by the Elbe where they had their dwelling. According as we adopt one or other of these suggestions, the tribe whose history we are considering will have been the Long-bearded men, the Long-halbert-bearing men, or the Long-shore-men. I confess that to me the first, the old-fashioned derivation, that which was accepted by Isidore and Paulus, still seems the most probable. In any case there is no doubt about the meaning of the first element of the name, and remembering the neighbourhood of the Langobardi and the Angli, we note with interest the true Teutonic form of the word, as it reappears in *Langdale*, and *Langley*, and the Scotch phrase ‘Auld *Lang* Syne’, rather than in our modern Gallicized word *long*.

The tribe of the Langobards were early distinguished by their fierce and warlike disposition. Velleius Paterculus, the contemporary and flatterer of Tiberius, in speaking of the victories of his hero in Germany (*cir.* A. D. 6), says that ‘nations whose very names were before almost unknown, were beaten down before him; the Langobardi, a race fierce with more than the ordinary fierceness of Germany, were broken by his arms, and the Roman legions with their standards were led from the Rhine to the Elbe’. So too, Tacitus, after describing the numerous and powerful nation of the Semnones, the head of the Suevic race, dwelling in a hundred *pagi*, passes on to their neighbours the Langobardi, and says that ‘these may rather pride themselves on the smallness of their numbers, since, girt round by so many great and strong nationalities, they have preserved their existence, not by a humble obedience, but by perpetual fighting, and in peril have found safety.’

The two greatest names in the history of the German peoples during the first century of our era were undoubtedly Arminius and Maroboduus; Arminius, the patriot chief of the Cherusci, who stirred up his tribe to a successful resistance against the encroachments of Rome, and who annihilated the three legions of Varus in the Teutoburgian forests; Maroboduus, the self-centred and crafty despot of the Marcomanni, who built up for himself a dominion of almost Oriental arrogance in the mountain-girdled realm of Bohemia; who gave succour and asylum to the enemies of Rome, and the shadow of whose ever-menacing might darkened with anxiety the last years of Augustus himself. In a fortunate hour for Rome, these two leaders of the German resistance to the Empire turned their arms against each other. The cause of the Cherusci, championed as it was by so popular a leader as Arminius, was looked upon by the Germans generally with greater favour than that of the Marcomanni under the

autocratic Maroboduus, and hence it came to pass that on the eve of the conflict, two Suevic tribes, the Semnones and the Langobardi, separated themselves from the Marcomannic kingdom and joined the Cheruscan confederacy. In the battle which followed, and which, though nominally drawn, was virtually a defeat for Maroboduus (soon followed by the utter downfall of his power), the Langobardi are especially mentioned as doing great deeds of prowess by the side of their Cheruscan allies on behalf of their new-found liberty.

The Langobardi evidently adhered for one generation at least to their new alliance, and did not return within the orbit of the great Suevic monarchy. Thirty years after their revolt from Maroboduus, when the Cheruscan Italicus, the Romanized nephew of Arminius, was struggling, with diverse fortunes, to maintain himself in the royal position to which he had been raised by his countrymen, weary of anarchy, it was among the Langobardi that he took refuge after he had been defeated by the rebels; it was from them that he received help and comfort, and it was by their arms that he seems to have been once, at least, reseated on the forest-throne of the Cherusci.

From this point onwards our information as to the fortunes of the Langobardi becomes extremely meager. The indications of their geographical position given by Tacitus and by Ptolemy, show that they were still known to the Romans as occupying their previous dwellings on the Elbe, in the reigns of Nerva and the elder Antoninus. But soon after Ptolemy wrote, they must have quitted their old home in order to take part in that movement of the German tribes southwards which brought on the Marcomannic war, and involved the reluctant philosopher, Marcus Aurelius, in ten bloody and hard-fought campaigns.

In a somewhat obscure paragraph of the history written by Peter the Patrician (Justinian's ambassador to Theodahad), we are informed that 'six thousand Langibardi (*sic*) and Obii, having crossed the Danube, A.D. 165, were turned to utter rout by the cavalry under Vindex, aided by an attack from the infantry under Candidus. As the result of this defeat, the barbarians, desisting in terror from their first attempt, sent ambassadors to Aelius Bassus who was then administering Pannonia. The ambassadors were Vallomar, king of the Marcomanni, and ten others, one being chosen to represent each tribe. Peace was made, oaths were sworn to ratify it, and the barbarians returned to their home'.

Not much can be made out of a jejune fragment like this, but it is clear that the Langobardi have left the lower waters of the Elbe for the middle waters of the Danube. They are accompanied by the Obii, in whom some commentators see the same people as the Avieni, whom Tacitus makes next-door neighbours to the Langobardi, but of whose history we are otherwise entirely ignorant. They are evidently once more allies, perhaps subject-allies of their old masters the Marcomanni, since Vallomar the Marcomannic king heads the embassy to Aelius Bassus. Considering that the account of the campaign comes from a Roman source, we may probably infer with safety that the repulse sustained by the Langobardi and their confederates was not a serious one, and that though they did not maintain the position which they had taken up on the Roman shore of the Middle Danube, yet that in returning 'to their home' they withdrew to no great distance from the tempting plains of Pannonia.

After this notice, information from Greek or Roman writers as to the fortunes of the Langobardi entirely fails us, and for a space of 300 years (as was before to the said) their name disappears from history. It brings before us in a forcible manner the long space of time over which the downfall of the Empire extended, to remind ourselves that this mere gap in the story of one of its destined destroyers lasted for ten generations, for an interval as long as that which separates the Englishmen of today from their forefathers of the reign of Elizabeth.

To some small extent, however, we may fill up the interval by repeating what the national historian, Paulus Diaconus, has preserved of the old traditions of the Lombard race. Some of

these traditions may possibly reach back to an earlier date than the notices of Strabo and Tacitus, but it is vain to attempt to fit the Saga (at least in its earlier portions) and the literary history into one continuous narrative. Far better does it seem to be to let the two streams of recital flow on unmingled, only eliminating from the pages of Paulus those paragraphs which evidently do not come from the treasure-house of the old national traditions, but are merely borrowed, and for the most part unnecessarily borrowed, from the pages of classical historians and geographers. The ‘*Origo Gentis Langobardorum*’ gives us the framework of the story, but the details come, for the most part, from the pages of Paulus Diaconus.

2.

The Saga of the Longbeards.

‘In the Northern land, that fruitful mother of nations, whose hardy sons have so often poured down on Illyricum and Gaul, and especially upon unhappy Italy, lies a mighty island, washed, and owing to its flat shores, well-nigh washed away, by the sea, and named Scandinavia. Here dwelt long ago the little nation of the Winnili, afterwards known as the Langobards.

‘Now the time came when this people found the island of Scandinavia too strait for them, and dividing themselves into three portions they cast lots which of the three it should be that must depart from their fatherland. Then that portion of the people upon which the lot had fallen, ordained two brothers to be their leaders, whose names were Ibor and Aio, men in the youthful vigour of their years, and sons of a woman named Gambara, in whose wise counsels they trusted greatly. Under these leaders they set forth to seek their new homes, and came to the region which is called Scaringa.

‘Now, at that time, Ambri and Assi, the two chiefs of the Vandals, having won many victories, held all the countries round under the terror of their name. These men marched with an army against the Winnili, and said unto them, “Either pay us tribute, or prepare yourselves for battle and fight against us”. Now the Winnili were all in the first flush and vigour of their youth, yet were they very few in number, being only the third part of the inhabitants of an island of no great size. Howbeit, Ibor and Aio having consulted with their mother Gambara, decided that it was better to defend their liberty by their arms than to soil it by the payment of tribute, and made answer accordingly, “We will prepare for battle”. Then did both nations pray to the gods for victory. Ambri and Assi prayed to Odin, and he answered them : “Whomsoever I shall first look upon at sunrise, to that nation will I give the victory.” But Gambara and her two sons prayed to Freya, the wife of Odin, that she would show favour unto them. Then Freya counselled them that at sunrise the Winnili should all assemble before Odin’s eastern window, having their wives with them, and that the women should let down their hair and encircle their faces with it as if it were a beard. Then, when the sun was rising, Freya turned upon her couch, and awoke her husband, and bade him look forth from the eastern window. And he looked and saw the Winnili and their wives with their hair about their faces, and said, “Who are these long-bearded ones?” Then said Freya to Odin, “As thou hast given them the name Langobardi, so give them the victory.” And he gave them the victory, and from that day the Winnili were called the Langobardi’.

‘After this victory the Langobardi were sore pressed with famine, and moved forth from the province of Scaringa, intending to go into Maurainga. But when they reached the frontier, the Assipitti were drawn up determined to dispute the passage. When the Langobardi saw the multitude of the enemy, and knew that by reason of their own small numbers they could not engage with them, they hit upon the following device. They pretended that they had in their camp Cynocephali, that is dog-headed men. They made the enemy believe that these creatures

followed the business of war with eagerness, being intent on drinking human blood, and that, if they could not drink the blood of an enemy, they would even drink their own. At the same time, to make their numbers appear larger than they were, they spread their tents wide and kindled very many fires in their camp. By these arts the enemy were so far dismayed that they did not dare to carry out their threat of battle; but, having in their ranks a champion who was very strong and whom they deemed invincible, they sent a messenger to propose that the dispute between the two peoples should be settled by single combat. If the champion of the Assipitti conquered, the Langobardi should return to the place from whence they came. But if the champion of the Langobardi prevailed, they should have liberty to march through the country of the Assipitti. Now when the Langobardi were in doubt whom they should choose for this encounter, a certain man, of servile origin, offered himself for the combat on condition that, if he were victorious, he and his offspring should be freed from the stain of slavery. His masters gladly promised to grant this request: he drew near to the enemy: he fought and conquered. The Langobardi had licence to pass through the country whither they would: and the champion obtained for himself and his children the rights of freedom. Thus, then, did the Langobardi succeed in reaching Muringa, and there, that they might increase the number of their warriors, they gave liberty to many of their slaves. In order that the free condition of these might thenceforth be subject to no doubt, they ratified the enfranchisement in the accustomed manner by an arrow, murmuring at the same time certain words handed down from their forefathers for a solemn confirmation of the act.

‘From Muringa the Langobardi moved forward and came into Golanda, and there they possessed the regions of Anthaib and Bainaib and Burgundaib, and now, as Ibor and Aio were dead, who had brought them out of the land of Scandinavia, and as they wished no longer to be under chiefs [or dukes], they chose themselves a king, after the manner of the nations. This was AGELMUND, son of Aio, of the noble seed of the Gungingi; and he reigned over the Langobardi thirty-three years.

‘In his time a certain woman of evil life brought forth seven children at a birth, and this mother, more cruel than the beasts, cast them all into a pond to be drowned. Now it happened that King Agelmund, on a journey, came to that very pond. Halting his horse, he marvelled at the unhappy babes, and, with the spear which he held in his hand, turned them over hither and thither. Then one of the children put forth its hand and grasped the royal spear. The king was stirred with pity, and, moreover, predicted a great future for the child, and at once ordered it to be lifted out of the pond, and handed over to a nurse, to be brought up with all possible care. And, as the child had been drawn out of a pond, which in their language is called *lama*, it received the name Lamissio.

‘Lamissio, when he came to man’s estate, proved to be so strong a youth and so apt in war that, upon the death of King Agelmund, he was chosen to guide the helm of the state. It is reported that before his accession, when Agelmund and his people were on their march, they found the passage of a certain river barred by Amazons. It was decided by the two armies that the dispute between them should be settled by single combat between Lamissio and one of the Amazons, a strong swimmer and a stalwart fighter. He surpassed her in swimming, and slew her in the fight, and thus obtained for his people passage across the stream.

‘After this, the Langobardi, having crossed the a stream and come into the lands beyond, dwelt there for some time in quietness and free from fear. The evil result of this security was seen when, by night, the Bulgarians suddenly fell upon them in their sleep, took and pillaged their camp, wounded many and slew many—among them Agelmund, their king, whose only daughter they carried off into captivity.

‘On the death of Agelmund, as has been already said, Lamissio became king of the Langobardi. A young man, of eager soul, prompt for war, and longing to avenge the death of

his benefactor Agelmund, he turned his arms against the Bulgarians. At the beginning of the first battle the Langobardi showed their backs to the enemy and sought refuge in their camp. Then Lamissio, seeing this, in a loud voice cried out to the whole army, bidding them remember the shame which they had before endured at the hands of these very enemies—their king slain, and his daughter, whom they had hoped to have for their queen, miserably carried off into captivity. He exhorted them to defend themselves and their families with their arms, saying it was better to die than to live as vile slaves, subject to the insults of such despicable foes. With threats and with promises he hardened the minds of his people for the fight, offering liberty and great rewards to any man of servile condition whom he saw forward in the fray, and thus, by his words and by his example (for he fought in the forefront of the battle), he so wrought upon the minds of his men that they at length made a deadly charge upon the enemy, whom they utterly routed, and wrought great slaughter upon them, thus avenging the death of their king. The great spoil which they gathered from this battle-field made them thence-forward keener and more bold in seeking the labours of war.

‘On the death of Lamissio, LETHU was crowned the third king of the Langobardi. After he had reigned about forty years, he died, and was succeeded by his son HILDEOC; and on his death GUDEOC took the kingdom.

‘In the reign of this, the fifth king of the Langobardi, happened that great overthrow of the Rugians and their king, Feletheus, by Odovacar, which had been foretold by the blessed Severinus, on account of the wickedness of Gisa, the Rugian queen. Then the Langobardi, going forth from their own regions, entered Rugiland (as the country of the Rugians was called in their language), and there, as the soil was fertile, they remained for several years.

‘During this interval Gudeoc died, and was succeeded by CLAFFO, his son, and, on his death, TATO, his son, seventh king of the Langobardi, ascended the throne. Then the Langobardi, going forth from Rugiland, dwelt in the wide plains which are called, in barbarian speech, *Feld*. And as they were tarrying in that place, for a space of three years, war arose between Tato and Rodulf, king of the Heruli.’

We have now reached the point at which the two streams, of Roman-written history and of Lombard Saga, fall into one. The war between King Tato and King Rodulf is narrated by Procopius as well as by Paulus, and can be assigned without much risk of error to a definite date, A.D. 511 or 512.

In reading these early pages of Lombard history as narrated by their churchman-chronicler, one is forcibly impressed by the general similarity which they bear to the history of the Goths, as told by their churchman-chronicler, Jordanes. We have in both the same curious blending of Teutonic tradition and classical mythology, the same tendency to digress into geographical description, the same hesitating treatment of the legends of heathenism from the standpoint of Christianity. But there is one great and obvious difference between Paulus and Jordanes. The Gothic historian exhibits a pedigree showing fourteen generations before Theodoric, and thus reaching back very nearly to the Christian era. The Lombard historian gives us only five links of the chain before the time of Odovacar, the contemporary of Theodoric, and thus reaches back, at furthest, only to the era of Constantine. Doubtless this modesty of his claim somewhat increases our confidence in the genuineness of his traditions, since, had he been merely inventing, it would have been as easy to imagine twenty names as five. On the other hand, it seems to show that the Langobardi, ‘fierce beyond even German ferocity’, a brutal and savage people, had preserved fewer records of the deeds of their fathers, probably had been more complete strangers to the art of writing, than their more civilized Gothic contemporaries. Indeed, even with these latter, signs are not wanting that national consciousness, and therefore national memory, were quickened and strengthened, if not altogether called into being, by their contact with the great civilized Empire of Rome.

However this may be, it is quite clear that it is hopeless to get any possible scheme of Lombard chronology out of these early chapters of Paulus. His narrative would place the migration from Scandinavia about A.D. 320, whereas it is certain that the Langobardi were dwelling on the southern shore of the Baltic at the time of the birth of Christ. And conversely he represents Agelmund the first king of the Langobardi, whose place in his narrative makes it impossible to fix his date later than 350, as slain in battle by the Bulgarians, who, as we know from another source, first appeared in Europe about 479. Thus, whatever genuine facts as to the early history of the people may be preserved in these curious traditions, they are like mountains seen through a mist, whose true size and distance we are unable to measure.

The chief of these dimly-discerned facts appear to be:—

(1) The primordial name of Winnili, applied to the nation which was afterwards known as Langobardi. There does not appear to be any motive of national vanity for inventing this change of name, and we may therefore accept it as true, though not coordinated with any other facts with which we are acquainted.

(2) The migration from the island of Scandinavia, by which Paulus appears to mean the southern part of the Swedish peninsula, intersected as it is with many lakes, and standing, so to speak, 'out of the water and in the water'. Few questions are more debated by ethnologists at the present day than this, whether the Teutonic nations are to be deduced from 'the common Aryan home' in Central Asia, or from the lands north of the Baltic: and, as far as the authority of Paulus and Jordanes is of any avail, it must be admitted to make in favour of the latter hypothesis.

3. *Scoringa*, the first home of the Langobards after their departure from Scandinavia, is probably named from a word related to our own word *shore*, and means the territory on the left bank of the Elbe near its mouth. Here is a considerable tract of country which late on in the Middle Ages still bore the name Bardengau, derived from that of the Langobards, and whose chief city, *Bardowyk*, played an eventful part in the history of the early German Emperors, till it was destroyed in a fit of rage by Henry the Lion in 1189.

Mauringa is also, on the authority of the Geographer of Ravenna, connected with the country near the mouth of the Elbe, probably on its right bank.

After this, however, we get into the region of mere conjecture. The hostile tribe of the Assipitti, the successive homes of the Langobard people in Anthaib, Bainaib and Burgundaib, are all matters of debate among the German inquirers who have written on the early history of the Lombards. The settlement of these questions, if settlement be possible, will depend on a minute acquaintance with German place-names and dialectic forms to which I can make no pretension, and therefore, while referring the curious reader to the note at the end of this chapter for a statement of some of the warring theories, I simply recall attention to the fact (hardly sufficiently noticed by some of them) that in the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and about the year 166, we have a clear and trustworthy historical statement connecting the Langobards with an invasion of Pannonia. This movement from the Lower Elbe to the Middle Danube is quite accounted for by the facts that the Langobardi were more or less loosely attached to the great Suevic monarchy, which long had its centre and stronghold in that which is now Bohemia, that there was a general convergence of the tribes in Central Germany towards the Danube frontier of the Empire about the time of the Marcomannic War, and that the great migration of the Gothic nation to the Euxine, which was described at the outset of this history, and which probably occurred about the middle of the second century, may well have sucked some of the tribes of the Elbe into its vortex, causing them, if once bent on change, to turn their faces towards the Danube rather than the Rhine.

I see no reason to believe that the Langobardi, having once left the shores of the North Sea and reached the heart of Germany, ever retraced their steps to their old home, though

undoubtedly the barbarian wave rolled back foiled from the Pannonian frontier. For the following three centuries, therefore, I prefer to think of them as hovering about the skirts of the Carpathians (perhaps sometimes pressed northwards into the upper valleys of the Oder and the Vistula) rather than as marching back across Germany to the once forsaken Bardengau. The fact that when they are next heard of they are occupying Rugiland, the district on the northern shore of the Danube which faces Noricum, entirely confirms the view here advocated.

As I have said, the fortunes of this obscure and unnoticed tribe for more than three hundred years (from 166 to 508) are a blank, as far as authentic history is concerned. They were subject probably in the fourth century to the rule of Hermanric the Ostrogoth, subject certainly in the fifth century to the rule of Attila the Hun, but are not mentioned by the historians who have written of either monarch. On the fall of the Rugian monarchy (if the statement of Paulus on this subject be correct) they made a successful attempt to obtain a footing on the northern bank of the Danube, opposite the Roman province of Noricum. But, possibly, owing to the consolidation of the power of Theodoric in these regions, they found that they had gained nothing by this movement, and that Noricum itself was still barred against them. They therefore went forth from Rugiland and took up their abode in some part of the wide plains of Hungary, called by them in their own Teutonic dialect, *Feld*.

Through all the eventful years from 376 to 476 they remained in the second rank of barbarian nations. Other and stronger peoples, the Alamanni, the Thuringians, the Rugians, the Gepidae, the Heruli, ranged themselves close round the frontiers of the Empire, and, often overpassing its limits, watched with hungry eyes the death-throes of the Mistress of the World. The stalwart forms of these nations prevented the little Langobardic tribe from sharing the plunder or the excitement of the strife: and, for this reason doubtless, their name is not written in the Life of St. Severinus or in the letters of Cassiodorus.

But two events, separated by an interval of sixty years, yet displaying many points of similarity to one another, finally broke down this barrier and opened to the Langobardi the full career of rapine and of conquest. These were the war with the Heruli about 508 and the war with the Gepidae which ended in 567. The history of these two wars will now be related, on the joint authority of Procopius and of Paulus.

3.

War with the Heruli.

The tribe of the Heruli, with whom we have already made some acquaintance in the wars of Odovacar and of Belisarius, are a perpetual puzzle to ethnologists. Zeuss, the most careful of all our guides, says of them: 'The Heruli are the most unstable of German tribes and seem to have wandered over well-nigh the whole of Europe. They appear on the Dniester and the Rhine, they plunder in Greece and in Spain, they threaten Italy and Scandinavia'. It is clear that part at least of this 'instability' may be explained by the fact that the tribe was early split up into two great divisions, one of which moved towards the Black Sea, while the other, remaining nearer to the common home of both, eventually made its appearance on the banks of the Rhine. With the western branch of the nation we have no present concern, and only to a very limited extent with the eastern branch, which towards the close of the fifth century appears to have been situated in Hungary on the eastern shore of the Danube, south of the wide '*Feld*' which was occupied by the Langobardi.

Here, from of old, had dwelt the Herulian people, practising a number of strange and savage rites which Procopius (who loathed the race, having often had to endure their unpleasant companionship in camp and garrison) delights to describe to the discredit of their slightly less barbarous descendants. They propitiated their gods with human sacrifices, and the

public opinion of the nation was hostile to the prolonged existence of the sick and the aged. As soon as a man found himself sinking into either of these two classes it was incumbent on him to ask his relations with the least possible delay to blot him out from the book of the living. Thereupon a great pile (apparently of pyramidal form) was built with logs of wood: the infirm man was seated on the top of it, and a fellow countryman, but not a kinsman of the victim, was sent up to despatch him with a short sword. When the executioner returned, having effected his purpose, the pious kinsmen set fire to the pile, beginning with the outer circle of logs, and when the whole pile was consumed and the flames had died down they collected their relative's charred bones and hid them in the earth. Not only was this form of *euthanasia* practised by the Heruli: the Hindu custom of *suttee* was also prevalent among them. On the death of a Herulian warrior, his wife, if she wished to preserve her good name, was virtually compelled to feign, if she did not feel, the emotions of a desolate widow, and to die, before many days had elapsed, at her husband's tomb. If instead of this self-sacrifice she chose to continue in life, her character was gone, and she was an object of jeering and derision to the relatives of her husband.

In the course of time the Heruli probably laid aside some of the more repulsive of these savage customs, but they appear to have remained heathens till their disappearance from history. Their power grew greater, and the terror inspired by them was such that many of the nations round them, including the Langobardi, consented to pay them tribute, a mark of subjection, as Procopius observes, unusual among Teutonic nations. At some time during the reign of the Emperor Anastasius, a singular interlude occurred in the savage annals of the Heruli, for it is recorded that having no one to fight with, they laid down their arms and for three years lived in peace. The warriors of the tribe, chafing at this inaction and having no instinct of discipline or subordination, constantly assailed their chieftain Rodulf with taunts and sneers, calling him womanish and soft-hearted. At length, unable any longer to bear these insults, Rodulf determined to make war upon the Langobardi, not alleging any pretext for the attack, but simply asserting that such was his sovereign will. Once, twice, thrice, did the Langobardi send their embassies to dissuade him from the meditated injustice. Submissively they pleaded that they had made no default in the payment of their tribute: yet even the tribute should be increased if the Heruli desired it. Most unwillingly would the Langobardi array their forces against their powerful neighbours, yet they could not believe that God, a single breath of whose power avails to overthrow all the haughtiness of man, would leave them unbefriended if battle was forced upon them. To the humble entreaty and the pious warnings Rodulf returned the same answer, simply driving the ambassadors from his presence with threats, and marching further into the Herulian territory.

At last came the inevitable collision, and Herul and Langobard met in battle-array. At that moment the sky above the Langobardic host was overcast with black clouds, while that above the Herulian army was magnificently clear, an omen (says Procopius) portending certain ruin to the latter nation. But of all this the Heruli took no heed, but, utterly despising their enemies, pressed on, thinking to decide the combat by mere weight of numbers. When, however, the hand-to-hand fight began, many of the Heruli were slain; Rodulf himself fell down dead, and his followers, forgetful of the duty of warriors, fled in headlong haste. Most of them were slain by the closely pursuing Langobardi, and only a few escaped.

Such is Procopius' account of the battle which practically blotted out the Heruli from the list of independent nations. We have another version of the same transactions from the pen of the Lombard historian, and curiously enough it is in many respects a version much less favourable to his people than that which Procopius heard, apparently from the Herulian mercenaries with whom he served in Italy. In the following words Paulus relates the story of the great encounter.

‘After the Langobardi had abode in the open *Feld* for three years, war arose, upon the following occasion, between Tato, their seventh king, and Rodulf king of the Heruli. The brother of King Rodulf had gone to Tato for the purpose of cementing an alliance: and when, having accomplished his embassy, he was returning to his own land, it chanced that he passed before the house of the king’s daughter who was named Rumetruda. She, beholding the multitude of men and his noble train of followers, asked who that man could be who had such illustrious attendance: and it was told her that the brother of King Rodulf was returning to his land after accomplishing his mission. Thereupon the maiden sent to beg him to condescend to receive a cup of wine at her hand. He came, as he was asked, in all guilelessness; but because he was little of stature, the maiden looked down upon him in the haughtiness of her heart and uttered words of mockery against him. He, glowing at once with shame and indignation, replied in such wise, as brought yet greater confusion on the maiden. Then she, hot with a woman’s rage and unable to repress the passion of her soul, at once set her mind on a wicked revenge. She feigned meekness, she put on a cheerful countenance, and soothing him with more pleasant words, she invited him to sit down and arranged that he should so sit as to have a window at his back. This window, apparently as a mark of honour, but really that his suspicions might not be excited, she had covered with a costly curtain: and then that cruellest she-monster commanded her servants, that when she said ‘Mix’ (as if speaking to the butler), they should pierce him in the back with their lances. It was done: the cruel woman gave the sign, her unjust commands were accomplished: her guest, pierced with many wounds, fell forward on the earth and expired.

‘ When these things were related to king Rodulf, he groaned at the cruel death of his brother, and impatient of his grief, burned to revenge so foul a murder. Breaking off, therefore, the league which he had made with Tato, he declared war against him. To be brief: the two armies met in the broad *Feld*. Rodulf drew up his men in battle array: then seating himself in his camp, having no doubt of the coming victory, he began to play at draughts. And in truth the Heruli of that day were well trained in the arts of war and already famous for the manifold slaughter of their foes: although (whether it were for nimbleness in the fight or that they might show their contempt of the wounds inflicted by the enemy) they fought entirely naked, save for a girdle round their loins. The king therefore, trusting without hesitation to the valour of his soldiers, while he comfortably continued his game, told one of his followers to climb a tree which happened to be near at hand, in order that he might have the earliest possible tidings of the victory. At the same time he threatened the man that he would cut off his head if he told him that the Herulian army was in flight. The man saw the ranks of the Heruli give way, he saw them being hard pressed by the Langobardi, but when asked again and again by the king, “How are my Heruli getting on?” always answered, “They are fighting splendidly.” Nor did he dare to give utterance to the evil which he beheld until the whole army turned its back to the enemy. Then, at last, he broke forth into speech, “Woe to thee, wretched Herulia, who art chastened by the wrath of the Lord of Heaven!”. At these words the king cried in consternation, “Is it possible that my Heruli are fleeing?”. The soldier answered, “It is thou, O king, who hast said the word, not I.” Then (as is wont to happen in such cases) the king and all his followers, perturbed and doubtful what to do, were sorely smitten by the in-rushing Langobardi, the king himself being slain notwithstanding a brave but fruitless resistance. The fleeing army of the Heruli—so great was the wrath of heaven upon them—when they beheld some green fields of flax, mistook them for lakes [covered with weed], and extending their arms and falling forward upon them as in act to swim were cruelly stricken by the swords of their enemies. When the victory was won, the Langobardi divided among themselves the vast spoil which they found in the enemy’s camp : and Tato carried off the standard of Rodulf (which is called in their language *bandum*) and the helmet which he had been accustomed to wear in battle.

‘From that time forward the valour of the Heruli so utterly collapsed that they never had a king over them again. The Langobardi, on the other hand, enriched with plunder and increasing their army out of the various nations which they overcame, began of their own accord to seek for occasions of war, and to push forward the renown of their valour in all directions.’

So far the Langobardic Saga as related by Paulus. As before said, it is less favourable to his own people than the story of the Byzantine historian. As a drama of providential retribution it entirely fails, since the cruel and treacherous deed of Rumentruda is left unavenged. It explains, however, some things which are left obscure in the narrative of Procopius. Well might the Herulian king—perhaps himself like his brother of small stature and unmartial appearance—fear the taunts of his subjects if he left that brother’s murder unavenged; and well might he, with such provocation to harden his heart, refuse the threefold petition for peace offered by the Langobardi. They, on their part, may very probably have offered a money payment, not so much on account of augmented tribute as by way of *weregild* for the murdered prince, and the triple embassy may have been due to some barbaric bargaining as to what the amount of this *weregild* should be.

Though true in substance, the narrative of Paulus is not literally accurate in saying that the Heruli were kingless ever after this defeat. To lose the institution of kingship, to be without a leader in their glorious wars, was in that age a mark of the last stage of national decay and demoralization, and though this calamity did for a time befall the Herulian nation, the obscuration of the kingly office was only temporary. Procopius¹ describes their miserable wanderings to and fro after their defeat by the Langobardi. They settled at first in Rugiland, evacuated as that country was by the Rugians when they went with the Ostrogoths into Italy. Driven thence, as the Langobardi before them had probably been driven, by hunger, they entered Pannonia and dwelt there as subjects of the Gepidae, paying tribute to those hard lords, and grievously oppressed by them. They then crossed the Danube, probably into Upper Moesia (which forms part of the modern kingdom of Servia), and there solicited and obtained permission from the Emperor Anastasius to dwell as his loyal *foederati*. We know, on the excellent authority of the chronicler, Marcellinus Comes, that this reception of the Heruli within the limits of the Roman Empire took place in the year 512, and we may therefore conjecturally assign the great battle between them and the Langobardi to a date a few years earlier, between 506 and 510.

Notwithstanding the hospitality which the Heruli had received from Anastasius, that savage people soon began their usual career of crime and outrage against their civilized neighbours. Anastasius sent an army against them which utterly routed and could easily have destroyed them, but in an evil hour the Emperor and his generals listened to their renewed supplications for mercy and suffered them to live. Procopius, whose bitter words we are here transcribing, regrets this clemency, for he says, ‘the Heruli never were true allies to the Romans, and never did them a single good turn.’ It is true that Justinian, who renewed the *foedus* with this people, brought them to make an outward profession of Christianity, and spread a little varnish of civilization over their inherent savagery. But they still remained bestial in their morality, fickle in their alliances, and in fact, says the loathing Procopius, ‘they are the wickedest of all men, and utter and unredeemed scoundrels’. Before long they again fell out with the Empire, and the occasion of the quarrel was a curious one. They had suddenly conceived the idea that they would be henceforward kingless, and had therefore killed their king Ochon for no imaginable reason, for in truth he hardly deserved the name of king, since any of his subjects might sit down beside him, dine with him, or insult him with impunity. Then finding an absolutely anarchic existence insupportable, they changed their minds again, and sent to Thule for a prince of the blood royal to come and reign over them.

For, after the great catastrophe of the defeat of the Heruli by the Langobardi, certain of the former nation, not brooking the thought of dwelling with diminished might in the Illyrian lands, and cherishing the old national remembrance of their Scandinavian home, had set off under the leadership of men of the royal blood to seek a new habitation by the shores of the Northern Ocean. They had passed through the lands of the Sclavonians, and then, through a great wilderness, had reached the borders of the Warni, and had travelled through their land and through all the tribes of the Danes unmolested by any of these barbarians. Coming thus to the shores of the ocean, they crossed it in their barks and reached the island of Thule, where they took up their abode. Thule (by which Procopius probably wishes to designate not Iceland, but some part of the Scandinavian peninsula) is a marvellously great island, more than ten times the size of Britain, lying far off from it towards the north wind. The land is barren, but thirteen large nations, governed by as many kings, are settled therein. Procopius, though earnestly desiring to visit this remote land, had never in his busy life found opportunity to do so, but he had heard from accurate and trustworthy observers strange histories of the course of nature therein. For forty days, about the time of the summer solstice, the sun never sets over Thule, but appears, now in the eastern heaven, now in the western, and the inhabitants have to measure the day only by the reappearance of the sun in the same quarter where he shone before. Then, at the winter solstice, the sun is absolutely invisible for forty days. Endless night reigns and the inhabitants, cut off from all communication with one another, are plunged in dejection and sorrow. Though the event is of yearly occurrence, they fear each year that the sun will never return to them again; but at the expiration of thirty-five days (measured by the rising and setting of the moon) they send certain of their number to the tops of high mountains to catch a glimpse of his light. When these messengers return with the glad tidings that they have seen the sun, and that in five days he will shine upon them, the inhabitants of Thule give themselves to unbounded rejoicing, and hold, all in the darkness of their land, the greatest of their national festivals.

To this distant region, then, did the Heruli of the Danube send for a king after they had murdered the over-affable Ochon. The first who was chosen died in the country of the Danes, whereupon the ambassadors returned and persuaded Todasius to accept the distant crown. Todasius and his brother Aordus, with two hundred young men of the Heruli, set forth upon the immense journey: but long before they reached the Danubian lands, the fickle and unstable people, deeming it a disgrace to them to accept a king from Thule, had sought and obtained a king, a Herulian named Suartuas, from the Emperor Justinian. Civil war seemed imminent, but when the Arctic claimant had come within a day's journey of his rival, the minds of the people changed again. They all deserted by night to the camp of Todasius, and Suartuas with difficulty and alone, escaped to Constantinople. As Justinian seemed disposed to support his candidate by force of arms, the Heruli joined themselves to the confederacy of the Gepidae, who were at that time, notwithstanding their *foedus*, virtually the incessant enemies of the Empire.

It has seemed worthwhile to follow the fortunes of this remnant of a most savage and unattractive people, as the story illustrates what has been said in an earlier part of this history as to the relation between vigorous royalty and national success, among the Teutonic tribes. The soft and pliable character of Rodulf caused him to be hurried into an unjust war, which he had not sufficient generalship to bring to a successful issue, and the disastrous end of which was fatal to the greatness of his nation. Ruin demoralized the race, and the instinct of national dignity became so deadened that they delighted in flouting the king, the representative of the greatness of the nation, and at length crowned their insults by murdering him. The spasmodic attempts to replace him by pretenders fetched from distant Norway, or begged from haughty Byzantium, all failed, and the nation, kingless, soulless and decayed, sank into a mere appendage to the monarchy of the equally barbarous but more loyal Gepidae.

4.

War with the Gepidae.

Returning to the history of Paulus, we find these two sentences as to the succession to the rude throne of the Langobardi :—

‘Tato was, shortly after the war with the Heruli, attacked and slain by his nephew Waccho, who succeeded him. Waccho left a son, the issue of his third marriage, named Waltari, who reigned for nine years. Then Audoin obtained the kingdom, who was succeeded by his son Alboin, the tenth king of the Langobardi’.

We see then that among the triumphant Langobardi also civil war and revolution soon broke out. It was not long after the great victory over the Heruli before king Tato was attacked, defeated, and slain by his nephew Waccho. The son of Tato, Risiulf, and his grandson Ildichis, who became at length refugees at the court of the king of the Gepidae, made apparently frequent attempts to recover the throne of their progenitor, but all these attempts were vain. For thirty years Waccho ruled the Langobardic nation in their settlement on the plains of Hungary, and he seems at last to have died in peace.

The long reign of Waccho is again nearly a blank the Langobardic annals. We are told that he brought the Suavi under subjection to his yoke but it is not easy to see what people are designated by this name. The Suavi, or Suevi, who dwelt in the south-western corner of Germany, called from them Suabia, are much too far off and too much involved in Frankish wars and alliances for any contest between them and the Langobardi to have been likely. More probably we have here another instance of the confusion pointed out in a previous volume between Suavia and Savia: and we are thus being told of the subjugation of the inhabitants of the region between the rivers Drave and Save. Such an event must have occurred after the Ostrogothic monarchy had begun to fall asunder in ruin, since, even in the days of Athalaric, Savia was still administered in his name in accordance with rescripts issued from Ravenna.

In the year 539, when Witigis the Ostrogoth found himself hard pressed by Belisarius, and began, too late, to cast about him for alliances to ward off his impending doom, he sent ambassadors to Waccho, offering him large sums of money if he would become his confederate. This, however, Waccho refused to do, having been, apparently throughout his reign, on cordial terms with the Court of Constantinople. In fact, we can see in the scanty notices concerning this king a determination to strengthen himself by alliances with all his more powerful neighbours, doubtless in order to resist the pretensions, either to dethrone, or to succeed him, which were put forward by the family of his predecessor. He was thrice married; the first time to a daughter of the king of the Thuringians, the second to a daughter of the king of the Gepidae, and the third to a daughter of the king of the Heruli. The last marriage only was fruitful in surviving male issue, but the two daughters of his second marriage were married to two successive kings of Austrasia, Theudebert and Theudebald: and thus these kings, who stood to one another in the relation of father and son, became brothers-in-law in right of their Langobardic wives. When at length Waccho died, probably somewhat advanced in years, he was succeeded by the child of his old age, his son by the Herulian princess Salinga, the boy-king Waltari.

For about seven years the nominal reign of Waltari, lasted, under the administration of the warrior Audoin, and then the young king died. It is distinctly stated that he died of disease, and we have none of those hints of foul play which are so usual when a young king dies and is succeeded by his guardian. Thus did the dynasty of the Lithingi, to which for sixty years or more the rulers of the Langobardi had belonged, cease to reign, and Audoin, father of the mighty Alboin, mounted the throne.

It seems probable that the reign of Audoin lasted for about twenty years. During the greater part of that time there was a simmering feud between the Langobardi and the Gepidae, ever and anon boiling over into actual war. Mere neighbourhood was reason enough for bloodshed between two tribes so barbarous and so faithless. But in addition, there was the fact that the remnant of the conquered Heruli, henceforth the irreconcilable enemies of the Langobardi, had been received into the Gepid nationality, and there were also two pretenders to the throne of the rival nation, each one seated at the hearth of the hostile king. Ildichis, grandson of Tato, and the last descendant of the illustrious house of the Lithingi, in the intervals of his wanderings, which took him to the Sclavonian country, to Constantinople, even to the court of Totila, found his most abiding home in the palace of Thorisind, king of the Gepidae. On the other hand, Thorisind had himself a rival of whom he was in fear, the young Ustrigotthus, son of his predecessor Elemund, and this pretender was a refugee at the court of Audoin.

To these two rival nations, whose power was so nearly equally balanced, the friendship and alliance of the great Caesar of Byzantium was a matter of supreme importance, and he was generally disposed to throw the weight of that alliance into the scale of the Langobardi, as slightly the weaker and the more remote of the two undesired neighbours. About the year 547, when the war between Totila and Justinian was dying down to its last embers, and when it was plain that either to hold or to conquer Italy alone was a task almost too heavy for either combatant, a great rearrangement of power took place in the countries under the shadow of the Alps. Without any trouble the Frankish kings took possession of the greater part of Venetia, neither Goths nor Romans being able to withstand them. On the other hand, the Gepidae pressed in from the north-east, resumed possession of their once held and long-coveted city of Sirmium, and spreading themselves thence across the Danube, wrested not from Goths, but from Romans, nearly the whole of the provinces which made up the diocese of Dacia. Irritated by this conduct of a people who still professed to call themselves *foederati* of the Empire, Justinian discontinued the subsidies which he had hitherto allowed them, and, as a counterpoise to the menacing Gepid power, invited the Langobardi across the Danube—not, however, to its southern, but to its western shore—and presented them with the city Noricum and other fortresses over against the Pannonian settlements of the Gepidae. This migration, which is generally described as a migration into Pannonia, but which was probably as much into Noricum as into Pannonia, was a most important event in the history of the Langobardic nation. It brought them out of the distant Hungarian plains into the countries which we now know as Styria, Salzburg, and Carinthia. Henceforward the more adventurous huntsmen and warriors of the tribe were constantly scaling mountains from which at least other mountains could be seen that looked on Italy. As Theodosius brought Alaric, so now has Justinian brought the father of Alboin to the threshold of the Imperial land.

It would be a difficult and unprofitable task to endeavour to reduce into their precise chronological order the rude, chaotic struggles which took place between Langobard and Gepid during the reign of Audoin. Procopius gives us one series of facts relating to them, Paulus another; and as neither writer gives us any exact dates, it is impossible to arrange them with any certainty in a consecutive history. A few scenes, however, which illustrate the habits and modes of thought of these barbarians—immeasurably ruder and more anarchic than the Goths, to whom our attention has hitherto been chiefly directed—may here be recorded.

In the first place, at some uncertain date, but probably about the year 550, we have the two tribes, neighbours, and therefore enemies, earnestly desiring to go to war with one another, and fixing a definite time for the encounter. The Langobardi, who knew that they were outnumbered by the Gepidae, sought for a definite alliance with the Romans. The Gepidae, on the other hand, who claimed to be still *foederati* of the Empire, though the *foedus* did not

restrain them from occupying Dacia, south of the Danube, and laying waste Dalmatia and Illyricum as far as the city of Dyrrhachium, insisted that the Romans were bound either to give them active assistance, or, at the very least, to stand aside and let them fight their battle with the Langobardi unhindered.

Ambassadors from the two nations arrived at Constantinople and received separate audience from e Justinian. The two harangues are given at great length by Procopius. There is much in them which savours of the Greek rhetorician and which is doubtless invented by him, but some of the pleas urged are so quaint and (in the case of the Gepidae) so impudent that we must believe that they were really uttered by the barbarians.

On the first day the Langobardi spoke. 'We are perfectly astounded' said they, 'at the presumption of these Gepidae, whose, embassy is the deadliest insult they could possibly have inflicted upon you. So long as the Ostrogoths were mighty, the Gepidae, cowering on the other side of the river, sought shelter in the Imperial alliance, received your yearly gifts, and were in all things the very humble servants of the Empire. As soon as the power of the Ostrogoths declined, when they saw them driven out of Dacia while you at the same time had your hands full with the Italian war, what did these faithful allies of yours do? They spurned the Roman rule, they broke all treaties, they swarmed across your frontier, they took Sirmium, they brought its citizens into bondage, and now they boast that they are making the whole of Dacia their own. Yet in their whole history they have committed no more scandalous action than in this embassy which they are now sending you. For as soon as they perceived that we were about to make war upon them, they dared to visit Byzantium and to come into the presence of the prince whom they have so grievously wronged. Perhaps also, in their abundant impudence, they will dare to invite you to an alliance against us, us your faithful friends. Should the condition of such an alliance be the restoration of the lands which they have wrested from you, the Roman gratitude will be due to the real authors of this late repentance, that is to the Langobardic nation. But if they propose to restore nothing, can anything be imagined more monstrous than their presumption?

'These things we have set forth with barbaric plainness of speech, and in unadorned language, quite inadequate to the offence of which we complain. Do you, Sire, carefully weigh our words and decide on such a course of action as shall be most for the interest, both of the Romans and of your own Langobardi. Especially remember this most important point, that in things pertaining to God we are at one with you in faith. The Gepidae are Arians, and for that very reason are sure to go into the opposite camp to yours, but we hold your creed, and have therefore, from of old, been justly treated by the Romans as their friends'.

Thus spoke the Langobardi. On the next day the Gepidae had audience of the Emperor. 'We admit, Sire', said they, 'that he who proposes to a neighbour that he should form an alliance with him, is bound to show that such alliance is just and expedient. That we shall have no difficulty in proving in the present instance. The alliance is a just one, for we have been of old the *foederati* of the Romans, while the Langobardi have only of late become friendly to the Empire. Moreover, we have constantly endeavoured to settle our differences with them by arbitration¹; but this, in their braggart insolence, they have always refused till now, when perceiving that we are in earnest and recognizing their weakness they come whining to you for succour. And the alliance with us will be an expedient one, for anyone who is acquainted with the subject knows that in numbers and martial spirit the Gepidae far surpass the Langobardi. If you choose our alliance on this occasion, grateful for your present succour, we shall follow your standard against every other foe, and the abundance of our strength will ensure you victory.

'But then these robbers pretend that Sirmium and certain other parts of Dacia are a sufficient cause of war between us and you. On the contrary, there is such a superabundance of

cities and territory in your great Empire, that you have rather to look out for men on whom to bestow a portion of them. To the Franks, to the Heruli, and even to these very Langobardi, you have given such store of cities and fields as no man can number. Relying in full confidence on your friendship, we anticipated your intentions. When a man has made up his mind to part with a certain possession, how much more highly does he value the friend who reads his thought and helps himself to the intended gift (always supposing there is nothing insulting in his way of doing it), than him who passively receives his favour. Now the former is exactly the position which the Gepidae have occupied towards the Romans.

‘Lay these things to heart we entreat you. If it be possible, which we earnestly desire, join us with your whole force against the Langobardi. But if that be not possible, stand aside and leave us to fight out our own quarrels’.

So ended the extraordinary harangue of the Gepidae.

After long deliberation, Justinian decided to help the Langobardi, and sent to their aid 10,000 cavalry under the command of John, nephew of Vitalian, and three other officers whose names we have met with in the Gothic wars. The unstable and disorganized Heruli fought on both sides of the contest; three thousand of them, under their king’s brother Aordus, helping their hosts the Gepidae, and seventeen hundred under Philemuth holding to their *foedus* with Rome and following the standards of John. Aordus and a large part of his Herulian army were slain by a detachment of the Imperial troops. Then, when the two rival nations perceived that Justinian’s soldiers were really about to appear on the scene, the barbarians’ dread and hatred of the great civilized Empire suddenly reassumed its old sway. The Gepid made proposals of peace and amity to the Langobard, the Langobard accepted them without the slightest reference to his Imperial ally; the quarrel was at an end, and the troops of Justinian, drawn far on into the barbarian territory and suddenly left without allies, were in imminent danger of destruction. Apparently they succeeded at length in making good their retreat, but we have no details of their escape, for Procopius leaves their story half-told.

The two nations, united by this patched-up peace, soon drifted again into war. Large bodies of troops, ‘many myriads of men,’ followed each king into the field. But before the armies were in sight of one another, a strange panic seized on either host. All the rank and file of the Langobardi, all the rank and file of the Gepidae, fled impetuously homeward, disregarding both the threats and blandishments of their leaders. Shame forbade these, the nobles of the nation, to fly; but Audoin, finding himself with only a trusty few around him, and ignorant that the enemy were in precisely the same condition, sent an embassy to Thorisind proposing conditions of peace. The ambassadors, finding this king also with only a staff and without an army, asked what had become of his people. ‘They have fled,’ was the answer, ‘though no man pursued them’. ‘The very same thing has befallen us’, said the Langobardi. ‘Come, then, since this has evidently happened by a Divine interposition to prevent two great nations from destroying one another, let us obey the will of God by putting an end to the war’. And accordingly a truce for two years was concluded between the two kings.

Again, perhaps at the end of this two years’ truce, did the Gepid and the Langobard arm for the inevitable strife. Again, as before, both sides sought the help of Justinian, who, alarmed and angry at the conduct of Gepidae in ferrying his Slavonic and Hunnish enemies across the Danube, and thus laying Thrace and Moesia open to their invasions, first, through fear, made a solemn treaty with that nation (which was ratified by the oaths of ten Senators of Byzantium), and then in his wrath made an equally solemn treaty with the Langobardi and sent an army to their assistance. The leaders of this expedition—Justinian seems, except in the case of Belisarius and Narses, to have shrunk from entrusting one man with the supreme command of an army—were Justin and Justinian, the two sons of Germanus, and great-nephews of the Emperor, Aratius, the Persarmenian, who had served under Belisarius in Italy, Suartuas, once

king of the Heruli, who had been thrust aside by the returned wanderer from Thule, and Amalafriid, son of Hermanfrid, king of the Thuringians, and great-nephew of Theodoric. This Thuringian prince had been brought in the train of Witigis from Ravenna by Belisarius, had become a noble in the Court of Justinian and an officer in his army, and his sister had been given in marriage to Audoin, in order to cement the alliance between the Langobardi and the Empire

Of all this many-generalled host only Amalafriid with his *comitatus* reached the dominions of his brother-in-law. The rest of the generals with their troops tarried behind at Ulpiana, to settle in Imperial fashion some theological disputes which had broken out there, probably in connection with the controversy of the Three Chapters. Thus it came to pass that in the great, long-delayed and terrible battle between the Langobardi and the Gepidae, the former nation fought practically almost single-handed. They did indeed conquer and destroy multitudes of their foes, but king Audoin, in sending tidings of the victory to Justinian, took care to remind him that he had not fulfilled his duties as an ally, and had ill requited the loyalty with which the Langobardi had sent their soldiers, in large numbers, into Italy to fight under the banners of Narses against Totila. And in fact in that campaign, and at the decisive battle of the Apennines, Audoin himself had been present, as we have already seen, with 2500 warriors attended by their 3000 squires.

However, notwithstanding these complaints, the alliance between Justinian and the now victorious Langobardi lasted for the present unbroken, and the Gepidae, in a depressed and broken condition, suing for peace, were admitted to a humble place in the same confederacy. One condition, however, was needed to cement the alliance, and that was the surrender of the fugitive Ildichis, the last remnant of the old stock of the Lithingi. His life was a perpetual menace to the throne of the intruder Audoin, and, moreover, he had rendered himself obnoxious to Justinian, whose court he had deserted, whose stables he had robbed of some of their most valuable inmates, and whose officers he had slain in a well-contrived night attack on a detachment of the Imperial troops in an Illyrian forest. By both Emperor and King, therefore, the surrender of Ildichis was demanded as that of a common enemy, and the Gepidae were plainly informed that, without the fulfillment of this condition, no durable peace could be concluded with them. But when Thorisind assembled the chiefs of his people, and earnestly entreated their advice on the question whether he should yield to the demand of these two powerful princes, the assembly absolutely refused to entertain the proposition of surrender, declaring that it was better for the Gepidae to perish out of hand with their wives and children, than to consent to so impious an act as the betrayal of a guest and a fugitive. Thorisind, who was brought hereby into a most difficult dilemma, between fear of his victorious neighbours and fear of his own nobles, parried the difficulty for a time by making a counter demand from Audoin for the surrender of his rival claimant, Ustrigothus, son of Elemund. The Langobard nobles were as unwilling to disgrace themselves by the abandonment of Ustrigothus, as the Gepid nobles had been to countenance the abandonment of Ildichis, and so for the time both demands were refused, and the negotiation was at an end. A community of interest, however, drew the two usurpers together, and each privately got rid of the other's rival by secret assassination, in a manner so foul, that Procopius refuses to describe it. The whole story is a valuable illustration of the character of Teutonic royalty, the limitations which in theory restrained it, and the means which it practically possessed of rendering those limitations nugatory.

Amid these events Alboin, the son of Audoin by his first wife Rodelinda, was growing up to his memorable manhood. Tall of stature, and with a frame admirably knit for all martial exercises, he had also the strenuous aptitude for war of a born general. In the great battle with the Gepidae which has been already spoken of, while the fortune of war was still uncertain the

sons of the two kings, Alboin and Thorismund, met in single combat. Drawing his great broadsword, the Langobard prince cut down his Gepid rival, who fell from his horse lifeless. It was the sight of the death of this their bravest champion which struck terror into the hearts of the Gepidae and gave the victory and abundance of spoil to the Langobardi. When these returned in triumph to their homes they suggested to king Audoin that the son, by whose valour so conspicuous a victory had been wrought, was surely worthy now to take a seat at his father's table as King's Guest: and that he who had shared the royal peril might justly share in the royal conviviality. 'Not so', replied the tenacious king, 'lest I violate the customs of our nation. For ye know that it is not according to our manners that a king's son should dine with his father, until he has received his arms from the king of some foreign people'.

When Alboin heard these words of his father he took with him forty young men of his *comitatus* and rode to the court of Thorisind, his father's recent foe. Having explained the object of his visit, he was courteously received and placed at the king's table in the seat of honour on his right hand. But Thorisind, though he thus complied with the laws of barbaric courtesy and recognized Alboin's right to claim adoption at his hands, was filled with melancholy when he saw the slayer of Thorismund sitting in Thorismund's seat. In one of the pauses of the long banquet he heaved a deep sigh and his grief broke forth in words :

'That place is to me ever to be loved, but the person who now sits in it is grievous to behold.'

Stirred by these words of his father, the king's surviving son began to taunt the Langobardi with clumsy sarcasms, derived from the white gaiters which they wore wrapped round the leg below the calf. 'You are like stinking white-legged mares', was the insult addressed to his father's guest by the Gepid prince. One of the Langobardi hurled back the taunt: 'Go,' said he, 'to the plain of Asfeld. There you will find out plainly enough how those mares can kick, when you see your brother's bones, like those in a knacker's yard, scattered over the meadows'. At these words the Gepidae started up trembling with rage: the Langobardi clustered together for defence : all hands were at the hilts of the swords. The king, however, leaped up from the table and threw himself between the combatants, threatening terrible vengeance on the first of his subjects who should begin the fray, and declaring that a victory earned over his guests in his own palace would be abomination in the sight of God. With these words he at length allayed the storm, and Gepid and Langobard returned with smoothed brows to the wassail bowl, the guttural-sounding song, and all the joys of the interrupted banquet. Thus did Alboin receive from Thorisind the arms of the dead Thorismund, and returning to his home was welcomed as a guest at his father's table, all voices being raised in praise of Alboin's valour and the faith—it is hard not to write the knightly faith—of Thorisind.

About ten years after these events (if we have read the chronology aright) Audoin died, and Alboin, on whom the nation's hopes were fastened, ascended the throne. Thorisind had meantime been succeeded by Cunimund, who was perhaps a brother of the deceased king of the Gepidae.

It was by a new political combination and by the aid of an altogether new actor on the scene, that the long duel between the two nations was terminated. In the closing years of the reign of Justinian, a fresh horde of Asiatics, apparently of Hunnish origin, but who assumed the name of Avars—a name which for some reason was already terrible—entered Europe, menaced the Empire, extorted large subsidies from the aged Emperor, and even penetrated westwards as far as Thuringia, bent on battle with the Frankish kings. These rude successors of Attila's warriors did, in fact, erect a kingdom far more enduring than his, for it was not till the close of the eighth century that the power of the Avars received its death-blow from the hands of Pippin, son of Charles the Great. The head of this barbarous race bore the title of Chagan (Khan), and the first Chagan of the Avars was named Baian. With him Alboin made a compact

of a curious kind, and one which seems to show that hatred of the Gepidae had blunted the edge of the land-hunger of the barbarian. 'Let us combine to crush out of existence these Gepidae, who now lie between your territories and mine. If we win, yours shall be all their land and half of the spoils of war. Moreover, if I and my people cross over the Alps into Italy and conquer that land, all this province of Pannonia wherein we now dwell shall be yours also'. The league was made : the combined invasion took place: Cunimund heard that the terrible Avars had burst the barrier of the Eastern Carpathians, then that the Langobardi had crossed the Danube and the Theiss and were assailing him from the west. Broken in spirit and in sore distress from the difficulties of his position¹ he turned to fight against the older and more hated foes. 'Let us fight,' said he to his warriors, 'with the Langobardi first, and if we vanquish them we shall without doubt drive the Huns forth out of our fatherland'. The battle was joined. Both sides put forth all their strength, and the Langobardi with such success and such fury that of all the Gepid host scarce one remained to tell the tale of his nation's overthrow.

Alboin himself slew Cunimund in a hand-to-hand encounter, and, like the untutored savage that he was, cut off his head and fashioned his skull into a drinking-cup, which ever after at solemn festivals was handed to the king full of wine, and recalled to his exultant heart the memory of that day's triumph.

Nor was this the only trophy carried from the land of the Gepidae to the palace of Alboin. His first wife, Chlotsuinda, daughter of the Frankish king Chlotchar, had died, and Rosamund, daughter of Cunimund, was selected by the conqueror to fill her place at the high-seat beside him. What seemed to the barbarians vast stores of wealth, taken from the Gepid dwellings, enriched the Langobardic homes. The Gepidae, on the other hand, were so depressed and enfeebled that they never thenceforward dared to choose a king of their own, but dragged out an inglorious existence either as subjects of the Langobardi, or in their own fatherland under the hard yoke of the brutal Avars.

Such was the fate of the third nation in the Gothic confederacy, which so many centuries ago, in its laggart ship, made the voyage from Scandinavia to the Livonian shore.

NOTE A.

On the Early Homes of the Langobardi.

In order not to encumber the text with the theories of German scholars on this subject, I insert the chief of them here.

I. *Zeuss (Die Germanen und die Nachbarstämme)* is so careful an enquirer, and is so well acquainted with the details given us by Greek and Roman geographers as to all the German tribes, that one always differs from him with reluctance.

He seems inclined to make Muringa = the flat country eastward from the Elbe, connecting it with *Moor* and other kindred words. For *Golauda* he takes an alternative reading (not well supported by MS. authority), *Rugulanda*, and suggests that it may be the coast opposite the isle of Rugen. *Anthai* is the *pagus* of the Antae who, on the authority of Ptolemy and Jordanes, are placed somewhere in the Ukraine, in the Dniester and Dnieper countries: *Banthaib* he gives up as hopeless, *Burgundaib* he connects with the Urugundi of Zosimus, whom he seems inclined to place in Red Russia, between the Vistula and the Bug. These names, he thinks, 'lead us in the direction of the Black Sea, far into the eastern steppes' and he connects this supposed eastward march of the Langobardi with their alleged combats with the Bulgarians.

II. Dr. Friedrich *Bluhme*, in his monograph ‘Die Gens Langobardorum und ihre Herkunft’ (Bonn, 1868), places the primeval home of the Langobardi in the extreme north of Denmark, in the peninsula or rather island formed by the Limfiord, which still bears the name *Wend-syssel*. (This he connects with the original name of the tribe, Winnili.) Thence he brings them to Bardengau on the left bank of the Elbe. I think he accepts the identification Scoringa = Bardengau. He places the Assipitti (the tribe who sought to bar the further progress of the Langobardi) in the neighbourhood of Asse, a wooded height near Wolfenbüttel. He rejects the identification of Mauringa with Holstein, and the reference to the Geographer of Ravenna, and thinks that we have a trace of the name in Moringen near Northeim, at the foot of the Harz mountains. But he makes them wander still further westwards and Rhinewards, chiefly relying on the passage of Ptolemy, which places them in close neighbourhood with the Sigambri. He considers this allocation to be singularly confirmed by the *Chronicon Gothanum*, which says that they stayed long at Paderborn. Thus he contends for a general migration of the tribe from Eastphalia (Bardengau) to Westphalia; and considers this theory to be strengthened by the great resemblance between the family names of Middle Westphalia and those of Bardengau: between the legal customs of Soest (in Westphalia) and those of Lübeck, and between these two sets of customs and the Lombard Edict.

Bluhme does not offer much explanation of the difficult names Golanda, Anthaib, Banthaib, and Burgundaib, except that he thinks the last was the territory evacuated by the Burgundians when they moved westwards to the Middle Rhine. He puts the migration of the Langobardi to the borders of Bohemia about 373, and thinks that the election of their first king Agelmund was contemporary therewith. He observes that the ruins of the palace of king Waccho (who reigned at the beginning of the sixth century) were still to be seen at Beowinidis, i. e. in Bohemia, probably at Camberg, S.E. of Prague, in the year 805 (*Chronicon Moissiacense*, s. a.).

Rugiland—Moravia. Feld—the March-feld bordering it on the south.

NOTE B.

Extract from the Codex Gothanus.

The opening and closing paragraphs of the Codex Gothanus are so utterly different from the Origo and the history of Paulus, that, instead of attempting to weave them into one narrative therewith, I prefer to give a separate translation of them here.

‘1. The fore-elders of the Langobardi assert “per Gambaram parentem suam pro quid exitus aut movicio seu visitatio eorum fuisset, deinter serpentibus parentes eorum breviati exissent”, a rough and bloody and lawless progeny. But coming into the land of Italy they found it flowing with milk and honey, and, what is more, they found there the salvation of baptism, and receiving the marks of the Holy Trinity, they were made of the number of the good. In them was fulfilled the saying, “Sin is not imputed where there is no law”. At first they were ravening wolves, afterwards they became lambs feeding in the Lord’s flock: therefore should great praise and thanks be brought to God who hath raised them from the dung-hill and set them in the number of the just, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of David, “He raiseth the needy from the dung-hill, and maketh him to sit with the princes of the earth”. Thus did the aforesaid Gambara assert concerning them (not prophesying things which she knew not, but, like the Pythoness or Sibyl, speaking because a divine visitation moved her), that “the thorn should be turned into a rose”. How this could be she knew not, unless it were shown to her by God. She asserts, therefore, that they will go forth, moved not by necessity, nor by hardness of heart, nor by the oppression of parents, but that they may obtain salvation from on high. It is a wonderful and unheard-of thing to behold such salvation shining forth, when there was no

merit in their parents, so that from among the sharp blades of the thorns the odorous flowers of the churches were found. Even as the compassionate Son of God had preached before, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners” [to repentance]. These were they of whom the Saviour Himself spoke in proverbs [parables] to the Jews, “I have other sheep, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring to seek for the living water”.

‘2. Here begins the origin and nation or parentage of the Langobardi, their going forth and their conversion, the wars and devastations made by their kings, and the countries which they laid waste.

There is a river which is called Vindilicus, on the extreme boundary of Gaul: near to this river was their first dwelling and possession. At first they were Winili by their own proper name and parentage: for, as Jerome asserts, their name was afterwards changed into the common word Langobardi, by reason of their profuse and always unshaven beards. This aforesaid river Ligurius flows into the channels of the river Elbe, and loses its name. After the Langobardi went forth, as has been before said (?), from the same shore, they placed their new habitations at first at Scatenaug on the shore of the river Elbe: then still fighting, they reached the country of the Saxons, the place which is called Patespruna, where, as our ancient fathers assert, they dwelt a long time, and they encountered wars and dangers in many regions. Here too they first raised over them a king named Agelmund. With him they began to fight their way back to their own portion in their former country, wherefore in Beovinidis they moved their army by the sound of clanging trumpets to their own property : whence to the present day the house and dwelling of their king Wacho still appear as signs. Then requiring a country of greater fertility, they crossed over to the province of Thrace, and fixed their inheritance in the country of the city (sic) of Pannonia. Here they struggled with the Avars, and waging many wars with them with most ardent mind, they conquered Pannonia itself. And the Avars made with them a league of friendship, and for twenty-two years they are said to have lived there’.

From this point to the accession of Rothari, a.d. 636, the text of the Codex Gothanus coincides very nearly with that of the Origo. It then proceeds as follows:—

‘7. Rothari reigned sixteen years: by whom laws and justice were begun for the Langobardi: and for the first time the judges went by a written code, for previously all causes were decided by custom (*cadarfada*) and the judge’s will, or by ordeal (?) (*ritus*). In the days of the same king Rothari, light arose in the darkness: by whom the aforesaid Langobardi directed their endeavours to the canonical rule and became helpers of the priests’.

[8 contains the durations of the kings’ reigns from Rodwald to Desiderius].

‘9. Here was finished the kingdom of the Langobardi, and began the kingdom of Italy, by the most glorious Charles, king of the Franks, who, as helper and defender of lord Peter, the prince of the Apostles, had gone to demand justice for him from Italy. For no desire of gain caused him to wander, but he became the pious and compassionate helper of the good: and though he might have demolished all things, he became their clement and indulgent [preserver]. And in his pity he bestowed on the Langobardi the laws of his native land, adding laws of his own as he deemed fit for the necessities of the Langobardi: and he forgave the sins of innumerable men who sinned against him incessantly. For which Almighty God multiplied his riches a hundredfold. After he had conquered Italy he made Spain his boundary: then he subdued Saxony: afterwards he became lord of Bavaria, and over innumerable nations spread the terror of his name. But at last, as he was worthy of the Empire’s honour, he obtained the

Imperial crown; he received all the dignities of the Roman power, he was made the most dutiful son of lord Peter, the apostle, and he defended Peters property from his foes. But after all these things he handed over the kingdom of Italy to his great and glorious son, lord Pippin, the great king, and as Almighty God bestowed the grace of fortitude on the father, so did it abound in the son, through whom the province of Thrace (!), together with the Avars, was brought into subjection to the Franks. They, the aforesaid Avars, who were sprung from a stock which is the root of all evil, who had ever been enemies of the churches and persecutors of the Christians, were, as we have said, by the same lord Pippin, to his own great comfort and that of his father, expelled and overcome: the holy churches were defended, and many vessels of the saints which those cruel and impious men had carried off, were by the same defender restored to their proper homes. Then the cities of the Beneventan province, as they deserved for their violation of their plighted oath, were wasted and made desolate by fire, and their inhabitants underwent the capital sentence. After these things, he also went to Beowinidis (?) with his army and wasted it, and made the people of that land a prey, and carried them captive. Therefore also by his orders his army liberated the island of Corsica, which was oppressed by the Moors. At the present day by his aid Italy has shone forth as she did in the most ancient days. She has had laws, and fertility, and quietness, by the deserving of our lord [the Emperor], through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen'

CHAPTER IV.

ALBOIN IN ITALY.

Thus have we followed the fortunes of the Langobardi, or, as I shall now for convenience call them, the Lombards, from their dim original on the shores of the Baltic, till they stood on the crest of the Julian Alps, looking down with lustful eyes on the land which had once been the Mistress of the World, but which now lay all but defenseless before them.

We may briefly summarize all that can be ascertained of their social and political condition on the day when, according to the Saga, the messengers of Narses appeared in Alboin's banqueting hall, bearing the grapes and the oranges of Italy. There is some difference of opinion as to the ethnological position of the Lombards. One German scholar, who, by his life-long devotion to philological study, claims our respectful attention, contends strongly for their Low-German character, basing his argument, not only on the traditions mentioned in the previous chapter, which connect them (in his opinion) with the Danish peninsula, but also (which is more especially interesting to us) on the extraordinary correspondence of Lombard words, customs and laws with those of the Anglo-Saxons. Another and younger authority (following, it is time, in the train of the venerable Jacob Grimm) says, in somewhat haughty tone, 'That the Lombards belonged to the West Germans, and to the High-German branch of that people, no one can now any longer deny'. Both he and Grimm were led to this conclusion chiefly by the High-German character of the Lombard names and the few relics which have been preserved to us of the language. The gift of the bridegroom to the bride, which was called in Low-German *Morgen-gabe*, is in the Lombard laws *morgin-cap*; the Anglo-Saxon *Alfwine* is apparently the same name as the Lombard Alboin; the judge who, in Gothic, is called *sculdhaita*, is, among the Lombards, *sculdhaizo*; and so with many other words. In all these the Lombard language seems to affect that form which, according to Grimm's well-known law, marks the High-German (say the Swabian or Bavarian) manner of speech, rather than the Low-German, which was practised by Goths, Frisians and Angles.

Where such authorities differ, it would be presumptuous in the present writer to express an opinion, but I may remark that to me the philological facts seem modified to correspond in a remarkable degree with what we have already learned from our authorities concerning the early history of the people. We have in the Lombards, as I venture to think, a race originally of Low-German origin, coming from the coasts and islands of the Baltic, and closely akin to our own Anglo-Saxon forefathers. So far, the case seems clear; and probably the Lombards spoke a pure Low-German dialect when they dwelt in Bardengau by the Elbe, and when they fought with the Vandals. But then, by about the middle of the second century after Christ, they gravitated towards the great Suevic confederation, and visited, in its train, the lands on the Middle Danube, where (if I read their history aright) they remained more or less persistently for nearly four hundred years.

This surely was a long enough time to give a Suevic, that is a Swabian or High-German, character to their speech, sufficient time for them to change their B's into P's, their G's into K's, and their T's into Z's, before they emerged into the world of book-writing and book-reading men.

Of the dress and appearance of the Lombards at the time of their invasion of Italy we have a most precious trace in the words of their great historian, and here again that connection, so interesting to us, between them and our own forefathers, comes into view.

‘At Modicia,’ says Paulus, ‘queen Theudelinda built a palace for herself [about the year 600], in which she also caused some representation to be made of the deeds of the Lombards. In this picture it is clearly shown how at that time the Lombards cut the hair of their heads, and what was their dress, and what their habit. For, in truth, they made bare the neck, shaving it up to the back of the head, having their hair let down from the face as far as the mouth, and parting it on either side from the forehead. But their garments were loose and for the most part made of linen, such as the Anglo-Saxons are wont to wear, adorned with borders woven in various colours. Their boots were open almost to the extremity of the great toe, and kept together by crossing boot-laces. Later on, however, they began to use hosen, over which the riders drew waterproof leggings. But this fashion they copied from the Romans’. Would that the chroniclers of the early Middle Ages would more often have furnished us with details like these as to the dress and habits of the people! They would have been more valuable than many pages of controversy on the ‘Three Chapters’, or even than the usual notes of miracles, eclipses, and displays of Aurora Borealis, which are found in their annals.

Politically the organization of the Lombard people was evidently rude and barbarous. To use a phrase of the which has lately come into fashion among German historians, the tendency of political life among them was centrifugal rather than centripetal. The institution of kingship was imperfectly developed. There does not appear to have been any single family, like the Amals among the Ostrogoths or the Balthae among the Visigoths, towering high above the other noble families, and claiming the veneration of the people by the right of long descent. A king arises among them, and perhaps succeeds in transmitting his royal power to one or two generations of his descendants; but then there is a murder or a rebellion, and a member of an entirely different clan succeeds to the throne. Nor, for many generations, do any national leaders give proof of political genius or constructive statesmanship. Mere lust and love of plunder appear to be the determining motives of their wars. They produce no Alaric, with his consciousness of a divine mission to penetrate to the Eternal City; no Ataulfus and no Theodoric, longing to preserve the remnants of Roman civilization by the arms of the barbarian; no Gaiseric, able to stamp his own impress on the nation from which he sprang, and to turn the foresters of Pannonia into the daring mariners of Carthage. Everything about them, even for many years after they have entered upon the sacred soil of Italy, speaks of mere savage delight in bloodshed and the rudest forms of sensual indulgence; they are the anarchists of the *Volkerwanderung*, whose delight is only in destruction, and who seem incapable of culture. Yet this is the race from which, in the fullness of time, under the transmuting power of the old Italian civilization, were to spring Anselm and Lanfranc, Hildebrand and Dante Alighieri.

It is probable that the destructive ferocity of the invaders was partly due to the heterogeneous character of their army. For not only the Lombards, strictly so called, followed the standards of the son of Audoin. Twenty thousand Saxons (perhaps from the region which was afterwards called Swabia), mindful of their old alliance with the Lombards, came at Alboin’s call to help in the conquest of Italy, and brought their wives and children with them, intending to make it their home. Moreover in that motley host there were Gepidae, who had lost their own national existence, but were willing to help their victors to sack the cities of Italy; there were Bulgarians from the Lower Danube, Sarmatians or, as we should say, Slaves from the plains of the Ukraine, and a mass of men of various nationalities (perhaps including the remnants of the Rugian and Herulian peoples), who called themselves after the provinces in which they dwelt—the men of Pannonia, of Savia, and of Noricum. Two centuries later, the names of these non-Lombard tribes were still preserved in some of the villages of Italy. At the time which we are now considering, it is easy to understand how the mixed character of the entering multitude may have added to the horrors of the invasion. Each barbarous tribe among

the Germans had, so to speak, its own code of morality, as well as its own peculiar national vices; but when they were all united for one great ravaging inroad into the rich lands of the South, we can well believe that each tribe would contribute its worst elements to the common stock of savagery; the cruelty of one, the treachery of another, the lustfulness of a third, becoming the general character of all.

Among those loosely-connected nationalities, there were probably some which were still actually heathen. The Lombards, however, appear to have generally professed that Arian form of Christianity which, as we have seen, was common to nearly all the Teutonic invaders of the Empire. Of the time and manner of their conversion (if we may apply so noble a name to so slight and superficial a change) we know nothing.

Their Arianism, though it was sufficiently pronounced to make a chasm between them and the orthodox inhabitants of Italy, does not seem to have been of a militant type, like the bitter Arianism of the Vandals. Apparently they were not sufficiently in earnest about their faith to persecute its opponents; but, whether they were Arians or heathens, the divergence of their religion from that of the Roman provincials was excuse enough for sacking the churches, carrying off the costly communion chalices, and slaying the priests at the altar.

The muster of this manifold horde of barbarians was completed in the early spring of 568, and, on the second of April in that year, the day after Easter Sunday, Alboin set forth. He marched (if local tradition may be trusted), not precisely by the same road which Alaric had trodden before him, by Laybach and the Pear-tree Pass, but went somewhat higher up the valley of the Drave, near to the site of the modern city of Villach, and crossed the Julian Alps by that which is now known as the Predil Pass. A high hill rises here, to the southward of the road, which, at least from the eighth century onwards, has borne the name of the King's Mountain, for thither, it is said, the Lombard leader climbed, and from its height looked backward over the long train of his followers—the horsemen, the slowly moving waggons, the dusty foot-soldiers; and then, straining his eyes over the sea of hills to the south of him, he saw the longed-for Italy.

The march of the invader through the province of Venetia seems to have been practically unopposed. He reached the banks of the Piave and looked, it may be, towards the lagoons on the south-eastern horizon, where the descendants of the refugees from the wrath of Attila were leading their strange amphibious lives between the Adriatic and the mainland. But no message either of peace or war came to him from Torcello or Murano, and no Patrician from Ravenna stood ready to dispute his passage of the Piave. Only Felix, bishop of Tarvisium (Treviso), met the Lombard king and besought him to leave untouched the property of his church. The easy success of the invasion thus far had made Alboin generous. He granted the bishop's request, and ordered a charter to be prepared (called in the grand Byzantine style a Pragmatic) safeguarding all the rights and privileges of the church of Treviso.

Vicenza and Verona were conquered without difficulty, and now the whole province of Venetia, with the exception of Padua, Monselice and Mantua (to which must be added of course the little settlement in the Venetian lagoons), accepted the yoke of the invader.

It was probably while Alboin was spending the winter of 568-9 in one of the conquered cities of Venetia, that he took measures for closing the door by which he himself had entered Italy, against any future invader. With this purpose in view he appointed his nephew Gisulf first duke of Forum Julii. This city, now called Cividale, was the chief place of the district which still bears its name under a slightly altered form, that beautiful land of Friuli, whose barrier Alps are so memorable a feature in the northeastern horizon when we are looking forth from the palaces of Venice. Gisulf, whom he selected as duke of this outpost-country, was not only nephew of Alboin but also held the position of Master of the Horse in his uncle's household, a title which in the Lombard language was expressed by the word *Marpahis*. But

though already famous for his warlike deeds, even he feared to undertake the onerous duty of guarding the passes of the Julian Alps, unless he might choose his retainers from among the pick of the Lombard army. To this condition Alboin assented, and some of the noblest and bravest *faræ*, or kinships, of the Lombards were chosen to follow the standards of Gisulf and to settle under his government in the plains of Friuli. He also asked for and obtained a large number of the king's best brood-mares, that from them might spring the swift horses of his border-cavalry. As our historian's own lineage was derived from these Lombards of Friuli it is doubtless with a touch of family pride that he tells us of the foundation of this aristocratic colony.

The progress of the Lombard invaders was steady and rapid. In 569 Alboin overran the province of Liguria. Milan, so long the residence of the emperors, the city of Ambrose and of Theodosius, opened her gates to him on September 3, and all the cities of Liguria, and the neighbouring province of Alpes Cottiae, save Ticinum and those which were situated on the sea-coast, followed her example. From the day of the conquest of Milan, Alboin seems to have assumed the title of 'Lord of Italy' and from this event he dated the commencement of his reign.

As a rule we hear little of the resistance either of Byzantine garrisons or of citizens loyal to the Empire in any of these cities of Upper Italy. Nor, notwithstanding the general character for ferocity borne by the invaders, do we hear any particulars as to deeds of cruelty wrought by them after the capture of such cities. Possibly the very weakness of the garrisons and the panic terror of the inhabitants, caused by the reports which they had heard of Lombard barbarity, made the invaders' victory easy and inclined their hearts to mercy.

The one marked exception to this facility of conquest was afforded by the great city of Ticinum, or (to use the name which it acquired under Lombard domination) Pavia. This city, so strongly placed in the angle between the Ticino and the Po, was probably held by a numerous imperial garrison, and resisted the barbarian attack for more than three years. Alboin pitched his camp on the western side of the city and turned the siege into a blockade. Exasperated by its long and stubborn resistance, the king vowed that when he had taken it, he would put every one of the inhabitants to the sword. But when at length, doubtless owing to the pressure of hunger, the citizens surrendered, the cruel vow was recalled, owing to one of those strange occurrences in which Alboin, like Attila before him, read a marvel and a portent. The Lombard king in all his pride was riding in at the eastern gate of the city, the gate of St. John, when suddenly his horse fell in the middle of the gateway. Neither the spurs of his rider nor the spears with which he was abundantly beaten by the king's retinue availed to make him rise. Then one of the Lombard soldiers cried aloud, 'Remember, my lord the king! what manner of vow thou hast vowed. Break that cruel promise and thou shalt enter the town. For of a truth it is a Christian people that dwells in this city'. Alboin accepted his follower's counsel, recalled his vow and promised that none of the inhabitants should be harmed. Then the horse arose, and he rode on through the streets of the famine-stricken city to the palace built by the great Theodoric, where he took up his abode. The people, hearing of the cancelled vow, flocked to the palace to utter their joyful acclamations. Life, even under the savage Lombard, was sweet, and food was delightful after the years of hunger, and they let into their hearts a hope of better days to come after so many miseries which they had endured.

The city which had been able to make so long a defence was evidently worth holding. Pavia became, though perhaps not at once, the capital of the Lombard monarchy and the place of deposit of the royal hoard.

The three years from 569 to 572 were by no means exclusively occupied with the siege of Pavia. Alboin probably left the conduct of that operation to one of his trusted officers, while he himself with the mass of his followers wandered, ravaging and conquering, over northern and

central Italy. We lack any precise chronological statement of his career, but we may conjecture that in the year 570 he completed (with a few exceptions, afterwards to be noted) the conquest of the valley of the Po, and that in 571 he crossed the Apennines and began the conquest of Tuscia and Umbria, of the Aemilian and Flaminian provinces. In the same year, as is generally believed, others of the Lombards pushed down through central to southern Italy, and by their conquests laid the foundation of the two great Lombard duchies of Spoleto and Benevento.

It was of great assistance to the cause of the invaders that they early obtained possession of Bologna, of Forum Cornelii (or Imola), and of the great fortress which guarded the tunnel-pass of Furlo. This latter fortress they burned to the ground, doubtless in order to prevent its again falling into the hands of the Imperialists and blocking the communication between north and south. If the reader will turn back to the previous pages of this history, in which the wars between the Ostrogoths and the Empire were recorded, he will see of what capital importance to the invading nation was the possession of these strongholds which guarded the great Flaminian Way, the main artery of traffic between the two centres of Imperial authority, Rome and Ravenna. It might seem as if communication between these two cities, except by sea, must have been henceforth entirely suspended: but the strong town of Perugia on its rocky perch still held out for the Emperor, and probably by means of this city, through difficult mountain roads, his faithful servants may have travelled between the two capitals.

To enumerate the conquests of the Lombards in these years would be to give a mere list of the chief cities of northern and central Italy. It will be more the purpose to give the names of the principal cities which were yet held by the Empire. In Venetia, as already said, Padua and Monselice were still Imperial. Mantua fell to the Lombards, probably in the lifetime of Alboin, though we have no precise details of its capture and though it was soon reconquered by the Empire. In the valley of the Po, Cremona and Piacenza were still 'Roman': on the western coast, Genoa and probably several other cities of the Riviera: on the eastern, Ravenna and the five cities which formed the Pentapolis (Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Sinigaglia and Ancona); in central Italy, Perugia; in Latium, Rome itself and a certain, not very large, extent of territory round it; in southern Italy, Naples, Salerno, Paestum, and nearly all the towns of the province of Bruttii.

It will be seen that practically, with the single exception of Perugia, all the places of which the Empire retained possession were either on the sea-coast (like Genoa and Ancona), or surrounded by water (like Mantua), or accessible by a navigable river (like Cremona and Piacenza). On the other hand, the Lombards, an inland people, accustomed to traverse the high Alpine passes of Pannonia and Noricum, held the central ridge of the Apennines, from whence they swooped down at their pleasure upon the weakly garrisoned fortresses of Tuscia and Liguria. The invasion was thus—strange as the comparison would have seemed to the priests and 'Levites' of the Roman church—analogous to that which had occurred more than two thousand years before at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, when, under the leadership of Joshua, a nation, not less dreaded than the Lombards, came from over Jordan to occupy the high table-land of central Palestine, and to wage a war of generations with the more highly civilized inhabitants of the maritime plain, the citizens of the Philistine Pentapolis and the Canaanites of the Zidonian strand.

The victories of Alboin and his horde were doubtless somewhat aided by the terrible physical calamities which about this time afflicted Italy. Already, before the recall of Narses (probably about the year 566), a fearful pestilence had raged, chiefly in the province of Liguria. Its special symptom was the appearance on the patient of boils, about the size of a nut, the formation of which was followed by fever and intolerable heat, generally ending on the third day in the death of the sufferer. The Lombard historian draws a dismal picture of flocks deserted in the pastures, of farm-houses, once teeming with peasant life, abandoned to silence

or only tenanted by troops of dogs: of parents left unburied by their children, and children by their parents. If some one, mindful of the ancient kindness between them, devoted himself to the burial of his neighbour, he would most probably himself fall to the ground plague-stricken and remain unburied. The harvests in vain expected the reaper's sickle : the purple clusters hung on the vine till winter drew nigh. An awful silence brooded over the fields where the shepherd's whistle and the sportsman's eager tread were alike unheard. And yet more dreadful than the silence were the sounds of a ghostly trumpet, the mysterious tramp of unseen multitudes which were heard at night by the solitary rustics who lay awaiting their doom¹. This pestilence, as Paulus expressly tells us, was one cause of Alboin's easy victories : and another was the famine which raged in 570, following a year of extreme plenty in 569. This plenty was itself the result—so it was considered—of an abundant snowfall during the previous winter which had given the plains of Italy the semblance of the snow-fields of the Alps.

The career of Alboin had been brilliant and successful; in its savage style not unworthy to be ranked with the career of Alaric or of Attila, but it was destined to an even speedier ending than theirs. There were perhaps unextinguished jealousies and rivalries of the barbarian races under his command, which may have contributed to the fatal result, but the sagas of his nation—in which women had already played a leading part—attributed his death solely to the rage of an insulted woman. And thus the story was told:—

On a certain day (probably in the spring of 572) the king sat at the banquet in his palace-hall at Verona. Having drunk too freely of the wine-cup he bade bring forth the goblet which was fashioned out of the skull of king Cunimund; that same goblet, adorned with goodly pearls which near two centuries later the Lombard historian saw on a day of feasting exhibited by king Ratchis to his guests. He bade the cup-bearer carry this goblet (fashioned as it was out of her own father's skull) to queen Rosamund and invite her to drink merrily with her sire. The queen, it would seem, obeyed with no outward manifestation of repugnance, but in her heart she determined on a terrible revenge. With this intent she sought the aid of Helmechis the *scilpor* or armour-bearer of the king, and his foster-brother. She promised him her hand, she held out to him the dazzling prospect of the Lombard crown, and Helmechis entered into her treacherous designs. Only he stipulated that Peredeo, the chamberlain, should be made an accomplice in the plot. Doubtless Peredeo's help was indispensable to its successful execution, but also there may have been some reluctance on the part of Helmechis to strike the actual death-stroke against his foster-brother, and for this reason he may have desired to enlist the strong arm of Peredeo in the service of the infuriated queen. The chamberlain, however, when Rosamund sought to enlist his services in her scheme of revenge, refused to be partaker of so great wickedness. But he did not warn his master of the danger impending over him, and the queen, taking advantage of an intrigue between Peredeo and one of her waiting-women, by the sacrifice of her own honour, forced the unwilling chamberlain into a position in which he must either join the plot or be denounced to Alboin as the seducer of his wife. Peredeo chose the former alternative, and from that moment the success of the conspirators was assured. When Alboin had retired for his noon-tide slumber, a great silence was made all round his bed-chamber; the tramping sentinels were, as we may suppose, removed by order of the chamberlain; and on some pretence or other the arms which hung in the room were taken away. Then, as Helmechis had counselled, the queen brought in Peredeo himself to strike the fatal blow. Suddenly aroused from slumber, Alboin stretched forth his hand to grasp the sword which always hung at his bed's head, but this by the cunning of the conspirators had been so tightly tied to its sheath that he could not draw it. He snatched up a footstool and for some time valiantly defended himself, but fell at last under the strokes of the assassins.

'Thus,' says Paulus, 'did that most warlike and courageous man, who had earned so great fame in war by the slaughter of multitudes of his foes, fall like a Nithing in his chamber by the

stratagem of a miserable woman. His body, amid the abundant tears and lamentations of the Lombards, was buried under a certain flight of stairs which joined hard to the palace. He was tall of stature and his body was well knit for all warlike deeds. Now this tomb of his was opened in our own days by Giselpert, who had been duke of Verona, and who took away his sword and all the adornments that he found therein. Wherefore he was wont to boast with his accustomed folly, when he was surrounded by ignorant persons, that "he had seen Alboin".'

The hopes which Helmechis had entertained that he might be chosen king of the Lombards proved utterly vain. Instead of that elevation, he and the partners of his crime soon found that they must save themselves by flight from the vengeance of the kingless people. A secret message was conveyed to the Patrician Longinus, at Ravenna, who sent a ship to facilitate their escape. Helmechis and Rosamund, now husband and wife, went on board the Byzantine vessel, taking with them all the royal treasure and Albswinda, the daughter of Alboin by his first wife, a Frankish princess. Longinus, who, though the representative of the majesty of the Empire in Italy, achieved nothing for the defence of the peninsula that has been deemed worthy of notice by historians, showed himself an eager accomplice in the schemes of murderers and adulterers. He suggested to Rosamund that she should rid herself of her newly-wedded husband and marry him. To the Gepid princess the temptation to become 'Lady of Ravenna' presented irresistible attractions; while to the Patrician the barbarian hoard, as well as the wicked loveliness of the barbarian bride, was doubtless an object of desire. When Helmechis was reclining in the *frigidarium* after enjoying the luxury of a Roman bath, his wife presented him with a goblet filled, as she averred, with some healthful potion. He drank half of the draught: then knowing himself to be poisoned, he stood over Rosamund with a drawn sword and compelled her to drink the remainder. Thus did the two guilty lovers die together, and the tragedy of Alboin's murder, which had begun with a cup of death at Verona, ended with a yet deadlier death-cup at Ravenna.

Albswinda was sent by the Patrician with the great Lombard hoard to Constantinople. There may have been some thought of keeping the daughter of Alboin as a hostage for the good behaviour of her father's people, but her name does not meet us in any subsequent negotiations, and she henceforth disappears from history.

There was a legend (for the truth of which our historian does not vouch) that Peredeo also was carried captive to Constantinople, and there, in the amphitheatre, slew a lion of marvellous size in the presence of the Emperor. Fearing lest a man of such great personal strength should work some damage to 'the royal cities,' the cowardly Emperor ordered him to be blinded. In the course of time he managed to provide himself with two sharp knives, and having secreted these in the sleeves of his mantle, he visited the palace and asked for an interview with the Augustus, asserting that he had some important secret to communicate. He was not, however, as he had hoped, admitted to the actual presence of the Emperor, but two counsellors, high in rank, came to learn his secret. As soon as he felt that they were before him, he went close up to them, as if to whisper his portentous news, and then at once struck right and left such fatal blows, that the two counsellors fell dead upon the spot. 'Thus, like Samson, he avenged his own cruel wrong, and for his two eyes of which he had been bereft, deprived the Emperor of two of his most useful counsellors'. Like Samson also, if there be any truth in the story, the revenge of Peredeo was, no doubt, fatal to its author.

CHAPTER V.

THE INTERREGNUM

The death of Alboin occurred, as has been already said, in the spring of the year, and that year was probably 572. The Lombard warriors, assembled, after some interval, at Pavia, which was perhaps, now for the first time, recognized as the capital of the new kingdom, chose Cleph, 'of the race of Beleo', one of the most nobly born among them, to be their king.

Of Cleph we really know hardly anything beyond his own name and that of his wife Masane. It is probable, though not distinctly stated, that, previous to his elevation to the throne, he was Duke of Bergamo. His rule bore hardly on the old Roman aristocracy, many of whom he slew with the sword, while he banished others from their native land.

At the end of eighteen months, that is, probably about the middle of 574, king Cleph was slain with the sword by a slave in his own household, whom he had probably exasperated by his overbearing temper.

Again the leaders of the Lombard nation were assembled at Pavia, but this time their meeting did not result in the choice of a king. King Cleph had left one son, Authari, who was apparently of tender years. The usual expedient of a maternal regency was probably not acceptable to a barbarous and warlike people. The chief nobles seem to have been all of nearly equal rank and power, so that it was difficult to single out one for supreme dominion. The debate (possibly a long and angry one) ended in a decision to elect no king, but to divide the royal power between the thirty-six chief nobles, who are known in history as the Lombard Dukes.

It was remarked, in an earlier chapter of this history, that the titles of Duke and Count came into the political vocabulary of Mediaeval Europe out of the Roman Imperial system, but were transposed on the way; 'Duke' being in the Middle Ages, as in modern times, always a title of higher honour than Count (or Earl), whereas in the *Notitia Utriusque Imperii*, *Comes* is a higher rank than *Dux*. Under the Empire both offices had to do with military administration, but the *Comes* had generally a larger or more important sphere of duties than the *Dux*, and in some cases the *Comes* of a diocese had directly under him the *Duces* of the various subordinate provinces.

It was probably through the German invaders of the Empire that the change in the relative value of the two titles was introduced, and, as far as we can trace it, the process of thought which led to that change seems to have been something like this. The word *Dux*, as implying him who led forth a tribe or a nation to battle, was chosen as the equivalent of *Heretoga*, or whatever might be the precise form then in use of the modern German *Herzog*. On the other hand, *Comes* (which, after all, meant only companion, and so might be applied to any member of a king's *comitatus* or band of henchmen) was chosen as the equivalent of the German *Graf*. This was an officer who probably did not exist when the Teutonic tribes were still in their native forests, but whom we meet with in the early Frankish State as the king's representative (exercising judicial as well as military functions) in the larger cities of Gaul.

The etymology of the two words seems to point to the conclusion indicated above. *Heretoga* is without doubt the leader of the host. The derivation of *Graf* is more doubtful, but one of our best German authorities thinks that it can be traced to a root denoting 'a companion'. However this may be, the meaning of these titles among the Teutonic invaders of the Empire is clear. Duke (*Dux*, *Herzog* or *Heretoga*) is a man who is looked upon as the natural leader in war of a nation or a large tribe. He is sometimes perhaps the descendant of earlier kings, and has only stooped to the condition of a Duke when his tribe lost its

independence and became merged in some larger national unity. In other cases he has been chosen by some process of popular election or even by lot. At any rate he is no mere delegate of the king; but from old memories, as well as by right of his present power, he has a strong tendency to make the dukeship hereditary in his family, and even to break the bond of subordination which attaches him to royalty. Thus we get the Dukes of the Bavarians, the Saxons and the Swabians, who are already, in Merovingian times, not far short of sovereign princes. How unlike these great nobles are to the modest *Duces* of the 'Notitia', it is needless here to indicate.

On the other hand, the Count (*Garafio*, *Graf* or *Comes*) is at this period always essentially the king's representative. He governs a city, such as Tours, or Bourges, or Poitiers, acting as judge as well as administrator therein, and when summoned to do so, bringing that city's contingent of soldiers to swell the royal army. He often governs his city very badly—the counts who confront us in the pages of Gregory of Tours are for the most part grasping and unscrupulous barbarians—but, whether well or ill, he always governs it as the king's representative. He has generally a life-tenure of the office (differing herein from the easily displaced Roman *comes*), but he does not apparently, as yet, cherish any hope of making it hereditary. He shines by the reflected light of the king's dignity, having no inherent lustre of his own, whether derived from old traditions of kingship or from recent popular election.

After this little digression, it will be easier for us to understand the position of the Dukes at this period of Lombard history—a position to which, I think, we may safely assert there was nothing analogous in the Visigothic kingdom of Spain, or in the Frankish kingdom of Neustria.

Among the thirty-six Lombard dukes who were now about to share between them the sovereignty of Italy, six appear to have held somewhat higher rank than the others. These were Zaban, or Zafan, at Pavia, a second Alboin, or Alboni, at Milan, Wallari at Bergamo, Alichis at Brescia, Euin at Trient, and Gisulf at Friuli. Among these six, Zaban, as duke of Pavia, now the recognized Lombard capital, held the highest place, and was, to borrow a term from much more modern politics, President of the Lombard Confederation.

The form which this Teutonic aristocracy assumed deserves special attention, for it is, in a certain sense, typical of the whole mediaeval history of Italy. These Lombard leaders, fresh from the forests of Pannonia or the wide pastures of the *Feld*, were, doubtless, essentially men of the country; men who, like the old Scottish chief, 'would rather hear the lark sing than the mouse chirp'. Thus did Tacitus write of their ancestors, five centuries before the time with which we are now dealing: 'It is well known that none of the German tribes live in cities, nor can they even bear houses in a row. They dwell scattered and solitary, as a spring, a meadow or a grove may have taken the fancy of each'. Yet these rustic warriors, having come into the land of stately cities, at once succumbed to their fascinations, and became dwellers in cities themselves. Of course, military considerations, as well as sensual delights, determined such a change. The cities of Italy were there, erected at every point of vantage, covering the passage of rivers and the entrance into valleys; and, if they were not to be all levelled with the ground, it was needful that they should be held by Lombard garrisons. Still, whatever the cause, the result is clear and important. We see that the civic character of Italian life has conquered even its rough Pannonian conquerors. Lordship now, and for many long centuries in Italy, will be essentially lordship of a city. The Lombard dukes are turning the page on which great feudal nobles like the Estes, and clever and successful 'tyrants' like the Medici, will write their names in the centuries to come.

Historians have not informed us what were the thirty cities from which the lesser dukes took their titles. Probably a pretty correct idea concerning them may be derived from a study of the list of the Episcopal sees of Northern and Central Italy. We may also safely assume that the duke of a city governed, not only the city itself, but a certain extent, sometimes a pretty large

extent, of surrounding country. Here also we have an anticipation of mediaeval geography, of the time when 'the Milanese', 'the Trevisan', 'the Bolognese', were well-known descriptions of territory.

The rule of these mailed aristocrats was, as might have been expected, hard and grasping, animated by the narrowest ideas of Lombard patriotism. Many of the Roman (that is, native Italian) nobility were slain by the sword, simply that their possessions might go to enrich some hungry Lombard warrior. The rest were reduced into a condition of semi-serfdom, still holding their lands, but only on condition of paying over one third of their produce to that one of the unwelcome 'guests' to whom they had been assigned. Harsh as this measure of spoliation was, the impoverished 'host' might console himself with the reflection that it might have been worse. Following the precedent set by Odovacar and Theodoric, the Lombards contented themselves (as has been said) with one third of the produce of the soil, while the Visigoths had taken two thirds, and the Burgundians a proportion varying between that fraction and a half.

Not only, however, did the refined Roman land-owner feel the weight of Lombard oppression in these years when there was no king in Italy. Among the barbarous tribes who had flocked to Alboin's standard, to share in the plunder of Italy, was a band of some 20,000 or 30,000 Saxons, who had brought with them their wives and children, intending to settle in the conquered land. To their great disgust, however, they found that their confederates would only suffer this on condition of their abandoning the laws and customs of their fathers and becoming altogether subject to Lombard rule.

The decision of the Saxons was soon and firmly taken : that they would abandon their new settlements and march back, with their families, to the home of their forefathers, rather than abandon their Saxon nationality. The story of their return, though it does not strictly belong to the history of Italy, is worth studying for the light which it throws on the manners of the times, and the thoughts of the wild barbarians who had streamed into Italy.

The land to which the Saxons wished to return was, apparently, the country afterwards known as Swabia, and formed part of the dominions of Sigibert, the Frankish king of Austrasia. The Saxons adopted a peculiar method of recommending themselves to the favour of their new sovereign. Crossing the Cottian Alps by the Col de Genève, they poured down into the plains of Dauphiné, and pitched their camp there. The rich villas were sacked; the inhabitants were carried captive; everywhere they spread desolation and ruin. The brave Romano-Gallic general, Mummolus, to whom Guntram, the Frankish king of Burgundy, had entrusted the defence of this region, came upon them suddenly, found them unprepared, and slaughtered them till nightfall. When morning dawned, it seemed as if the battle would be renewed, but messengers arrived in the camp of Mummolus, bearing rich presents, and offering, on the part of the Saxons, to surrender all their booty if only they might be allowed to repass the Alps into Italy. The offer was accepted, and the Saxon warriors, as they marched away, declared that they meant to return, not as the foes, but as the loyal subjects of the Frankish kings.

Next year (apparently) the Saxons, finding their Lombard hosts inflexible, collected their wives and children and again marched into Gaul. They had divided themselves into two 'wedges', one of which marched along the Riviera to Nice and the other by the old road into Dauphiné. It was the time of the ingathering of fruits, and everywhere around them they saw the golden sheaves standing in the fields and all the fatness of the fruitful land. The simple barbarians, like felons let loose in London, could not keep their hands from plunder. They gorged themselves and then their horses with the crops of the peasants of Dauphiné, and they even set fire to some of the villages. But when they reached the banks of the Rhone, they found the terrible Mummolus ready to execute judgment upon them.' You shall not pass this stream', he said, 'till you have made satisfaction to my lord. See how you have laid waste his kingdom,

have gathered the crops, trampled down the oliveyards and vineyards, slain the flocks, cast fire into the houses. You shall not pass till you have made atonement to those whom you have reduced to poverty. Otherwise I will put your wives and little ones to the sword, and will avenge the injury done to Guntram my king'. The brutal Saxons quaked with terror, paid down many thousand golden solidi for their redemption, and were suffered to march on into the kingdom of Sigibert I on the east of the Rhine.

When they reached their old homes they found them filled up with Swabians, whom Sigibert had planted there when they themselves had started for Italy. The angry Saxons at once declared that they would sweep the intruders from the face of the earth. 'Take a third of our lands', humbly pleaded the Swabians; but the offer was indignantly refused. 'Half?'. 'Two thirds?'. 'We will add all our cattle if only we may have peace'. Every proposition that could be made was contemptuously spurned by the Saxons, who, confident of victory, were already dividing among themselves by anticipation the wives and property of the hated Swabians. 'But the mercy of a just God,' says Gregory, 'turned their thoughts into another direction. Of 26,000 Saxons who joined battle on that day, 20,000 were slain; of 6,000 Swabians only 480, and victory remained with their comrades. The survivors of the Saxons swore a great oath that they would cut neither hair nor beard till they had avenged them of their foes. But when they again rushed to battle they only incurred deadlier slaughter : and so at length there was rest from war'.

In the great work which lay before the Lombard nation, the conquest of the Italian peninsula and the expulsion of the officials who represented the majesty of the Eastern Augustus, but little progress was made by the confederated dukes. It is true that they were able grievously to harass the clergy and citizens of Rome. Already in 574 (perhaps before Cleph's assassination) such swarms of Lombards surrounded the Eternal City that communication with Constantinople was cut off, and after the death of Pope John III (13 July) more than ten months elapsed before his successor, Benedict I, could be chosen. Famine followed in the steps of the marauding invaders. Hearing of the sufferings of the Roman citizens from hunger, the Emperor Justin ordered a fleet of corn to sail from Egypt to the mouth of the Tiber. By this time the severity of the Lombard blockade must have been relaxed, for the mariners were able to ascend the Tiber and bring the longed-for relief to the starving citizens.

In the year 575 a great Byzantine official appeared at the head of an army in Italy. This was Baduarius, the son-in-law of the Emperor and Count of the Imperial Stables. He had shortly before been strangely insulted by Justin, whose long latent insanity was then beginning to show itself openly. The Emperor ordered his chamberlains to assault and buffet his son-in-law and then to drag him into the wondering Consistory, while still bearing the marks of their blows. Sophia, having heard of this outburst of frenzy, was much distressed thereat and administered conjugal reproof to her husband. He too, now that the paroxysm was over, repented of his violence and sought Baduarius in the stables to make his apologies. When the Count of the Stables saw the Emperor approaching he feared that he was about to repeat his outrages and leaped from manger to manger in order to escape. But the Emperor adjured him in God's name to abide where he was, went up to him, caught him by the arm and covered him with kisses. 'I have sinned against thee', said he, 'but it was at the Devil's prompting. Now I pray thee receive me again as thy father and thy Emperor'. Then Baduarius fell at the Emperor's feet, which he watered with his tears, and said, 'My lord! in thy hands is supreme power over all of us : but as thou didst once treat thy servant contemptuously in the presence of thy counsellors, so now let these dumb creatures' (pointing to the horses) 'be witnesses of thy confession'. Whereupon the Emperor invited him to a banquet, and so he and his son-in-law were reconciled. This was the man who was now sent to try conclusions with the Lombards.

We hear, however, very little of the course of the campaign, except that Baduarius was overcome by them in battle and shortly after ended his life

Again in 579 a vacancy in the Popedom is the cause of our being informed of that which was probably at this time the chronic condition of the regions round Rome, Lombard ravage and blockade. After a little more than four years' occupancy of the Papal throne Benedict I died and was succeeded by the Roman Pelagius (second of that name), who was ordained without the command of the Emperor, because the Lombards were besieging the City of Rome, and much devastation was being wrought by them in Italy. At the same time so great rains fell that all men said that the waters of the deluge were returning upon the earth, and so great was the loss of human life that the oldest inhabitant remembered nothing like it aforesaid.

In their distress the citizens called upon the Emperor, their natural protector, for help. Two embassies, apparently in the years 577 and 579, bore to the New Rome the lamentable cry of the Old. The first was headed by the Patrician Pamphronius and carried a tribute of 3,000 pounds weight of gold (about £120,000 sterling); the second consisted of senators and ecclesiastics, one of the latter class being probably the man who was to be afterwards the world-famous Gregory the Great.

Neither embassy obtained the military help which was so urgently required. The Persian war pressed heavily on the resources of the state, and a somewhat feeble, though well-intentioned, ruler was at the helm. For in the year after his strange encounter with Baduarius the madness of Justin II assumed so outrageous a form that it was deemed necessary to confine him to his palace and to associate with him Tiberius a colleague who bore the humbler title of Caesar, but who was in reality supreme governor of the Empire. The new Caesar bore the ill-omened name of Tiberius, but was in character as unlike as possible to the suspicious and secluded tyrant of Capri. Open-handed and generous to a fault, he shocked his Imperial patroness Sophia by the profusion with which he lavished his treasure on the poor; but he was rewarded for his munificence, as was told in a previous chapter, by the opportune discovery of the buried hoards of the eunuch Narses. This good-tempered, but not strenuous monarch, before the second embassy reached Constantinople, had become in name as well as in fact supreme Augustus, by the death of his brainsick colleague Justin II. In neither capacity, however, could he be persuaded to send any adequate supply of soldiers for the deliverance of Italy, but, true to his character as a giver, he sent money—in the first case returning the tribute brought by Pamphronius—which money was to be employed in buying off individual Lombard dukes, or, if that resource should fail, in hiring Frankish generals to lend their arms for the liberation of Italy.

The policy thus pursued was not altogether ineffectual. Both on this and some later occasions Byzantine gold was found efficacious in detaching some members from the loosely-knit Lombard confederacy. Farwald, duke of Spoleto, who had probably hitherto taken the lead in the ravages of Roman territory, seems to have, in some measure, withdrawn his forces from her immediate neighbourhood. But it was only the recoil before a deadlier spring. It was probably in the year 579 that Farwald with his Lombards appeared before the town of Classis, the sea-port of Ravenna. We are not told how long a resistance it offered, but it was eventually taken and despoiled of all the treasures which had been accumulated within its walls during six centuries of security. After the sack the Lombards seem still to have held on to the city, hard as it was to do so in the face of the superior naval forces of the Empire.

The chief events of the Lombard interregnum that remain to be noticed relate to the Lombard invasions of Gaul. Some of these invasions were made in the lifetime of Alboin and therefore should strictly have been described in the preceding chapter, but in order to give a continuous narrative I have purposely reserved them for this portion of the history.

It has been well pointed out by a German historian that these attacks on their Frankish neighbours were utterly senseless and impolitic, mere robber-raids caused by nothing else than the freebooter's thirst for plunder. The one object which a Lombard statesman, whether he were called duke or king, should have set before himself was to consolidate the Lombard rule in Italy, to drive out the last representatives of the Empire, if possible to become master of the sea. Instead of firmly pursuing this aim, scarcely had the Lombards entered Italy when they began to swarm over the difficult passes of the Alps, to rob and ravage in Dauphiné and Provence. Thus did they make the old feud between themselves and the Franks, which a few generations of peaceful neighbourhood would perhaps have obliterated, an indelible national instinct, and, in fact, they thus prepared the levers which at length, after the lapse of two centuries, brought about the ruin of the Lombard monarchy at the hands of Frankish Charles.

When we were last concerned with Frankish history we reached the point where the divided monarchy was reunited by Chlotochar I. We must now glance at the well-known events which intervened between that reunion and the commencement of the Lombard interregnum.

For three years Chlotochar, the last surviving son of Clovis, reigned over the whole of the vast territory which had been won by the Frankish battle-axe. In 561 he died, and his kingdom was divided between his four sons. But the fourfold partition now, as in the previous generation, soon became threefold. Charibert, the king of Paris, died in 567, and thus the well-known sentence of Caesar, 'Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres,' was again true of Gaul and remained true for the rest of the century. It is true that, whatever might be the ostensible partition of the Gaulish territory, it was more and more tending to group itself into four—not three—great divisions, namely, Neustria, Austrasia, Burgundy and Aquitaine. But the last of these, the territory between the Loire and the Pyrenees, the territory which had been won from Alaric the Visigoth, and which was one day to give the Plantagenet princes their great vantage-ground for the conquest of France, was during the latter part of the sixth century so split up and so squabbled over by the lords of the other portions, that, for the sake of clearness, it will be well to leave it out of sight altogether. Let us briefly consider the three other divisions and their rulers.

I BURGUNDY

The region which still bore the name of Burgundy was substantially that which had obeyed the shifty Gundobad and his unwise son, Sigismund. It embraced the later provinces of Burgundy, Franche Compté, Dauphiné, the greater part of Switzerland, Lyonnais, Nivernois and a considerable part of Languedoc. It was, in fact, 'the kingdom of the Rhone', including almost the whole territory watered by that noble river and its tributaries except—a notable exception—that thin strip of fruitful territory at the mouth of the Rhone which still bore the name of Provincia, and still keenly remembered that it had been the first and the last of the Roman provinces in Gaul. Though the nucleus of the new kingdom was the old Burgundian domain it included some lands in the centre of Gaul, south and west of the Loire, which had never belonged to the Burgundians, and the king's capital was Orleans, a city which had never owned the sway of Gundobad. The king of this territory, from 561 to 593, bore the uncouth name of Guntchramn, a name for which I will venture to substitute, as many have done before me, the easier form, Guntram. A good-tempered, easygoing man, who was not cruel, except when his interests seemed to call for cruelty, a man who took and put away wives and concubines with great facility, but was almost a moral man by comparison with the unbridled licentiousness of most of the Merovingian kings, Guntram has, by reason of his generosity to

the Church and the comparative respectability of his character, obtained the honours of canonization, though it is not often that we meet with an historian sufficiently attentive to the rules of ecclesiastical etiquette to call him *Saint* Guntram.

Our Lombard historian, Paulus, describes Guntram as 'a peaceful king and one conspicuous by all goodness'. He then proceeds to tell concerning him a story which he had probably heard at Chalon-sur-Saone in the course of his travels through France, and which, as he states with a thrill of self-satisfaction, not even Gregory of Tours had related in his voluminous history of the Franks :—

'The good king Guntram went one day into the forest to hunt, and as his companions were scattered in various directions, he was left alone with one faithful henchman, on whose knees he, being weary, reclined his head and so fell fast asleep. From his mouth issued a little reptile, which ran along till it reached a tiny stream, and there it paused, as if pondering how to cross it. Then the henchman drew his sword out of its scabbard and laid it over the streamlet, and upon it the little creature crossed over to the other side. It entered into a certain cave of a mountain not far from thence, and returning after an interval again crossed the streamlet by the sword and re-entered the mouth of the sleeper. After these things Guntram, awaking from slumber, said that he had seen a marvellous vision. He dreamed that he crossed a river by an iron bridge, and entered a mountain in which he saw a vast weight of gold. Then he in whose lap his head had lain told him in their order the things which he had seen. Thereupon the king commanded an excavation to be made in that place, and treasures of inestimable value, which had been stowed away there in ancient days, were found therein. From this gold the king afterwards made a solid canopy of great size and weight, which he adorned with most precious stones, intending to send it to the sepulchre of the Lord at Jerusalem. But as he could not do this, he ordered it to be placed over the shrine of the blessed martyr Marcellus, at Cavallonum (Chalon-sur-Saone), and there it is to this day, a work incomparable in its kind'. As I have said, it was probably from the priests in the chapel of the martyr that Paulus, in his travels, heard the marvellous tale.

Treasures buried in long departed days by kings of old, mysterious caves, reptile guides or reptile guardians—are we not transported by this strange legend into the very atmosphere of the Nibelungen Lied? And if the good king Guntram passed for the fortunate finder of the Dragon-hoard, his brothers and their queens, by their wars, their reconciliations and their terrible avengings, must surely have suggested the main argument of that most tragical epic, the very name of one of whose heroines, Brunichildis, is identical with the name of the queen of Austrasia.

II AUSTRASIA

This kingdom of Austrasia, the eastern land, the name of which first meets us about this time, is the same region with which we have already made acquaintance under the government of the Frankish Theodoric and his descendants; a region extending, it may be roughly said, from Rheims to the Rhine, but spreading across the Rhine an unknown distance into Germany, claiming the allegiance of Thuringians, Alamanni, and Bavarians, fitfully controlling the restless Saxons, touching with warlike weapons and sometimes vainly striving with the terrible Avars.

The capital of this kingdom was Metz—it is noteworthy how these royal partners always strove to fix their seats as near as possible to the centre of Gaul, as if to keep close watch on one another's designs—and the son of Chlotochar who reigned there as king was Sigibert.

Sigibert was the youngest, but the most capable and least vicious, of the royal brotherhood. Disgusted at the profligacy of all his brothers, who disgraced themselves by adulterous unions with the handmaids of their lawful wives, he determined to wed a princess of his own rank, and accordingly he wooed and won Brunichildis, daughter of Athanagild, the Visigothic king of Spain. A brave and high-spirited woman, Brunichildis, in the course of her long and strong career, became hard and unpitying as the rocks upon which she was dashed by the waves of her destiny; but the ten years of her union with Sigibert were the brightest portion of her life. The young Austrasian king and queen seem to have loved one another with true and pure affection, and their story is an oasis in the desert of Frankish profligacy and shame.

III NEUSTRIA

The kingdom of Chilperic (who was half-brother to his three royal colleagues) is generally spoken of as the realm of Neustria. This name strictly belongs to a somewhat later period than that which we have yet reached, but as ‘the western kingdom’, in antithesis to Austrasia, it conveniently expresses the territory ruled over by Chilperic, which was in fact the old kingdom of the Salian Franks, and comprised the Netherlands, Picardy, Normandy, and Maine, with perhaps some ill-defined sovereignty over the virtually independent Celts of Brittany. The capital of this kingdom was the ancestral seat of dominion, Soissons.

Chilperic’s character is one of the strangest products of the strange anarchic period in which he lived. Cruel, lustful, avaricious—a man whom the kindly Gregory calls ‘the Nero and Herod of our time’—he nevertheless was, after the fashion of his age, a religious man—wrote sacred histories in verse, after the manner of Sedulius (it is true that his hexameters limped fearfully)—composed masses and hymns, and wrote a treatise on the Trinity, which he hoped to impose, Justinian-like, on his bishops and clergy, but the theology of which was so grossly heretical, that the prelates to whom he showed it could hardly be restrained from tearing it in pieces before his face.

Chilperic had already taken to himself many mistresses, whom he dignified with the name of wives; but when he heard of the rich and lovely young princess whom his younger brother had won for his bride, he was seized with jealousy, and vowed that he too would have a princess for his wife. An embassy to Athanagild, bearing the promise of a rich dowry for the future queen in case she survived her husband, and an assurance that the palace should be purged of the concubines who then polluted it, was successful in obtaining the hand of a sister of Brunichildis, named Galswintha. The princess, who might almost seem to have had some forebodings of the dark fate reserved for her, clung to her home and her parents, and begged for delay; but the ambassadors insisted on her immediate return with them. State reasons prevailed, and the weeping Galswintha set forth upon her long journey, accompanied by her fond mother as far as the Pyrenees. There the mother and daughter parted; and the latter journeyed in a kind of triumphal procession through Gothic Gaul, and then through the territory of her future husband, till she reached the city of Rouen. She was received with all honour by Chilperic, by whom she was loved with great affection, ‘for’ (says Gregory) ‘she had brought with her great treasures’. On the day after the marriage, according to old Teutonic custom, he gave her as ‘moming-gift’ (*morgane-gyba*) Bordeaux and four other cities in the south-west of Gaul. These were to form her dowry in case she survived her husband.

For a short time all went well. Then one of concubines, Fredegundis, succeeded in recovering her lost footing in the palace; the king’s old passion for her was rekindled, and the poor young Spanish bride was made to suffer daily insults and mortifications, such as, eleven centuries later, her countrywoman, the queen of Louis XIV, had to endure when she saw

Montespan or La Vallière preferred before her. With pitiful pleading, Galswintha besought that she might leave her treasures behind her and return across the Pyrenees. Chilperic soothed her with kind words, but not many days after she was found dead in her bed, strangled by a slave, in obedience her husband's orders. The royal hymn-writer professed to mourn for her for a few days, and then married Fredegundis.

The wedding, the murder, the second marriage, all happened in the year 567. And now began that long duel between two beautiful and angry queens which for thirty years kept the Frankish kingdoms in turmoil. Of Brunichildis I have already spoken. She was not by nature cruel, and might, perhaps, have passed through life with fair reputation, had not the longing for vengeance, first for a murdered sister, and then for a murdered husband, transformed her nature and turned her into a Fury. Fredegundis, evil from the first, utterly remorseless and cruel, had yet a magnetic power of attracting to herself those whom she would make the ministers of her wicked will. She ruled her husband with absolute sway, though strongly suspected of unfaithfulness to her own marriage vows. And whenever there was a rival to be disposed of, a brother-in-law, a step-son, a dangerous confidant to be murdered, there was always to be found some young enthusiast, willing, nay eager, to do the deed, going to certain death for the sake of winning a smile from Fredegundis. In her marvellous power of fascination over men, she resembled a woman with whom, in all other respects, it would be a calumny to couple her name, Mary, Queen of Scots. With all her wickedness, Fredegundis must have been a brilliant and seductive Frenchwoman; and there is something about her strange demoniac power which reminds us of the evil heroines of the Renaissance.

The murder of Galswintha, followed by the marriage with her low-born rival, aroused the anger of the Franks, and Chilperic's brothers endeavoured to eject so atrocious an offender from their royal partnership. In this, however, they do not seem to have been successful. If war was actually waged by Sigibert against the murderer (which is not clearly stated), it was terminated by a more peaceful civil process, in which Guntram acted as arbiter between his brethren. The result of this process was as follows: but both its terms and the principles on which it was based would have been utterly unintelligible to any of the Roman jurisconsults who, two centuries before, abounded in the great cities of Gaul. 'The *morgane-gyba* of Galswintha was to form the *weregild* of Brunichildis'. In other words, the five cities of Aquitaine, which Chilperic had assigned to the murdered queen as her dower, were to be handed over to her sister and next of kin in atonement for the crime. It would, seem as if the decision had scarcely been given when the faithless Chilperic sought to overturn it; at any rate, it is in Bordeaux (one of the cities of the 'morning-gift') and its neighbourhood that we find him constantly attacking his brother of Austrasia, in the obscure wars which fill up the interval between 567 and 575. At length the dispute came to a crisis. The fierce Austrasian warriors, Sigibert's subjects, were only too ready to pour themselves westwards into Neustria, and enjoy the plunder of its cities. Sigibert was a warrior and Chilperic apparently was not, though he shrank from no deed of cowardly violence. And Guntram, though the most uncertain and untrustworthy of allies, was at this time ranged, with some appearance of earnestness, on the side of Sigibert. The campaign went entirely in favour of the Austrasian army. It pressed on to Paris, to Rouen: Chilperic, beaten and cowed, was shut up in Tournay (his capital now, instead of Soissons) : a large part of the Neustrian Franks consented to acclaim Sigibert as their sovereign instead of the unwarlike and tyrannical Chilperic. The ceremony took place at Vitry, near Arras, not far from the border of the two realms. Sigibert was raised on the shield and hailed king by the whole army of the Franks; but almost in the moment of his triumph, two serving-men rushed upon him and dealt him a mortal wound on either side with their strong knives, which went by the name of *scaramaxes*. The weapons, it was said, had been steeped in poison by the hands of Fredegundis; the servants had been 'bewitched' by the terrible queen.

There can be little doubt that for this murder, at, least, she was justly held answerable by her contemporaries.

So fell, in the prime of his life and vigour, the gallant Sigibert—

‘Titus, the youngest Tarquin: too good for such a brood.’

Had he lived and attained, as he well might have done, to the sole dominion of the Franks, the course of European history might have been changed. He would hardly, one thinks, have propagated so feeble a race as the *fainéant kings* who issued from the loins of the kings of Neustria; he would almost certainly have checked the growing audacity, and resisted the overweening pretensions, of the nobles of Austrasia.

Brunichildis, with her children, was at Paris (the capital of the late king Charibert) when the terrible news reached her of the murder of Sigibert—a crime which utterly reversed the position of affairs, and made her a helpless outcast in the land of her deadly foe. Her little son Childebert, a child of five years old, was carried off by one of Sigibert’s generals, who succeeded in conveying him safely to Metz, where he was accepted by the Austrasian warriors as his father’s successor. Thus began a reign which lasted for twenty-one years—one which was upon the whole prosperous, and which had many points of contact with the history of the Lombard neighbours of Austrasia. As Childebert, however, was only twenty-six when he died, it is evident that during the greater part of his nominal reign, the actual might of royalty must have been in other hands than his. In fact it seems to have been during his long minority that the power of the great Austrasian nobles (who must have formed a sort of self-constituted Council of Regency) began distinctly to overshadow the power of the crown. Our justification for lingering over these events, which apparently belong to purely Frankish history, is that we are here watching the beginnings of that singular dynasty of officials, the Mayors of the Palace, whose descendant was one day to overthrow the Lombard monarchy.

As for Brunichildis, she, like the Kriemhild of the great German poem after the death of her glorious young hero Siegfried, lived but to avenge his death; and, like Kriemhild, she sought to compass her revenge by a second marriage, the natural resource of a young and beautiful woman in a lawless generation, which was ready to trample under foot the rights of the widow and the fatherless. It was, perhaps, for this reason that she did not attempt to return to Austrasia. Taken prisoner by Chilperic, she was despoiled of all her treasures and sent to live in banishment at Rouen. Thither, before long, came Merovech, the son of Chilperic by one of the many wives whom he had married before Galswintha. He saw the beautiful widow and loved her, and, though she as his uncle’s wife was within the forbidden degrees of relationship, he was married to her within a few months of her first husband’s death, by Praetextatus, bishop of Rouen. Great was the wrath of Chilperic, greater still probably the rage of Fredegundis, when they heard that the hated Gothic princess had thus made good her footing in their own family, and was the wife of the young warrior to whom all Franks looked forward as chief of the descendants of Clovis in the next generation. Chilperic marched to Rouen, intending to arrest the newly-wedded pair, but they fled to the church of St. Martin at Tours, whose inviolable sanctity Chilperic was forced to respect. On receiving his promise that he would not separate them ‘if such were the will of God’, Merovech and his wife came forth. The kiss of peace was exchanged, and the king, his son and his new daughter-in-law banqueted together. Notwithstanding his oath, however, Chilperic insisted on his son’s accompanying him to Soissons, while Brunichildis appears to have returned to Austrasia. Merovech fell under suspicion, perhaps just suspicion, of complicity with some rebels who attacked the city of Soissons, where Fredegundis was then dwelling. He was again arrested, shorn of the long hair which was the glory of a Merovingian prince, and forcibly turned into an ecclesiastic. Another escape, a long sojourn in the sanctuary at Tours, a visit to Austrasia (where he was coldly received by the nobles, who desired the presence of no full-grown scion of the royal house

among them), and then an ill-judged expedition into his father's kingdom followed. He was again taken prisoner and lodged in an inn, while his captors sent messengers to his father to ask what should be done with him. But meanwhile he had said to his henchman Gailen, 'Thou and I have hitherto had but one mind and one purpose. I pray thee let me not fall into the hands of mine enemies, but take this sword and rush with it upon me'. This Gailen did; and when Chilperic arrived he found his son dead. But some said that Merovech never spoke those words to his henchman, but that the fatal blow was struck by order of Fredegundis.

The romance of Brunichildis' second marriage—at any rate in the fragmentary shape in which it exists in the pages of Gregory—is a disappointing one. Even Brunichildis seems to falter and hesitate in her great purpose of revenge for the death of Sigibert, and Merovech seems to spend most of his time cowering as a suppliant by the tomb of St. Martin. And the least romantic part of the story is the calmness with which the newly-wedded couple bear their separation from one another; a separation which it was apparently in their power at any time to have ended.

The remainder of the reign of Chilperic was chiefly memorable for the afflictions which befell him in his family. One after another of the sons of his earlier marriage, young men just entering upon manhood, fell victims to the jealous hatred of their step-mother; and as if to punish her for her cruelty, one after another of her own sons died in infancy. The sons of Guntram also perished in their prime; it seemed as if the whole lineage of Clovis might soon fail from off the earth. Wars, purposeless but desolating, were waged between the three Frankish kingdoms, and in some of these wars, strange to say, Childebert—that is to say the counsellors of Childebert—were found siding with Chilperic, his father's murderer, against the easy-tempered Guntram. This, however, was only a passing phase; as a rule Austrasia and Burgundy stood together against Neustria. The chief characteristic of the rule of Chilperic was the increasing stringency of his financial exactions, not merely from his Roman, but from his Frankish subjects, and the jealousy, a well-grounded jealousy, with which he regarded the growing power and possessions of the Church. 'He would often say, "Behold! our treasury remains poor; behold! our riches are transferred to the churches; none reign at all save the bishops; our honour perishes and is all carried over to the bishops of the cities". With this thought in his mind, he continually quashed the wills which were drawn up in favour of the churches, and thus he trampled under foot his own father's commands, thinking that there was now none left to guard their observance'. No wonder that such a prince—whom even secular historians must hold to have been a profoundly wicked man—figures in an ecclesiastic's pages as 'the Nero and Herod of our time.'

At length, in the fifty-second year of his age, Chilperic met that violent death, which in the sixth century was almost as much as the long hair that floated around their shoulders—the note of a Merovingian prince. He went to his country-house at Chelles, about twelve miles from Paris, and there amused himself with hunting. Coming back one evening in the twilight from the chase, he was about to dismount from his horse, and had already put one hand on the shoulder of his groom, when some one rushed out of the darkness and stabbed him with a knife, striking one blow under the armpit, and one in his belly. 'The blood gushed out from his mouth and from the two wounds, and so his wicked spirit fled.'

The author and the motive of the assassination of Chilperic remained a mystery. We do not even hear the usual details as to the death by torture of the murderer, and it seems possible that in the obscurity of the night and the loneliness of the forest he may have succeeded in escaping. Fredegundis was accused of this, as of so many other murders. It was said that Chilperic had discovered her infidelity to her marriage vows, and that she forestalled his inevitable revenge by the hand of a hired assassin. This explanation, however, seems in the highest degree improbable. No one lost so much by the death of Chilperic as his widow;

hurled, like her rival Brunichildis, in one hour from the height of power to helplessness and exile, and obliged to seek temporary shelter at the court of the hospitable Guntram.

After all its vicissitudes, the family of Chilperic at his death consisted only of one babe of three years old, named, after its grandfather, Chlotochar. This child, who was destined one day to reunite all the Frankish dominions under his single sceptre, was at once proclaimed king, the reins of government being assumed, not by Fredegundis, but by some of the more powerful nobles, and thus Neustria had to pass through even a longer minority than that from which Austrasia was now slowly emerging. There can be little doubt that these long periods of obscurity of the royal power, however welcome to the great nobles who exercised or controlled the authority of the regent, were deplored by the poorer Franks and by the Gallo-Roman population, to whom even the worst king afforded some protection from the lawless violence of the aristocracy.

But our rapid review of Frankish history, which began with the eleventh year of the government of Narses, has taken us on to the end of the Lombard Interregnum. It is time now to turn back and fit the Lombard invasions of Gaul into the framework of Frankish history.

The year of the Lombard irruption into Italy was, it will be remembered, 568. This was one year after the murder of Galswintha, and at a time therefore when the relations between Sigibert and Chilperic were probably strained to the utmost; and yet, strange to say, it was rather against Burgundy than against Neustria that the arms of Austrasia were at this time directed. Sigibert wrested Arles from his brother Guntram; then he lost Avignon: but these struggles, purposeless and resultless as they were, perhaps distracted the attention of the Burgundian generals and made a Lombard invasion possible. We are vaguely told that 'in this year the Lombards dared to enter the neighbouring regions of Gaul, where multitude of captives of that nation [*i. e.* the Lombards] were sold into slavery'. Evidently the invasion, whithersoever directed, was a failure. Probably it was only by isolated bands of marauders without concert or leadership.

The next invasion which was made, probably in the year 570, was more successful. The Lombards made their way probably by one of the passes of the Maritime Alps into Provence. Amatus (whose name makes it probable that he was a man of Gallo-Roman extraction) held that region for king Guntram, wearing the Roman title of Patrician. He delivered battle to the Lombards, was defeated and fled. A countless number of Burgundians lay dead upon the field, and the Lombards, enriched with booty, the value of which their barbarous arithmetic could not calculate, returned to Italy.

In the room of the defeated, perhaps slain, Amatus, king Guntram conferred the dignity of Patrician on Eunius, surnamed Mummolus, and with his appointment an immediate change came over the scene. Though a grasping and selfish man, Mummolus was a brave soldier, and if, as seems probable, he too, like Amatus, was a Gallo-Roman by birth, his career was a proof that there was still some martial spirit left in the descendants of the old provincials of Gaul. His father, Peonius, had been count of Auxerre, and entrusted to Mummolus the usual gifts by which—perhaps on the accession of Guntram—he hoped to obtain the renewal of his office. The faithless son, however, obtained the dignity, not for his father, but for himself, and having thus placed his foot on the official ladder, continued to mount step by step till he reached, as we have seen, the dignity of the Patriciate, which was probably still considered the highest that could be bestowed on a subject.

In the following year (apparently) the Lombards again invaded Gaul, not now by the Maritime Alps, but by the Col de Genève. They reached a point near to Embrun in the valley of the Durance; but here they were met by Mummolus, who drew his army all round them, blocked up with *abattis* the main roads by which they might have escaped, and then felling upon them by devious forest paths took them at such disadvantage as to accomplish their entire

defeat. A great number of the Lombards were slain; some were taken captive and sent to king Guntram, probably to be sold as slaves: only a few escaped to their own land to tell the story of this, the first of many Lombard defeats which were to attest the military skill of Mummolus. Ecclesiastics heard with horror that in this battle two brothers and brother-prelates, Salonius and Sagittarius—the former bishop of Embrun and the latter of Gap—had borne an active part, ‘armed, not with the heavenly cross, but with helmet and coat of mail’, and, which was worse, had slain many with their own hands. But this was only one, and in fact the least censurable, of many irregularities and crimes committed by this lawless pair, who had already a few years before (in 566) been deprived of their sees by the Council of Lyons, but had been replaced therein by the Pope. Again, at a later period, deposed and confined in separate monasteries, they were once more let out by the good-natured Guntram and again condemned by a council. The end of Salonius is unknown. Sagittarius, as we shall shortly see, came to a violent end in consequence of joining a conspiracy against king Guntram. Such were some of the bishops of Gaul in the sixth century, though it must be admitted that few were as wildly brutal and licentious as Salonius and Sagittarius.

In the years immediately following the invasion, Mummolus distinguished himself by that successful campaign against the Saxon immigrants of which mention was made in the earlier part of this chapter. Then somewhat later still, in the year which witnessed the assassination of Cleph the Lombard king, a large army of Lombards under the command of duke Zaban again entered the dominions of king Guntram. This time, however, it was not against Dauphiné but against Switzerland that their ravages were directed. They went, doubtless, northward by the Great St. Bernard Pass from Aosta to Martigny, and descended into that long Alp-bounded parallelogram through which the young Rhone flows, and which then as now bore preeminently the name of ‘the Valley’. They reached the great monastery of Agaunum (now St. Maurice), scene of the devotions and the vain penitence of Burgundian Sigismund, and there they tamed many days, perhaps engaged in pillaging the convent, though this is not expressly stated by the monkish chronicler from whom we derive our information. At length, at the town of Bex, a little way down the valley from St. Maurice, they suffered so crushing a defeat at the hands of the Frankish generals, that but a few fugitives, duke Zaban among the number, succeeded in recrossing the mountains and reaching Italian soil.

Undaunted by this terrible reverse, in the next year the Lombards resumed their irritating inroads into Gaul. This time Zaban was accompanied by two dukes, other dukes, Amo and Rodan, the names of whose cities have not been recorded. The three armies all went by the same road till they had crossed the Alps. This was that to which allusion has already been made, which is still the well-known pass of the Mont Genève. Though one of the lowest in the great chain the Alps and frequently traversed by Roman generals, it is, at the summit, nearly 6,500 feet high. Leaving the city of Turin in the great plain of Piedmont, the road ascends the beautiful valley of the Dora Susa till it reaches the little town of Susa, where a triumphal arch still preserves the memory of Augustus, the founder of the Colony of Segusio. A steep climb of several hours leads to the summit of the pass and the watershed between the two streams, the Dora Riparia which flows eventually into the Po, and the Clairet which flows into the Durance. The Roman road from this point turned sharply to the south and followed the course of the Durance till it reached the neighbourhood of Arles. In doing so it passed the little cities of Ebrodunum (*Embrun*) and Vapincum (*Gap*), the seats of the two bellicose bishops, Salonius and Sagittarius. In all the story of these campaigns Embrun in the valley of the Durance plays an important part. It was apparently a sort of mustering place for the invaders both after crossing and before recrossing the Cottian Alps.

From this starting-point the three dukes diverged in order to make three separate raids into south-eastern Gaul.

(1) Amo, keeping to the great Roman road, descended into 'the province of Arles', which he ravaged and perhaps hoped to subdue. He paid a hostile visit to a villa in the neighbourhood of Avignon which Mummolus had received as a present from his grateful king.

He threatened Aquae Sextiae (*Aix*) with a siege, but on receiving 22 lbs. of silver, he marched away from the place. He did not penetrate as far as Marseilles itself, but only to the 'Stony Plain', which adjoined that ancient seaport, and he carried off large herds of cattle as well as many captives from the Massilian territory.

(2) Duke Zaban took the road which branched off March. from Gap and led north-westward through Dea (*Die*) to Valentia (*Valence*) at the confluence of the Isère and the Rhone, and there he pitched his camp.

(3) Higher up on the course of the Isère, in a splendid March of amphitheatre of hills, lies the stately city of Grenoble, recalling by its Roman name Gratianopolis the memory of the brilliant young Emperor Gratian. To this city duke Rodan laid regular siege. Mummolus, hearing these tidings, moved southwards with a strong army and first attacked the besiegers of Grenoble. 'While his army was laboriously crossing the turbid Isère, an animal, by the command of God, entered the river and showed them a ford, and thus the whole army got easily through to the opposite shores'. The Lombards flocked to meet them with drawn swords, but were defeated, and duke Rodan, wounded by a lance, fled to the tops of the mountains. With 500 faithful followers he made his way to Valence through the trackless Dauphiné forests—the high road by the Isère being of course blocked by Mummolus. He told his brother-duke Zaban all that had occurred, and they jointly decided on retreat. Burning and plundering they had made their way into the valleys of the Rhone and the Isère: burning and plundering they returned to Embrun.

At Embrun Zaban and Rodan were met by Mummolus at the head of a 'countless' army. Battle was joined; the 'phalanxes' of the Lombards were absolutely cut to pieces, and with a few of their officers, but far fewer, relatively, of the rank and file, the two dukes made their way back over the mountains into Italy. When they reached Susa they were coldly and ungraciously received by the inhabitants. The reason for this coldness, which does not seem to have passed into actual hostility, was that Sisinnius, Master of the Soldiery, was then in the city as the representative of the Emperor. There was no bloodshed, but a little southern astuteness freed the good town of Susa from its unwelcome visitors. While Zaban was conferring with Sisinnius (perhaps arranging as to the billeting of the remnant of the Lombard army), a man entered who feigned himself to be the slave of Mummolus. He greeted Sisinnius in his master's name, handed him letters, and said, 'These are for thee from Mummolus. He is even now at hand'. At these words (though in truth Mummolus was nowhere in the neighbourhood) Zaban and Rodan left the city with all speed and retreated panic-stricken to their homes.

When tidings of all these disasters were brought to Amo in the province of Arles, he collected his plunder, and sought to return across the mountains. The snow, however, had now begun to fall on the Mont Genève, and so blocked his passage that he had to leave all his booty and many of his soldiers behind. With much difficulty and accompanied by only a few of his followers, Amo succeeded in returning to his own land. So disastrously ended the expedition of the three dukes. 'For', as the Frankish historian truly says, they were all terrified by the valour of Mummolus.

After the failure of this expedition we hear of no further invasion of Gaul by the Lombard dukes. The only result of these invasions (except memories which must long have made the name of Lombard hateful to the inhabitants of Dauphiné and Provence) was an extension of territory over the crest of the Alps in favour of the Franks of Burgundy, and at the expense of the Lombards. Ecclesiastical charters prove that about the year 588, the upper valley of the Dora Baltea, with its chief city Aosta, and that of the Dora Susa, with its chief city Susa, were

treated as undoubted portions of the dominions of king Guntram, and were spoken of as having been formerly in Italy, but annexed by him. These two cities and the regions surrounding them occupied the Italian side of the two great practicable passes of that time—the Great St. Bernard and the Mont Genève. There can be little doubt that their occupation by Frankish generals was at once the result of the campaigns which have been just described, and the cause that the Lombard invasions of Gaul were not renewed.

The after-career of Mummolus, the brave champion of Burgundy against the invading Lombards, forms one of the most striking pages in Gregory's history of the Franks, but is too remote from our subject to be related here in any detail. In an evil hour for himself he deserted the master whom he had hitherto served so faithfully, and took up with a pretender, probably base-born and certainly mean-spirited, who was named Gundovald and called himself son of Chlotochar. The soldiers of the pretender, led by Mummolus, obtained some temporary successes, but in 585 Guntram sent a powerful army against him, and, at the mere rumour of its approach, Gundovald's party began to crumble, and he and Mummolus were forced to take refuge in Convenae (now Comminges), a little city perched on one of the outlying buttresses of the Pyrenees. Gundovald made a plaintive appeal to the Burgundian general, Leudegisclus, that he might be allowed to return to Constantinople, where he had left his wife and children. The general only scoffed at the meek petition of 'the painting man, who used in the time of king Chlotochar to daub his pictures on the walls of oratories and bed-chambers'. After the siege of Convenae had lasted fifteen days, secret communications passed between Leudegisclus and Mummolus, the result of which was that the latter persuaded or forced Gundovald to go forth and trust himself to the faintly hoped for mercies of the foe. Vain was the hope : no sooner was he outside the city than one of Guntram's generals gave him a push, which sent him headlong down the steep hill on which Convenae was built. The fall did not kill him, but a stone from the hand of one of his former adherents broke the pretender's skull and ended his sorrows. Vengeance was not long in overtaking his betrayers; one of whom was that same turbulent Bishop Sagittarius, whom we have already seen fighting with carnal weapons against the Lombard invaders. Leudegisclus sent a secret message to his king, asking how he was to dispose of them. 'Slay them all' was the answer of 'good king Guntram'. Mummolus, having received some hint of his danger, went forth, armed, to the hut where Leudegisclus had his head-quarters.

'Why dost thou come thus like a fugitive?' said the Burgundian general.

'As far as I can see', he answered, 'none of the promises made to us are being kept, for I perceive myself to be in imminent danger of death'.

Leudegisclus said, 'I will go forth and put all right'. And going forth, he ordered his soldiers to surround the house and slay Mummolus. The veteran long kept his assailants at bay, but at length, coming to the door, he was pierced in the right and left sides by two lances, and fell to the earth dead. When Bishop Sagittarius, who had apparently accompanied Mummolus to the hut, saw this, he covered his head with his hood, and sought to flee to a neighbouring forest; but one of the soldiers followed him, drew his sword, and cut off the hooded head. Such was the ignoble end of Mummolus, who at one time bade fair to be the hero of Merovingian Gaul. The story is a miserable record of brutality and bad faith. Not one of the actors keeps a solemnly plighted promise or shows a trace of compassion to a fallen foe. These Frankish and Gallo-Roman savages, with a thin varnish of ecclesiastical Christianity over their natural ferocity, have not only no conception of what their descendants will one day reverence as knightly honour, but do not even rise to the usual level of truthfulness attained by their heathen forefathers in the days of Tacitus.

The treasures of Mummolus came into the hands of king Guntram, who out of them caused fifteen massive silver dishes to be wrought, all of which, save two, he presented to

various churches. And the residue of the confiscated property he 'bestowed upon the necessities of the churches and the poor'.

It is now time to return to the affairs of the Lombards, round whom the clouds were gathering in menacing fashion a year before the death of Mummolus. In the year 582, the Emperor Tiberius II, the generous and easy-tempered, had died and had been succeeded by his son-in-law Maurice, who as a general had won notable victories over the Persians, though he was eventually unsuccessful as a ruler, owing to his riding with a sharper curb than the demoralized army and nobles of Constantinople could tolerate.

The eternal quarrel with Persia wore during these years a favourable aspect for the Empire, whose standards were generally victorious on the Tigris and the mountains of Media, and the wild Avars on the Danubian frontier were for the moment at peace with their southern neighbours. Thus freed from his most pressing cares, Maurice began to scheme for the attainment of that object which could never be long absent from a Roman Emperor's thought—the recovery of Italy.

Already, before the death of Tiberius, an Austrasian army under duke Chramnichis had, from the Bavarian side, attacked the Lombards in the valley of the Adige; but after winning a signal victory it had at last been defeated and expelled from the country by Euin, duke of Trient. The court of Constantinople had doubtless heard of this invasion, and knew that it would find in the nobles, who governed Austrasia during Childebert's minority, willing helpers against the hated Lombards. Troops indeed could not yet be spared from the Persian war, but money, as in the days of the lavish Tiberius, could still be sent. The ambassadors of Neustrian Chilperic had received from Tiberius certain wonderful gold medals, each a pound in weight, bearing on the obverse side the Emperor's effigy, with the inscription "Tiberii Constantini Perpetui Augusti", and on the reverse, a chariot and its driver, with the motto "Gloria Romanorum". A more useful, if less showy gift, now (in the year 584) reached the court of the Australian king. The ambassadors of Maurice brought him a subsidy of 50,000 *solidi* (£30,000) and a request 'that he would rush with his army upon the Lombards and utterly exterminate them out of Italy'. The young Childebert, now about fourteen years of age, was permitted by his counsellors to lead his army across the Alps. The force which poured in from Austrasia (probably by the Brenner or some other of the eastern passes of the Alps) was too overwhelming for the Lombards to cope with it. They shut themselves up in their cities (whose fortifications, wiser than the Vandals, they had not destroyed) and saw the hostile multitudes sweep over the desolated plains. But though unable to meet the Franks in arms, they had other weapons which, as they probably knew, would be more efficacious with the greedy nobles of the Austrasian Court. They sent ambassadors who offered costly gifts, and, tempted by these, Childebert and his army retired. As a pecuniary speculation the invasion had been a complete success for the Franks. The 50,000 *solidi* were still almost untouched in the treasury of Metz, and though the Emperor Maurice loudly demanded the return of the money, he demanded in vain. To the same treasury were now carried the gifts of the Lombard dukes, gifts which doubtless consisted chiefly of their own plunder from the palaces of the Roman nobles, the work of generations of cunning craftsmen, while the Lombards were still wandering through Pannonian wildernesses. These gifts could, of course, be easily represented as tribute, and the returning Austrasians might boast that the Lombards had professed themselves servants of king Childebert. There was none to say them nay; and such is the colour put upon the treaty of peace by Frankish Gregory, but which disappears from the pages of his Lombard copyist.

CHAPTER VI.

FLAVIUS AUTHARI.

The attempt of the Lombard dukes to keep the government of the new state in their own hands, after ten years of trial, had proved a failure. Their enemies were drawing together into an alliance which might easily bring upon the Lombard kingdom the same ruin that had befallen its Ostrogothic predecessor, and internally the condition of the subject population, which called itself Roman, was probably both miserable and menacing. Though we greatly lack precise details as to the real position of these subject Italians, there are many indications that their lot was harder during the ten years of 'the kingless time' than at any period before or after. We can well understand that the yoke of these thirty-six barbarous chiefs, each one a little despot in his own domain, would be far more galling than that of one supreme lord, who, both for the sake of his revenues and in order to prevent a dangerous rivalry, would be disposed to defend the peasant and the handicraftsman from the too grievous exactions of a domineering neighbour. But there is no need to labour at this demonstration: it is one of the commonplaces of medieval history that the power of the king was generally the shield of the commoner against the oppression of the noble.

Whether it was the fear of external war or of internal discontent that caused the return to monarchy, we know not; all our information on the subject is contained in the following words of Paulus :—

'But when the Lombards had been for ten years under the power of their dukes, at length by common consent they appointed to themselves as king, Authari, the son of the above-mentioned sovereign, Cleph. On account of his dignity they called him Flavius, a forename which all the kings of the Lombards who followed him used auspiciously. In his days, on account of the restoration of the kingdom, the then ruling dukes contributed half of all their possessions to the royal exchequer, that there might be a fund for the maintenance of the king himself, and of those who were attached to him by the liability to perform the various offices of his household. [In this division] the subject populations who had been assigned to their several Lombard guests were also included. In truth this was a marvellous fact in the kingdom of the Lombards; there was no evidence, no plots were devised, no one oppressed another with unjust exactions, none despoiled his neighbour; there were no thefts, no robberies with violence: every man went about his business as he pleased, in fearless security'.

In this brilliant, but doubtless over-painted picture of the golden days of Flavius Authari, let us try to discover such lines of hard prosaic fact as the labour of archaeologists and commentators have been able to decipher.

It was said in the previous chapter that there was some reason to suppose that Cleph was the first Lombard duke of Bergamo. If this were so, probably his son Authari passed his boyhood at that place under the guardianship of his mother, Queen Masane.

Most of the great cities of Lombardy are built in the plain; but Bergamo, at least the older city of Bergamo, stands on a hill, an outlier of the great Alpine range which, even to the far Bernina, towers majestically behind her. Her territory in those far-off days, when she still gave birth to kings, was more extensive than in later centuries, reaching back to the deep trough of the Valtelline, through which the early waters of the Adda are poured, resting on the two lakes of Iseo and Como to the east and west, and coming far down into the plain within eight miles

of the unfortunate Cremona,—Cremona, which as still loyal to the Empire, had to see her territories retrenched for the benefit of her more submissive neighbours.

As we have seen, Authari assumed the title Flavius, that title which, endeared to the memories of the subject Roman population by dim remembrance of the glories of the Flavian line, was looked upon as in some sort putting the seal of Roman legitimacy upon barbaric conquest. Odovacar, the captain of Herulian mercenaries, had called himself Flavius, a century before the accession of Authari. Recared, the Visigothic king of Spain, who was just at this time coming over to the orthodox creed, and generally reconciling himself to the old order of things, assumed the same title. There can be little doubt that the poor downtrodden Roman colonists heaved a sigh of relief and lifted up his eyes with faint hopes of the coming of a better day, when he heard that the king of these fierce barbarians from the Danube condescended to call himself Flavius. And upon the whole, the promise implied in Authari's new title was fulfilled, and the expectations formed of him by the nobles who raised him to the throne were justified. In the letters of popes and emperors, he and his people are still 'most unspeakable' (*nefandissimi*); but we hear less, in fact we hardly hear anything at all, of mere barbaric plunder of the cities and villas of Italy; the senseless invasions of Gaul are not resumed; the dukes are kept well in hand, and apparently the resources of the young kingdom are directed with wisdom and foresight to the necessary work of its defence against the threatening combination of its foreign foes. And thus, though we certainly cannot accept the picture of millennial happiness under Authari's sway drawn for us by Paulus, we can believe that his was, in the main, a rule which made for righteousness, and that life was more endurable in his days than during the barbarous 'kingless time', or during the feeble reigns of some of his successors.

The figure of this bright and forceful young king, whose reign was too short for his people's desires (for he was only six years upon the throne), impressed the imaginations of the Lombard people, and their Sagas were more busy with his fame than with that of most of the dwellers in the palace at Pavia. Minstrels told how he marched victoriously through the regions which were formed into the two great duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, how he arrived finally at the city of Reggio, at the extreme end of the peninsula which looks across over Scylla and Charybdis at the white walls of Messina, and seeing there certain columns (perhaps of a submerged temple) placed in the very waters of the straits, he rode up towards them, and hurling his spear said, 'Thus far shall come the boundaries of the Lombards'. Wherefore to this day (says Paulus) that column is called 'the column of Authari'.

The story of his wooing belongs to the latest years of his life, but it may be related here, in order to show the popular conception of his character. Authari had asked for and obtained the promise of the hand of Chlodosinda, daughter of Brunichildis, sister of Childebert, king of Austrasia. But when news arrived in Gaul of the conversion of Recared of Spain to the Catholic faith, Brunichildis, who was herself a convert from Arianism and a fervent Catholic, broke off her daughter's engagement to Authari, and betrothed Chlodosinda to Recared. Hereupon Authari turned his thought to a nearer neighbour and determined to woo Theudelinda, the daughter of Garibald, duke of the Bavarians. Theudelinda, whose fame as a beautiful and accomplished princess had probably been widely spread abroad, had been herself betrothed to the youthful Childebert, but that alliance had also been broken by the influence of Brunichildis, who probably dreaded the ascendancy of such a woman over her feeble son. The sister of Theudelinda had been already some ten or fifteen years the wife of a Lombard duke, the stouthearted and successful soldier Euin of Trient.

To Bavaria accordingly king Authari sent his ambassadors to ask for the hand of the daughter of Garibald. They returned with a favourable answer, and the young king determined to seize an opportunity for gazing on the features of his future bride before she entered his kingdom as its queen. Choosing out therefore few of his most trusty followers, he journeyed

with slight equipment to the Bavarian court. A grave and reverend 'senior,' upon whom was devolved the apparent headship of the mission, spoke some words of diplomatic courtesy to Garibald, and then Authari himself (of course preserving his incognito) stepped up to the Bavarian and said, 'My master Authari has sent me that I may behold the face of his betrothed, our future mistress, and may make report of her beauty to my lord'. Garibald then ordered his daughter to approach, and Authari gazed long in silence on the slender form and beautiful face of his betrothed. Thereafter he said to the Bavarian duke, 'In good sooth we behold that your daughter is such a person that she is well worthy to be our queen. Command, therefore, I pray, that we may receive a goblet of wine from her hand, as we hope often to do in the years that are to come'. Garibald gave the word and Theudelinda brought the goblet of wine and offered it first to the older man, the apparent chief of the embassy. Then she handed it to Authari, all unwitting that he was her future husband, and he in returning the cup secretly intertwined her fingers with his, and bending low, guided them over the profile of his face from the forehead to the chin. When the ambassadors had left the presence-chamber, Theudelinda, with a blush of shame, told her nurse of the strange behaviour of the Lombard. 'Assuredly,' said the aged crone, 'he must be the king thy betrothed suitor, or he would never have dared to do this unto thee. But let us be silent about the matter lest it come to the knowledge of thy father. And in truth he is a comely person, worthy of the kingdom and of thee'. For the young king, in the flower of his age, with his tall stature and waves of yellow hair, had won the hearts of all the beholders.

A banquet followed, and the Lombard messengers, escorted by some of the Bavarian nobles, set forth upon their homeward journey. When they were just crossing the frontiers of Noricum and their horses' feet touched the soil of his Italy, Authari, rising high in his saddle, whirled his battle-axe through the air and fixed it deep in the trunk of a tree, where he left it, shouting as he threw, 'So Authari is wont to strike his blow'. Then the Bavarian escort understood that he was indeed the king.

A short time elapsed. Childebert, probably alarmed at the tidings of the alliance between the Bavarians, his doubtful subjects, and the Lombards, his frequent foes, moved his army against Garibald. There is one reason to think that either at this time or soon after, Garibald was dethroned and his duchy given to a relative, perhaps a son or a nephew, named Tassilo; but however that may be, it is certain that Theudelinda fled from her country (her young brother, Gundwald being the companion of her exile), and notified to her betrothed her arrival in Italy. Authari received her with great pomp on the shores of the beautiful Lake Garda, and the marriage was celebrated amid general rejoicings in the neighbouring city of Verona the 15th of May (589).

The union so romantically brought about was apparently a happy one, but its happiness was short-lived, for in September of the following year Authari died. But having thus related all that is to be known as to the personal history of the young king, let us turn back to consider the chief public events of his short but important reign.

For some time the occupants of St. Peter's chair had been uttering to all the potentates of the Catholic world plaintive cries for help against the violence of the Lombards. In a letter written by Pope Pelagius II to Aunacharius, bishop of Auxerre, the writer bewails 'the shedding of innocent blood, the violation of the holy altars, the insults offered to the Catholic faith by these idolaters'. 'Not without some great purpose', continues the Pope, 'has it been ordained by Divine Providence that your [Frankish] kings should share with the Roman Empire in the confession of the orthodox faith. Assuredly this was brought to pass in order that they might be so to speak neighbours and helpers of this City of Rome, whence that confession took its birth, and of the whole of Italy. Beware then lest through levity of purpose your kings should fail in their high mission. Persuade them as earnestly as you can to keep themselves

from all friendship and alliance with our most unspeakable enemies the Lombards, lest when the day of vengeance dawns (which we trust in the Divine mercy it will do speedily), your kings should share in the Lombard's punishment'.

Again, in 585 the same Pope addressed a letter to the deacon Gregory, his representative at the court of Byzantium, urging him to bring under the notice of the Emperor Maurice the cruel hardships of his Italian subjects. 'Such calamities and tribulations are brought upon us by the perfidy of the Lombard, contrary to his own plighted oath, that no one can avail to relate them. Tell our most pious lord the Emperor of our dangers and necessities, and consult with him how they may be most speedily relieved: because so straitened is the Republic that, unless God shall put it into the heart of our most pious sovereign to bestow his wonted compassion upon his servants, and to relieve our troubles by sending us one Master of the Soldiery and one Duke, we shall be brought to the extremity of distress, since at present the region around Rome is still for the most part quite undefended.

'The Exarch writes that he can give us no remedy, since he avers that he has not sufficient force even to defend that part of the country [the neighbourhood of Ravenna]. May God therefore direct him speedily to succour our perils before the army of that most unspeakable nation succeeds (which God forbid) in occupying the districts still held by the Republic'.

If the Emperor could not spare any large number of soldiers in response to these plaintive appeals, he could at least place the existing Italian army under more efficient leadership than that of the incapable Longinus, who, during the eighteen years of his government, had performed no memorable action, except abetting the flight of the murderess Rosamund and shipping off Alboin's daughter and her treasures to Constantinople. Smaragdus was now appointed governor of Italy, with a title which was afterwards to become famous, but of which we now meet with the first undoubted mention, the title of Exarch. It was probably in the early part of the year 585 that the new governor arrived in Italy. His name (a curious one to be borne by a Roman governor) is the Greek word for an emerald. By no means a flawless jewel, and a man with some strange streaks of madness in his composition, Smaragdus was nevertheless an active and energetic soldier, and the fact that he twice held the great post of Exarch of Italy shows the high value which the Imperial Consistory placed on his services.

The efforts of the new Exarch were powerfully seconded by those of a deserter from the Lombard camp. This was a certain Droctulf, by birth belonging to the Suavic or Alamannic nation, who had grown to manhood among the Lombards, and being a man of comely presence and evidently of some military talent, had received the honour of a dukedom among them. He had apparently been taken prisoner in some battle by the Imperial troops, and nurtured a feeling of resentment against the other Lombard generals, to whose languid support he considered that he owed his captivity. In this captivity at Ravenna, he, like so many barbarian chiefs before him, was fascinated by the splendid civilization—splendid even in its ruins—of the great Roman 'Republic'. The barbarous Suave of the Black Forest, the more barbarous Lombard of Pavia—what were these beside the magnificent officials who sat in Theodoric's palace at Ravenna, issuing the decrees and bestowing on loyal allies the endless golden *solidi* of the great World-Emperor? As he worshipped in the glorious basilica of St. Vitalis, and gazed upon the yet existing mosaic pictures of that martyred praetorian, father of two sons, Gervasius and Protasius, soldiers and martyrs like their sire, he took that warrior-saint for his patron, and in the visions of the night he seemed to see Jesus Christ himself giving to him, as to Constantine, a banner to be reared in the service of Christ and of Rome.

This was the man who, as it seems, early in the reign of Authari openly attached himself to the party of the Empire, gathered a band of soldiers together, and seizing the little town of Brixellum (*Brescello*) on the Po, raised there the Christ-given banner of Rome against the unspeakable Lombard. Brescello is only about twelve miles from Parma on the Aemilian way,

and Droctulf's object in seizing this position was doubtless to hamper the communications of the Lombards along that great highway between Parma, Placentia and Modena, while he himself by the swift sailing-ships (*dromones*), which sailed up and down the river Po, kept open his own communications with the Adriatic. However, the young Authari led the Lombard host against Droctulf, and, after a long siege took Brixellum, razed its walls to the ground, and forced Droctulf to flee to Ravenna.

Hereupon a truce for three years (555-558) was concluded between the Lombard king and the Exarch; a truce which was probably employed by both parties in completing their preparations for further war. It was perhaps before the full completion of the third year that hostilities of a desultory kind were resumed both on the east and west of the Lombard kingdom. In the extreme north-east, Authari's future brother-in-law, Euin, duke of Trient, invaded the wealthy province of Istria. After much pillaging and burning he concluded peace—doubtless a special, local peace—with the governor of the province for one year and returned bearing great spoil to Authari. In the west, the shouts of battle were heard on the shores of the Lake of Como, where for twenty years there had been a strange survival of Roman rule in a part of Italy otherwise entirely subjugated by the barbarians.

At the present day, a traveller sailing or steaming up the western branch of the Lake of Como, perhaps scarcely notices a little island—the only one which the lake can boast—lying on his left hand as he is nearing Bellaggio. The hills of the mainland rise high above him, bearing aloft the shrine of Our Lady of Succour, to which many a boatman has looked for help when the suddenly arising storm has threatened to fill his bark. But the little island itself, which is about half a mile long and two to three hundred yards broad, rises to no great elevation, though its cliffs are in one place somewhat steep, and there are slight traces of the walls which once rose above them. Still the Isola Comacina, as Paulus calls it, suggests to us in these modern days little of the idea of a stronghold, nor has it ever been such since the invention of gunpowder. But before that great change in the art of war, the simple fact that it was separated by a deep strait, some quarter of a mile wide, from the mainland rendered it inaccessible to any power which had not naval supremacy on the lake and made its possession an object of desire to contending potentates. Here, as we shall see, came Imperial generals and rebel Lombard dukes bent on defying the arms of the lord of Pavia. In the twelfth century, in those fierce intestine wars which preceded the formation of the Lombard League, the little island threw in her lot with Milan against Como, shared the earlier reverses and the final victory of her mightier ally, but was at last, some forty years later, utterly destroyed by the neighbour whose power she had braved. The sacristan of the small and lonely church of St. John tells one in dejected tones that the little island once counted its 7000 inhabitants, but that in the time of Frederick Barbarossa 'everything was burnt', and the island has since remained desolate. Apparently, however, it was not from the terrible Emperor, but from their own burgher neighbours of Como, that the vengeance and the destruction came. Last of all, in our own days, in the war of Italian Liberation in 1848, Charles Albert confined a number of his Austrian prisoners on the island. At night they slept in the church; in the day they were allowed to scramble about the rocks and thickets of their prison, looking over the narrow strait which divided them from the shore and longing in vain for their Tyrolese or Croatian home

Hither then to this 'home of lost causes' came an Imperial *magister militum*, Francio by name, when Alboin entered Italy, and here for twenty years he had kept the flag of the Empire flying. But now at length Authari directed the whole forces of his kingdom against Francio, and after six months' siege captured his island-fortress and took possession of the vast stores of treasure deposited there by refugees from almost all the cities of Italy. To Francio himself terms were accorded worthy of so brave a foe, and he was allowed to depart for Ravenna with his wife and all his household possessions.

It was probably just after the expiration of the three years' truce that the port of Classis, which had been for at least nine years in the occupation of the Lombards was recaptured for the Empire. The hero of this reconquest was Droctulf, who was no doubt well supported by the Exarch Smaragdus. He prepared a swarm of vessels of small draft, with which he covered the shallow streams and lagunes between Ravenna and Classis, and by their aid he overcame the large Lombard host which Farwald of Spoleto had sent to maintain his important conquest.

This is all that is told us of the deeds of Droctulf in Italy. He seems, after his first Romanization, to have lived and died a faithful servant of the Empire, and to have fought her battles in the Danubian lands against the savage Avars. We know not the year of his death, but we learn that he was buried in the church of his patron-saint Vitalis at Ravenna, where for many generations might be seen his epitaph in thirteen elegiac couplets, which may be thus somewhat freely translated:—

'Droctulf here lies; his body, not his soul;
Droctulf, whose fame doth round the wide world roll

Though leagued with Bardi, Suavia gave him birth,
And suave his mood to all men upon earth.

Kind was his heart, though terrible his frown,
And his long beard o'er his broad breast flowed down.

On Rome's great commonwealth his love he placed,
And for that love's sake laid his brethren waste.

He scorned his fathers, prayed with us to stand,
And chose Ravenna for his fatherland.

Brixellum captured was his earliest feat;
There, feared by all his foes, he fixed his seat.

Christ gave the banner which he stoutly bore,
After Rome's standards thenceforth evermore.

When Farwald Classis won by foul deceit,
He for the Fleet-town's conquest armed his fleet.

Up Badrin's stream his shallops fought their way,
And made the countless Bardic hosts their prey.

Taming, in Eastern lands, the Avar hordes,
He won the glorious laurel for his lords.

The soldier-saint, Vitalis, gave him might,
Triumph on triumph thus to earn in fight;

And in Vitalis' holy home to lie
He prayed, when 'twas the warrior's turn to die.

This of Johannes was his last request,
Whose loving hands here fold him to his rest.’

The rest of the political events in the life of Authari were chiefly connected with Frankish invasions, threatened, accomplished, or averted; and to understand their somewhat obscure and tortuous course, we must once more cross the Alps and visit the hill-girt city of Metz, whence the young king Childebert, son of Sigibert and Brunichildis, rules his kingdom of Austrasia. In the courtly language of contemporary ecclesiastics he is ‘gloriosissimus dominus Childeberthus rex’; but to us he is a somewhat pale and uninteresting figure, always acting under the impulse of some stronger will, ruled either by his mother or by one of the great nobles and prelates, who, as already said, claimed the right to advise—a right not easily distinguishable from the right to rule—their youthful monarch.

Childebert was generally on good terms with his uncle, the easy-tempered Guntram of Burgundy, and he was in fact, three years after the accession of Authari, formally recognized as his heir by the Treaty of Andelot: but occasional misunderstandings arose between them, nor was it easy to direct their combined resources to one common end.

The old fierce feud between Brunichildis and Fredegundis, though not healed, was during these years slumbering. Ever and anon the wicked queen of Neustria despatched one of her emissaries on the forlorn hope of murdering Guntram or Childebert: but the plot was always discovered; the would-be murderer confessed under torture the name of his inciter; he was put to death: Fredegundis bestowed some of her vast wealth on his surviving relatives, and all went on as before. Generally speaking, it may be said that the period from 584 to 600 was the time of the greatest obscuration of the Neustrian kingdom. Its king, Chlotochar II, was, at the beginning of this period, a mere infant, and Neustria was shorn of a considerable part of its former territory for the benefit of Austrasia and Burgundy.

The ‘most glorious lord Childebert’ having once crossed the Alps at the head of an army, and won but little renown there, was not disposed to repeat the experiment. The court of Constantinople, however, unceasingly demanded either the return of its 50,000 *solidi* or the accomplishment of the expedition of which they were the wages. And, in addition to this pecuniary claim, there was a personal motive towards friendliness with Constantinople, operating at this time with peculiar force both on Brunichildis and on Childebert. To understand its bearings we must go back three or four years, and must glance at the history of Spain and the tragedy of the rebellion of Hermenigild

We have seen that two kings of the Franks married two daughters of Athanagild, king of the Visigoths. That monarch died shortly after he had despatched the hapless Galswintha on that nuptial journey which proved to be the road to death, and he was succeeded, after a short interval, by the last and well-nigh the greatest of the Arian kings of the Visigoths, Leovigild. Lion-like by name and by nature, this Visigoth, champion of a falling cause stoutly defended the land and the faith of his Arian forefathers. Against the generals of the Empire who had gained a footing in Murcia and Andalusia, and against the hereditary Suevic enemy in Galicia and Lusitania, he dealt his swashing blows. He fought the Basques (that irreconcilable remnant of the dim aboriginal race which once peopled the Peninsula), and sent them flying across the Pyrenees. He repressed the anarchic movements of his own turbulent nobility, and made them feel that they had now indeed a king.

True, however, to the policy of his predecessor Athanagild (whose widow Goisvintha he had married after the death of his own first wife), Leovigild desired to conciliate as much as possible his mighty Frankish neighbours on the north. Accordingly, he asked and obtained for his son Hermenigild the hand of the young Austrasian princess Ingunthis, sister of Childebert. The little princess—she was scarcely more than a child—thus recrossed the Pyrenees which

her mother had crossed on a similar errand fourteen years before. She was attended by a brilliant retinue; but she came bringing dissension into the palace of the Visigoths, and to herself exile and untimely death.

The cause of dissension was—need it be said?—the difference of creed between the two royal families to which the bride and bridegroom belonged. In the previous generation both Brunichildis and Galswintha had easily conformed to the Catholic faith of their affianced husbands. Probably the counsellors of Leovigild expected that a mere child like Ingunthis would, without difficulty, make the converse change from Catholicism back into Arianism. This was ever the capital fault of the Arian statesmen that, with all their religious bitterness, they could not comprehend that the profession of faith, which was hardly more than a fashion to most of themselves, was a matter of life and death to their Catholic rivals. Here, for instance, was their own princess Brunichildis, reared in Arianism, converted to the orthodox creed, clinging to it tenaciously through all the perils and adversities of her own stormy career, and able to imbue the child-bride, her daughter, with such an unyielding devotion to the faith of Nicaea that not one of all the formidable personages whom she met in her new husband's home could avail to move her by one hair's breadth towards 'the Arian pravity'.

Chief of all these baffled proselytisers was Queen Goisvintha, own grandmother to the bride and step-mother to the bridegroom. This ancient dame was a bitter Arian, who had inflicted some humiliations on the ecclesiastics of the opposite party, and whose one blinded eye, covered with the white film of cataract, was hailed by the Catholics as a Divine judgment on her wickedness. It was at first with soft and fair speeches that the aged grandmother—who had received Ingunthis with real gladness—sought to persuade her to quit the Catholic fold and to be baptized as an Arian. But the child-wife answered with manly spirit, 'It is sufficient for me to have been washed from the stain of original sin by baptism, and to have confessed the Trinity in one equality. This doctrine I avow that I believe with my whole heart, nor will I ever go back from this faith'. By this stubborn refusal the wrath of Goisvintha was aroused. She seized the child—so says the Catholic Gregory—by the hair of her head and dashed her to the ground; she trampled her under foot and beat her till the blood spirted forth; she ordered her to be stripped and thrown into a pond: but all these outrages failed to shake the constancy of the heroic princess.

Of these proceedings, on the part of his wife, Leovigild seems to have been a passive, probably an unwilling spectator, and it was perhaps in order to deliver his daughter-in-law from such persecution, that he assigned the city of Seville, far from his own new capital Toledo, as the residence of the youthful pair; associating Hermenigild with himself in the kingdom.

In their new home by the Guadalquivir Ingunthis began to ply her husband with entreaties that he would leave the falsehood of heresy and recognize the verity of the Catholic law. Although Hermenigild came by the mother's side from a Catholic family, his maternal uncle being the celebrated Leander, bishop of Seville, he long resisted the arguments of his wife, but at length he yielded and received Catholic baptism, perhaps from Leander's own hands; changing his name to John.

After this defection of the young prince from the ancestral creed there was of course 'doubt, misconception, and pain' in the royal palace. The father invited the son to a friendly conference. The son refused, as he said, 'because thou art hostile to me on account of my being a Catholic'. He called upon 'the Greeks' that is the generals of the Empire, to protect him from his father's anger; but as their succour had not arrived when the royal army was approaching, he accepted the mediation of his brother Recared, entered the hostile camp, and cast himself at the feet of Leovigild. The king raised him by the hand, kissed him and spoke to him kindly; but

afterwards, 'forgetful' (says Gregory) 'of his plighted oath, sent him into exile, removing from him all his usual attendants except one young slave'.

It is not easy to trace the exact course of subsequent events, but it is clear that Hermenigild must have escaped from exile, and renewed his rebellion, or, as the annalists (though of the Catholic party) call it, his 'tyranny'. The war seems to have lasted for two years. 'The Greeks', as far as we can see, brought little effectual help to Hermenigild, but the Catholic Suevi put forth all their strength on his behalf. Their king perished in a vain attempt to raise the siege of Seville, and the war ended in the triumph of Leovigild, the captivity of Hermenigild, and the final overthrow of the Suevoic kingdom.

Once again the king's son was sent into confinement; this time at Valencia. Possibly he escaped thence, for a few months afterwards we hear of his being slain at Tarragona. The Gaulish historian says that his father put him to death; but a somewhat better informed Spanish annalist attributes the murder to a certain man named Sisbert, without hinting at Leovigild's approval of the deed.

The unfortunate Ingunthis was thus made a widow in her nineteenth year and left with one orphaned child, a boy, already it would seem three or four years old, whom she had named Athanagild, after her maternal grandfather. She had been apparently separated from her husband during these years of war, for when the rebellion first broke out he had left his wife and child under the care of his Greek allies. Those allies, however, fully recognized the value of such a hostage as Ingunthis, sister of the king of the Franks, and daughter-in-law of the king of the Visigoths, bearing in her bosom one who one day sit on the throne of Leovigild. In all the subsequent negotiations, reconciliations, wars, between Leovigild and his son, neither of them could ever recover Ingunthis from 'the Greeks'. And now, after her husband's death, she was not restored to her home by the Moselle, but sent in a kind of honourable captivity over the wide Mediterranean, her destination being Constantinople : so little consideration or sympathy did the orthodox Greeks exhibit for one who had in her tender youth done and suffered so much on behalf of the Creed of Nicaea. As it turned out, Ingunthis never reached the city of the Bosphorus, but died, probably worn out by home-sickness and sorrow, at Carthage, and was buried there. The little Athanagild was sent on to Constantinople, where it is probable that he eventually died, as we never hear of his return to the West of Europe, though that return was the subject of much diplomatic discussion.

It was by the captivity of Ingunthis and her child that the tragedy of Hermenigild was connected with the history of Italy, but it is worthwhile to devote a few sentences to the sequel of that tragedy in Spain. The stout-hearted Leovigild died in the spring of 586, not many months after the murder of his eldest son. His second son, Recared, who then ascended the throne, promptly put his brother's murderer to death, and by another striking exercise of his royal power proved that the example of that brother, the courage of his young sister-in-law, the exhortations of his uncle Leander, had not been lost upon him. In 587 he assembled a conference of prelates, both Catholic and Arian. They argued with one another and the heretics were unconvinced; but when they appealed to miracles the orthodox won a signal victory. Recared openly avowed himself a believer in the Three Equal Persons of the Godhead, and before many years were passed he had, by gentle compulsion, brought the whole Visigothic nation to share his change of faith. Thus was the last of the great Arian kingdoms, except the Lombard, brought into communion with that form of Christianity which was professed by the Empire, and thus was, if not the 'Eldest Son of the Church', perhaps the most obedient of her children brought into the fold.

In the opinion of some scholars, it is to Recared that we should assign, if not the composition, at any rate the authoritative publication of that great battle-hymn of orthodoxy the

‘Quicumque vult’, which is generally known by the incorrect name of ‘The Creed of Saint Athanasius’.

In his father’s lifetime Recared had been betrothed to the young Regunthis, daughter of the Neustrian Chilperic and Fredegundis; but on her father’s assassination this matrimonial project fell through, though the bride had already arrived on her nuptial journey almost at the borders of the Visigothic kingdom. After his conversion Recared obtained, as we have seen, the promise of the hand of Chlotoswinda, sister of Childebert, thus depriving Authari of the coveted Frankish alliance. In fact, however, this betrothal also came to naught, and the wife whom Recared eventually married was a Visigothic lady named Baddo. Certainly the Merovingians and the kings of the Visigoths were not happy in their matrimonial diplomacies.

We return to the court of Childebert, whither came messengers from the Emperor Maurice with the usual request that the Frankish king would send an army to Italy to fight against the Lombards. Childebert, supposing that his widowed sister was still alive and in the Emperor’s power, complied the more readily with the Imperial request, and sent an expedition across the Alps. But the heterogeneous character of the state which obeyed the rule of the Austrasian king reflected itself disastrously in his army. So great a dissension arose between the Franks and Alamanni serving under his standards, that, without any gain of booty for themselves or conquest of territory for their master, they were obliged to return home.

At length, perhaps early in the year 588, the tidings of the death of Ingunthis reached the court of Metz, but at the same time probably came the news that the little Athanagild was detained at Constantinople. Thereupon all the resources of Austrasian diplomacy were employed to procure his liberation. Four ambassadors were sent to Constantinople: their names and titles were Sennodius the ‘Optimate’, Grippo the king’s Sword-bearer, Radan the Chamberlain, and Eusebius the Notary. They took with them a whole packet of letters, sixteen of which have been preserved. Though written, of course, not by their reputed authors, but by some clerk—probably an ecclesiastic—in the royal chancery, they are interesting for the light which they throw on the ways of European diplomacy in the sixth century, and especially on the relations existing between the barbarian kings of Western Europe and the Imperial Court. There are letters to the Emperor’s father, the veteran Paulus; to his little son Theodosius, a child of about the same age as Athanagild; to the Patriarch of Constantinople; to the Master of the Offices, the Quaestor and the Curator of the Palace, beseeching the good offices of all these illustrious persons on behalf of the ambassadors, sent as they were to establish a firm peace between the Frankish monarchy and the Empire. In these letters we hear but little of the true, the personal object of the embassy; but those addressed by Childebert to Maurice, and by Brunichildis to the Empress, are more outspoken, and plead earnestly for the liberation of the little orphan who, by the waves of a cruel destiny, had been drifted so far from his home. Two of the letters are addressed to Athanagild himself. In the letter of Brunichildis to her grandson, notwithstanding the stilted style of its address, there is something really pathetic. Though the prattling child is called ‘the glorious lord, king Athanagild’, he is also ‘my sweetest grandson whom I long after with inexpressible desire’; and we read that the vanished Ingunthis will not seem altogether lost, if only Brunichildis may gaze upon her offspring.

The whole correspondence, and the way in which this little one’s captivity among ‘the Greeks’ influences the movements of armies, and accomplishes results which thousands of solidi had been vain to procure, give us a favourable idea of the strength of the family tie among these otherwise unattractive Merovingian monarchs. Even the apathetic Childebert seems to show some concern for the safety of his nephew: but doubtless Brunichildis was the moving spirit in the whole negotiation. That fierce old Spanish lioness, though her life was spent in fray, had something of the lioness’s longing to recover her captured whelp.

The embassy to Constantinople was hindered by various causes, which will shortly be mentioned, and did not finally return to Metz till near two years after it had set forth; but meanwhile Childebert, anxious to show his zeal in the Emperor's service, sent an army into Italy, probably in the early summer of 588. Over this invading host Authari and his warriors won a signal victory. They felt that the very existence of the Lombards as an independent nation was at stake, and thus, fighting for their freedom, they triumphed. It is admitted by Gregory that the slaughter of Frankish soldiers was greater than that on any former battlefield whereof the memory was preserved. Many captives were taken, and only a few fugitives returned, with difficulty, to their native land. This victory was the chief event of Authari's reign, and, notwithstanding some subsequent reverses, obtained for him an enduring place in the grateful recollection of his countrymen.

During the year 589 warlike operations seem to have slumbered. The year was memorable to the inhabitants of Italy for other ravages than those of war. Throughout the north of Italy the streams fed by the Alpine snows rushed down in such destructive abundance that men said to one another in terror that Noah's deluge was returning upon the earth. Whole farms were washed away by the raging streams, and in those villas which remained might everywhere be seen the corpses of men and cattle. The stately Roman roads were in many places broken down (and what a Roman Emperor had built a rough Lombard king would find it hard to replace), and some of the smaller paths were quite obliterated. Impetuous Adige rose so high that a large part of the walls of Verona was undermined and fell in ruin, and the beautiful church of San Zenone outside the city was surrounded by water reaching up to the highest tier of windows; but men noted with awe-struck wonder that not a drop penetrated into the building itself. This most terrible storm of a stormy season raged on the 17th of October, the thunder rolling and the lightning flashing in such fashion as was rarely witnessed even in the middle of summer. And only two months later the unhappy city of Verona, which had suffered so severely from the plague of great waters, was well-nigh reduced to ruin by the opposite enemy, fire.

At Rome the Tiber rose so high that it overtopped the walls which lined its banks, and filled all the lower quarters of the City. 'Through the channel of the same river,' says our historian, 'not only a multitude of serpents, but also a dragon of vast size, passed through the City and descended to the sea.'

One reason why there were no great warlike operations in the year 589 may have been that Pavia was busy with the marriage festivities of Authari and Theudelinda, and that Ravenna was witnessing the departure of Smaragdus and the advent of his successor in the office of Exarch. A bitter ecclesiastical quarrel, the result of the miserable controversy about the Three Chapters, was raging in the churches of Istria. The energetic but hot-tempered Smaragdus could not refrain from interfering in this quarrel. Laying violent hands on the patriarch of Aquileia he dragged him and three other bishops to Ravenna, and forced them by threats and violence to communicate with the bishop of that city. It was, in the general opinion, a fitting punishment for this high-handed treatment of the Lords anointed, that Smaragdus was shortly afterwards 'attacked by a demon' (in other words, became insane), and had to be recalled to Constantinople. His successor, Romanus, held the office of Exarch for about eight years (589-597).

In the year 590 Grippo, the ambassador who had been sent to Constantinople to plead for the liberation of the young Athanagild, returned to Metz, having a strange and terrible story to tell of his mission. It seems, on the whole, most probable that the little prince was already dead when the embassy of 588 arrived at Constantinople, that Grippo had returned to his master with these tidings, and had then, in the year 589, been sent forth on another embassy to the same court, his companions this time being two Gallo-Roman noblemen, Bodigisil, son of

Mummolinus of Soissons, and Evantius, son of Dynamius of Arles. For some reason quite unknown to us, but probably connected with the closing scenes in the life of Ingunthis, these ambassadors went first to the great city, the metropolis of Roman Africa, which was called Magna Carthago, to distinguish her from her lesser namesake in Spain.

While the ambassadors were tarrying here, waiting the commands of the Prefect as to the order of their journey to the Imperial Presence, a tragedy was enacted, which affords us one of our few glimpses of the condition of the great African city in the century and a half that elapsed between her liberation from the yoke of the Vandals and her conquest by the sword-preachers of Islam. One of the body-servants of Evantius saw in the market-place some piece of merchandise which caught his fancy, and following 'the simple plan,' laid hold of it and took it with him to the inn where the ambassadors were lodging. The shopkeeper, thus defrauded of his goods, demanded daily, with ever more clamorous entreaties, the return of his property, and at length, one day, meeting the servant in the street, laid hold of his raiment and said, 'I will not let you go till you have returned that which you stole from me'. At this the Frank drew his sword and slew the importunate creditor. He then returned to the inn, but gave no hint to any of his companions of what he had done. The chief magistrate of the city¹, when he heard of the murder, collected his soldiers and some of the common people, whom he hastily armed, and went at their head to the inn where the ambassadors were then enjoying their siesta after the midday meal. Hearing an uproar the Franks looked out and were at once called upon by the city magistrate to come forth and assist in the investigation into an act of homicide which had just been committed. Perplexed and alarmed, they asked for some security for their lives before laying down their arms. Meanwhile the angry and excited mob began to rush into the house. First Bodigisil, and then Evantius stepped out and were slain at the inn-door. Then Grippo, fully armed and at the head of his retainers, sallied forth and said, 'What the crime may be, about which you say that you are come to enquire, I know not; but here are my two colleagues, who were sent on an embassy to the Emperor, slain by the swords of your citizens. We came for peace and for the common benefit of your state and ours; but now there will never be peace between our kings and your Emperor. I call God to witness of your crime, and He will judge between us and you'. At this the Carthaginian levy was dismissed, and the Prefect of the city, coming to Grippo's lodging, endeavoured to soothe him and began again to discuss the old question of the formalities which were to be observed in their visit to the Imperial court.

The Carthaginian outrages on the Frankish embassy had at least the effect of making the surviving ambassador's work easier at Constantinople. The Emperor laid aside his usual haughty isolation of manner, received Grippo as an honoured guest, and promised that ample satisfaction should be made to his master for the wound given to his dignity by the outrages at Carthage. In fact, however, this 'ample satisfaction' consisted in arresting, some months later, twelve men who were said to have been guilty of the murder, and sending them bound to the court of Childebert, who was told that he might put them to death if he thought fit, or else allow them to redeem their lives at the rate of 300 *aurei* apiece. The Frankish king took reasonable objection to this mode of settling the dispute. 'There was no proof that these twelve men had anything to do with the murder. They might be slaves of some Greek courtier, who allowed them to be cheaply sacrificed in this manner, while the king's ambassadors, who had been slain at Carthage, were men of noble birth'. Grippo too, who was standing by, said, 'The Prefect of that city collected two or three thousand men, came against us, and killed my colleagues. Ay, and he would have killed me too, if I had not known how to defend myself like a man. If I go to the place myself, I can pick out the men who did the deed, on whom your master will have to take vengeance, if he desires peace as much as he professes to desire it'. King Childebert gave the word : the captives were allowed to depart, and, with provoking reticence, the historian never tells us how the affair ended.

This last incident, however, of the sham satisfaction for the outrage belongs to the later stages of the business. On the return of Grippo, in the early months of 590, with his first friendly message from the Emperor, and his promise of ample justice on the authors of the outrage, Childebert—so mighty were still a few courteous words from the great Roman Emperor to a barbarian king—at once prepared an army, the fourth that he had put in the field for the invasion of Italy.

Twenty dukes were the officers of this new army, acting under three leaders, whom we should call generals of division, and whose names were Audovald, Olo and Chedin. All three divisions of the army, according to the usual Frankish custom, robbed and murdered to their hearts' content, long ere they passed the frontiers of their own land, beginning this work of devastation in the immediate neighbourhood of Metz.

When they had crossed the Alps, Audovald with seven dukes encamped over against Milan. Olo with no ducal subordinate marched against Bellinzona. Chedin, with thirteen dukes, descending, the valley of the Adige, threatened Verona.

Olo, approaching incautiously too near to the walls of Bellinzona, was pierced in the breast by a javelin and died of the wound. His soldiers probably joined the main body under Audovald, who was pressing the siege of Milan. The Franks, ravaging the country in all directions, found themselves continually liable to be cut off by detachments of the Lombard army, issuing forth from the fortresses, in which they had Audovald taken refuge. At length, however, the two hosts were drawn up in battle array on the western side of Lake Lugano, where the small but deep stream of the Tresa issues from the lake, carrying its waters to the broader expanse of Maggiore. On the banks of this stream stood a Lombard warrior, armed with helmet and breastplate, and brandishing a spear, who shouted, 'This day will it appear to which side God will grant the victory'. A few of the Franks crossed the stream, set upon the Lombard champion and overthrew him, whereupon his countrymen, who had apparently staked all their hopes on the rude ordeal of this unequal combat, took to flight. The Franks then crossed the stream, but the operation occupied some time, and when they entered the Lombard camp they found nothing there but the ovens and the marks of the tent-poles.

One cause of the discouragement and flight of the Lombard army was doubtless the near approach of the Exarch's forces, which seemed to be on the point of effecting a junction with the Franks. Messengers arrived from the Imperial camp to announce this approach to Audovald, and to say that they hoped in three days' time to reach the camp of their allies. The signal of their arrival on the scene was to be the wreaths of smoke arising from a certain villa on the hill to which the envoys pointed and which they promised to set on fire. For six days the Franks waited, but no smoke was seen to arise from the doomed villa. Apparently the failure to effect this junction was the death-blow to the hopes of the western division, and they returned home at the end of the sixth day.

In the north-east, Chedin, with his thirteen dukes, took five border-fortresses in the Tridentine duchy, from the inhabitants of which he received oaths of fidelity to King Childebert, permanently annexing, or rather restoring, the surrounding territory to the Austrasian kingdom. He also took ten towns or villages in the valley of the Adige, two in the Valsugana, and one in the immediate neighbourhood of Verona. Verona itself saw the Frankish host encamped beneath its walls, but apparently resisted the siege with success, if any regular siege there were.

The fortress of Verruca, erected, or at any rate greatly strengthened, by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, was saved by the intercession of two bishops, Ingenuinus of Seben and Agnellus of Trient, and the inhabitants were permitted to redeem themselves at rates varying from one to 600 solidi. From all the conquered towns a long train of captives was carried back into Gaul, though in many cases their surrender had been obtained by the solemn oath of the generals, that

the liberty and property as well as the lives of the citizens should be spared. In fact, to any one who studies the obscure notices which we possess of this campaign, it will be clear that the Franks, burning, murdering and pillaging, were more terrible to the miserable inhabitants of Italy than even the Lombards themselves.

But now, as so often before and since, the climate of Italy, especially her climate in the later months of summer, proved the best friend to her afflicted inhabitants. The terrible deluges of 589 were succeeded by pestilence in the following year, pestilence which carried off the venerable Pope Pelagius II, and which, in the form of dysentery, so terribly wasted the invading army that Chedin, as well as Audovald, found himself obliged to abandon the campaign.

After three months of destructive wandering over the plains of northern Italy, the whole Frankish army returned into its own country, having practically accomplished nothing. It had not been able to force the Lombards to fight, for they had remained behind the walls of their fortresses. It had not, as it once hoped to do, captured Authari himself, for he had tarried in his strongly fortified capital of Pavia. It had not succeeded in collecting great spoil, for the soldiers had to sell their clothes and even their arms for bread, before they reached their native land. Plague-stricken, ragged and desperate, the great army of the Twenty Dukes disappeared from the soil of Italy.

The Byzantine version of this campaign of 590—agreeing as to the main result, but differing as to the cause of the failure—was given by the Exarch of Italy, who wrote to Childebert two letters (still extant) bitterly complaining of the incapacity of the Franks in war, and of their cruel conduct towards the Roman provincials. The following are the most important sentences in these letters:—

‘We heard from your messenger, the Vir Magnificus, Andreas, how earnestly your Glory desired to stop the effusion of Christian blood and to liberate Italy from the unspeakable Lombards. We heard and reported to the most clement Emperor and to his Augusta (your most serene sister) that for this purpose you had ordered the most flourishing army of the Franks to descend into Italy.

‘Even before their arrival God gave us, in answer to your prayers, the cities of Modena, Altino and Mantua, which we won in fight and beat down their walls, hastening as we did to prevent the unspeakable ones from attacking the Franks before our arrival.

‘Then we heard that the Vir Magnificus (your general) Chedin was encamped with 2000 men near the city of Verona, and had sent an ambassador to Authari with some talk about terms of peace. That king had shut himself up in Ticinum; the other dukes and all their armies had sought the shelter of divers fortresses; we saw ourselves on the point of joining the Roman army to the 20,000 of Chedin, supporting them by our cutters on the river, besieging Ticinum and taking captive king Authari, whose capture would have been the greatest prize of victory. While we were urging Chedin to this course and anxiously consulting your dukes as to each step to be taken against God’s enemies and ours, what was our amazement to find that they, without any consultation with us, had made a ten months’ truce with the Lombards, abandoned the opportunities for booty, and marched suddenly out of the country.

If they had only had a little patience, today Italy would be found free from the hateful race, and all the wealth of the unspeakable Authari would have been brought into your treasury; for the campaign had reached such a point that the Lombards did not consider themselves safe from the Franks even behind the walls of their cities.

‘For ourselves (besides the previously mentioned successes) Parma, Rhegium and Placentia were promptly surrendered by their dukes to the Holy Roman Republic, when we marched to besiege these cities. We received their sons as hostages, returned to Ravenna, and marched into the province of Istria against our enemy Grasulf. His son, the magnificent Duke,

Gisulf, wishing to show himself a better man than his father, came with his nobles and his entire army, and submitted himself to the Holy Republic. The glorious patrician, Nordulf, having come by the favour of our Lords into Italy, gathered his men together again and in concert with the glorious Osso and his Roman army recovered several cities.

‘Now, as we know that your anger is kindled by the return of your generals, leaving their mission unaccomplished, we pray you to send speedily other generals, more worthy of your trust, who may fulfill the promises made by you and your pious ancestors. Let them come at such a time that they may find all the enemy’s harvests in the field. Tell them to inform us by what routes and at what dates we may expect them. And, above all things, we hope that when, with good luck, the Frankish army descends from the Alps, the Romans, on whose behalf we ask your aid, may not be subjected to pillage and captivity; that you will liberate those who have been already carried off into bondage; and that you will direct your generals not to bum our workshops, so that it may be clearly seen that it is a Christian nation which has come to the defence of Italy’.

There is much which, owing to our imperfect knowledge of persons and events, is obscure in these letters of the Exarch, but we can see in them quite enough of bitterness and misunderstanding to account for the failure of the coalition to accomplish its full purpose and drive the Lombards out of Italy. At the same time it is clear that the Lombards were in great danger, and that Authari had a narrow escape of being carried in chains to the Austrasian capital and visiting the court of Childebert, not as brother-in-law, but as captive. A considerable tract of country on the southern bank of the Po was recovered for the Empire; but this was won more through the disloyalty of the Lombard dukes—perhaps weary of the strict rule of Authari—than by any bravery of the Byzantine soldiers. Still, a hundred miles of the great Aemilian way had been cleared from the presence of the invader; the frontier of the Empire had been pushed up to within twenty miles of the Lombard capital, and the delusive hope of once more extending the dominions of ‘the Republic’, from the Adriatic to the Gulf of Genoa, floated before the eyes of the Imperial governor.

Before the summer of 590 was ended, Authari sent an embassy first to the king of Burgundy and then to the king of Austrasia, praying, in somewhat humble fashion, for peace and alliance with the nation of the Franks. The ambassadors were courteously received by Guntram and terms of peace between the Lombards and the Franks of Burgundy were agreed upon. They were still at the court of Childebert when they heard the unexpected tidings of their master’s death.

King Authari died at Pavia on the 5th of September, 590, being still in the prime of youthful manhood and having reigned less than seven years. His death was by some attributed to poison, but, as pestilence was ravaging Italy in that year, and he had been living for months in the unwholesome atmosphere of a blockaded city, it seems more reasonable to attribute the event to natural causes, especially as no author and no motive is suggested for the crime.

Though the last few months of Authari’s reign were clouded by adversity, it is evident that he guided the fortunes of the Lombard state with vigour and success. Some of the constitutional changes connected with his assumption of royal power, and especially with that arrangement whereby the Lombard dukes surrendered half of their territory in order to endow the new kingdom with a royal domain, are reserved for consideration in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

GREGORY THE GREAT.

‘King Authari dying: left no seed. Then all the Lombards’, says Paulus, ‘since the queen Theudelinda pleased them well, decided that she should remain queen, and that whosoever of the Lombards should be chosen by her as husband should wear the royal crown. She, therefore, taking counsel with the wise men of the realm, chose Agilulf, duke of Turin, for this double honour. For he was a strong man and a warrior and well fitted by manly beauty, as well as by courage, to grasp the helm of the kingdom.

‘Now this Agilulf (who was also called Ago) was with the rest of the Lombard nobles at Verona, when Theudelinda came thither amid the rejoicings of the people to wed her first husband, Authari. And it so happened at that time that the air was greatly disturbed, and that a certain tree in the royal garden was struck by lightning, accompanied with a mighty thunder-crash. Agilulf then, having among his servants a certain youth with a spirit of divination, who, by diabolical arts, could foretell things to come, was secretly told by him, “That woman, who has just been wedded to our king, will after no long time be thy wife”. Which, when Agilulf heard, he told the boy that he would cut off his head, if he said anything more of that matter. “I may be killed,” quoth the boy, “but it is none the less certain that woman has come into this land to be thy wife’.

‘And now behold, after the death of Authari, Theudelinda ordered Agilulf to come into her presence, and she herself hastened as far as the town of Laumellum to meet him. And when they had met, after some words spoken, she ordered wine to be brought, and after she had first drunk of it, she ordered the residue to be handed to Agilulf. Then he, receiving the cup from the queen, reverently kissed her hand; but she with a blush and a smile said, “He ought not to kiss my hand who has the right to kiss my lips”. So, raising him up to her salute, she opened to him her intentions concerning her re-marriage and the royal dignity.

‘The wedding was celebrated amid great rejoicings. Agilulf, who was a kinsman of the late King Authari, assumed the royal dignity in the beginning of the month of November (590), and afterwards in the month of May, when all the Lombards were gathered together into one place, he was solemnly raised to the kingdom at Milan’.

So runs the Saga of Theudelinda and Agilulf in the pages of Paulus. Modern criticism, which would rob history of every touch of poetry, suggests doubts as to the accuracy of the story; but there seems no reason why it should not be strictly true. Of course the tale as to the divining boy, coupled with the suspicions as to the unnatural character of Authari’s death, might easily suggest that the second marriage of Theudelinda was the climax of some dark domestic tragedy; but no contemporary writer makes this obvious suggestion, while the high and noble character of the great queen herself, and (as far as we can discern) of her second husband also, utterly negatives any such suggestion.

Let us look a little more closely at this newly-wedded pair, who are to play so important a part in the history of Lombard Italy. Agilulf, late duke of Turin, now entering on a victorious career which is to last for a quarter of a century, is of Thuringian extraction, though a relative of his predecessor, Authari. He is sprung, therefore, from the great nation settled in the centre of Germany, whose king, Hermanfrid, married Theodoric’s niece, and whose state was, about

the middle of the sixth century, swallowed up by the all-devouring Austrasian monarchy. He is a man capable in war and of manly beauty, the ideal leader of a still semi-barbarous people.

Theudelinda, daughter of the king (or duke) of the Bavarians, is descended on her father's side from the warlike nation of the Marcomanni, who so often saw the legions of Imperial Rome flee before their onset, and who, after long sojourn in the country which we now call Bohemia, entered, about the year 500, that fair and wide land which now bears their name.

But, on the mother's side, Theudelinda was descended from the old Langobardic kings, for Walderada, wife of Garibald, was daughter of Waccho, who so long ruled the nation in its Pannonian home. Undoubtedly this alliance with the old family of the Lithingi, together with the fame of Theudelinda's beauty and accomplishments, was a powerful motive with Authari when he sought her hand in marriage, and the same remembrance made the chiefs of the proud Lombard nation willing to leave the decision as to the choice of their king in the hands of one who, though foreign-born, was not a stranger in blood.

And in fact Theudelinda is a central figure in the history of the Lombards. As I have said, she reached back through her mother's ancestry to the old barbarous Langobardic kings. She virtually established a new, a Bavarian dynasty in Italy, her descendants and those of her brother, the exiled Gundwald, occupying the Lombard throne with little intermission to the fifth generation. And lastly, she was the main agent in that great change of creed which at last brought the Lombard nation into line with the other Teutonic monarchies of Western Europe, and made it possible—though even then not easy—to establish a *modus vivendi* between the Lombard kings and the successors of St. Peter.

Looking to her later history, we can hardly doubt that so fervent a Catholic as Theudelinda sought to use her influence, even with her first husband, to mitigate the bitterness of his Arianism. But the time was too short for her to accomplish anything noteworthy, and so late as the spring of 590 we find Authari putting forth an edict whereby he forbade the sons of the Lombards to be baptized at Easter according to the Catholic rite. For this act of oppression Pope Gregory saw a righteous retribution in the sudden death which prevented Authari himself from witnessing the celebration of another Easter. Over Agilulf, however, the man whom she had herself exalted to the throne, Theudelinda exercised a more potent influence; and though it cannot be positively stated that he ever formally renounced the creed of his forefathers, he cultivated the friendship of the rulers of the Catholic Church, and seems to have witnessed with complacency the baptism of Theudelinda's son by an adherent of the Creed of Nicaea.

In this great change Theudelinda was powerfully aided by the man who was placed in the chair of St. Peter, about the same time when Agilulf saluted his queenly bride at Lomello; a man who more than all other pontiffs who have received that title merited the epithet of the Great.

Gregory was born, about the year 540, of a noble Roman family, which had already given one Pope to the Church, and many Senators to the State. His father, Gordianus, a tall, grave-visaged Roman noble-man, who lived in a stately palace on the Coelian Hill, held the post of *Regionarius*, a civil office which seems to have represented the secular side of the duties of the seven deacons, each one of whom administered the vast charities of the Roman Church in one of the seven regions into which, for ecclesiastical purposes, the City was divided.

Three of Gregory's aunts on one and the same day embraced with enthusiasm the conventual life, now made illustrious by the fame of Benedict and Scholastica: and though one of them, Gordiana, fell away from that early fervour of faith, returned into the world, and even married her steward, the other two, Aemiliana and Tharsilla, persevered, and died in early life worn out by their pious austerities.

Gregory himself received a good education in Latin literature—the Greek language he never mastered—and apparently had sufficient acquaintance with the ordinary course of

instruction pursued by the teachers of rhetoric to despise and avoid their frivolous pedantry. We hear, however, very little about his youth or early manhood, until we find him, about the year 573, filling the high office of Prefect of the City.

The dignity of this office, which brought with it presidency of the Senate, the right to wear a robe of Imperial purple and to be drawn through the streets of Rome in a four-horsed chariot, has been described in an earlier volume of this history. We have also, in following the fortunes of Sidonius and Cassiodorus, had a glimpse of the anxious responsibilities, especially in respect to the food-supplies of the City, which almost outweighed even its dignity. It is probable that when Gregory held the office its duties were lighter and its splendour less than half a century earlier. The Lombards had now been for some years in Italy, and we can perceive that, in presence of this continued danger, there was a tendency in the Imperial government to circumscribe the powers of the merely civil magistrates, and to concentrate all authority in the hands of the military chiefs. But there can be no doubt that the Prefect of the City was still an important personage, and great therefore must have been the marvelling of the populace in the Forum when, one day, the news was spread abroad that the Prefect of the City was about to lay aside his silken robe, decked with jewels, to don the coarse sackcloth of the monk, and to minister as a pauper to his pauper brethren. This, however, was the truth. Gregory laid down his high office (perhaps at the expiration of his usual term), founded and endowed six Benedictine convents in Sicily (then from various causes the especial asylum and Paradise of the Church), and divided all the residue of his property among the poor, except one possession, the ancestral palace on the Coelian Mount. This abode he turned into a monastery, which he dedicated to St. Andrew, and into this new monastery the descendant of so many Senators entered in mean attire, not as its abbot, but as the humblest of its brethren.

It was apparently in the year 575 that this great change occurred in the life of Gregory. For the next three years he remained in the monastery, enjoying its deep repose and practising its austerities. His food consisted chiefly of uncooked vegetables, which his mother supplied to him on a silver dish, sole relic of the former splendours of the Coelian palace. This silver dish itself was at last given away to one who bore the appearance of a shipwrecked mariner, and who came for three days in succession, asking for alms. A student of these monastic biographies already knows the sequel. Long afterwards the self-styled shipwrecked mariner appeared again as a glorious angel, and told his benefactor that for him was reserved the honour of sitting in the chair of St. Peter and guiding the Church of God.

Of more interest for us, sons of the Saxons, than the conventional stories of the faintings, the fastings, and the macerations of the body, which, notwithstanding the wise caution of St. Benedict, still filled too large a place in the life of a young and earnest monk, is the story (too well known to need more than an allusion here) of the incident which first kindled Gregory's missionary zeal on behalf of the island of Britain. It was during his residence as a monk in the monastery of St. Andrew that Gregory took that memorable walk through the Forum, in the course of which he saw, exposed for sale, the fair-haired and fresh-faced Yorkshire lads, whose angelic beauty suggested to him the mission to the Angles and the hope of rescuing from the wrath to come the heathen inhabitants of Deira, and teaching the subjects of King Aelle to sing Alleluia.

Gregory himself sought and obtained from Pope Benedict I leave to undertake this great mission, and had already accomplished three days' journey towards Britain when, during the noonday halt, a grasshopper lighted on the page of the scriptures which he was reading. His mind at this time, perhaps throughout his life, seems to have been singularly attuned to that pleasant figure of speech which has been so often an 'infirmity of noble minds,' and which grammarians term *paronomasia*. 'Ecce Locusta!' said he. 'Does this mean "*Loco sta*" ("Abide still in the place where thou art")? Know ye, my companions, that we shall not be suffered to

proceed on our journey'. And even while they were talking, before the hot and tired mules were saddled for the next stage of the journey, messengers arrived who told them that the Pope had withdrawn his permission, and commanded Gregory to return. For the people of Rome, who perhaps thought that Benedict had seen without regret the departure of a man whose sanctity overshadowed his own, gathered round the Papal palace, and shouted with terrible voices, 'Ah, Apostolic one! what hast thou done? Thou hast offended Peter; thou hast destroyed Rome in suffering Gregory to depart'.

Thus then Gregory returned to the great City, but not to his convent: for Pope Benedict, whose attention had perhaps, by this very event of his attempted flight and recall, been attracted to the great power and Deacon.' popularity of the former Prefect, now appointed him to the office of 'Seventh Deacon': thus associating him with his own cares and labours. The seven deacons of Rome, as has been already said, superintended—each one with the assistance of a *Regionarius* and his staff—the distribution of the alms of the Church to the poorer classes of the seven regions of the city. The cares of the public 'annona', which had formerly devolved on the Imperial officers, and preeminently on the Prefect of the City, were thus, in great part, if not altogether, now discharged by the officers of the Church. We are not able exactly to state what is meant by the expression 'Seventh Deacon,' but if, as seems probable, it means the Archdeacon, that office was already looked upon as a frequent stepping-stone to the Papacy.

Soon, apparently, after Benedict I had thus called Gregory to his side, his own pontificate was ended by his death. The choice of a successor fell not, as yet, upon Gregory but upon Pelagius II, some of whose letters against the Lombards were quoted in the last chapter. It may have been partly some jealousy of the popularity of Gregory, but more probably a praiseworthy desire to employ his great practical ability on behalf of the Church in a sphere where all that ability was sorely needed, that led the new Pope to send Gregory as his Nuncio, or (as it was then called) his Apocrisarius to the Imperial court of Constantinople.

The years, probably not more than six in number, during which Gregory remained at Constantinople were important both for the Empire and the Church. He heard a new Emperor proclaimed, and saw a new Patriarch consecrated. On the 14th of August, 582, the over-generous Emperor Tiberius was succeeded by the unconciliatory Maurice; and four months previously the aged Eutychius had been succeeded as bishop of Constantinople by the aspiring John the Faster, a man with whom Gregory was one day to wage a long and difficult spiritual combat. With Eutychius his personal relations appear to have been friendly, but with him too he had a sharp discussion, turning on the mysterious question of the resurrection-body of the saints. Eutychius maintained that this body will be more subtle than aether, and too rare to be perceived by our present bodily senses. Gregory met him with the words of Christ, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have". Eutychius answered that this was a body specially assumed by the Saviour in order to reassure the doubting hearts of his disciples; a suggestion which Gregory met by some obvious arguments against such a Docetic resurrection. Eutychius quoted, 'Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God', and Gregory replied by distinguishing between two different senses of the word 'flesh' in the New Testament. The debate grew warm, and, as such discussions are wont to do, left neither party convinced by the arguments of the other. The good Tiberius visited each of the disputants separately, and tried in vain to reconcile them; but, convinced himself by the arguments of Gregory, committed the treatise of Eutychius to the flames. Ere any open breach had been caused, both the Patriarch and the Nuncio fell sick. Gregory, though his health had been thoroughly broken by his monastic austerities, recovered of this malady, a sharp attack of fever; but Eutychius, who had the burden of seventy years upon him, died of his sickness. On his death-bed he touched his skin, and said to the friends who surrounded him, 'I acknowledge

that in this flesh I shall see God'; an allusion to the celebrated passage in Job, which was accepted by Gregory as a recantation of his former errors.

It was on this same book of Job that Gregory, in the intervals of his busy diplomatic life at Constantinople, found leisure to write the voluminous commentary which goes by the name of the *Magna Moralia*, that marvellous treatise the object of which was to show that 'the book of Job comprehended in itself all natural, all Christian theology, and all morals. It was at once a true and wonderful history, an allegory containing in its secret sense the whole theory of the Christian Church and Christian sacraments, and a moral philosophy applicable to all mankind.

For our present purpose it is not the religious but the political results of Gregory's residence at Constantinople which are most important. Though I am not aware that he ever gave utterance to the feeling, we can well believe that a Roman noble, one who had seen from his childhood the triumphal arches, the *fora* and the palaces of Rome, glorious even in their desolation, viewed with some impatience the pinchbeck splendours of the new Rome by the Bosphorus, already, it is true, near three centuries old, but still marked with somewhat of the ineffaceable brand of a *parvenu* among cities.

Gregory made some warm friendships with members of the Imperial family and household. Constantina, the wife, and Theoctista, the sister, of the Emperor; his imperial cousin Domitian, Metropolitan of Armenia; Theodore, the Imperial physician; Narses, a general who not only bore the name, but in some degree shared the fame, of the mightier Narses of a previous generation; these and some others were admitted into the innermost circle of the friends of the Roman Apocrisiarius. But with Maurice himself, though that Emperor paid him the compliment of asking him to stand sponsor for his son, the infant Theodosius, it would seem that his relations were not cordial. We can imagine that the Emperor was worried by repeated applications from Rome for help in men and money against the Lombards; applications with which he felt himself unable to comply. We can imagine also that Gregory, in whose eyes 'Roma caput mundi' was the one absolutely priceless jewel of the Empire, was irritated by seeing the resources of the State muddled away, as he deemed it, in somewhat inglorious campaigns against the Persians and the Avars. With his undoubted genius for affairs, he probably despised the wordy inefficiency of the Greek statesmen; with his old Roman pride he scorned the Byzantine servility. Whatever the cause may have been, and though undoubtedly his residence at Constantinople largely increased his knowledge of the great game of politics, and was an invaluable preparation for his own future political career, it seems clear that he left the Thracian capital with no great love in his heart either for the city or the Caesar. After he became Pope he was still outwardly the loyal subject of the Emperor, but 'the little rift within the lute' was already beginning to mar the harmony of their relations. We seem able to trace here that little crack in the earth which, two centuries later, was to widen into a mighty chasm, separating the successor of St. Peter from the successor of Divus Augustus.

It was probably in 585 or 586 that Gregory returned to Rome, and re-entered the monastery of St. Andrew; not now as a humble monk, but as head of the community. We hear scarcely anything of his life during these years of his second residence in the convent (585-590), except that, during this time, his pen seems to have been put at the service of the Pope, in the interminable controversy with the bishops of Istria, about the condemnation of the Three Chapters. We are also told that he inflicted signal punishment on one of his monks who had sinned against the monastic rule that all things were to be in common. This monk, Justus by name, had some knowledge of the art of a physician, and had in that capacity tended Gregory himself in his frequent illnesses. But he had, apparently by the exercise of his profession, earned three golden solidi, which, against the rule of his order, he kept secreted in his medicine chest. He was attacked by a mortal disease, and his brother Copiosus, a physician outside the monastery, who tended him in his sickness, discovered his secret and reported it to the Abbot.

All beside Copiosus were ordered to absent themselves from the sick man's cell. He died almost alone, with the brand of ignominy upon him, in deep penitence for his sin. At his burial his body was laid in unhallowed earth, and a monk threw the three solidi after him into his grave, crying with a loud voice, 'Thy money perish with thee'. But after thirty days the heart of Abbot Gregory relented, and he ordered mass to be said without intermission during thirty days more for the soul of Justus, who at the end of the appointed time appeared in a dream to Copiosus, his countenance radiant with joy, and assured him that hell's torment was ended and that he was now received into the communion of the blessed.

In such cares as these passed away the years of Gregory's abbotship. In 589 came the terrible inundations, at the beginning of 590 the more terrible pestilence which ravaged Italy. On the eighth of February Pope Pelagius II died; the clergy and people of Rome flocked to the gate of the monastery of St. Andrew and insisted that Gregory should fill the vacant chair.

He resisted and wrote a letter to the Emperor Maurice, imploring him to withhold that Imperial assent which in those days was deemed necessary ere the Pope elected by the people and clergy could receive consecration. But the Prefect of the City, who was himself, according to one account, a brother of the Pontiff elect sent a swift messenger, who overtook the bearer of Gregory's letter, suppressed that document, and substituted for it the earnest petition of the people that Gregory should be made Pope.

The answer from the Imperial court was long in arriving, and meanwhile the pestilence raged fearfully in the City. The eyes of all the citizens were turned towards the Abbot of St. Andrew's, who came forth from his seclusion, and, like another John the Baptist, preached a sermon of repentance and conversion to the people.

'The judgments of God are upon us, dearest on the brethren. Let grief and fear open the path of pestilence. Our hearts, for it is indeed with us as the prophet Jeremiah said of old, "The sword reacheth unto the very soul." Lo! the whole people is smitten with the sword of the divine anger and a sudden mortality lays waste the city. The languor of disease does not precede death, for death itself cuts short all its lingering pains. Each one who is struck down is hurried off before he has had time to turn to repentance. The dwellers in the city are not cut off one by one, but in whole companies do they hurry to the grave. The houses are left empty: parents have to behold the funerals of their sons, and their own heirs die before them.

'Let us then turn to Him who hath said that He willeth not the death of a sinner. Let us imitate the three days' penitence of the men of Nineveh and beseech our merciful God to turn away His anger from us. Therefore, dearest brethren, let us come, with contrite hearts and pure hands and minds prepared for tears, to the Sevenfold Litany, to which I now invite you, and the celebration of which will begin at dawn on the fourth day of the week, according to the following order.'

Then followed the programme of the great procession, which gives us an interesting glimpse of the 'regions' and churches of Rome at the close of the sixth century:—

(1) In the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian (in the Roman Forum) were to assemble the great body of the clergy, with the priests of the sixth region.

(2) The abbots and monks of Rome with the priests of the fourth region, in the church of SS. Gervasius and Protasius, on the southern slope of the Quirinal.

(3) The abbesses and their nuns with the priests of the first region, in the church of SS. Marcellinus and Peter, two miles out of Rome on the eastward leading Via Labicana.

(4) All the children, with the priests of the second region, in the church of the martyrs John and Paul, on the Coelian Hill, very near to Gregory's own monastery.

(5) All the laymen, with the priests of the seventh region, in the church of the Protomartyr Stephen, that quaint round building which, with its strange and ghastly modern frescoes representing the torments of the martyrs, still stands, a little to the west of the Lateran.

(6) All the widows, with the priests of the fifth region, in the church of St. Euphemia.

(7) All the married women, with the priests of the third region, in the church of the holy martyr Clement, that church between the Colosseum and the Lateran, the successive stages of whose development have been recently laid bare and form one of the most interesting monuments of Christian antiquity in Rome.

From their several places of assembly these seven troops of suppliants were to march in solemn procession, with prayers and tears, to the great basilica on the Esquiline, now known as S. Maria Maggiore, and there for three days in succession (Wednesday to Friday) were to implore the pardon of the Lord for the sins of the people.

The assembling took place at dawn, the march through the streets at the third hour of the day, and all as they went sang loud the great penitential hymn *Kyrie Eleison*. A deacon of Tours, who was present at the ceremony, informed his bishop (the chronicler) that in one hour, while the procession was moving through the streets, eighty men fell to the earth and gave up the ghost; a proof of the severity of the pestilence, but also an event which raises a doubt whether the great concourse, and the excitement of soul caused by the Sevenfold Litany, were the best means of staying its ravages.

With this solemn act of intercession ordered by the chosen of the people, the imagination of much later ages coupled a beautiful legend, which changed the name of one of the best-known monuments of ancient Rome. In the course of the three days' procession, so it was said, Gregory was about to march with the seven groups of chanting penitents over the bridge of Hadrian, in order to worship at the tomb of St. Peter, when, lifting up his eyes, he saw standing on the top of the mighty Mausoleum of Hadrian the Archangel Michael with a flaming sword, which was in the act of returning to its sheath; thereby showing that the penitential Litany was accepted in Heaven, and that the pestilence was about to cease.

From this story the Mausoleum received the name of the Angel's Castle, which it bore already in the tenth century. In later days Pope Benedict XIV fixed the legend for ever in the memories of all pilgrims to Rome, by erecting that statue of St. Michael which has now stood for a century and a half on the summit of 'The Castle of Sant' Angelo.

It seems that seven months elapsed before the Imperial assent to the consecration of the new Pope arrived in Rome. Possibly the wretched state of the City and Of Italy, distracted both by pestilence and by the ravages of the Lombards, caused delays to the messengers, alike in going and returning. But the assent came at length; probably about the end of August: and Gregory began to prepare for flight, in order to avert the dreaded honour. Legend said that he was carried forth from one of the City gates in a basket of merchandise, and that he hid himself in some solitude of the Campagna, but that his hiding-place was revealed by a light from heaven. His contemporary and namesake, Gregory of Tours, knows nothing of all this. He says simply—and this is no doubt the true account of the matter—that 'while he was preparing for flight and concealment, he was taken prisoner, dragged to the basilica of St. Peter, and having there been consecrated to the Pontifical office, was given as a Pope to the City'.

The letters of Gregory I, for some time after his elevation to the Papacy, are full of lamentations over this disastrous change in his life. 'It is an old and terribly shaken ship,' he writes to the Patriarch of Constantinople, 'the command whereof has been entrusted to my weak and unworthy hands. At every seam the waves are entering, and the rotten planks, shaken by daily and fierce tempests, creak out the word "shipwreck." I pray you, in the Almighty's name, stretch out the hand of your prayers to help me'.

To Theoctista, sister of the Emperor, he writes: 'Under the colourable pretext of bishopric, I am in truth brought back into secular life; for in this office I am in bondage to so many worldly cares, that in no part of my career as a layman can I remember to have been in equal slavery. I have lost the deep joys of my old quietness, and while I seem to have risen into

a higher station, internally I am in a state of collapse. Thus must I bewail that I am driven far from the face of my Creator. I was endeavoring each day to put myself outside of the world, outside of the flesh, to banish all the phantasms of the body from the eyes of the mind, and to look with disembodied gaze on the joys of heaven. Not in words only, but in my inmost soul did I pant for the countenance of God, saying with the Psalmist, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek". Naught desiring in this world, naught fearing, I seemed to myself to stand, as it were, at the summit of all things, so that I could almost believe that in me was fulfilled the Lord's promise to His prophet, "I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth". Then suddenly, being caught by the whirlwind of temptation, I have been dashed down from this high pinnacle, and plunged into all sorts of fears and terrors, since, though I have no fear for myself, for those committed to my charge I do greatly tremble.'

Then the Pope goes on, in that vein of mystical commentary which was the fashion of the age, to explain that a contemplative life was the Rachel of his tenderest affections, barren, it might be, of visible result, but lovely beyond telling in his eyes. Homely, blear-eyed Leah, the life of activity and affairs, was doubtless more fruitful in offspring, but she possessed none of his love. Yet now that the veil of night was removed, it was to this bride, unlovely and unloved, that he found himself hopelessly united.

After many more reflections of this kind, he ends a long and interesting letter with a grotesque piece of self-disparagement. 'Behold! the most serene Emperor has ordered an ape to become a lion. A lion indeed it may be called at the Imperial command, but a lion it cannot become'.

In reading these many similar utterances of the greatest Pope who ever sat in the chair of St. Peter, we are forced to ask ourselves, 'Is this passionate reiteration of the formula *Nolo episcopari* quite sincere? Gregory could not but know and feel that he had capacities for the great office of the Popedom, such as no other man then living upon the earth possessed. He belonged to the Imperial race of Rome, and showed forth its noblest qualities, as scarce any Roman had done since Trajan died. Is it possible that he was wholly indifferent to the master-passion of his countrymen, Ambition? Must we not rather believe that even in the days of his Prefecture he had perceived that the office of Pope was the only one which brought with it real power, or which was worthy of a Roman's acceptance? And the successive stages of 'the Great Renunciation' which followed, the laying aside of the purple robe, the conversion of the paternal palace into a monastery, the fastings, the austerities, the self-humiliations,—were they not all parts of a subtle and unavowed canvass for that splendid prize?

As in the cases of Mohammed, of Savonarola, and of Cromwell, this easy hypothesis of conscious hypocrisy seems to me to be a quite inadequate solution of the problem. Rather is the solution to be found in a frank recognition of that dual nature which many men who have played a great part on the stage of the world have evidently possessed. There were two men, not one, within the visible enwrapping of this great Aristocrat Bishop. One man, seeing keenly the follies and vanities of the world, longing after the joys of Heaven, disliking the petty routine of daily business, and cherishing ardent aspirations after that clear vision of the Most High which was thought to be the peculiar guerdon of a life of contemplation :—this man was happy in the cloisters of the Coelian, and had no desire to quit their grateful shade. Another man, inhabiting the same fleshly tabernacle, and thinking through the same brain, saw, as has been said, that none of the offices of the effete and decaying Empire, neither Exarchate, Prefecture, nor Duchy, was, for real power over the wills and inclinations of men, to be compared with the Bishopric of Rome. He saw that the holder of this office had an opportunity of conferring incalculable benefits on powerful races and vast kingdoms of men, and of winning for the half-ruined city by the Tiber a wider and more enduring empire than had been swayed by Titus or by Aurelius. This man, full of a noble ambition, longed to be Pope, and

was, perhaps, dimly conscious that the austerities, the generousities, the humiliations of his other self were all bringing him nearer to that splendid goal. But when the goal was reached, satiety began to reign in his soul, and to poison all the joys of possession. Though the strong and vigorous intellect at once set itself to grapple with the difficulties of the situation and overcame them with brilliant success, the body, enfeebled by monastic austerities and tortured by gout, longed for the ordered life and the inviolable repose of the cloister; and the soul, weary of the sordid cares of the administration of the vast Papal Patrimony, yearned for the mystic joys and the serene contemplative happiness which had once been hers. In short, to use his own metaphor, the man was truly wedded to two wives. The Rachel of ascetic holiness was his best beloved, but the Leah of practical beneficence had also a share of his affections, and it was through her progeny, through such facts as the conversion of England, the remodelling of the liturgy, the spiritual conquest of the Lombards, that Gregory most powerfully influenced the world.

The chief monument of Gregory's life of practical statesmanship is the *Epistles*, composed by him during the fourteen years of his pontificate, arranged in fourteen books corresponding to those years, and filling nearly 500 closely printed pages. Though the writer despised all rhetorical artifices, and even allowed himself to speak disrespectfully of the rules of the grammarians, he wrote in a vigorous style, and his generally correct, if not polished, Latinity was utterly unlike the grammatical chaos which we find in the writings of his namesake of Tours. It is probably the very fact that he did not care to write rhetorically, which makes his letters so much pleasanter reading than the prolixities of Cassiodorus or the pompous obscurities of Ennodius. He does not, like the scholars of the Renaissance period, labour to give all his sentences a hexameter ending, but they are often instinct with manly and simple eloquence. Thus there is in them no affected imitation of Cicero, but often a true echo of Caesar.

These fourteen books of the *Epistles* of Gregory are a vast quarry, out of which the student of early mediaeval history may hew almost endless material. While the letters of the heathen Prefect, Symmachus, give us little beside hollow compliments and literary inanities, almost every letter of Gregory affords some information as to the politics, the morals, or the economics of his age. In this respect it would be hardly too much to say that *Gregorii Epistolae* are only surpassed, and not far surpassed, by the two great Codes of Theodosius and Justinian. It is of course impossible in a single chapter of this book to give any proper idea of a correspondence, for an adequate description of which two volumes like the present would not more than suffice; but a few samples culled almost at random throughout the mighty collection may give some faint idea of the world-wide activity of the Second Founder of the Papacy.

If not the most anxious of the new Pope's duties, of one of the most troublesome to a man who had any longings after contemplative repose, must have been the care of the vast estates which went by the name of the Patrimony of St. Peter. These estates, the proofs of the liberality of the faithful during four or five centuries, had probably been much increased during the last two hundred years by the financial burdens and military perils to which the landowners in outlying districts found themselves exposed. When the demands of the Imperial tax-gatherer were trenching more and more closely on the narrow margin of profit left to the owner of the soil; when the barbarian henchmen of Alaric or Alboin were burning the villas and liberating the slaves in Picenum or Campania, the pleasures of possession began to be outweighed by its anxieties, and the devout landowner felt a strong inducement to make over his threatened domains to the Church and to save his soul by retirement into a monastery, or his body by flight to Constantinople. Notwithstanding all the troubles of the times, the Church had armour of defence both against the tax-gatherer and the barbarian, such as no lay proprietor possessed,

and we may well believe that of all the real estate thus surrendered to the Bishops of Rome, they succeeded in retaining by far the largest portion.

The Patrimony of St. Peter (we may well marvel what would have been the feelings of the simple-hearted fisherman of Bethsaida, could he have surveyed the lordly lands which were said to be his inheritance) was largest and richest in the island of Sicily; but it also embraced considerable estates in Rome and its environs, in the country of the Sabines, in Picenum, in the neighbourhood of Ravenna, in Campania, Apulia and Bruttii, in Gaul and Illyricum, and in the islands of Sardinia and Corsica. The precise extent of all these widely scattered possessions can only be approximately stated, but a careful German enquirer¹ estimates it at 1800 square miles. These wide domains, it must be remembered, were not ruled, but owned, as an English nobleman owns his estate, and the revenue accruing therefrom is calculated at £300,000 a year.

The care of this magnificent property, though administered by able and generally by conscientious stewards, was evidently a heavy burden on the shoulders of an ascetic Pope, to whom great revenues and large estates could, in themselves, bring no pleasure.

In the first eighteen months of his pontificate Gregory wrote fourteen letters (some of them extremely long ones, touching on a great variety of topics) to the subdeacon Peter, the steward whom he had set over the Apostolic Patrimony in Sicily, in succession, but not in immediate succession, to a layman, Antoninus the *defensor*. Antoninus, it seems, had in several instances pushed the claims of the Roman Church both against its neighbours and its serfs (*coloni*) beyond what justice and humanity warranted. The new Pope shows in his letters a praiseworthy anxiety that all these wrongs shall be redressed by his representative. Peter, however, as far as we can judge from the letters addressed to him, though an honest man and a personal friend of Gregory's, seems to have been somewhat weak, forgetful and procrastinating. A few passages selected from the fourteen letters just mentioned will help the reader to imagine their general tenour.

'It has come to my ears that during the past ten years, from the times of Antoninus the *defensor*, many persons have suffered violence and wrong at the hands of the Roman Church, and that men openly complain that their borders have been invaded, their slaves enticed away, their moveable property taken from them by the strong hand with no pretence of judicial process. Pray, in all these things, let your Experience exercise the most strenuous vigilance, and let this letter be your warrant for the restoration of whatever you may find to have been violently taken away or wrongfully detained in the Church's name during these ten years: that he who has suffered wrong may not be forced to come to us, undertaking the toil of so long a journey, when, after all, the truth of his story cannot be so well tested here as there. Considering, then, the awfulness of the coming Judgment, restore all things that have been sinfully taken away, being assured that you will bring me in a more profitable return if you accumulate the reward of a good conscience than if you bring back great riches.

'We are informed also that many complain of the loss of slaves, saying that any runaway slave who professes himself to be under ecclesiastical law is at once claimed and kept by the Church's bailiffs (*rectores*), who, without any judicial decision in their favour, back up the slave's assertions by violence. All this displeases me as much as it is abhorrent to the spirit of justice and truth. Wherefore I desire that your Experience should shake off all sloth and correct all misdeeds of this kind which you may discover. Let any slaves now in the Church's power, who were taken away without a judge's order, be restored before any proceedings are taken; and if any such do lawfully belong to the Holy Church, let the right to them be asserted against their alleged owners in a regular and orderly action.

'Amend all these abuses with firmness, for you will thus approve yourself a true soldier of the blessed Apostle Peter, if in causes where he is concerned, you do anxiously maintain truth, without suspicion of partiality even towards Peter himself. But if, on the other hand, you

see some piece of property which you think justly belongs to the Church, beware of defending our right even to this with the strong hand; especially since we have published a decree, forbidding, under the penalty of our anathema, the affixing of notices of claim to any property, either urban or rural, by our Church. Whatever reasonably belongs to the poor ought to be defended by reason, lest otherwise our unrighteous action in a good cause should make even our just claims seem unjust in the sight of Almighty God. May the noble laymen and the glorious Praetor love you for your humility and not abhor you for your pride. So act that your humility may not make you slack, nor your authority rigid; but that the righteousness of your purpose may give a seasoning to your humility, and your humility may impart mildness even to your righteousness'.

In another letter, Gregory says that he has been informed that the monks of a city in the south of Italy dispersed by barbaric violence (probably some raid made by the Lombards of the Duchy of Benevento), are wandering over Sicily without a ruler, without any care as to the health of their souls, without the habit of their order. These vagabond monks are all to be collected into the monastery of St. Theodore at Messina, and there placed under proper discipline.

In another long and extremely interesting, but difficult letter, Gregory describes the various unjust exactions to which the peasants on the farms of the Sicilian Patrimony had been subjected, and orders the immediate reformation of these abuses. These peasants (called *rustici Ecdesiae*) had to pay a corn-rent to the Church, that is the equivalent in golden *solidi* of a certain number of pecks of corn; and Gregory enjoins that they shall not have the value of the peck oppressively beaten down in times of plenty. Thus, if there were a bountiful harvest, the Church under Gregory's liberal management of her estates would leave to her tenants the whole of the profit which the favourable year had brought them. It would certainly seem, however, as if an unvarying price fixed for the *modius* must have borne hardly upon the rustic in years of scarcity.

The iniquitous oppressions of the farmers of the ecclesiastical revenue, some of whom insisted on the peasants supplying 25 *sextarii* to the *modius* instead of the normal 16, were rigorously suppressed, a margin of 2 *sextarii* only (or 18 to the *modius*) being left to allow for shrinkage or short measurement. The unjust weights which, according to the report of a previous administrator, were found to be in use in some parts of the Patrimony, were to be at once broken, and new and righteous weights made in their stead. To prevent the recurrence of any similar exactions after Pope Gregory's death, each tenant was to receive a document called his *libellus securitatis*, in which the exact sum that might be legally claimed from him was to be clearly set forth.

Besides these and many other ordinances of a general kind for the regulation of the estate, a great number of cases of individual hardship were dealt with in this letter, which gave orders for their relief.

Both Antoninus the *defensor*, and a certain Theodosius (who was perhaps a subordinate in the Patrimonial Estate-office), seem to have died in debt to the Church. The legacies left by Antoninus were to be in part discharged by Peter out of his sequestered property. From the goods of Theodosius a return was to be made to the unfortunate peasants who had been forced to pay their taxes to the Imperial government twice over, Theodosius having collected the money from them and then made default in his payments to the treasury. 'If, after repayment of the sum required for this purpose, amounting to 507 *solidi* [£304], there are still left, as you reckon, 40 *solidi* [£24], they may be handed over to the daughter of Theodosius, that she may redeem her property which is in pawn. And we wish also that her father's drinking-cup be restored to her.'

Almost every word of this long and carefully-written letter, of some forty paragraphs, is in favour of a wise and generous liberality towards the tenants, the servants and the debtors of St. Peter. Yet that the Pope could, on occasion, use sharpness is clearly seen, not only by the command, twice or thrice repeated, 'Lay aside all sluggishness,' and fulfill this or that commission, but also by the following caustic paragraph about an order which Gregory had given with reference to a member of his own family, and which Peter had apparently forgotten :—

'We must express our great thanks to your Anxiety, since I desired, in respect to my brother's affairs, that you should retransmit his money [hither], which injunction you have treated with as complete forgetfulness as if it had proceeded from the meanest of your slaves. Now then, let—I will not say your Experience, but—your Negligence set about obeying my commands. Anything of his which you may find to have been lodged with Antoninus, retransmit [hither] with all speed.'

At last the long letter, the fruit probably of many days of toil, ends thus:

'Carefully read over all these commands and lay aside that too fondly indulged habit of negligence. Cause my writings which I have addressed to the rustics to be read to them on every farm; that they may know how they ought to defend themselves by our authority against the violence of their superiors, and let authentic copies be given to every one of them. See that you keep all these precepts in their integrity, for I, who write them for the preservation of justice, am thereby freed from responsibility, and you, if you neglect my words, remain bound. Consider the terrible Judge who is coming, and let that consideration cause you to tremble now before His Advent, lest you should then fear, and have no plea to urge in your behalf, when before His presence Heaven and Earth shall tremble. You have heard what I wish: see that you perform it'.

In other letters of this series Gregory gives orders that the son of a certain Godischalcus being blind and poor, shall receive annually 24 pecks of wheat, 12 pecks of beans, and 20 *decimatae* (?) of wine, at the charge of the Patrimony: while Pastor, a man apparently of somewhat higher rank, formerly on the staff of the Magister Militum, who is also afflicted with blindness, having a wife and two servants, is to receive annually 300 pecks of wheat and 300 of beans out of the same revenues.

Joanna, the wife of Cyriacus, a woman who was converted from Judaism to Christianity after her betrothal, has been subjected to some annoyance in the courts of law, probably by her Jewish relatives, from whom she is to be protected in future. The possessions of the Church of Tauromenium (beautiful Taormina), which border on the Patrimony of St. Peter, are said to have been unjustly invaded by the bailiffs of the Roman Church, and it is ordered that these wrongs shall be redressed.

The correspondence closes with another long letter, the receipt of which, we may be sure, caused some bitter heart-stabs to the procrastinating sub-deacon. After directing that the Jewish tenants on the Church's farms, if they are willing to become Christians, shall receive some mitigation of their pecuniary burdens, the Pope passes on to ordinary landlord's business: 'Let the cows that are too old to calve, and the bulls which appear to be useless, be sold, so that at least their price may serve some good purpose. I wish all those herds of horses which we keep in very useless style, to be disposed of, and only 400 of the younger mares to be kept for breeding. Of these, one is to be sent to the tenant of each farm, who is each year to make some return on its behalf, for it is a very hard thing that we should be paying 60 *solidi* [£36] a year to our stud-grooms, and not receiving 60 denarii [£2 10s.] from our stud.'

Towards the end of the letter, the Pope says, 'You have moreover sent us one wretched horse and five good asses. The horse I cannot ride, because it is a wretch, nor the asses, good as

they are, because they are asses. I pray you, if you are disposed to serve me, to bring with you something worthy of my acceptance.'

The reason why the Pope tells Peter to bring the horse with him is because he has already, in an earlier part of the letter, summoned him to Rome. Gregory himself is sick, but he desires the sub-deacon to come to him with all speed before St. Cyprian's day, that he may escape the equinoctial storms. He wishes to consult with Peter whether it will be better that he should return to Sicily or that some one else shall be appointed in his place. Several sentences reveal the Pontiff's deep dissatisfaction with his subordinate.

'If you have an atom of sense, you will be able to arrange this matter so as to perform my will without displeasing the bishop of Syracuse. I wrote to you to pay the legacies of Antoninus. I cannot think why your Experience has delayed the execution of my orders. I desire you to attend to these payments at once, that you may not, when you come to visit me, leave behind you the groans of the poor.'

'Abbot Martinianus tells me that the storehouse in the Praetoritan monastery is not yet half finished. Wherefore, what can I do but praise the zeal of your Experience? Even now, being thus warned, rouse yourself and show what you can do towards the construction of that monastery.'

'I am further informed that you have ascertained that some [moveable] things and many farms [in our possession] belong of right to other owners, but that, owing to the entreaties of certain persons or your fear of them, you hesitate to restore these things to their lawful owners. But if you were truly a Christian, you would fear the judgment of God more than the voices of men. Give your mind to this business, about which I have incessantly warned you. If you fail to fulfill it, my words will rise up as witnesses against you at the last day.'

Such being the mood of mind to which eighteen months of Peter's administration had brought his master, it is not surprising that his official career soon came to an end. The letter from which these extracts have been taken, virtually contained his dismissal, and we have no more epistles of Gregory addressed to Peter the sub-deacon of Sicily.

Of course, not only the receipt, but also the expenditure, of the large income derived from the Papal Patrimony imposed severe labour on so conscientious a steward of his wealth as Pope Gregory. Hints of his discriminating liberality to the poor have reached us in the few letters already quoted. The description of his public benefactions given by Joannes Diaconus, though written nearly three centuries after his death, seems vouched for in a way that entitles it to credit:—

'He turned into money the revenues of all the *patrimonia* and farms, according to the ledger of [Pope] Gelasius, of whom he seems to have been a most studious follower: and then, having collected all the officials of the Church, the palace, the monasteries, the lesser churches, the cemeteries, the deaconries, the reception-houses for strangers, in the city and suburbs, he decided from the ledger (in accordance with which, distribution is still made) how many solidi, out of the above-named receipts in gold and silver, should be given to each person four times in the year, namely, at Easter, on the birthday of the Apostles, on the birthday of St. Andrew, and his own birthday. At the first dawn of the day of the Lord's resurrection, in the basilica of Pope Vigilius, near to which he dwelt, he gave to all bishops, presbyters, deacons, and other dignitaries of the Church, an *aureus* a-piece, after bestowing on them the kiss of peace.

'On the first day of each week, he distributed to the poor generally, the same kinds of produce which were collected from the rents. Thus corn in its season, and in their several seasons, wine, cheese, pulse, bacon or other wholesome flesh, fish and oil, were most discreetly distributed by that father of the family of God. But pigments and other delicate articles of commerce were courteously offered by him to the nobles of the City, so that the Church came to be regarded as the warehouse of the whole community.'

‘To three thousand maids of God (whom the Greeks call *monastriae*) he gave 15 lbs. of gold for bed-furniture¹ and bestowed upon them for their daily stipends 80 lbs. annually.’

‘Moreover, every day, by means of charioteers appointed to the office, he sent out cooked rations to all the sick and infirm poor throughout the streets and lanes of the City. To those who had seen better days he would send a dish from his own table, to be delivered at their doors with his Apostolic blessing.’

The biographer then goes on to tell us of Gregory’s grief on learning that a poor man in one of the common lodging-houses of Rome had died of hunger. He blamed himself as if he had killed the man with his own hands, and for some days he would not permit himself to celebrate mass.

‘There exists to this day,’ Joannes continues, ‘in the most holy muniment room of the Lateran Palace, a very great paper volume, compiled in his times, wherein the circumstances of all persons of either sex, of all ages and professions, whether at Rome or in the suburbs, in the neighbouring towns, or even in the far-off cities of the coast, are described in detail, with their names, ages, and the *remunerations* which they received.’

Certainly in all these philanthropic engagements there was abundance of work, abundance of drudging and wearisome routine, to fill up the hours of a studious and meditative Pope. Leah’s progeny came with quick-thronging steps, with loud and importunate voices, to call the *Paterfamilias Dei* away from communion with the Rachel in whom his soul delighted.

In addition to the cares of the largest landowner in Italy and the greatest almsgiver in Rome, there were those cares which came upon Gregory as the Metropolitan Bishop of the West. In reading his correspondence we realize how thoroughly monarchical the constitution of the great Latin Patriarchate had now become. For generations the tendency of events had been in this direction, and when a man of Gregory’s saintly character and intellectual force entered the Lateran Palace, the transformation was complete. The chair of St. Peter was now indeed a throne. Though desirous to preserve the dignity of his brother bishops unimpaired, Gregory would assert, upon occasion, almost with severity, the right of the Bishop of Rome to the unquestioning obedience of all the bishops of the West, and even to receive appeals from the East and to reverse the judgments of the Patriarch of Constantinople himself. So wide a spiritual Empire necessarily brought a vast accession of care to him who ruled it, especially when the ruler was such a man as Gregory, in Africa.

In Africa he organized a system of firm and quiet ecclesiastical pressure, which, with the frequently invoked assistance of the secular arm, at length extinguished the schism of the Donatists—a schism which had lasted for three centuries and which the Catholic Church in Africa vanquished, only just in time to enjoy the honours of victory before she and her rivals were swept together into destruction by the followers of Mohammed.

In Sardinia Gregory stirred up the clergy to undertake the conversion of the idolatrous Barbaricini, and set himself to control the vagaries of the bishop of Cagliari, the white-haired Januarius, who crowned the eccentricities of a lifetime by going forth into his neighbours’ corn-fields, and ploughing them on the Lord’s Day, both before and immediately after his celebration of mass.

In France, by his correspondence with his somewhat in lethargic vicar, Vergilius, bishop of Arles, he laboured, with more zeal than success, to correct that barbarization of the Gallican Church, of which the pages of ‘Gregory of Tours’ furnish so terrible a picture, to uproot the simony which was destroying the Church’s life, to induce the bishops to resume their almost abandoned custom of assembling in national and provincial councils for the reform of abuses, and to combat the disorders which were making the Frankish monastery, and yet more the Frankish nunnery, a scandal to Christendom.

With Visigothic Spain, which (as has been related), after nearly two centuries of uncompromising Arianism, had entered the Catholic fold three years before Gregory's elevation to the Papacy, the correspondence is somewhat less active than might have been expected, from the splendour of such a conquest and from the ties of old friendship which bound the Pope to the most conspicuous actor in the drama, Leander the Metropolitan of Seville. In a letter, written just after his consecration, Gregory, while expressing his joy at the conversion of his 'most glorious son Recared' to the Catholic faith, entreats Leander to warn his nephew against the snares of the devil, which, in his case, will probably take the shape of temptations to spiritual pride. The correspondence then seems to languish. Perhaps Recared expected a more enthusiastic welcome from the pontiff. Perhaps he was engaged in suppressing some revolt of the discontented Arians. At any rate the first letter from the Visigothic king to the Pope is assigned to so late a date as the ninth year of Gregory's pontificate. In this letter, written in somewhat halting and barbarous Latin (possibly the consciousness of these defects had something to do with the King's silence), Recared excuses himself for having so long delayed to express his reverence to the head of the Christian priesthood. Hindered for three years by the cares of his kingdom, he had at last chosen certain abbots and charged them to bear his gifts to St. Peter. But when already within sight of the shores of Italy they were overtaken by the violence of the sea, thrown back on the rocks near Marseilles, and barely escaped with life. Now at last Recared sends another messenger, with a golden chalice studded with gems for the Apostolic treasury, and the expression of his profound reverence for the Pope, whom he has already learned to love through his conversations with his uncle Leander. Apparently this letter was accompanied or followed by a communication of a more political nature.

King Recared desired to establish a *modus vivendi* with the Emperor, who had acquired (as we have seen) a footing on both sides of the Peninsula, and, with this loathe view, asked for a sight of the treaty between Justinian Empire and an earlier Visigothic king, a copy of which he believed to be stored in the archives of the Holy See. The request gives us a glimpse into the still lingering barbarism of the court of Toledo, which, for a document so vitally affecting its own interests, had to depend on the presumed superior accuracy of the Papal chancery, though that body had really no immediate concern in the affair. In this case, however, Gregory replied that the archives of the See had suffered so severely from fire in the time of Justinian, that scarcely a single paper of that time was still extant.

As some compensation for this disappointment, and an indication of good-will, 'we send you', says the Pontiff, 'a little key from the most holy body of the blessed Apostle Peter, in which is enclosed some iron from his chains, so that the same metal which bound his neck to the cross of his martyrdom may loose you from all your sins. The bearer of these presents will also offer you a crucifix, wherein is some of the wood of our Lord's cross, and some hairs of the blessed John the Baptist: so that by means of this cross you may also have the consolations of Christ, through the intercession of his Forerunner'.

The spiritual conquest of Spain was glorious, but it had been achieved before Gregory mounted the Papal throne. The conquest of England was all his own work, his own daring thought translated into action. In 596 he sent forth Augustine, Abbot of his own beloved monastery of St. Andrew, on his memorable mission, armed with letters of introduction to all the chief prelates of Gaul, requesting them to speed the missionaries on their way. But whatever might be the outward professions of respect and obedience tendered by these eminent ecclesiastics, so weak was their faith, and so alarming the picture which they drew of the savage temper of our Saxon forefathers, that the timid monks, accustomed as they were to the stormless atmosphere of the convent, shrank from encountering the perils before them, and Augustine actually returned to Rome to beseech permission to abandon the difficult enterprise.

Then it was that Gregory's singleness of purpose and inflexibility of will saved the endangered project, and he who had once, in obedience to a Pope, left the path to Britain untrodden, now, as Pope, claimed the obedience of Augustine, sent him forth again on his great mission, and forced upon the timid Abbot of St. Andrew's the glory of being the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

The success of that mission, the conversion of Ethelbert and the larger part of his nobles and people to Christianity, are events which lie beyond our present province, and are too well known to need more than a passing allusion here. All that we are here concerned with is the fresh burden of toil, fruitful and triumphant, but still toil, which the conduct of this great enterprise must have brought upon the pain-racked Pope. In 601 he sent out a second mission under Mellitus, to reinforce Augustine and his fellow-labourers. These also had to be sped upon their difficult way; letters of commendation had to be written for them to the Gaulish bishops, and protection had to be claimed from the Frankish kings. In the same year a letter was sent to Augustine, in which, at great length, Gregory replied to eleven questions which the English missionary had addressed to him as to the government of the new province won from heathenism. The questions travelled over a wide range of subjects, touching on the division of the Church revenues, the punishment of sacrilege, the degrees of affinity within which marriage was prohibited, the consecration of bishops, the ceremonial defilements which operated as a bar to holy communion, and so forth. Gregory's answers were upon the whole wise and statesmanlike, especially in reference to varying ecclesiastical usages. 'Your Brotherhood knows already the custom of the Roman Church in which you remember that you were nourished. But my pleasure is that you should carefully select, not only from the Roman, but also from the Gallican, or any other Church, whatsoever you can find that is pleasing to Almighty God, and in the Church of the Angles, which is still new to the faith, implant all that you have thus collected from various Churches. For we ought not to value a thing because of the place from which it has sprung, but value places according to the things which they produce. From the several Churches, therefore, select all customs which are godly, religious, just, and, weaving them all into one wreath, crown with them the souls of the Angles.'

Besides that which came upon Gregory daily, the care of all the Churches, he laboured also at that reformation (if it were in truth a reformation) of the music of the Church, which has perpetuated his fame in some quarters where his other great deeds are little remembered. He remodelled the Roman Liturgy, composing a new *Sacramentarium* and *Antiphonarius*, and giving to the service of the Mass nearly the same form which it bears at the present day in the Roman ritual. He established and endowed two schools of singers, one at the Lateran, the other under the steps of the basilica of St. Peter at which the pupils were taught the Gregorian 'plain song' which now superseded the Ambrosian chants, and the musical scale divided into octaves, which superseded the eighteen *tones* or five tetrachords of the Greeks. Three centuries after his death, men still looked with veneration upon the memorials of Gregory's musical enthusiasm which were preserved in the Lateran Palace, not only the authentic copy of his *Antiphonarius*, but the bed on which he reclined when, racked with gout and dyspeptic pains, he still persisted in giving his lessons to the choir, and the rod with which he corrected the youthful singers, when they failed to render a passage in one of his chants correctly.

As diligently as he laboured to cultivate the musical sense of his people, even so diligently did he reorganize his own household at the Lateran on the strictest monastic and Roman models. All the lay servants who had ministered to the pride and luxury of former pontiffs were banished from his palace. None but monks and clergy were to be found in attendance on the visible head of the Church. The Pope led, with these, his brethren in religion, that life in common which was the characteristic of the convent, and we may fairly infer that

he, though lord of such mighty resources, submitted himself to that stern prohibition against private property which he had enforced so rigidly against the unfortunate Justus.

This change applied not merely to the personal attendants of the Pontiff. He first, apparently, inaugurated that strict rule that the Church's possessions should be governed by churchmen, which prevailed with few exceptions down to the fall of the temporal power of the Popes in our own day. 'No layman could administer any part of the Church's patrimony, but all ecclesiastical charges were held by ecclesiastical men, laymen being relegated to the profession of arms or the occupations of agriculture'.

And not only was the lay element excluded from even the outer courts of the Church's service; the descendants of so many Roman Senators also barred his doors against the all-pervading influence of the barbarians. 'None,' says his biographer, 'of those who were in the Pope's service, from the lowest to the highest, ever showed anything barbarous either in speech or attire, but the purest Latinity of speech, and the constant use of the *toga* of the Quirites or the *trabea* [of the old Consuls] preserved, as it were, an inviolate Latium in the dwelling of the Latin Pope.'

From his palace in the ancient domain of the Senator Lateranus, the gift of Constantine to the Roman See, Gregory doubtless often wandered to his own ancestral home on the slope of the Coelian Hill, scarcely more than half a mile distant, that palace which had become the monastery of St. Andrew. There are still shown his marble chair and a recess in the wall, in which, if the inscription speak truly, the great Pope often passed the night. There undoubtedly, for centuries after his death, were visible the contemporary portraits, in fresco, of himself and his parents, with which the liberality of Gregory had adorned the walls of the convent. Near the fountain in the courtyard were two doors, on one of which St. Peter, in a sitting posture, was represented as holding out an encouraging right hand to the *regionarius*, Gordian, father of Gregory. Gordian was depicted as tall of stature, with somewhat solemn face but penetrating eyes, with short hair and scanty beard. His feet were shod with the military *caliga*, and over his dalmatic was thrown a mantle (*planeta*) of a chestnut colour.

Silvia, the mother of Gregory, was painted as also tall, but with a round and cheerful face, beautiful notwithstanding the wrinkles of age, and with the large grey eye of genius. On her head she wore the turban of a Roman matron, and over her milk-coloured tunic a white veil flowed in ample folds from her shoulders to her feet. With two fingers of her right hand she made the sign of the cross, while her left hand held the Psalter, open at the words, 'My soul liveth and it shall praise thee, and thy judgments shall help me.' A scroll in the background of the picture, running from the right shoulder to the left, bore the words, 'GREGORIUS SILVIAE MATRI FECIT.'

In an apse behind the monks' *cellarium* (cupboard) was the likeness of Gregory himself, designed by the same artist—a namesake of his own—who had painted the portraits of his parents. A face which combined in comely proportions the length of his father's, and the roundness of his mother's, countenance; a high and noble forehead crowned with two little curls bending towards the right; a head, bald above but with a wisp of nearly black hair, brushed back behind his ears; dark and small eyes, and a slightly aquiline nose; fresh-coloured cheeks, which became even high-coloured towards the close of his life; moderate stature and a goodly figure: long taper fingers which seemed well adapted to handle the pen of the writer;—such was the guise in which, 270 years after his death, John the Deacon beheld the mightiest of the Popes, the converter to Christianity of our Saxon forefathers.

CHAPTER VIII.
GREGORY AND THE LOMBARDS, 590-595.

From the deeds of the great founder of the mediaeval Papacy we must turn to follow for a little while the far humbler fortunes of the Lombard king.

Immediately on his elevation to the throne, Agilulf turned his attention to that which was the most pressing necessity of the Lombard state, the conclusion of peace with the Franks. Two missions were dispatched with this object to the Austrasian court, both going from the Duchy of Trient, and both doubtless proceeding by the pass of the Brenner, through what had once been the Roman provinces of Rhaetia and Vindelicia. Agnellus, bishop of Trient, went to negotiate for the return of the prisoners whom the Franks had carried off from his diocese in the cruel raid of the previous year. It seems doubtful whether complete success crowned his efforts, but he had at least the joy of bringing back to their homes many captives whom the Austrasian queen-mother had herself redeemed from bondage. In the difficult task of assaying the strangely compounded character of Brunichildis, let at least this good deed be remembered to her credit.

The other, a more directly political mission, was entrusted to Euin, duke of Trient, and brother-in-law of Queen Theudelinda. We have no details as to his journey; we are only told that 'he went to Gaul to obtain peace, and having obtained it, returned home'. The Austrasian king had perhaps perceived by this time that he could not conquer, could only ravage, Italy, and that, in unduly weakening the Lombards, he was but playing the game of the Emperor. The hostility of Neustria was becoming more dangerous, as the son of Fredegundis was growing out of infancy into boyhood. The old actors, too, were soon to pass away from the scene. The easy-tempered Guntram of Burgundy died early in 593. Childebert, who of united that kingdom to his paternal inheritance of Austrasia, enjoyed his wide-reaching sway but three years, and died in 596, having only attained his twenty-sixth year. His sons, children of nine and ten years old, succeeded him, Theodoric in Burgundy, and Theudebert in Austrasia. There were thus, now, minors on all the three Frankish thrones. Brunichildis hoped to govern two kingdoms as regent in her grandsons' names, but her hope was disappointed. Expelled from Austrasia, she took refuge in Burgundy, and sought to avenge herself by Burgundian arms on the Austrasian rebels. Civil war and domestic confusion became the normal condition of Gaul, and for the twenty-five years during which Agilulf was consolidating the Lombard throne, the Frankish monarchy was in a state of partial eclipse. These were, perhaps, some of the causes of the change which now came over the relations of the two peoples. The change itself is undoubted; with the accession of Agilulf the hostilities between Frank and Lombard—so irritating to the student by their want of plan, and so lamentable for the sufferers by their purposeless barbarity—cease, and for many generations Italy is left to work out her own destinies, undisturbed by any interference on the side of Gaul.

The next duty of Agilulf was to assert his royal authority against the subject dukes, who could look back to a still recent time when they had no king over them, and some of whom had seen with anger the elevation of a Thuringian stranger over their heads by a woman's favour.

One of these was Mimulf, who in the recent campaign had traitorously surrendered himself to the Frankish dukes. His stronghold was the island of St. Julian in the Lake of Orta. Notwithstanding his watery defence he was captured and slain. Ulfari, duke of Treviso, who had also rebelled (perhaps had gone over to his Imperial neighbours), was besieged and taken prisoner.

The most powerful and the most obstinate of all the rebel nobles was Gaidulf¹, duke of Bergamo. By right of his important duchy, possibly also by right of some relationship with Authari of Bergamo, Gaidulf had probably himself aspired to the kingdom. Agilulf, however, marched against him, received his submission, and forced him to give hostages for his future fidelity. How long he remained loyal we know not; but next time that he broke out into rebellion we find him not behind the walls of Bergamo, but in that cave of Adullam, the island in the Lake of Como. This island, after the defeat of the Byzantine general Francio, had apparently been annexed to the territory of Bergamo, and the rich treasure found there had been entrusted to Gaidulf's keeping. The island was now successfully attacked, Gaidulf's soldiers expelled, and the treasure carried off to safer keeping at Pavia. Gaidulf fled to Bergamo, was there taken prisoner by Agilulf, a second time pardoned and a second time listened to when he repeated his promises of loyalty. We shall see at a future time how these promises were kept.

These domestic disturbances being quelled, Agilulf, doubtless at the earliest moment of leisure, turned his thoughts towards the long struggle with the Empire; a struggle which was now passing into a chronic stage and involving a second generation of combatants. Rome, Ravenna, Naples, Genoa; these four cities were Empire's grasp, and so long as these cities and the territories round them were in hostile hands, could any king of the Lombards feel that his possession of the remaining three-fourths of Italy was secure? Rome and Ravenna especially, the old and the new capitals of Emperors, were always alluring and always defying the Lombard attack. The Pope at Rome, the Exarch at Ravenna, held perilous communication with one another by the long nerve-filament of the Flaminian Way. Might it not be possible for the Lombard marauders to destroy that communication, to isolate the two capitals from one another and then to conquer them in detail? It seemed doubtless feasible enough to a Lombard duke; but it was never wholly done, and even its partial accomplishment was only attained towards the very end of the Lombard domination. Instead of the Lombard king being able to separate Rome from Ravenna, the Via Flaminia practically separated him from his fellow-countrymen in the South. The duchies of Spoleto and Benevento (whose histories will be hereafter described more in detail) became more and more detached from the great body of the monarchy, whose heart was in Pavia; and the Empire, though powerless to expel the Lombards from Italy, was powerful to divide and to scatter them.

The impression made by the events which we are now considering, on the political condition of Italy was deep and long-enduring. In our own day a new generation is arising which is accustomed to the appearance of United Italy on the map: but all men of middle age remember how the maps of their boyhood showed a great irregularly-shaped region called 'The States of the Church', reaching across the waist of Italy, from the north-east to the south-west: almost within sight of Venice, where it touched the Adriatic, almost within sight of Naples, where it touched the open Mediterranean. That strange rhomboidal figure, which once seemed to present so hopeless a barrier to the unity of Italy, was a direct survival from the age when Rome and Ravenna were the two great strongholds of the Empire in the Italian peninsula, and when the Flaminian Way was the all-important line of communication between the city of the Pope and the city of the Exarch.

There was, however, one station on the Flaminian Way which had been occupied by the invaders, and by the which a Lombard duke had made the seat of power. This was Spoletium, now Spoleto, almost exactly half-way between the Tyrrhene Sea and the Adriatic. Here Farwald had reigned, and here in 591 *Ariulf* was reigning, drawing ever nearer and nearer to Rome, so that it seemed, in those early days of Gregory's pontificate, as if the great prize of the World-City's capture might after all fall into the hands, not even of a king, but of a mere duke of the Lombards. To Gregory himself, and all true Roman hearts within the City, the outlook must have seemed indeed a dreary one. As far as they were concerned, Roman territory, once

deemed world-wide had shrunk into limits little wider than those of the early days of the Republic. Latium with a corner of Etruria and a few square miles of Sabine territory—this was the *Ducatus Romae*: this was all the territory in which the citizens could move about, and even then only with a precarious and menaced freedom. As they looked forth from the walls of their City, they knew that the *Ducatus Romae* was almost bounded by the visible horizon. North-westward the Cassian Road led up to the dark brow of the Ciminian Mount. Just over the shoulder of that forest-crowned hill was Viterbium, and in Viterbium reigned a Lombard duke. On the northern horizon were the Sabine hills, at whose foot lay Interamna with its waterfalls, and Interamna was an outpost of Lombard Spolegium. Far nearer and even within sight of Rome were the towers of Tibur and Praenestes, high up on their hills against the sunrise; and though these towns were still Roman, they were now frontier towns, looking forth on Lombard territory. It was only towards the south-east, where stretched the old Volscian land, and towards the west, where rolled the friendly sea, that the Roman could gaze without feeling that he was gazing towards the near dominions of a foe.

The letters of Gregory, in the early years of his pontificate, give us a vivid picture of his anxieties and distresses, hemmed in as he was within such narrow bounds, daily hearing of, and all but seeing, the desolation wrought by the invaders. Writing to one of his old friends at Constantinople, the Patrician and Quaestor John, in the beginning of 591, he says, ‘You have intended to do me a kindness [in assisting my elevation to the papacy], and may God repay you for your good mind towards me, but you have brought me, the lover of quietness, into a state of continual disquiet. For my sins I find myself bishop, not of the Romans but of the Lombards; men whose promises stab like swords, and whose kindness is bitter punishment. Hither has your patronage led me. But do you, who still have the power, fly from the business of this world, because, as far as I see, the more progress a man makes in this, the more he falls off from the love of God. Moreover, I send you a most sacred key, from the body of the blessed Apostle Peter, Prince of the Apostles, made illustrious by the many miracles performed by its means on the bodies of many sick persons, and enclosing some filings from his chains. Let those chains therefore, which once clasped that holy neck, now be hung round your neck and sanctify it.’

In another letter to the Judicial Assessor Paulus, Gregory begs his correspondent to come and assist in the extreme need of the Roman City, ‘because outside the walls we are incessantly molested by the swords of the enemy, and within we are threatened by the yet graver peril of a mutiny of the soldiers’.

The effect of all the ravages, not only of the Lombards during the recent years, but of their predecessors during the two previous centuries, was already seen in reducing the fertile regions of the Campagna to a desert. The two towns of Mintumae and Formiae (both in our own day represented only by ruins) were to be joined under one bishop (the bishop of Formiae), ‘because we have learned’ says the Pope, ‘that the Church of Mintumae is, owing to the desolate condition of the country, utterly stripped both of clergy and of people’.

The ecclesiastical administrator of Campania (Anthemius the subdeacon) was enjoined to prevent the dwellers on the Papal patrimonies, who with their wives were fleeing from barbarian savagery, from taking refuge on the Insula Eumorphiana, on which was erected an oratory to St. Peter. ‘There are other places of refuge in the neighbourhood, and I think it highly inopportune that women should be dwelling on the same island with monks.’

So far, however, up to the end of the first year of Gregory’s papacy, the tide of battle had not rolled close up to the walls of Rome. But with September, 591, when his second year of office began, hostilities became more active. The terrible pestilence, from which Pope Pelagius had died, was still raging in Italy, and Gregory, writing to the bishop of Narni, exhorts him to turn the panic caused by its ravages in that city to good account spiritually, by laboring among

the Lombards as well as Romans within its walls, and persuading the heathens and the heretics to turn to the true Catholic faith. Narni was emphatically a frontier city, but there is perhaps room for a doubt whether the Lombards here referred to were conquerors who had carried the city by a surprise, or the remnant of some of the Lombard armies, who, under various generals, had deserted to the Empire in recent years.

The next letter, however (written on the twenty-seventh of September, 591), gives no uncertain sound of war. It is addressed to Velox, Master of the Soldiery, stationed probably at Perugia, certainly somewhere on the road between Ravenna and Rome.

‘I told your Glory some time ago that I had soldiers ready to come to you at your present quarters : but as your letter informed me that the enemy were assembled and were making inroads in this direction, I decided to keep them back. Now, however, it seems expedient to send some of them to you, praying your Glory to give them suitable exhortations, that they may be ready to undertake the labour which falls upon them. . . . And do you, finding a convenient opportunity, have a conference with our glorious sons, Maurice and Vitalian: and whatever, by God’s help, you shall jointly decide on for the benefit of the Republic, that do. . . . And if you shall discover that the unutterable Ariulf is breaking forth either towards Ravenna or in our direction, do you fall upon his rear and exert yourselves as becomes brave men, that so, by God’s help, the high opinion which the Republic already holds of you may be raised yet higher by your glorious labours.’

The autumn and the winter of 591 passed away, apparently, without bringing the dreaded invasion. But the Pontiff was looking anxiously towards his northern frontier, desiring to strengthen himself against attack from the side of Tuscany. Here, about thirty miles from Rome, south of the Ciminian mountain, stood the two little towns of Sutrium and Nepe. These towns, which, in the infancy of the Republic, had been won for her by the valour of Camillus, were now part of her northern barrier against invasion. Sutrium and Nepe under Maurice were thus what the Firths of Forth and Clyde had been under Antoninus. The Pope, who as one grasping the helm of the State at a moment of extreme peril spoke with all the authority of a king, addressed a short letter ‘to the clergy, council, and commonalty dwelling at Nepe.’

‘To the clarissimus Leontius, bearer of these presents, we have entrusted the care and responsibility for your city, that by his vigilance in all things he may make such arrangements as shall be for your advantage and that of the Republic. We therefore admonish you by these presents to render to him in all things due obedience, that none may dare to despise him, when he is toiling for your benefit. Whosoever shall resist his lawful commands will be deemed to rebel against us; and whosoever listens to him listens to us. If any should venture—which we do not expect—after this admonition to think that he may treat Leontius with contempt, let him clearly understand that he does so at his peril.’

It is easy to see from one short letter like this how the distance from the seat of Empire, the interruption of communication with Ravenna, the lordship of the vast Patrimony of St. Peter, were all tending to turn the Pope, with his will or against his will, into a temporal sovereign. Not only would Pope Symmachus not have so written under the strong rule of Theodoric, but under the weakest of the phantom emperors who flitted across the stage in the middle of the fifth century, it is inconceivable that such a letter could have been addressed even by the mighty Pope Leo to the inhabitants of the most insignificant village in the Campagna.

As the spring drew on, Ariulf again showed unwelcome signs of life. In April, Gregory, writing to the bishop of Ravenna, asked him to examine into the case of certain bishops in the obedience of the Roman see, ‘who cannot come hither by reason of the interposition of the enemy’. Then, in June, we find Gregory writing as follows to the Masters of the Soldiery, Maurice and Vitalian, who, notwithstanding their high official titles, seem to have been really his generals, responsible to him and not to the Exarch.

‘The magnificent Aldio, after the arrival of your messengers, wrote to us that Ariulf was now very near, and we feared lest the soldiers who are being dispatched by you should fall into his hands. But, by God’s help, our son, the glorious Master of the Soldiery, has made his preparations to meet him. And let your Glories also, if the enemy should march hither, fall upon his rear and, with God’s help, do what you can according to your wonted valour. For we trust in the power of Almighty God and of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, on whose natal day they hope to shed our blood, that they will find him too strong for them, and that immediately.’

Soon after the dispatch of this letter Vitalian came to Rome, had a personal interview with the Pope, and carried back his commands, both oral and written, to his comrades. Then another person appeared upon the scene—a messenger from the Lombard host, bearing a letter written by Ariulf himself, and dated the 11th of June. In this letter he mentioned, probably by way of boast, and in order to show how closely he was drawing his net round the City of Rome, that the inhabitants of Suana had promised to surrender to him. Suana, now the miserable little village of Sovana in the Etruscan Maremma, was a strongly fortified town as late as the thirteenth century, though its chief celebrity was derived from the fact that there was born the only other Pope who could for a moment contest with the first of the name the title of Gregory the Great. In the year 592 it can only have been an outlying fortress of the Empire, being fully forty miles beyond the frontier of the *Ducatus Romae*, and the marvel is that it should have resisted the Lombard attack so long.

With the despatch which the Pope now sent to the two generals, Maurice and Vitalian, he enclosed the letter of Ariulf, and continued, ‘Do you therefore carefully read this letter, and see if the citizens of Suana have persevered in the faith which they promised to the Republic. Take from them important hostages, the possession of whom may give you confidence in the fulfillment of their promises; and bind them moreover with fresh oaths, returning to them that which you have already taken by way of pledge, and healing their spirits by your speeches.’

So far had spoken the monarch and the statesman, but then came in the churchman’s fear of doing anything that might put the souls of his flock in jeopardy. If the Suanese had sworn, even to the hurt of the State, they must not be encouraged to break their oaths. ‘But if you shall clearly ascertain that they have treated with Ariulf for their city, or even have given him hostages with that intent—a point as to which his enclosed letter leaves us in doubt—then give the whole matter your most careful consideration, that neither your souls nor ours may come under any burden by reason of [violated] oaths. Accomplish then whatsoever you may deem advantageous to the Republic. Let your Glories so act that on the one hand we give no occasion for blame to our adversaries [at the Imperial Court], nor on the other hand neglect God while looking to the welfare of the State. Be careful, my glorious sons, because, as far as I can ascertain, Ariulf has collected his hostile forces, and he is said to be now quartered at Nardiae, and if, through God’s anger against him, he should choose to direct his course hither, do you, by the Lord’s help, lay waste his own territory¹, or at least let those whom you send carefully post their sentinels lest some serious mishap should befall you.’

How the affair of Suana ended we are not informed, but the most probable conjecture is that Ariulf’s was no vain boast, and that the Etrurian outpost did at this time fall into the hands of the Lombards.

All round the horizon the sky seemed darkening. Arichis, duke of Beneventum, was cooperating with his countryman Ariulf and pressing hard on Naples. As the Pope could not stir up the Exarch to provide for the defence of that important city by sending an Imperial duke with sufficient reinforcements, he took upon himself to send the ‘magnificent’ tribune, Constantius, to bear military rule in the city, and wrote a letter ordering all the soldiers quartered there to render him due obedience. What troubled him most was the apparent

indifference of the Exarch, Romanus, who seemed heedless to all the misery which the fury of Ariulf and his Lombards was bringing on the peasants of Campania. On behalf of Romanus it may be urged that the one all-important matter was to keep the communications open between Rome and Ravenna, and that every soldier who could be spared was needed for the defence of Perugia, which had become the vital point in these communications. But, whether justly or unjustly, Gregory was now thoroughly out of temper with Romanus, and the project, the momentous project, of forming a separate peace with Ariulf and cultivating the friendship of Spoleto, since Ravenna was so callous and unjust, was already taking shape in the Pope's mind. It was with such thoughts stirring in his soul that he wrote to John, bishop of Ravenna, probably in the month of July, 592.

'Set it not down to indolence but to ill-health that I have made such scant reply to the numerous letters of your Blessedness. For my sins, when Ariulf came [close up] to the City of Rome, slaying some of our people and mutilating others, I was smitten with such sadness that I suffered from an attack of colic. Much did I marvel what could be the reason why the well-known solicitude of your Holiness on our behalf did not profit this City nor relieve my necessities. But when I got your letters which went astray, I recognized that you do indeed act zealously for me, but that you have to deal with a man with whom such zeal is of no avail. It must be, therefore, to punish me for my sins that he who is now concerned only pretends to fight against our enemies, and at the same time forbids us to make peace, although now we should be quite unable to do so even if we wished it, because Ariulf, having with him the army of Auctarit and Nordulf, claims that gratuities for them shall be handed over to him before he will condescend to say anything about peace'.

Gregory then goes on to speak about the schismatical bishops of Istria and the Three Chapters Controversy, and continues, 'Be assured that I shall not cease to write to our most serene lords [the Emperor and his son] on that matter with perfect freedom and earnestness. But you need not be distressed by the animosity of the aforesaid most excellent Patrician Romanus [against me], because as far as I am superior to him in place and dignity, with so much the more patience and gravity I ought to bear his impertinence.

'If, however, there is any chance of getting a hearing, let your Brotherhood deal with him, so that we may make peace with Ariulf, should there be any hope, however faint, of accomplishing that result. The regular soldiery, as he himself knows, have been removed from Rome. Only the Theodosians remain, and as they have not received their donative, they will scarce consent to do sentry duty on the walls. Since the City is thus bereft of all its defenders, if it have not peace, how shall it continue to exist?

'As to the city of Naples, you must press the most excellent Exarch hard. For Arichis, as we have heard, has joined himself to Ariulf, and in violation of his promise has gone against the Republic. He is plotting deeply against that city, and if a duke be not speedily sent to its relief, it may be absolutely given up for lost.

'As for your suggestion about sending alms to the burnt city of Severus the schismatic, your Brotherhood would not have made it if you had known what bribes he has been sending to the palace to inflame persons against us. And even had he not been thus active, we must remember that our pity is primarily due to the faithful, and only in the second place to the enemies of the Church. All the more so, as hard by is the city of Fanum, many of whose inhabitants have been carried captive, and to which in the past year I wished to send remittances, but could not on account of the interposition of the enemy. It seems to me, therefore, that you ought to send the abbot Claudius thither with a pretty large sum of money, to redeem all such free persons as he may find to be there held in bondage for their ransoms, or to be still in captivity. Make your mind easy about the sum of money to be transmitted to you [for this purpose], because whatever you decide upon I shall be glad to pay. But if you can

convince the most excellent Patrician Romanus that we ought to make peace with Ariulf, I am ready to send you another person with whom these matters of ransom can be better arranged.'

After this letter, the name of Ariulf fades for a time out of Gregory's correspondence. Evidently the stress of war and the fear of the capture of the City were soon lightened, and we may assert with little fear of contradiction that the cause of this change was a separate peace concluded between Rome and Spoleto about the end of July 592. In negotiating this peace, the Papal coffers were probably put under contribution, in order to satisfy the demands of Ariulf, since Gregory himself, in alluding to the transaction three years later, says that the peace was made 'without any cost to the Republic'.

Having thus carefully traced the course of events as revealed to us by the Papal letters we may now listen to a story told by Paulus Diaconus in his life of Gregory in which, though Ariulf's name is not mentioned, the similarity of events is so great that we can hardly doubt that Ariulf is the person alluded to.

'There was a certain tyrant who greatly oppressed the Roman Church, troubling its repose by his unbearable importunity, laying waste its possessions, and treating the serfs belonging thereto with the utmost cruelty. For which wrongs the blessed Pope admonished him by means of messengers, but he was made all the more furious by this reproof, and came, mad with rage, to depopulate the City itself. But on his arrival, he was met in conference by the blessed Gregory. His heart was touched by Divine grace, and he perceived that there was so much force in the Pontiff's words that with most humble courtesy he made satisfaction to the pious successor of the Apostles, and promised that he would ever after be the subject and devoted servant of the Roman Church. Finally, he being afterwards sick [apparently] unto death, besought the prayers of the venerable Pope, and received for answer that God would grant unto him further space for repentance.'

It seems clear that, as here described, the raging enemy of the Church was converted by this interview, if not into a subject ally, at least into a respectful and courteous antagonist. The moral miracle of Leo I's subjugation of Attila was thus repeated after the lapse of a century and a half, by the greatest of his successors. That Ariulf, rough warrior as he might be, was not insensible to influences which may be called religious or superstitious according to the narrator's point of view, is shown by a story told of him by Paulus in the Lombard history. When warring against the Romans at Camerinum (possibly in that very expedition which caused the captivity of the citizens of Fanum), he enquired of his men, after they had gotten the victory, who was that warrior whom he had seen fighting so valiantly. 'There was no braver warrior than yourself,' said his soldiers. 'No, assuredly, there was one better than I, who, whenever one of the opposite party wished to strike me, guarded me with his shield'. Soon after they came near to the basilica in which rests the venerable body of the blessed martyr St. Sabinus; and Ariulf asked, 'Whose is that ample house?'. Some Catholics in his suite answered, 'There rests the martyr Sabinus, whose help Christians are wont to invoke when they go forth to war'. Ariulf, who was still a heathen, reasoned, 'How can a dead man give help to the living?'. Having so said, he leaped from his horse and went in to view the basilica; and while the others were praying, he strolled round the church admiring the pictures on the walls. As soon as he saw the blessed martyr's portrait, he exclaimed, with an oath, 'That is the face and that is the figure of the man who guarded me in the fight'. Then all understood that Sabinus himself had been Ariulf's defender'.

So runs the story in the pages of Ariulf's countryman Paulus. What the Emperor or the Exarch said of such a miraculous interference on behalf of an enemy of the Roman Republic no Byzantine chronicler informs us.

The separate peace thus concluded by Gregory with Ariulf aroused great indignation, when the tidings of it reached Ravenna and Constantinople. Though probably a wise and

statesmanlike measure, there can be no doubt that—to use a legal phrase—it was quite *ultra vires*, being entirely beyond any legal competency yet possessed by the bishop of Rome in ‘the Roman Republic’. An archbishop of Canterbury negotiating for himself a separate peace with Napoleon I, at the time of his meditated Boulogne invasion, or, to take a less improbable contingency—a bishop of Durham making private terms for himself and the territories of St. Cuthbert with the king of Scots, on the eve of the battle of Flodden; these hypothetical cases offer fair analogies to the conduct of Gregory on this occasion, on which he did indeed make a memorable stride towards complete independence. It appears to have been at this time, and was possibly in order to undo Gregory’s work, that Romanus at last marched with an army from Ravenna to Rome. It would seem as if the independent action of the Pope accomplished that which his piteous entreaties had failed to effect, in stirring up the Exarch to action. His campaign was evidently a victorious one. The towns of Sutrium, Polimartium, Horta, Tuder, Ameria, Luceoli, and Perugia, were all recovered from the Lombards, and the Exarch returned in triumph to Ravenna.

This expedition of Romanus is usually represented as a mere outbreak of temper on his part, a petulant explosion of wrath on the part of a man ‘who could make neither war nor peace’, and who, by this ill-timed display of energy, sacrificed all the fruits of Gregory’s diplomacy. It is not clear, however, that we are right in so regarding it. If we look at the map, we shall see that the loss of these places (which had probably all fallen during Ariulf’s campaign of 592) fatally jeopardized the line of communication between Rome and Ravenna. Luceoli, Tuder, Ameria, were all important stages on the Via Flaminia, while Sutrium, Polimartium and Horta were towns within the border of the *Ducatus Romae*, as it remained for the next century. Gregory’s desire for peace, and his pity for the sufferings of the war-worried *coloni*, were praiseworthy and Christian, but Romanus was justified in thinking that a peace concluded on the basis of the *status quo* in July 592, would leave the Imperial possessions in Italy at the mercy of the barbarians.

The case of Perugia was peculiar. That old Etruscan city, on her high Umbrian hill, held, probably, the true key of the position; but we are, unfortunately, not able fully to follow her varying fortunes. It is now pretty generally agreed that up to the year 592 the city had remained in the uninterrupted possession of the Empire. In that year it was taken, perhaps by Ariulf, perhaps by a Lombard duke named Maurisio, who was entrusted with the government of the city. This man, however, surrendered his post to Romanus, deserted his countrymen, entered the service of the Empire, and, in that capacity, held Perugia for the Exarch in 593. As we shall see, it was almost immediately won back by the Lombards, but it was probably restored to the Empire at the general peace in 599, for it was certainly Imperial in 735, and probably during the whole course of the preceding century.

This successful campaign of Romanus brought king Agilulf into the field. The rebellion of the dukes had probably kept him fully employed in 592, while Ariulf and Arichis were carrying on the war in the centre and south of Italy, but now, apparently in the spring of 593, he took the field, crossed the river Po, and marched with a powerful army to Perugia. After a siege of some days, the city surrendered, and Duke Maurisio, for his treason to the cause of the Lombards, was at once put to death.

Agilulf then marched on Rome, where Gregory was at that time engaged in giving daily homilies on woe, which exactly harmonized with the mood of mind of the melancholy Pope, who sincerely believed—and it is the key to much of his conduct—that the end of the world was visibly approaching. He had already, in his sixth homily, bewailed the overthrown cities, the desolated country, the departed glory of the senate and people, the stately buildings of Rome herself daily toppling in decay. ‘After the men have failed, even the walls fall. Where are they who aforesaid rejoiced in her magnificence? Where is all their pomp, their pride, their

frequent disordered revelry? Lo, she sitteth desolate, she is trodden down, she is filled with groaning. Now, no one hastens to her that he may get forward in the world: not one of her mighty and violent men remaineth to oppress the poor and to divide the spoil.'

So was Gregory daily haranguing from the pulpit when the news came that Agilulf had crossed the Po. Then, after a few days, came the manifest and miserable signs of war. Some citizens crept back to Rome, their hands having been chopped off by the savage foe; others were reported to be taken prisoners; others slain. Gregory himself, from the battlements of the threatened City, saw the captive Romans driven over the Campagna, with halters round their necks, roped together like dogs, on their way to slavery in the land of the Franks. He closed the great uncial manuscript of Ezekiel with a sigh, descended from the pulpit, and preached no more homilies on the prophet. Perhaps he called to mind that even so had St. Jerome been labouring to expound the mysteries of Ezekiel when he received the news of the capture of the City by Alaric; an event, the horrors of which, after nearly two centuries, seemed likely to be repeated by the more barbarous Agilulf. However this may be, the Pope turned from his spiritual labours as expositor of the Bible, and, aided by his namesake Gregory, the Prefect of the City, and by Castus, the Master of the Soldiery, set himself vigorously to work to provide for the defence of Rome.

After all, the City was not stormed, was perhaps not even subjected to a long blockade, though there are indications of something like a famine having prevailed within its walls. How was it that Agilulf did not write his name in the list of Rome-captors, where Alaric, Gaiseric and Totila had written theirs? It is a curious illustration of the sparsely-scattered lights by which the history of this period has to be written, that the answer to this important question comes to us from far Copenhagen. In the continuation of Prosper's Chronicle, which has been frequently referred to in these pages, and which is known as *Codex Havniensis*, we find it recorded that 'Agilulf at last, with the whole force of his army, set forth for the siege of the City of Rome; but on his arrival he found the Blessed Gregory, who was then gloriously ruling the Church, ready to meet him at the steps of the basilica of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles. Being melted by Gregory's prayers, and greatly moved by the wisdom and the religious gravity of so great a man, he relinquished the siege of the City. He kept, however, the spoil which he had already taken, and, returning, betook himself to Milan'.

Other causes may have concurred to produce this result; the fear of fever, the remembrance of the long and disastrous Gothic siege, disaffection, or even rebellion, on the part of some of the Lombard dukes. But, as in the case of Attila, so here the venerable personality of the recognized head of Christendom seems to have been the main instrument in procuring peace.

But the reconciliation between Pope and King, if it was to lead to a durable peace for Italy, must necessarily be followed by a reconciliation between King and Emperor. For this the Pope seems at once to have begun working, since we find him, in a letter written in September, 593, urging the bishop of Milan to use his good offices to reconcile Agilulf and Romanus, and even empowering him to offer something like a Papal guarantee for the Lombard's good behaviour. Moreover, it was just about this time (October, 593) that Gregory gave orders for a diligent search to be made for the vessels of Church plate, that had been carried into Sicily by bishops fleeing from their sees in Italy, which were menaced by the Lombard ravagers. These vessels were to be all collected into one place and carefully labelled, in order that when peace was reestablished—a contingency which the Pope then regarded as probable—they might be restored to the Churches which were their rightful owners.

But peace between two such essentially antagonistic powers as the Lombard and the Greek was not easily to be obtained, nor was the Pope in these years in such favour at Constantinople as to be an acceptable mediator. The Emperor had issued an edict, which

seemed to be rendered necessary by the increasing tendency of the servants of the State to evade their patriotic obligations by hiding themselves in a monastery, or assuming the office of the priesthood. The terms of this now lost edict appear to have been, 'That no one who is engaged in the administration of public business shall undertake ecclesiastical duty: nor shall it be lawful for him to change his condition and enter a monastery. The same prohibition applies to all officers and to every private soldier who has once been marked on the hand as belonging to the army, until his term of service is expired'.

Against this edict Gregory remonstrated in a which is perhaps the most famous of all his Epistles, full as it is of holy indignation and couched in terms of bold rebuke, such as the Emperors never heard from the pliant Patriarchs of Constantinople. To the first part of the law, forbidding civil servants to accept office in the Church, the Pope made no objection. The result of his own sorrowful observation was that 'Whosoever shall doff the secular habit from a desire to scramble into ecclesiastical office, wants to change his world, not to leave it.' But the prohibition to enter a monastery was a widely different matter. It could not be justified by any supposed loss to the State, for any claims which it might have on the estate of a civil servant would be defrayed out of the property of the monastery. And as for the soldiers, why was the way of salvation to be closed up to them by Imperial decree? There were many who could not possibly lead a religious life, while still clothed with the secular habit. Was the Emperor's soldier to be forbidden to become a soldier of Christ?

Then, like another Bossuet or Bourdaloue, confronting Louis XIV in the plenitude of his power, Gregory turns and addresses these daring words to 'the Master of all things':—

'Lo! thus to thee, through me the lowest of his and thy servants, Christ makes answer, saying, "From a notary I made thee Captain of the Guard, from Captain of the Guard Caesar, from Caesar Emperor, and not only that, but father of Emperors yet to be. I have committed My priests to thy keeping, and wouldest thou withdraw thy soldiers from My service?" Most pious lord! I pray thee answer thy servant what reply wilt thou make to thy Lord, when He comes and says these things to thee at the Judgment?

'But perhaps you think that there is no such thing as the honest conversion of a soldier to the monastic life. I, your unworthy servant, know how many converted soldiers in my days have wrought miracles in the monasteries which they have entered. But by this law, not even one such soldier is to be allowed the privilege of conversion.

'I beg my lord to enquire, what previous Emperor gave forth such a law, and then let him carefully consider if that Emperor [Julian] set an example which he ought to follow. Let him consider this also, that he is hereby forbidding men to renounce the world at the very time when the world's own end is drawing near. For lo! there will be no delay: the time is at hand when, while the sky is burning, burning too the earth and the elements flashing fire, with angels and archangels, with thrones and dominations, with principalities and powers, the terrible Judge shall come. If He shall have forgiven all thy other sins, and shall allege against thee but this one law which thou hast promulgated, what, I pray, will be thy excuse? Wherefore, by the same terrible Judge I adjure thee, not to allow all thy tears, thy prayers, thy fastings, and thine alms, for the sake of some supposed advantage, to be clouded over before the eyes of Almighty God: but either by some fresh interpretation or by some open change to turn aside the rigour of that law. For then does my lord's army prevail most against his enemies when God's army grows strongest in prayer.

'I verily, as becomes one subject to your orders, have caused that law to be transmitted to various parts of your dominions : but I hereby announce to my Most Serene Lords by the pages of this memorandum that the law itself is utterly repugnant to Almighty God. Thus have I paid the debt which I owe to each, to the Emperor obedience, to God the assertion of His rights'.

What was the result of these energetic remonstrances by the Pope we are not distinctly informed, but it is probable that the obnoxious edict, if not formally rescinded, was allowed to slumber unenforced in the Statute-book, and silently passed into oblivion.

If some soreness was left in the Emperor's mind by Gregory's vigorous protest, this was not likely to be allayed by his chief ecclesiastical adviser. John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, was one of the few eminent ecclesiastics who might conceivably claim to rival Gregory in the severity of his asceticism; and it is evident that the relations were never cordial between these two holy men, both so celebrated for the rigorous treatment of their bodies, and both really contending for the first place in the Christian hierarchy. It seems probable, though the fact is not expressly stated, that a certain letter addressed by the Empress Constantina to the Pope in the spring of 594, was secretly prompted by John of Constantinople. This letter contained the really astounding request that the head of St. Paul might be severed from his body, which was believed to repose in his stately basilica by the Ostian road, and might be sent to Constantinople to enrich a chapel which Constantina was building in the Imperial palace in honour of the Apostle. If John the Faster was consulted about this letter, he must have known that it was quite impossible that the Empress's petition should be granted, and he may have calculated that the inevitable refusal would place his rival at some disadvantage in the competition for Imperial favour. Gregory replied to the Empress that her request was one which he could not and dared not comply with. 'For the bodies of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, reposing in their churches, gleam with such miracles and such terrors that we cannot approach them, even for prayer, without great fear. When my predecessor [Pelagius II], of blessed memory, wished to change the silver [canopy] which was over the most holy body of St. Peter, though it was at a distance of fifteen feet from the corpse, a sign of no small terror appeared unto him. I, too, wished to make a similar improvement in connection with the most holy body of St. Paul, and found it necessary to dig somewhat deeply near the sepulchre. But the superintendent of the place having found certain bones not in immediate contact with the tomb, and having dared to lift them and remove them to another place, beheld certain sad signs and died by a sudden death'. The Pope then proceeds to relate a number of similar occurrences which showed the anger of the saints against those who ventured to disturb their bones. Some of his stories admit of an obvious physical explanation, but not all. The whole letter is an extraordinary one, proceeding as it does from the pen of one who had been a great Roman magistrate, accustomed to the careful weighing of evidence : and we rise from its perusal as from our study of the same author's life of St. Benedict, with the painful question in our minds, 'Is it possible that this man of clear and shrewd intellect really believed all that he has here recorded?'

Another root of bitterness between the Pope and the Emperor was the election of a certain Maximus as bishop of Salona, that Dalmatian city which a century and a half before this time saw a fallen Emperor officiating in its cathedral. Honoratus the archdeacon was the candidate for this see favoured by Gregory, who disliked the character of Maximus, and suspected him of winning the votes of his most influential supporters by simony. The contest was a long one (593-599), and ended after six years in something that resembled a Papal surrender; and meanwhile Maximus, secure in the favour of the Imperial court, ventured on acts of the most outrageous defiance to the see of Rome, and even dared to accuse the saintly Gregory of murder, because a Dalmatian bishop named Malchus, who had been summoned to Italy to account for his maladministration of the Papal Patrimony, had died suddenly in exile. 'It has come to my ears' said the Pope, 'that Maximus has sent a certain cleric [to the Emperor] to tell him that the bishop Malchus was killed while in custody on a charge of embezzlement. On this matter I have only one brief suggestion to make to my Most Serene Lords, that if I, their humble servant, had chosen to mix myself up with the murder even of a Lombard, at this day

the Lombard nation would have neither king, duke, nor count, but would be all split up in hopeless confusion. But because I fear God I shrink from imbruing my hands in the blood of any man.

‘As for Malchus, he was neither in custody nor under any kind of duress; but on the day on which he pleaded his cause and lost it, he was without my knowledge taken home by Boniface the notary, who invited him to dinner. He was treated at the banquet as an honoured guest, but died suddenly in the night, as I think that you, dear friend, have already heard.’

At the beginning of 595 the relations seem to have become somewhat more friendly. On the 12th of March in that year we find the Pope writing to the Emperor, thanking him for a remittance of 30 lbs. of gold [£1200] ‘brought by my fellow-servant, the Treasury-clerk, Busa’, for distribution among the priests, the poor, and especially the nuns who had flocked to Rome from the various parts of Italy that were invaded by the Lombards, and were now eking out a bare subsistence in the convents and other places wherein they were quartered. He also reports that Castus, the Master of the Soldiery, has distributed the donative to the soldiers out of the funds brought by the same messenger: that this gift has been gratefully received by the soldiers and has put an end to the murmurs and indiscipline which were before prevalent in the ranks.

Two months later (May, 595) Gregory wrote to Severus, the Assessor of Exarch Romanus, entreating him to use his influence with his chief in favour of peace. He says that those who sit by the side of rulers and who love them with pure affection, ought to make to them such suggestions as, without detracting from their own reputation for wisdom, may tend to the salvation of the ruler’s soul. ‘Therefore, as I know what faithful love you bear to the Most Excellent Exarch, I desire to inform your Greatness of the course of affairs, that you, being in possession of this knowledge, may use your influence with him on behalf of reasonable proposals.

‘Know, then, that Agilulf, king of the Lombards, is not unwilling to make a general peace, if my Lord the Patrician is of the same mind. He complains that many things have been done in his district contrary to the terms of the truce. He claims that compensation shall be made to him for these wrongs, if they are proved to the satisfaction of the judges, and on the other hand he is willing to make the fullest reparation if any breach of the peace can be proved against his side. As this request is reasonable, judges should be appointed to take cognizance of acts of violence committed by either party; and let us hope that thus, by God’s favour, a general peace may be firmly made. How necessary such a peace is to all of us you well know. Act, therefore, with your usual wisdom, that the Most Excellent Exarch may be induced to come in to this proposal without delay, and may not prove himself to be the one obstacle to a peace which is so expedient for the State. If he will not consent, Agilulf again promises to make a separate peace with us; but we know that in that case several islands and other places will necessarily be lost. Let the Exarch then consider these points and hasten to make peace, that we may at least have a little interval in which we may enjoy a moderate amount of rest, and, by the Lord’s help, may recruit the strength of the Republic for future resistance.’

But the Pope’s noble persistence in the cause of peace was not yet to be crowned with success. Hardly had this epistle been dispatched when he received a letter from the Emperor, the sharpest and the hardest to bear of all that had reached him from that quarter. The contents of that letter, itself lost, may easily be conjectured from the reply. All the transactions with the Lombards for the five preceding years were passed in review, and Gregory found himself accused of disloyalty, of presumption, of prodigality and—hardest stroke of all—of stupidity, all in one breath. The letter of reply is so important that it is necessary to quote it almost entire.

‘GREGORY TO MAURICE, AUGUSTUS.

‘In their most serene commands the Piety of my Lords, whilst rebuking me for certain faults, has with an appearance of sparing, not spared me at all. For in your letter, though you politely use the word “simplehearted”, you do in fact call me “a fool”. Now, in the Scriptures we are always exhorted to let our simplicity be mingled with prudence, as it is said of Job, He was a man simple and righteous”: as the Apostle Paul says, “I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil,” and as the Truth Himself says in the gospel, “Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” It follows, therefore, that when I, in my Lords’ most serene letters, am said to have been deceived by the wiles of Ariulf, and am called “simple,” without the addition of “prudent,” your meaning, without doubt, must be that I am a fool. And I myself must confess that you are right. Even if your Piety did not use the word, my very circumstances cry aloud “He is a fool.” If I were not, I should never have consented to suffer those things which I have suffered here from the swords of the Lombards. As for my report concerning Ariulf, that he was ready with his whole heart to come over to the Republic, you do not believe me. That means that I am accused of telling lies. But even if I am not worthy to be considered a priest, I know this much about the priest’s office, that he is bound to render service to the truth, and that it is a deadly insult to call him a liar. I have long perceived, however, that more confidence is reposed in Norduulf or in Leo than in me, and now those who come between us receive more credence than is given to my assertions.

‘And in truth if the captivity of our land were not daily and hourly increasing, I would gladly hold my peace as to the contempt and derision that are poured upon me. But this sorely afflicts me, that the same temper which accuses me of falsehood permits Italy to be daily led captive under the Lombard yoke, and that while no confidence is reposed in my assertions the forces of the enemy are enormously increasing. I would suggest, however, to my Most Pious Lord, that he may think of me all the evil that he pleases: but for the good of the Republic and for the cause of the liberation of Italy, let him not easily lend his pious ears to the first comer, but let him trust facts rather than words.

‘Do not let my Lord, in the consciousness of his earthly power, be quick to take offence with bishops, but let him remember Whose servants they are, that he may show them fitting reverence. God Himself, speaking through the mouth of Moses, calls priests “gods”, and the prophet Malachi says, “The priest’s lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the angel [messenger] of the Lord of Hosts”. The history of the Church bears witness that when the bishops were assembled in council [at Nicaea] Constantine burned the indictments preferred against some of them, before their faces, saying, “Ye are gods, appointed by the true God. Go and judge your own causes yourselves, for it is not fitting that we should be the judges of gods.” In which sentence, pious Lord! he gained more honour for himself by his humility than he conferred on the bishops by his reverence. Even the pagan Emperors of old, who worshipped gods of wood and stone, gave highest honour to their priests, and surely a Christian Emperor should not do less to his bishops.

‘These suggestions I make to my pious Lords, not for mine own sake, but for the sake of other bishops. For I am but a sinful man, and as I am incessantly failing in my duty towards Almighty God, so I trust that the strokes which I am now daily and hourly receiving may somewhat lighten my sentence at His awful Judgment-day : and I think that you may even please the Almighty the better, the more harshly you deal with His unworthy servant. For I have already received many strokes, and when my Lords’ orders came, I found some consolations that I did not hope for. If possible, I will briefly enumerate these strokes to which I refer.

‘The first was that the peace which, without any cost to the Republic, I had concluded with the the bards encamped in Tuscia, was wrested from me.

‘Then, when peace had been broken, the soldiers were removed from Rome. Some were slain by the enemy, others quartered at Narni and Perugia, and that Perugia might still be held, Rome was left unguarded.

‘A heavier stroke after this was the arrival of Agilulf, when, with my own eyes, I saw Romans coupled together like dogs, with ropes round their necks, being led away to be sold in France.

‘Then, as we who were within the City by God’s protection escaped his hands, an attempt was made to show that we were responsible for the failure of the corn-supplies, which cannot possibly be stored in any great quantity or for a long time in this City, as I have shown more fully in another memorandum.

‘For myself, I am not harassed by any of these things, because my conscience bears me witness that I am ready to suffer any adversity, if only I may escape all these evils without peril to my soul. But for the Glorious persons, Gregory the Prefect [of the City], and Castus, Master of the Soldiery, I am distressed, greatly distressed, since they neglected no possible precaution, but endured the toils of police-duty and sentry-duty during the aforesaid siege with the greatest alacrity, and then, after all, are struck by the severe indignation of My Lords. All which plainly shows that it is not their own conduct, but their connection with me, that brings them into trouble, and that as they laboured together with me in our tribulations, so they are to be tribulated together with me after our labours are ended.

‘As for my pious Lords reminding me of the awful and terrible judgment of Almighty God, I pray them in the same Almighty Name not to do that again. We do not yet know how each man will appear on that day. As the illustrious preacher Paul says, “Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord cometh who shall illuminate the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the secrets of all hearts.” I will say this, however, briefly, that as an unworthy sinner I have more hope from the mercy of Jesus when He comes, than I have from the justice of your Piety. Men know little about His judgment, and perchance the things which you praise He will blame, and those which you blame He will praise. Therefore, amid all this uncertainty, I can but have recourse to tears, and pray that the same Almighty God may guide our most pious lord by His own hand, and that in that dread day He may find me free from fault, having enabled me so to please men (if that be necessary) as not to forfeit His everlasting favour’.

This letter of Gregory, bold almost to insolence, marks the ‘dead point’ of his strivings after peace with the Lombards. He had now occupied the chair of St. Peter, and Agilulf the throne of Pavia, for nearly five years. Peace was their common interest, but the relation in which Gregory stood to Constantinople made that peace as yet unattainable. The Emperor, though powerless to win back Italy, and not too sure of being able to defend even the fragments of it which were left to him, would not recognize, and thereby seem to legalize, the past conquests of the Lombards. For his attempt to persuade him to adopt that course the Pope had now received a sharp reprimand, which, had Maurice been Justinian and Gregory Vigilius, would probably have been followed by deportation to an island in the Propontis, and a formal charge of *laesa majestas*.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PAPAL PEACE.

The year 595 has been generally looked upon as a turning-point in the history of Gregory's papacy. It was not only in that year that he began seriously to prepare his scheme for the conversion of England, but it was also then that he formally entered the lists to dispute the pretensions of the Patriarch of Constantinople. For we must always bear in mind the double character of the warfare which a Bishop of Rome, at that period of the world's history, deemed himself bound to wage. Locally, as the first citizen of Rome, as one who looked forth from her walls on the Sabine hills and the Ciminian forest, he felt himself to be, as he continually repeats, 'between the swords of the Lombards;' but, ecclesiastically, he had to defend the contest so-called rights of Peter, Prince of the Apostles, against the ever-menacing encroachments of the see of Constantinople. It has been already shown, and the proof need not be repeated here, how the claim of Old Rome to the ecclesiastical primacy of the world was interwoven with her old Imperial dominion, and how this claim was threatened when Constantinople became the political centre of the Empire, and her bishops the intimate friends and spiritual advisers of the Emperor. Now, the very fact that Italy was becoming more and more hopelessly lost to the Empire, and that the Bishop of Rome, if he retained any connection whatever with 'the Roman Republic,' must live a most precarious life 'between the swords of the Lombards,' to some extent imperilled even his ecclesiastical position. Pope and Exarch already found their interests diverging; those interests would probably diverge yet more in future. Yet greater in all probability would be the ever-widening gulf between Pope and Emperor; while, on the other hand, the Bishop of Constantinople, living under the shadow of the Imperial greatness, and with the hard fate of the outspoken Chrysostom ever present to his mind, tended more and more to become the mere private chaplain of the Byzantine Augustus. No wonder, therefore, that whenever a dispute arose between the First and the Second in authority in the Universal Church, the Emperor was always ready to look askance at the pretensions of Rome and to favour those of Constantinople.

The holy man, John the Faster, whose elevation to the patriarchal throne Gregory had witnessed in 582 during his residence at Constantinople, had revived for his own benefit a dormant claim to a title which had been conceded, as a matter of courtesy, to some of his predecessors, that of Ecumenical, or Universal, Bishop. In the year 588 (two years before Gregory's accession) a synod was held at Constantinople in reference to the affairs of the see of Antioch, and when the Acts of this synod were received at Rome they were found to contain frequent mention of the name of John of Constantinople, with the unwelcome addition 'Universal Bishop'. Against this title Pelagius II, probably by the advice of Gregory, who knew the temper of the Eastern Patriarch, energetically protested, forbade his *responsalis* to communicate with the usurping prelate, and even went so far as to declare the Acts of the Council null and void by reason of this irregularity.

Apparently the controversy slumbered during the first five years of Gregory's pontificate; but in 595, John the Faster, with an ingenuity in annoyance such as might be looked for in a man so holy and so abstinent, addressed to his brother of Rome a letter in which 'almost in every line he called himself Ecumenical Patriarch'. By this letter all the wrath of Gregory—not naturally a sweet-tempered man, and already sufficiently tortured by dyspepsia, gout and Lombards—was aroused against the aspiring Patriarch. The messenger who was speedily

dispatched to the Imperial court took with him a heavy packet of letters, all relating to this 'wicked word' ecumenical.

To the offending Patriarch himself Gregory wrote, as he says, sweetly and humbly admonishing him to cure his desire of vainglory. Yet even this sweet and humble letter cannot have been altogether pleasant to receive.

'I am astonished' says the Pope, 'that you, who fled in order that you might escape the honour of the Patriarchate, should now bear yourself in it so proudly that you will be thought to have coveted it with ambitious desire. In the days of my predecessor, Pelagius, a letter was sent to you in which the acts of the synod about Bishop Gregory were disallowed because of the proud title attributed to you therein, and the Archdeacon sent to the Emperor was forbidden to celebrate mass with you on account of it. That prohibition I now repeat: my *responsalis* Sabinianus is not to communicate with you till you have amended this error.

'The Apostle Paul rebuked the spirit which would shout, "I am of Paul and I of Apollos." You are reviving that spirit and rending the unity of the body of Christ. The Council of Chalcedon offered this title of *universalis* to the Roman Pontiff, but he refused to accept it, lest he should seem thereby to derogate from the honour of his brother bishops.

'It is the last hour: Pestilence and the sword are raging in the world. Nation is rising against nation, the whole fabric of things is being shaken. Cities with their inhabitants are swallowed up by the yawning earth. All the prophecies are being fulfilled. The King of Pride is nigh at hand, and—inexpressible shame—priests are serving in his army. Yes, they are raising the haughty neck of pride who were chosen that they might set an example of humility.

'Our Lord humbled Himself for our sakes, and He who was inconceivably great wore the lowly form of manhood, yet we bishops are imitating, not His humility, but the pride of His great foe. Remember that He said to His disciples, Be not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." He said, "Woe to the world because of offences! Woe to him by whom the offence cometh!" Lo! from this wicked word of pride offence has come, and the hearts of all the brethren are provoked to stumbling by it'.

Gregory then quotes the words of Christ (Matt, XVIII. 15-17) about telling a brother his fault 'between him and thee alone,' and continues, 'I have, by my *responsalis*, once and twice told you your fault, and am now writing to you myself. If I am despised in this endeavour to correct you, it will only remain to call in the Church.

'I have received the very sweet and kind letters of your Holiness about the causes of John and Athanasius, about which, with the Lord's help, I will reply to you in my next, because under the weight of so great tribulations, surrounded as I am by the swords of the barbarians, I am so oppressed that I cannot say much, nay can hardly breathe.'

So ran the letter to the arch-offender. To his *responsalis*, Sabinianus, the Pope wrote, saying that he had addressed his most reverend brother John with a proper admixture of frankness and courtesy, but, if he persisted, another letter would be addressed to him which his pride would not relish. 'But I hope in Almighty God,' said Gregory, 'that his hypocrisy will soon be brought to nought by the Supernal Majesty. I marvel, however, that he should have been able so to deceive you, dear friend, that you should allow our Lord the Emperor to be persuaded to write, admonishing me to live in peace with the Patriarch. If he would act justly, he should rather admonish him to give up that proud title, and then there would be peace between us at once. You little thought, I can see, how craftily this was managed by our aforesaid brother John. Evidently he did it in order to put me in this dilemma. Either I must listen to our Lord the Emperor, and so confirm the Patriarch in his vanity, or not listen, and so rouse the Imperial mind against me.

'But we shall steer a straight course in this matter, fearing none save God Almighty. Wherefore, dear friend, tremble before no man; for the truth's sake despise all whom you may

see exalting themselves against the truth in this world; confide in the favour of Almighty God and the help of the blessed Peter; remember the voice of Truth which says, "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world and do with fullest authority, as from us, whatever has to be done in this affair.

'For after we have found that we could in no way be defended [by the Greeks] from the swords of our enemies, after we have lost, for our devotion to the Republic, silver, gold, slaves and raiment, it is too disgraceful that we should, through them, lose our faith also. But to consent to that wicked word is nothing else than to lose our faith. Wherefore, as I have written to you in previous letters, you must never presume to communicate with him.'

It will be seen from this letter that the aspiring Patriarch had invoked the assistance of the Emperor against the Pope, even before the latter had received the extreme provocation of the letter which bristled with the obnoxious word 'ecumenical'. Evidently John of Constantinople had represented his brother of Rome—not altogether without truth—as exacting and quarrelsome; and Maurice, sincerely desirous for peace in the Church, had addressed Pope Gregory in language similar to that which Constantine employed to the contending prelates at Nicaea. To Maurice, therefore, the Pope addressed a long and eloquent letter praising his zeal for the peace of the Church, but insisting that the whole trouble arose from the pride of the Patriarch of Constantinople. Yes, the pride of the clergy was the real cause of the disasters of the Empire, of the triumphs of the barbarians. To disarm criticism, Gregory appears to associate himself with the sins of which he accuses his rival, but this is evidently a mere rhetorical artifice, and when he says 'we', he means the obnoxious Faster alone.

'When we leave the position which befits us, and devise for ourselves unbecoming honours, we ally our own sins to the forces of the barbarians; we depress the strength of the Republic and sharpen against us the swords of her enemies. How can we excuse ourselves, who are preaching one thing to our flocks, and ourselves practising the opposite? Our bones are worn away with fasting and our hearts are swollen with pride: our body is clothed with vile raiment, and in the elation of our souls we surpass the purple of emperors. We lie in ashes, and we nourish proud fancies. Teachers of the lowly and generals of pride, we hide a wolf's teeth behind a sheep's visage. But God sees our spirits, and is putting it into the heart of the Most Pious Emperor to restore peace to the Church.

'This is not my cause, but the cause of God Himself. It was to Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, that the Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock will I build my Church." He who received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he to whom the power of binding and loosing was entrusted, was never called the Universal Apostle; and yet that most holy man, my fellow-bishop John, strives to get himself called the Universal Bishop. When I see this I am compelled to cry out, "*O tempora! O mores!*"

'Lo! all Europe is handed over to the power of the barbarians; cities are destroyed, villages overthrown, provinces depopulated; no tiller cultivates the soil; idolaters rage and rule, daily murdering the faithful; and yet the priests, who alone should have thrown themselves on the pavement and wept in sackcloth and ashes, are seeking for themselves names of vanity and flaunting new and profane titles.'

The Pope then enlarges on the undoubted fact that Bishops of Constantinople had been more than once convicted of heresy¹, and after touching on some of the arguments brought forward in the accompanying letters, he tries to excite the Emperor's resentment by hinting that the hated word implied a covert attack on his own crown and dignity.

'We are all suffering from the scandal of this thing. My Most Pious Lord must coerce this proud man, who is disobeying the canons of the Church, and is even setting himself up against the honour of your Imperial dignity by this proud private word.

‘Let the author of this scandal return to a right life and all the quarrels of bishops will cease. I am myself the servant of priests, so long as they live priest-like lives. But as for this man, who in his swelling vainglory raises his neck against Almighty God and against the statutes of the fathers, I trust in God that he shall never bend my neck, no, not with swords’.

So wrote the first citizen of Old Home to the Monarch of the New; and his words, though uttered in the bland tone of the Churchman, had in them a ring which reminds us of Regulus and Coriolanus.

Lastly, Gregory wrote to the Empress Constantina, thanking her for having thrown her influence on the side of St. Peter against some who were proudly humble and feignedly meek. For this she would be rewarded both in this life and in the life to come, when she would find the benefit of having made him who had the power of binding and loosing, her debtor. ‘Do not let any hypocrisy,’ he says, ‘prevail against the truth. There are some who, by sweet speeches and fair words, deceive the hearts of the simple: shabby in dress, but proud in heart, they seem as if they despised everything in this world, yet they are scheming to obtain all this world’s treasures. They profess themselves the unworthiest of men, yet they are trying to acquire titles which proclaim them worthier than all others.

‘I have received my Most Pious Lord’s letters, telling me to live peaceably with my brother John. It is quite fitting that a religious Emperor should send such instructions to his bishops. But when my brother, by a new and unheard-of presumption, calls himself “Universal Bishop,” it is a hard thing in my Most Serene Lord to correct, not him whose pride is the cause of all the trouble, but me, who am defending the rights of the Apostle Peter and the canons of the Church.

‘In my brother’s pride I can only see a sign that the days of Antichrist are at hand. He seems to imitate him who said, “I will set my throne above the stars of heaven : I will sit on the mount of the covenant on the sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.” Do not suffer this perverse word to be used. Perhaps the sins of Gregory may have deserved such a humiliation, but Peter has not sinned; and it is Peter who will be the sufferer again I say: see that the honour paid by your pious predecessors to Peter suffers no diminution, and Peter will be your helper here in all things, and hereafter will discharge your sins.

‘It is now seven and twenty years that we have been living in this City between the swords of the Lombards. How much we have had to pay daily from the Church’s treasury, in order that we might be able even to live among them, cannot be calculated. Briefly, I will say that as my Lords have at Ravenna an officer called Paymaster of the First Army of Italy, who, as necessity arises, provides for the daily expenditure, so in this City in such matters I am their Paymaster. Yet this Church, which is incessantly spending such vast sums on the clerics, on the monasteries, on the poor, on the people, and on the Lombards also, must be further oppressed by the affliction of the other Churches, all of which groan over this man’s pride, though they do not dare to express their feelings’.

Such was the tenor of the letter to the Empress. Let it not be thought that in drawing so largely from this correspondence we are devoting too much time to a mere ecclesiastical squabble, which might find a place in the history of the Church but scarcely concerns the history of Italy. Besides its valuable incidental allusions to the miseries inflicted by the ravages of the Lombards, this correspondence is of truly ‘ecumenical’ importance in its bearing on the relations of East and West, of the Tiber and the Bosphorus. It was the growing estrangement between the Churches which prepared the way for the separation of the Empires. Had there been any real cordiality through the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries between Pope and Patriarch, it is not probable that the descendant of a Frankish Mayor of the Palace would ever have been hailed as Augustus in the streets of Rome.

In this particular case the dispute between the two sees ended in something like a drawn battle. In the very year in which the fierce correspondence quoted above had taken place, perhaps only a few weeks after Gregory's angriest letter had arrived at Constantinople, John the Faster died. When the Universal Conqueror had thus mowed down the Universal Bishop, one element which had lent peculiar acrimony to the dispute, namely, the emulation of austerity between the two chief combatants, disappeared. The Emperor, sincerely anxious for the peace of the Church, lingered for some time over his choice of a successor to the Faster, and at length selected Cyriacus, a man apparently of gentle and unassuming nature, who had been a friend of Gregory during his residence at Constantinople. The two *responsales* whom the new Patriarch dispatched to Rome were cordially received, and unhesitatingly admitted to communion with the Pontiff; 'for why,' as Gregory himself argued, 'should the fact that I forbade my representative to accept the sacred mysteries at the hands of one who had fallen into the sin of pride and elation, or who had failed to correct that sin in others, prevent his ministers from receiving them at the hands of one who, like myself, has not fallen into that sin?'. After five months' residence at Rome the messengers of Constantinople were at length reluctantly and affectionately dismissed.

To the Emperor Gregory wrote thanking him for his delay in choosing John's successor, and for his final appointment of Cyriacus. To the new Patriarch himself the Pope wrote a few letters, in a gradually diminishing tone of affection, as it became more and more manifest that the 'wicked word' Ecumenical, though not obtruded by him, would not be abandoned. But though Gregory still emphatically asserted that whoever called himself 'Ecumenical Bishop' was the precursor of Antichrist, the correspondence on the subject lost much of its former heat, and we may perhaps say that, the title having been claimed by Cyriacus for the honour of Constantinople, and protested against by Gregory for the honour of Rome, the personal relations of the two Patriarchs became friendly, if not cordial.

The issue of the controversy, which shall be finally stated here, was so illogical as to be almost amusing. Notwithstanding a decree of Phocas, the successor of Maurice, confirming in strong terms the primacy of the see of Rome, the Patriarchs of Constantinople continued to use the objectionable title, and at length the Roman Pontiffs, finding that they could not inhibit the use of it by their rivals, decided to adopt it for themselves. About the year 682 the Popes began to style themselves, and to allow others to style them, Ecumenical Bishops or Ecumenical Popes; and in the two succeeding centuries the title, as used by or of the bishops of Rome, was of frequent occurrence. The world had thus the curious spectacle of two rulers of the Church, each of whom claimed universal jurisdiction, though not yet at open war with one another; and the Church of Rome saw Pope after Pope assuming a title which, in the judgment of their greatest predecessor, was a distinct note of the precursor of Antichrist.

So much for the ecclesiastical war of Patriarchates. We return to the endeavours which Gregory was making, with praiseworthy perseverance, to secure peace to Italy. Throughout the year 595, and at least the first half of 596, he was sore in spirit because of the continued hostility of the Exarch Romanus. 'Most Exarch holy brother,' he wrote to Bishop Sebastian, 'the things which we suffer in this country from the influence of your friend, the lord Romanus, are such as we cannot describe. Briefly, I may say that his malice towards us is decidedly worse than the swords of the Lombards, so that the enemies who slay us outright seem kind in comparison with the rulers (*judices*) of the Republic who consume us by their spite, their rapine, and the treachery of their hearts. But to have simultaneously to support the care of the bishops and clergy, of the monasteries and the people, to watch with anxious vigilance against the snares of the enemy, to have always to defend oneself as a suspected person against the tricks and malice of the [Imperial] generals:—what labour and what grief this is, your Brotherhood who loves me so well and so purely, will be able truly to conjecture.'

Moreover the cowardice or the licentiousness of the clergy demoralised their flocks, and so made the work of the invaders easier. In the beginning of 596 Gregory wrote to his representative in Campania that it had come to his ears that Pimenius, bishop of Amalfi, was not content to dwell in his own Church, but was roaming about to different places, and that his flock, following his bad example, were deserting their own village. All this was simply inviting the enemy to make depredations on their homes, and therefore Pimenius must be sharply rebuked and ordered to remain thenceforward in his own Church, where a bishop ought to be. If disobedient, he was to be shut up in a monastery, in which case Gregory would take measures for the appointment of a successor.

Castorius the Papal chartularius, who was much employed by the Pope about this time in certain ecclesiastical matters concerning the succession to the see of Ravenna, became also a person of considerable political importance, as one acquainted with the views of the Pope on the subject of peace, and as the intermediary between him and Agilulf. It was he who brought to Rome the report of the negotiations which his colleague Secundus had been carrying on with the Lombard king. But his activity in this negotiation did not render him popular with the citizens of Ravenna. Shut up in their impregnable city, they could afford to despise the sufferings of the *coloni* of Campania—those sufferings which tore the heart of Gregory—and could boast, with easy courage, that they would have nothing to do with any surrender to the barbarian. A curious letter of the Pope's, which was probably written in the spring of 596, states that 'some person, at the instigation of a malign spirit, has in the silence of the night affixed a placard in a public place at Ravenna, speaking of Castorius in libellous terms, and even bringing crafty insinuations against ourselves in reference to the conclusion of peace. Hereupon all the priests and Levites, the generals, the nobles, the clerics, the monks, the soldiers and the people of Ravenna, at home or abroad, are called solemnly to witness that the author of this libel, unless he shall come forth in public and confess his sin, is excluded from participation in the body and blood of Jesus Christ. If he presume to partake thereof after this denunciation, it shall be anathema unto him, and if the unknown writer be a person to whom, in our ignorance, we have sent letters of congratulation, the good wishes contained in those letters will be null and void. The only condition upon which the offender can be restored to the communion of the Church, and relieved from this awful curse, is that he shall come forth in public either to prove his assertions or to retract them.'

As the ill-timed obstinacy of the Imperial government, backed up as it evidently was by the public opinion of Ravenna, still prevented the conclusion of the peace so necessary for Italy, Gregory exerted himself at least to lessen the miseries of war by promoting the redemption of some out of the many captives carried off in the train of each Lombard army. Writing to his Campanian representative Anthemius, he said¹, 'How great is the sorrow and affliction of our heart, arising from the events which have happened in the regions of Campania, we cannot describe, but you will imagine, from the greatness of the calamity. To remedy this, we are sending you money by the hands of Stephen, Vir magnificus, which we desire you diligently to employ in the immediate liberation of such freemen as are not able to pay their own ransoms, also of all those slaves whose masters are too poor to redeem them, and especially of such slaves on the Church's estates as have perished [fallen into the hands of the enemy] through your negligence. Make a careful list of the names, occupations, dwelling-places, birthplaces, of all whom you redeem. Give your best attention to this work, that those who are to be redeemed may not incur any peril through your negligence, nor you hereafter undergo our vehement displeasure. Especially strive to redeem the captives at as low a price as possible, and send us the list above mentioned with all speed.'

For this pious work of the liberation of captives, Gregory thankfully accepted the help of the powerful and wealthy friends whom he had made at Constantinople. In two letters, written

about the middle of June 597 to his old allies, Theoctista, the Emperor's sister, and Theodore, his physician, he gratefully acknowledges the large sums which they have sent him for the redemption of captives and the relief of the poor. The physician's contribution is not mentioned; that of Theoctista amounted to 30 lbs. of gold (£1200). In his letters to the latter, after congratulating her on her generosity, and pitying himself for the added responsibility thus brought upon him, he says :—

'I will mention to you, however, that from the city of Crotona on the Adriatic, which was taken by the Lombards in the past year, many men and many noble women were led away as booty: and sons were divided from their parents, husbands from their wives : but because they ask heavy ransoms for them, many to this hour have remained among the unutterable Lombards. However, I at once remitted for their liberation half of the money which I received from you, but out of the other half I have arranged to buy bed-clothes for the maids of God (whom you call in Greek monastriae), because they suffer sadly from the cold in our City from the scantiness of their bedclothes. Of these maids there are many in this City, for according to the memorandum of distribution there have been found 3000 of them, and they receive from the Patrimony of St. Peter 80 lbs. (£3200) annually. But what is that among such a multitude, especially in this City, where everything is sold at such a high price? But their life is of such a kind, so strictly passed in fasting and in tears, that we believe if it were not for them, none of us would have been able to exist for so many years between the swords of the Lombards [i.e. we owe our lives to their sanctity and prayers]'

To each of his friends, in return for their munificent offerings, Gregory sent his usual present of a golden key which had lain by the body of St. Peter, and which contained some filings from his chains; and to Theoctista he told the story of a miracle which connected her key with the Lombard king Authari:—

'A certain Lombard who had entered a city beyond the Po, found this key, and despised it as being a key of St. Peter, but seeing that it was golden desired to make something out of it, and took out his knife that he might cut it. But at once, being arrested by the Spirit, he stuck that same knife into his throat and fell dead the same hour. Autharith [*sic*], king of the Lombards, came up, with many of his men, found the dead man lying on the ground, and the key lying by itself, and they were all at once struck with grievous fear, so that none of them dared to lift that key from the earth. Then a certain Catholic Lombard, Mimiulf by name, who was known to be given to prayer and almsgiving, was called, and he raised it from the ground. But in remembrance of such a miracle, Autharith caused another golden key to be made, and sent it along with this one to my predecessor of blessed memory, relating what a miracle it had wrought. I therefore wished to send it to your Excellency, that the same instrument through which Almighty God killed a proud infidel may bring present and eternal salvation to you who love and fear Him.'

The letter to Theoctista, a very long one, from which these quotations have been made, is also interesting, not only as containing some of Gregory's most beautiful thoughts, and a specimen of his most extravagantly allegorizing interpretation of Scripture, but also as giving us a glimpse of the Imperial nursery as presided over by the Patricia, the aunt of the young princes:—

'I beg also that you will take care to train the little lords whom you are nursing, in excellent morals, and to warn the Glorious Eunuchs, who are charged with their education, to speak to them in such fashion, that their hearts may be softened towards one another in mutual love and tenderness, and that if they have conceived any passion of hatred among themselves, it should not break forth into a quarrel.'

In the same year, probably, in which these letters were written to Constantinople, one great obstacle to peace was removed by the death of the Exarch Romanus. He was succeeded

by a man of less difficult disposition, and more statesmanlike intellect, whose true name was Callinicus; but it is characteristic of the increasing divergence between the two divisions of the Empire that this regularly formed Greek name, which had been borne by rhetoricians, martyrs, and bishops in the eastern world, was now evidently a stumbling-block to western Romans, and was gradually converted by them into the barbarous Gallicinus.

Already, in May 597, we find a more hopeful tone in Gregory's letters. Writing to his representative in Sicily, the deacon Cyprian, he mentions the case of a certain Libertinus, *Vir magnificus*, who had apparently filled the office of Praetor of Sicily, and had received a hostile summons to Ravenna, there to give an account of his stewardship. Gregory's language is not very clear, but he seems to say, 'Do not let Libertinus distress himself. We have received a letter from Ravenna which we enclose for your perusal, and which shows that his enemies will not get the upper hand. Bid him therefore to be of good cheer, for we believe that our most excellent son the Exarch will do nothing to grieve him. We did not forget to write about his business; but as the said Exarch is now busied in the valley of the Po, we have not yet received his reply'. There can be little doubt that we are here dealing with a new regime. The Pope's 'most excellent son' is the new and friendly Exarch Callinicus, and his occupations in the valley of the Po have possibly something to do with negotiations for peace.

But all the members of the new Exarch's suite were not equally friendly with himself, and in a letter written about the same time as the last to his old ally the *scholasticus* Andreas at Ravenna, we find Gregory saying: 'Moreover, I thank you for putting me on my guard about two persons who have come with the Glorious Callinicus, although we have already had some very disagreeable experience of the person first named by your Excellency. But inasmuch as the times are evil, we bear all things—with a groan'.

In the year 598 no great change seems to have occurred in the position of affairs. Pope Gregory's letters for this year are few in number, suggesting the probability that communications with the other parts of Italy may have been unusually disturbed by hovering swarms of Lombards. Certainly the language employed by the Pope to the bishop of Terracina shows that the inhabitants of that city, though only sixty miles from Rome, and close to the friendly sea, were still harassed by war's alarms:— 'We have heard that many are excusing themselves from sentry duty on the walls: and we therefore wish you to take anxious heed that no one, either in our own name or in that of the Church, obtains exemption from this duty, but that all collectively be compelled to undertake it: so that by the vigilance of all, and by Divine help, the guarding of the city may be secured.'

In the midst of all the terror which filled the rest of Italy, the City of Rome itself remained not only unharmed, but apparently unmenaced; an immunity which was doubtless due to the spiritual ascendancy which Gregory had obtained over the minds of Ariulf and Agilulf. This special security granted to Rome is much insisted upon by the Pope in a letter written the summer of 598 to Rusticana, a great lady of Constantinople. He thanks her for the 10 lbs. of gold (£400) which she has sent him for the redemption of captives. He gently chides her for tarrying so long at Constantinople, and postponing indefinitely her visit to Rome, 'a visit which would greatly redound to her profit hereafter in the life eternal'. (And here we observe in passing that Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse, which was to become the hold of every unclean and hateful bird, is already, by the end of the sixth century, become a sacred City, a pilgrimage to which confers spiritual benefits on the traveller.) 'The Gospel orders us,' says Gregory, 'to love even our enemies. Think then what a grave fault it must be to love too little those who love us. Your servant will tell you how great desire we all have to behold your face. If any one tells us that he loves us, we know very well that no one loves those whom he does not care to visit. But if you are afraid of the swords and the wars of Italy, you ought to see for yourself how great is the protection vouchsafed by Peter, prince of Apostles, to this City, in

which, without any great number of people, and without help from soldiers, we have by God's help been preserved for so many years unhurt between the swords of the enemy. All this we say to you because we love you. May Almighty God grant you whatsoever He may see to be for the everlasting benefit of your soul, as well as for the present reputation of your household.'

In the autumn of 598 the long pending negotiations for peace at length began to assume a favourable aspect. Gregory's representative at the Lombard court was now the abbot Probus, and the Pope heard from him in the month of September that the terms of the peace might be considered as settled, both King and Exarch having given their consent. Our chief information as to this crisis of the negotiations is derived, curiously enough, from a letter of the Pope to Januarius, bishop of Sardinia. That strange and silly old man had not only to be restrained from sallying forth from his cathedral just after the celebration of mass to plough up his neighbour's harvest-field—but also to be warned of the continued necessity of vigilance against the Lombards. Both he and Gennadius the Exarch of Africa, to whose province Sardinia belonged, had been already in vain admonished by the Pope to put the island in a proper state of defence; and their carelessness had been punished by an attack of the barbarians (possibly on Caralis the capital), by which, though no permanent settlement had been effected, much injury had been done to the property of the islanders. The Pope expressed his hope that Januarius would learn a lesson from this misadventure, and keep a better guard in future, and he promised that for his part he would omit nothing which might be of service to the islanders in their preparations for defence. 'Know, however,' said he, 'that the abbot, whom a long time ago we sent to Agilulf, has by God's favour arranged a peace with him according to the most excellent Exarch's letters to us. And therefore till the actual signing of the articles for the confirmation of peace, cause the sentinels on your walls to discharge their duty with anxious vigilance, lest by chance in this time of delay our enemies should think to make another visit to your parts. We trust in our Redeemer's power that the assaults or the stratagems of our adversaries will work you no further harm.'

In a later letter the Pope seems to speak of the peace as now actually concluded. But as it was for a limited time—we learn from other sources that it was only concluded for two years—he warns Januarius of the probability that at the end of that time Agilulf would renew the war :—

'As we have no less concern for your safety than for our own, we thought it right at once to point out to you that when this peace is ended, Agilulf, king of the Lombards, will not make [another] peace. Wherefore it is necessary that your Brotherhood, while you still have liberty, should cause your city and other places to be more strongly fortified, and should take care that abundant store of provisions be laid up in them, so that when the enemy, by God's wrath against him, arrives there, he may not find anything that he can injure, but may go away disappointed.'

The peace negotiations seem after all not to have been finally concluded till the spring of 599. The the reason for such an inordinate delay (which reminds us of the prolonged negotiations of Munster or of Utrecht), is partly disclosed to us by a letter of the Pope to Theodore the Curator (or, as we should say, the Mayor) of Ravenna. From this we learn that after Agilulf the King and Callinicus the Exarch had been brought to agree as to the terms of peace, a difficulty arose as to its signature on the part of Ariulf and Arichis, the Dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, and strange to say on the part of Gregory also, who, when the object of his earnest strivings for seven years seemed at length within his grasp, displayed either a strain of morbid conscientiousness left in him by his cloister life, or else an ignoble desire to shield himself from responsibility, and make others his instruments for extracting the advantage by which he was to profit. Whatever the motive, he declined himself to sign the peace, offering

one of his suffragan bishops, or at any rate an archdeacon, as a substitute. The part of the letter which is important for our purpose is as follows:—

‘Our *responsales* have always brought us tidings about you which have gladdened our hearts, but now preeminently our son the abbot Probus has told us so much about your Glory’s liberal expenditure on behalf of peace, and the earnest desire which you have manifested for the same (a desire which was never displayed by any previous citizen of Ravenna), that we can only pray that your labours for the common weal may be abundantly repaid to your own soul hereafter. We observe therefore that Ariulf has sworn for the preservation of peace not [unconditionally] as the king himself swore, but only on condition (1) that there shall be no act of violence committed against him, and (2) that no one shall march against the army of Arichis. As this is altogether unfair and deceitful, we look upon the case precisely as if he had not sworn at all, for he will always find something to complain of as “an act of violence against himself,” and the less suspicious we are of him the more easily he will deceive us. Wamilfrida too, by whose counsel, or as I might say no-counsel, Ariulf is ruled in all things, absolutely refused to swear. And thus it has come to pass that from that peace from which we expected so much, we in these parts shall receive practically no remedy, because the enemies by whom we have hitherto been chiefly suspected will in future continue to suspect us.

‘Your Glory ought also to know that the king’s men who have been passed on hither insist that we ought to sign the agreement for peace. But remembering the reproaches which Agilulf is said to have addressed to Basilius, *Vir clarissimus*, tending through us to the injury of blessed Peter (though Agilulf himself entirely denies having thus spoken), we nevertheless decide to abstain from signing, lest we who have been suitors and mediators between him and our most excellent son the lord Exarch, if by chance anything is privately carried off, should seem to fail in any point, and so our own promise should be brought into doubt. Thus should any similar occasion arise in future (which God forbid), he will make an excuse for not granting our petition. We therefore beg of you, as we have already begged of our aforesaid most Excellent son, that you will, with your wonted goodness to us, bring it to pass that when the king’s men return from Arichis he shall speedily send them writings which are to be brought to us, and in which he shall command them not to ask for our signature. If that be conceded we will cause our brother Gloriosus, or one of the bishops, or at any rate an archdeacon, to sign the pact.’

In reading this letter we cannot but be struck by the distrust of Ariulf which is evidently displayed by the Pope. Had he himself come round to the opinion of the Emperor and did he look upon himself as fatuus for having seven years before listened to the fair words of the duke of Spoleto? The Pope’s relations with King Agilulf, too, seem far from friendly. The *Vir clarissimus* Basilius, whoever he may have been—probably some great Byzantine official—had made mischief between King and Pontiff by repeating some unguarded words of the former which Gregory chose to understand as reflecting injuriously on his honour, and through him on that of the blessed Peter.

But this was not the permanent relation of the two potentates. The influence of the devout Theudelinda was being ever exerted to smooth away asperities and to make her husband and her unknown friend Gregory kindly disposed one towards the other. It was probably through her influence that the difficulties which had arisen at the last moment, and which seemed so menacing, were smoothed away. The dukes of Spoleto and Benevento must have been persuaded to acquiesce in the proposed arrangement; the Pope’s guarantee must have been either obtained or dispensed with. In some way or other the weary negotiations were brought to a close and peace was concluded between Agilulf and Callinicus.

This chapter, devoted to the story of a peace which formed a turning-point in the history of Lombard Italy, may be fittingly ended by a translation of the two letters which the Pope addressed shortly before the conclusion of the peace to the king and queen of the Lombards.

‘To Agilulf, king of the Lombards:—

‘We render thanks to your Excellency that you have heard our petition, and justified the confidence which we had in you, by arranging a peace which will be profitable to both parties. Wherefore we greatly praise the wisdom and goodness of your Excellency, because in loving peace you have proved that you love God who is the author of peace. For if it had unhappily not been made, what else could have followed but the sin and danger of both parties, accompanied by the shedding of the blood of the miserable peasants whose labour is serviceable to both? But in order that we may feel that peace, as you have made it, we pray, while saluting you with fatherly love—that whenever opportunity offers, you will by your letters order your Dukes who are commanding in various districts. But especially in these parts, to keep this peace in its integrity, according to your promise, and not to look out for occasions of strife or unpleasantness. Thus doing you will earn from us yet ampler gratitude.

‘We have received the bearers of these presents, as being truly your servants, with proper affection: since it was right that we should give a loving greeting and farewell to wise men who announced the peace made by the favour of Almighty God.’

‘ To Theudelinda, queen of the Lombards:—

‘ We have learned, by the report of our son the abbot Probus, how kindly and zealously, according your wont, you have exerted yourself for the conclusion of peace. We knew that we might reckon on your Christianity for this, that you would by all means apply your labour and your goodness to the cause of peace. Therefore we render thanks to Almighty God, who has so ruled your heart as not only to bestow on you the true faith, but to cause you to accomplish His own decrees.

‘Do not think, most excellent daughter, that it is any trifling reward which you will reap from staying the effusion of blood on both sides. Therefore while thanking you for your willing help in this thing, we pray our compassionate God to give you His recompense for your good deeds both in body and soul, both here and hereafter.

‘Saluting you, moreover, with fatherly love, we exhort you to use your influence with your most excellent consort that he may not reject the alliance of the Christian Republic. For, as we think you know, it is in many ways expedient that he should be willing to accept its friendship. Do you therefore, according to your custom, ever study all that tends to grace and the reconciliation of foes, and when you have such an opportunity of earning reward, labour that you may yet more conspicuously recommend your good deeds before the eyes of Almighty God.’

CHAPTER X.

THE LAST YEARS OF GREGORY.

The peace of 599, though not final, marks the transition to a different, and more settled, state of affairs in Italy. Hitherto war had been the relation between the Empire and the Lombard invaders: henceforward peace, though doubtless a turbulent and often interrupted peace, prevailed. Both Empire and Papacy now recognized the fact that the presence of the intruders, however unwelcome and ‘unspeakable’ they might be, was no mere passing misery; that there was no hope of expelling them from the peninsula; little prospect even of inducing them to accept the nominal subordination of *foederati*; that they were settled in Italy as the Franks and Burgundians were settled in Gaul, and the Visigoths in Spain; and that the only thing now to be done was to defend the fragments of coast line, and the chain of posts along the Flaminian Way, which still owned the sway of the Roman Republic.

It would seem therefore that no more fitting place could be found for ending the history of Lombard Invasion, and beginning that of Lombard Rule in Italy, than this same year 599, which has also the advantage of coming at the close of a century. But there are two men, an Emperor and a Pope, whose names have occurred so frequently in my later pages, that for their sakes I shall include in this period the few years by which their lives overlap the six hundredth year from the birth of Christ.

One consideration, which probably weighed with the Emperor in favour of the peace so long urged by Gregory, and so long refused by him, was the fact that the Avars, those Huns of the sixth century, were keeping up desultory but worrying hostilities in the provinces south of the Danube; twice besieging the key-city of Singidunum (Belgrade), invading Dalmatia, and on one occasion (597) penetrating as far south as Thessalonica. There was probably some connection between these invasions and an embassy which the great Chagan of the Avars sent to Milan in order to ‘make peace’, by which we are probably to understand a treaty of alliance with King Agilulf. The movements of these Tartar swarms evidently exercised a powerful influence on the politics of Europe at this time, and, as in the days of Attila, a century and a half previously, inclined the earlier invaders of the Empire to seek for peace with one another and with ‘the Republic’. Issuing westwards from their quarters in Pannonia, they invaded Thuringia, and waged grievous war with the Franks, who were now over-lords of that country.

As with the Empire so also with the Franks, harassed by these sons of the wilderness, King Agilulf concluded a treaty of peace which was perhaps in their case a treaty of alliance. As we have seen, all the kings of the Franks were now in their infancy. Guntram, the uncle, king of Burgundy, had died in 593 : Childebert, the nephew, in 596. His two children, Theudebert II and Theodoric II, ruled in Austrasia and Burgundy. Their grandmother Brunichildis, expelled from Austrasia by the nobles, swayed the sceptre of Burgundy as regent over her infant grandson, and it was of course by her influence, though in the name of Theodoric, that a ‘perpetual’ peace was concluded between the Lombards and the Franks of the southern kingdom.

The Lombard king had in truth need of peace with his foreign foes in order to deal with domestic treason. Or perhaps we should state cause and effect in a different relation, and say that the conclusion of peace and the relaxation of the grasp on the forces of the State which the ‘war-power’ gave to the king, brought its opportunity to rebellion. Three dukes revolted: the irrepressible Gaidulf of Bergamo, already twice pardoned; Zangrulf of Verona, and Warnecaut,

who was perhaps duke of Pavia. All were defeated and slain by the energetic Agilulf, who wisely forbore from leaving Gaidulf under temptation to a fourth act of treason.

To Gregory the conclusion of the long wished for activity, peace brought in one sense rest, in another an immense increase of labour. Now was the time, when the roads were clear, and the Papal messengers could travel in safety, to order the affairs of the Churches, many of which had been lapsing into anarchy under the pressure of the times. Never probably, during the whole pontificate of Gregory, was the Papal chancery so busy as during this year of restored peace, 598-599. Of the 851 letters which make up the collection *Gregorii Epistolae*, 238, or more than one quarter of the whole, belong to this year.

A great number of these letters are addressed to the *defensores*, and relate to disputes about boundaries, the recovery of fugitive slaves, the administration of the estates of deceased persons, and matters of that kind. Many also are addressed to the sub-deacons, who had charge of the Papal Patrimony. The affairs to Sicily occupied a large amount of the Pope's attention, now no longer fixed with anxious gaze upon swords of the Lombards.' In Naples party-spirit was running high between two groups of citizens, and a grasping bishop was claiming privileges which properly belonged to the 'patron' of the city. In Gaul there were the ever-recurring difficulties, the licentious lives of the clergy, the wide prevalence of simony, the impossibility of getting the bishops to assemble in a synod; an impossibility which was probably due to the fact that the majority of them were conscious of deeds of their own, which would not bear the light of a judicial investigation. These are some of the subjects which were touched upon in the 240 letters of 'the Second Indiction'.

In one letter addressed by the Pope to the pay-master Donellus, entreating him to come without delay and pay the half-mutinous garrison of Rome their wages, we have a sentence which sounds like the sigh of an Italian patriot of our own times under Austrian domination. 'We grieve to hear that you have been troubled by sickness: but we trust in the Divine compassion that He, who has made you to love our miserable and depressed Italy, will both restore to you bodily health, and reward you with eternal life.'

The same letter concludes—'The city of Rome, doubtless owing to our sins, is so reduced by the languor of various diseases, that there are hardly men enough left to guard the walls'. And in another letter of about the same date, the Pope says:—'Such grievous febrile languors have attacked the clergy and people of this city, that scarce any man remains, free or slave, able to undertake any charge or duty. From the neighbouring cities also we hear daily reports of destructive mortality. And how Africa is being wasted by disease and death you doubtless know more accurately than we, as being closer to the scene of events. They, too, who come from the East report yet more terrible desolations there. All these things point to the approaching end of the world'. We hear from Paulus that this pestilence was especially severe at Ravenna and all along the sea-coast (probably therefore ravaging Roman Italy more grievously than the mountainous interior which was in the hands of the Lombards); and that in the following year a terrible mortality laid waste the inhabitants of the district round Verona.

Gregory himself, though he apparently escaped the fever, was more cruelly than ever racked by gout. We may perhaps infer that the busy energy of the summer of 599, during all of which time he was fighting against this persistent enemy, brought him at last to so low a point that work became almost impossible; for the 240 letters of 'the Second Indiction' are succeeded by only twenty letters in the following year; one of the poorest harvests in the whole collection. He himself says to his correspondents¹ in Sicily,

'For my sins I have now for eleven months been able only very rarely to rise from my bed. Such are the pains inflicted upon me by gout and other infirmities, that life is to me the heaviest of punishments. Every day I faint with the pain and wait with sighing for the remedy

of death.’ And again, in a later letter, July 600, addressed to the Patriarch of Alexandria, he says:—

‘I received last year the very sweet letters of your Holiness, which I have not hitherto been able to answer, on account of my exceeding sickness. For behold! it is now all but two years that I have been confined to my bed, and so tortured with the pains of gout, that scarcely on festival days have I been able to rise for the space of three hours to celebrate the rites of the Mass. Then I am forced to lie down, in such severe pain, that only an occasional groan enables me to bear my agony. This pain in my case is sometimes gentle, sometimes intense, but never so gentle as to depart, nor so intense as to kill me. Hence I am daily dying, and daily driven back from death.’

So the two years of peace wore away in Italy. There were fears of an invasion of Alamanni, but they were not fulfilled. The dukes of Benevento and Spoleto seem to have come in to the peace, and to have lived on friendly terms with their Roman neighbour. It is even thought by some that Arichis, the duke of Benevento, renounced his Arianism, and became a member of the Catholic Church; but this is perhaps too large an inference to draw from the fact that in the only letter which the Pope addressed to him, and which was probably written in the year 599, he accosts him ‘as in truth our son’.

At length the two years’ peace came to an end. Notwithstanding the anxious fears of Gregory, it would perhaps have been renewed by Agilulf, for the perfidious act of the Exarch, who thought by the seizure of a hostage to force the Lombard king to renew the peace on less favourable terms. A daughter of Agilulf by his first wife was dwelling with her husband Gottschalk at Parma, of which place Gottschalk was probably duke. It may have been owing to the security born of the two years’ peace (though we are not expressly told that this was the case), that the princely couple were taken unawares by the soldiers of Callinicus, who suddenly appeared before the city, and carried them off to Ravenna.

It seems to have been a felon stroke, and it utterly missed its aim. Far from being intimidated by his daughter’s danger, Agilulf was roused to a more vigorous prosecution of the war. He made overtures for a fresh league with the Chagan of the terrible Avars, and sent him shipwrights, from the Italian ports under his sway, to help him to construct ships for warlike operations against Thrace. Agilulf himself then moved against the great city of Patavium (Padua), which till this time had successfully resisted the arms of the Lombards. He succeeded in kindling a conflagration by means of fiery bolts hurled into the city. The garrison saw that they could no longer hold the place, and surrendered to Agilulf, who, honouring their bravery, allowed them to depart uninjured to Ravenna. The city itself, we are told, was levelled with the ground; the second time within two centuries that this fate had befallen the proud city of Livy.

At this time the ambassadors who had been sent to the Chagan of the Avars returned, announcing that he had graciously concluded a perpetual peace with the Lombards. The great barbarian sent also an ambassador of his own, who proceeded to the courts of the Frankish kings, and announced to them his master’s pleasure that they should dwell at peace with his Lombard friend.

The next year was a prosperous one for Agilulf. The Lombards, with their Avar and Slavonic allies, entered Istria, which they laid waste with fire and sword. In the Po valley, the arms of the Lombards achieved a signal success by the reduction of the Mountain of Flint (*Monselice*), which had been one of the few islands rising above the flood of barbarian conquest.

There was great joy also in the new palace at Modicia (*Monza*), which Queen Theudelinda had built and adorned with paintings of the victories of the Lombards. Here in this barbaric Versailles, Queen Theudelinda, after eleven years of married life, gave birth to her firstborn son, who was named Adalwald, and who was baptized according to the Catholic rite

by Secundus of Trient, the historian to whom Paulus was indebted for most of his knowledge of this period. This was a signal triumph for Catholicism. Agilulf's predecessor had sternly forbidden the Lombard nobles to have their children baptized by Catholic bishops, and now King Agilulf himself, though probably still making profession of Arianism, permitted his own son to be held over the baptismal font by a Catholic ecclesiastic.

The year of Adalwald's birth also witnessed the reconciliation of the two great dukes, Gaidwald of Trient, and Gisulf of Friuli, who had before been estranged from Agilulf, if not actually in rebellion against him, but who now came in and submitted themselves to his rule.

Meanwhile there was a change in the occupants of the Imperial palace at Constantinople and of the Exarch's palace at Ravenna. The year 602 saw downfall of the Emperor Maurice, with circumstances which will shortly be related, and also saw the removal of Callinicus, who was replaced as Exarch by Smaragdus, the same capable, but somewhat headstrong official, who had been recalled from Ravenna thirteen years before for his too harsh treatment of the Istrian schismatics. The recall of Callinicus at this juncture may have been connected with the revolution at Constantinople, but seems sufficiently accounted for by the conspicuous failure of his dastardly blow at the family of the Lombard king, and by an actual defeat which he is said to have suffered under the walls of Ravenna.

The change of rulers did not, however, make any difference in the fortunes of the war. The year 603 beheld the most triumphant of all the campaigns of Agilulf. Going forth from Milan in the month of July, he laid siege to the city of Cremona. There were among his troops a number of Slavonic barbarians, whom his great ally, the Chagan of the Avars, had sent to serve under his banners. On the 21st of August Cremona was taken, and, according to Paulus, was levelled with the ground. It is hardly likely, however, that the Lombard king would thus utterly destroy a large and wealthy city just added to his dominions. It seems more probable that it was only the fortifications that were destroyed, as in the case of the African and cities taken by Gaiseric. From Cremona he marched against its old neighbour Mantua, beat down its walls with battering-rams, and entered the city on the 13th of September, having admitted the garrison to an honourable surrender, and allowed them to return to Ravenna. He also captured the little town of Vulturina, the position of which is unknown, but which was probably situated upon the northern bank of the Po, not far from Parma, for we are told that the garrison in their flight from Vulturina set the town of Brixellum on fire. Brixellum (now Brescello) was the town on the south bank of the Po, about ten miles from Parma, which as the reader may remember, the Alaman Droctulf had long held for the Empire against the Lombards. It was, however, at last surrendered to King Authari, and, as a Lombard town, was now set on fire by the fleeing garrison of Vulturina.

The fortune of war was so evidently going against the Imperial arms that, in September of this year, Smaragdus was glad to make peace with Agilulf. Hostilities were to cease for eighteen months, till the 1st of April, 605. King Agilulf evidently retained all his conquests, and—most striking confession of Imperial failure—his daughter was restored with her husband and children. The princess returned to her home of Parma, but the story of her captivity had an unhappy ending. She died in child-bed almost immediately after her return from Ravenna. Would that we knew more of this strange and pathetic little incident in the meagre annals of the time! The princess, whose very name is hidden from us, dwelt probably for two years and a half with her husband and children in captivity at Ravenna. How gladly would we hear something of the effect which the imperial and ecclesiastical splendours of the city by the Ronco produced on the daughter of the Thuringians; of her relations with the two Exarchs who successively ruled there; of the terms of her captivity, whether easy or severe; of the Exarch's announcement to her that she was free; of the scene of her restoration to her father's arms, and

of his emotions when he heard that a mightier than the Exarch had carried her off into the captivity from which there is no returning!

The total effect of these operations of 601-603 was greatly to enlarge the Lombard boundary. The whole valley of the Po was now in the possession of the invaders; the communication by land with the cities of the Venetian lagunes was cut off; there was now no Imperial city of importance in Italy north of the latitude of Ravenna. No change of frontier occurred for a generation of equal extent with that which followed on the abduction of the daughter of Agilulf.

We have followed the course of events in Italy down to the autumn of 603; but we must now return to the close of the preceding year in order to notice the revolution which, in November, 602, was accomplished at Constantinople.

From his correspondence with Gregory, the reader will probably have already formed a fair estimate of the character of Flavius Tiberius Mauricius Augustus. He was neither a bad nor a foolish man, but he often did the right things in the wrong way, and he had not that power of achieving personal popularity which has been possessed by many rulers of far inferior capacity. A skillful general and author of a book of some authority on Strategics, Maurice was nevertheless unpopular with the army. An orthodox Churchman, he, nevertheless, on account of his quarrel with Pope Gregory, earned a bad name in ecclesiastical history. Inheriting an exhausted treasury from his lavish predecessor Tiberius, he failed to make his subjects understand that 'his poverty, and not his will, consented' to retrenchments which they thought mean and unworthy of the Imperial dignity. In civic politics Maurice leaned to the faction of the Blues, which seems to have been weaker than that of the Greens, and at a critical period of the revolution he unwisely armed both factions in order to form a city-guard against the mutinous soldiers. The remote cause of his downfall appears to have been his refusal (in the year 600) to ransom 12,000 soldiers (possibly deserters), who were in the power of the Chagan of the Avars, and who, being unransomed, were put to death by the barbarian. This refusal, which was perhaps due in part to absolute poverty, in part to notions of military discipline, like those which prompted the well-known speech of Regulus to the Roman Senate, sank deep into the hearts of the soldiery; and when, in 602, Maurice issued orders that to save the expense of their rations the Danubian army should spend the winter in the cold and inhospitable regions inhabited by the Sclavonians, the long-suppressed anger of the legions burst into a flame. They defied the Emperor's power, refused to cross the Danube, and raising one of their officers, the centurion Phocas, on a shield, after the fashion of the barbarians, they saluted him, not indeed as yet with the title of Emperor, but with the only less splendid name of Exarch.

The full details of the revolution need not be given here, as they belong rather to the history of the East than of Italy, and they have been already to some extent anticipated in connection with the history of Germanus Postumus, the great-grandson of Theodoric, and the great-nephew of Justinian, who was for a time an unwilling candidate for the Imperial dignity, but who was eventually put to death by the usurper, after he had used that venerated name as a cloak for his own ambition.

It may not, however, be out of place to give the outlines of the story of the fall of Maurice as it is told by Joannes Diaconus, who probably preserves that version which early obtained credence in Italy.

Through the barbarous and obscure Latinity of the biographer we can discern something of the internal struggle in the Emperor's mind, distracted between his duty to the State and his fear for the safety of his soul if he continued in opposition to the Pope. 'Most covetous and most tenacious of Emperors,' (says the Deacon),—Maurice perceived that Gregory, who had been raised to the pontificate by his vote, no longer needed the Emperor's defence against the tumults of the time, but relied on spiritual help, on the force of the canon law, on his own

holiness and prudence to overcome the dangers by which he was surrounded. While partly admiring his courage, Maurice was drawn away more and more to hatred and detraction of the great Pontiff, and at length wrote him that sharp letter of rebuke for wasting the stores of corn [and listening to the peace propositions of Ariulf], to which Gregory replied in the famous letter beginning 'In serenissimis jussionibus' which was quoted in an earlier chapter.

The boldness of this reply moved Maurice both to admiration and to anger, and he would probably have proceeded to some act of tyrannical oppression against the Pope, but for a strange scene which was enacted in the streets of Constantinople. A certain man, clothed in monastic garb, and endued with superhuman energy, walked, bearing a drawn sword in his hand, from the Forum to the brazen statue of the gladiator, proclaiming to all the bystanders that the Emperor should die by the sword. (The biographer's manner of telling the story leaves us in doubt whether he is describing a supernatural appearance or the bold deed of some enthusiast.) When Maurice heard this prediction he at once forbore all further acts of violence against Gregory, and set himself with earnestness to avert the coming judgment. He sent not only to Gregory, but to all the Patriarchs, bishops, and abbots in his dominions messengers bearing costly gifts, money, tapers, and frankincense, accompanied by his written petition, to which he besought them to add their suffrages, that it would please God to punish him for his sins in this life, and to deliver him from endless torment. This for long was the burden of his tearful prayer. At length one night in his slumbers he saw himself standing with a great multitude by the brazen statue of the Saviour, at the brazen gate of the palace. Lo! a voice, a terrible voice, issued from the mouth of the Incarnate Word, 'Bring Maurice hither and the ministers of judgment brought him, and laid him down before the Judge. With the same terrible voice the statue said, 'Where dost thou wish that I should requite to thee the ills that thou hast wrought in this world?' 'Oh! Lover of men,' the Emperor answered, 'Oh! Lord, and righteous Judge, requite me here, and not in the world to come.' At once the divine voice ordered that 'Maurice and his wife Constantina, with their sons and daughters, and all their kinship, should be handed over to Phocas the soldier'. When the Emperor awoke, he sent a chamberlain to summon his son-in-law Philippicus, whom he had long suspected of treasonable designs upon the throne. Philippicus came in, trembling, having taken, as he supposed, a last embrace of his wife Gordia, and having fortified himself with the Holy Communion. When he entered the Emperor's sleeping apartment, and, according to custom, prostrated himself at his feet, Maurice raised him up, and, performing the same prostration, said, 'Pardon me, I pray, for I now know, by a revelation from God, that thou hast harboured none of the evil designs against me, of which I suspected thee. But tell me if in all our armies thou knowest a man who passes by the name of Phocas'. Then Philippicus, after long musing, answered, 'One man called Phocas I do know, who was lately named procurator by the army, and who was murmuring against your rule'. 'What manner of man is he?' said the Emperor. 'Young and rash,' answered Philippicus, 'but timid withal.' Then said Maurice, 'If he is timid, he will also be a murderer.'

While he was still in doubt and fear over this business an Imperial messenger¹ brought back the answer of some holy hermits to whom he had been sent—'God has accepted thy repentance. Thou and all thy house shall be saved, and shall have your dwelling with the saints above, but thou shalt fall from the throne with disgrace and danger.'

When Maurice heard these words he thanked God and continued his acts of penitence. His covetousness, however, he could not eradicate, and thus it came to pass that he ordered his troops to winter in perilous places, crossing over the Danube to seek their food at the risk of their lives in the country of the Sclavonians, that they might not eat their rations at the expense of the State. These orders were conveyed to the general Peter (brother of the Emperor), who, summoning his officers, said, 'These orders of the Emperor that we should winter in the enemy's country seem to me too hard. I am placed in a most difficult position. Disobedience to

orders is disastrous, but obedience seems more disastrous still. Nothing good comes out of avarice, which is the mother of all the vices; and that is the disease under which the Emperor is now suffering, and which makes him the author of such grievous ills to the Romans.'

Then came, as has been already said, the open mutiny of the army, their elevation of Phocas on the shield, his proclamation as Exarch. The mutineers offered the diadem successively to Theodosius, son of the Emperor, and to Germanus, the father-in-law of Theodosius, who both refused it, and acquainted Maurice with the offer that had been made them. Germanus, however, seeing that he had roused the Emperor's suspicions, took refuge in the church of the Theotokos. Maurice looked upon his son as a traitor, and ordered him to be flogged, and he then sent many persons to draw Germanus forth from the shelter of the church of St. Sophia, to which he had removed from that of the Theotokos. The multitude, however, would not permit Germanus to be removed, and broke out into shouts of invective against Maurice, calling him a Marcionite heretic. Unnerved by the tumult, Maurice went on board a swift cutter with his wife and children, and reached the sanctuary of the martyr Autonomus, on the Bithynian coast. Meanwhile Phocas arrived at the palace of the Hebdomon, outside the gate of Constantinople, and, after some little dallying and delay, during which the claims of Germanus to the vacant throne were advocated by the Blue faction, Phocas himself was proclaimed Emperor.

Possibly Maurice might have been left unmolested in his sanctuary, but for the injudicious cry of the offended Blues at the coronation of the new Empress Leontia:—'Begone: understand the position: Maurice is not dead'. An officer was sent to Chalcedon to slay the Emperor and his four younger sons; Theodosius, the eldest, having started on the eastward road to seek the assistance of the Persian king. As each of the young princes yielded up his life, the fallen Emperor, determined to drink the cup of his punishment to the dregs, repeated the verse, 'Thou art just, Oh! Lord, and true are thy judgments'. The youngest of the tribe was but a baby, and the nurse, who was rearing him, with 'splendid mendacity' tried to substitute her own child for the Imperial nurseling, but Maurice, as nobly unselfish, insisted on proclaiming the truth, and gave his own little one to the sword. Last of all, the Emperor himself was slain. His martyr death revealed the essential nobleness of his nature, and seems to demand a merciful judgment on a life marked indeed by many mistakes, but, as far as we can see, stained by no crime.

The young and attractive prince Theodosius, returning from his eastern journey, at its first stage fell into the hands of the usurper's creatures and was slain. The widowed Empress Constantina, her daughters, and Germanus, were put to death about three years afterwards. By the end of 605 there was no scion left of the once flourishing house of Mauricius Augustus.

Too soon the soldiers and the people of Constantinople found out the terrible mistake which they had made in exchanging a just and noble-hearted, if somewhat unsympathetic, ruler for that monster of lust and cruelty, the imbecile and brutal Phocas, whose reign is perhaps the darkest page in all the annals of Byzantium. We are indeed bound to read with some caution the character of a monarch, written by the courtiers of the rival who dethroned him. The dynasty of Heraclius, who in 610 ended the horrible nightmare of the reign of Phocas, wore the imperial purple for the greater part of a century; and we, therefore, ought to treat the history of Phocas, as told by the meagre historians of that century, in something of the same spirit in which modern critics treat the Tudor historians' description of the deeds and character of Richard III; but after every deduction has been made, there can be no doubt that Phocas was a jealous, lecherous and cruel tyrant, besides being intellectually quite unfit to wield the sceptre of a great empire, and that the eight years of his reign were one of the gloomiest and most disastrous periods in Byzantine history.

The death of Maurice took place on the 27th of November, 602. Probably some indistinct rumours of the revolution reached Rome before the formal Embassy, but it was on the 25th of

April, 603, that the statues of the August Phocas and Leontia were brought to Rome, accompanied by letters in which the crowned trooper addressed the Senate and People of Rome in terms of the utmost condescension. The clergy and the Senate assembled in the great Julian basilica, near the Papal palace of the Lateran, and shouted the customary acclamations to the new Augustus and the new Augusta. The statues were then carried, by order of the Pope, into the oratory of S. Caesarius, in the Lateran Palace, and erected there; and then Pope Gregory sat down to compose his answer to the Imperial proclamation.

It might have seemed that he had a difficult task before him. He had himself, in the earlier stages of his career, been somewhat indebted to the deceased Emperor's friendship. Of later years it is true that the relations between them had been much strained, and the angry correspondence of the years 595 to 597 had apparently been succeeded by an angrier silence. But if the Pope's relations with Maurice himself had of late been hostile, with his family he had ever been on terms of friendship. He had written letters of fatherly love and tenderness to the Empress Constantina; he had raised her eldest son, Theodosius, from the baptismal font; he had interested himself in the education of the little occupants of the Imperial nursery. And now Constantina was in forced seclusion; Theodosius, if yet living, was a fugitive; the other princes, down to the youngest of them, had been slain in their innocent childhood by the order of an usurper. And to that usurper Gregory had now to address congratulatory letters on his accession. As has been already said, the task, to an ordinary man of the world, might have seemed a difficult one. To the infinite disappointment and disgust of all honest champions of the great Pope's reputation, it must be admitted that he found in the task no difficulty at all. He could not rise to the level of the Jewish chieftain who poured forth his glorious song of lamentation over the relentless enemy who had fallen on Mount Gilboa. The thought of the desolate widow and murdered infants seems never to have crossed his mind; he only remembered the slights offered to his priestly dignity, the monarch who had dared to call him fatuous; the Patriarch who had used the abhorred word 'ecumenical'; and, because Phocas had trampled on the man who dared to use the one word and to defend the other, he addressed that murderous usurper with Hosannas like those uttered by the crowd at Christ's entry into Jerusalem:—

'Glory to God in the highest—to Him who according to the Scripture changeth times and transferreth kingdoms. For He hath made all men to perceive that which He deigned to speak by the mouth of His prophet:—"The Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will". In the incomprehensible providence of Almighty God the destinies of our mortal lives alternate one with another. Sometimes, when the sins of many have to be punished, one is exalted, by whose sternness the necks of his subjects are pressed under the yoke of tribulation; and this we have experienced in our own long afflictions. Then again, when the merciful God decides to cheer the sorrowing hearts of many by His own consolation, He raises one man to the height of power, by whose tender compassion He pours the oil of His own gladness into the hearts of all men. With this abounding gladness we are persuaded that we shall soon be refreshed, we who do already rejoice that the kindness of your Piety has arrived at the summit of Imperial greatness. "Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad." By your benign actions may all the citizens of our Republic, till now so grievously afflicted, regain their cheerfulness of soul. Under the yoke of your rule may the proud minds of our enemies be pressed down. By your compassion may the contrite and dejected hearts of your subjects be raised up again—may the power of the heavenly grace make you terrible to your enemies; may your piety make you merciful to your subjects. In your most happy days may the whole Republic have rest, an end being put to those ravages of peace which are made under the guise of law. May the ambushade of testaments, may the pretence of voluntary gifts exacted by violence be done away. Let all men have once again secure possession of their own property,

that they may enjoy without trembling that which they have honestly acquired. Under the yoke of a pious Emperor let liberty be fashioned anew for every man. For this it is which makes the difference between the kings of the nations and the Emperors of the Republic, that the former are lords of slaves, and the latter of free men.

‘But we can say all this better in prayer than in exhortation. May Almighty God in every thought and word hold the heart of your Piety in the hand of His grace, and whatever is to be done with justice, whatever is to be done with clemency, may the Holy Spirit, inhabiting your breast, direct you to these things, so that your Clemency may be made sublime by your temporal reign, and that after many years have run their course you may attain to the Heavenly Kingdom’.

Again two months later, in sending an *apocrisiarius* to represent him at the Imperial Court, the Pope continued in the same strain of virulent abuse of the fallen, and fulsome flattery of the reigning, Emperor:—

‘I delight to think, with a grateful heart, what praise is due to Almighty God for removing the yoke of our sadness, and bringing us to days of liberty under the pious rule of your Imperial kindness.

‘That your Serenity did not find a deacon from the Apostolic See dwelling in your palace according to ancient custom, must be ascribed not to my negligence, but to our sore need. For as all the ministers of our Church shunned and declined such hard times [as had to be endured by our *apocrisiarius* at Constantinople], I could not lay upon them the burden of going to the royal city to abide in the palace. But as soon as they knew that, by the disposing grace of Almighty God, your Clemency had arrived at the summit of the Empire, they who had hitherto trembled, were now eager in the promptings of their joy, to hasten to your feet. But as some of them are prevented by the infirmity of age, and others by the cares of the Church, from undertaking this duty, I have chosen the bearer of these presents [Bonifacius], who is the first of all our *defensor* of long tried diligence, and fit by his life, faith, and manners, to wait upon the footsteps of your Piety. I have therefore ordained him deacon, and sent him with all speed, that he may at a fitting time convey to your Clemency tidings of all that is going on here. May your Serenity deign to incline your pious ears to him, and so be the more quickly moved to pity our affliction, by hearing from him the true relation of it. For in what fashion we have now for the long space of thirty-five years been oppressed by the daily swords of the Lombards, and how their inroads have afflicted us, no words of ours are adequate to express.

‘But we trust in the Almighty Lord, that He will perfect for us those good gifts of His consolation which He has already begun, and that He who has raised up pious rulers for the Republic will also extinguish her cruel foes. May the Holy Trinity long guard your life, that we may have the longer fruition of the blessing of your Piety, which we have so late received’.

At the same time Gregory wrote thus to the new Empress Leontia, who was inhabiting doubtless the very rooms which had witnessed the orisons of the pious Constantina, and echoed to the prattle of the children whom the husband of Leontia had murdered:—

‘What tongue can utter, what heart can conceive, the thanks which we owe to Almighty God for the serenity of your Empire, that the hard weight which so long pressed upon us is removed from our necks, and that light yoke of the Imperial majesty which the subjects love to bear, has taken its place? Let glory therefore be given to the Creator of all by the hymning choirs on high:—let thanks be brought by men upon the earth:—because the whole Republic, which has borne so many sorrowful wounds, has now found the fomentings of your consolation.’

Gregory then goes on to pray that God, who holds the hearts of kings in His right hand, may turn the hearts of Phocas and Leontia into His service, and make them as zealous defenders of the Catholic faith as they are benign rulers of the state; that Leontia may be

another Pulcheria in clemency—another Helena in zeal for the true religion. As they love the Creator of all, so are they bound to love the Church of that Apostle, to whom it was said, ‘Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church’. May they give their relieved subjects joy on earth, and themselves receive, after a long reign, the eternal joys of heaven.

These letters, written in July, 603, are nearly the last that we shall have to notice as proceeding from the pen of the great Pontiff.

In December of the same year he wrote to Queen Theudelinda thanking her for a letter which she had written from Genoa announcing the Catholic baptism of her son Adalwald. The tortures of gout prevented him from replying at that time to the doubts which had been instilled into her mind by her spiritual adviser Secundus, with reference to the ‘Three Chapters’ controversy; but he sent the Acts of the Fifth General Council in order to show that nothing had really been done thereat in derogation of the council of Chalcedon. He sent, moreover, certain presents which may have fascinated the gaze of the baby convert.

‘We send our most excellent son, Adalwald the king, certain charms, namely, a cross with the wood of our Lord’s cross, a manuscript of the Holy Gospel enclosed in an embroidered case. To his sister, my daughter, I send three rings, two with jacinths and one with an onyx, and I pray you to hand these presents to your children, that so your Excellency may foster their love towards us. Saluting you with fatherly love, we pray you to give thanks to our most excellent son the king your consort, for the peace which has been made. As your manner has ever been, incline his heart by all means to peace in the future, that so, besides your many other good actions, you may earn from God the reward of an innocent people saved, who might otherwise have perished unshriven’.

During all this time the Pope’s bodily infirmities were increasing. His once portly frame was shrunken and withered by the gout, and by the daily worries of his life. Sometimes he was simply tortured with pain, and at other times a strange fire seemed to spread along with the pain through his body: the fire and the pain seemed to fight together, and body and mind alike gave way under the

In February, 603 he wrote:—‘I live in such wailing and worry that I regret to see the light of each fresh day; and my only comfort is the expectation of death. Wherefore, I beg you to pray for me, that I may be the sooner led forth from this prison-house of the flesh, and that I be not any longer tortured by such agonies.’

It is pleasant to have to record that almost the last letter which we have from Gregory’s pen is one which shows his thoughtfulness for others in the midst of his own daily sufferings. In January, 604, he wrote to the bishop of Perugia that he heard that ‘our brother and fellow-bishop’ Ecclesius was suffering from the cold, because he had no winter garment. He had asked the Pope to send him something, and accordingly Gregory sent a two-ply wrapper, a tunic and a waistcoat, which were to be forwarded from Perugia with all speed to the shivering bishop. ‘Be sure that you lose no time in executing this commission, and write to us at once that you have done it, for the cold is intense.’

Soon after writing this letter, the great Pontiff’s long struggle with life was ended. He died on March 11, 604, and was buried on the following day at the east end of the basilica of St. Peter. After the death of the man, who for fourteen years had been indisputably the foremost figure in the Italian peninsula, there was some trace of that reaction which is so often perceived when a commanding personality, such as that of Augustus, of Elizabeth, of Cromwell, is removed from the world; and, strange to say, it was the open-handed liberality of the deceased Pope which was chosen as the point of attack by his calumniators. The stories of what happened in Rome after his death are obscure, and reach us only through authors who lived two or three centuries after the event; but there is probably in them some vague echo of the truth. Paulus Diaconus tells us that Sabinianus, Pope Gregory’s successor, refused to

continue his predecessors lavish charities to the people, averring that if he did, the corn-magazines would be exhausted and they would all die of hunger. Thrice did Gregory appear to him in a vision to warn him to repent and change his course, but in vain. A fourth time he appeared, and vehemently rebuked him, and struck him on the head with his staff. Soon after (in February, 606) Sabinianus died.

According to the story told by Joannes Diaconus, Gregory's later biographer, the Pope's death was followed almost immediately by a famine in Rome. (This at least seems to be an undoubted fact.) Certain calumnious persons (Sabinianus' name is not expressly mentioned) stirred up the people, alleging that Gregory had been a spendthrift, and had wasted the treasures of his patriarchate. Hereupon the mob assembled with tumultuous cries, and began to talk of burning the late Pope's books. His friend the deacon Peter ran in among the crowd and earnestly sought to dissuade them, declaring that he had often seen the Holy Spirit hovering over the late Pope's head in the form of a dove, while he was writing his books. The people shouted, 'Swear to this till death, and we will not burn the books'. Hereupon Peter ascended the 'ambo' with the Gospels in his hand, swore the required oath, and 'breathed out his spirit amid his true confession'.

The character of Pope Gregory, truly called the Great, has been sufficiently indicated by what has been here recorded of his deeds, and quoted of his words. The one great blot upon his escutcheon, his jubilation over the downfall of Maurice, and his fulsome praise of the tyrant his successor, can be palliated by no lover of truth and justice; and it is grievous to think how much more stainless his record would have been had his cruel enemy, the gout, carried him off only one year before the actual date of his death. We must admit, however, that a man of deep spiritual discernment, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his Master, would not have written either the congratulatory epistles to Phocas, or many another letter in the great collection, which denotes impatience and an angry temper. On the whole, it seems safer to judge him as a great Roman, than as a great saint;—and thus considered, his generosity, his justice, his courage, entitle him to a high place among the noblest names of his imperial race. In estimating his character we must never forget that, during all his public life, he was almost incessantly tortured by disease. That little passage in his biography which describes how he used to train the choir in the convent which had been his father's house, seems to me emblematic of much in the life of Gregory. In the midst of a tumultuous and discordant generation, it is his to bear witness to the eternal harmony. But he is stretched upon the bed of sickness; his frame is racked by pain; he holds the rod of discipline in his hand, and ever and anon, as he starts up to chastise the offender, he feels a sharper twinge than usual of his ever-present agony; and this gives an energy to his stroke, and a bitterness to his words, of which he himself is hardly conscious. At any rate, there can be no doubt of the world- historical importance of this man, the last of the great Romans of the Empire, the true founder of the Mediaeval Papacy.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ISTRIAN SCHISM.

I have postponed to this place the description of some ecclesiastical events which took place in the North of Italy during the latter part of the sixth century, and which exercised a powerful influence over the political condition of the cities of the Northern Adriatic, especially over that of the rising Venetian Commonwealth, during the greater part of the Lombard rule.

It is necessary to remind the reluctant reader of that dreary page in ecclesiastical history known as the controversy of the Three Chapters. Most futile and most inept of all the arguments that even ecclesiastics ever wrangled over, that controversy nominally turned on the question whether three Syrian bishops of irreproachable lives, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Theodoret of Cyrrhus, and Ibas of Edessa, were to be stigmatized, a century or more after their deaths, as suffering the punishment of everlasting fire, because the Emperor Justinian, sitting in the library of his palace at the dead of night, and ceaselessly turning over the rolls of the writings of the Fathers, had discovered in the works of these three men the germs of the Nestorian heresy. That was nominally the issue, but, as all men knew, something more than this trifling matter was really involved. The writings of these three Syrians had been received without condemnation, if not with actual applause, at the great Council of Chalcedon; and the real question was whether the Eastern Emperors should be allowed to inflict a backhanded blow on the authority of that Council by throwing out the souls of these three hapless Syrians to the Monophysite wolves of Egypt and of Asia, who were forever howling after the Imperial chariot. The Council of Chalcedon was dear to the Western, especially dear to the Roman, heart. In it a check had been inflicted on the audacious speculations of Oriental ascetics; by it the Tome of the great pontiff Leo had been accepted almost as a fresh revelation, or (it would perhaps be better to say) as the best expression of Christian common sense on the matters in dispute, and had been used as a bulwark against the ever-rising tide of irreverent speculation into which the Fullers and the Weasels and the other grotesquely-named theologians of Alexandria delighted to plunge.

No Roman Pope would willingly connive at anything which seemed like disrespect to the Council of Chalcedon. Vigilius had struggled, we have seen how desperately, to avoid the slight on that Council which was involved in the condemnation of the Three Chapters; but having obeyed the Imperial summons to Constantinople, he had found that he was in the power of one stronger than himself, and, after doubling backwards and forwards like a frightened hare, he had at last yielded his reluctant but final consent to the proceedings of the Fifth Council, by which the Three Chapters were condemned.

After the Holy See had once irrevocably committed itself to the propositions of Justinian, it could not be accused of lukewarmness in its newly-adopted cause. No partisans are more bitter than those who have a position which they declared they would never surrender, and who in their secret hearts envy the courage of its remaining defenders; a courage which they themselves have not dared to imitate. And thus it came to pass that for something like a century and a half the Roman Pontiffs oppressed with unusual bitterness and acrimony the men who were called the defenders of the Three Chapters, and who still struggled to maintain the position which a Pope had once fought for, and which was almost universally held in the Western Church when Justinian first started his idle controversy.

As far as we can discern, the condemnation of the Three Chapters was for a generation or more an unpopular measure in Italy generally as well as in Africa, but the peculiar geographical position and political circumstances of one province, that of Istria, caused the

opposition there to be more stubborn and long-enduring, and to assume more completely the character of schism than in other parts of Italy.

The peninsula of Istria, stretching forth into the Adriatic Sea at its northern end, whose coast, during the sixth century, was still lined with fair cities which owned the sway of the Empire, formed one province with the mainland and islands to the West which bore the name of Venetia. But this province was now so circumscribed by the conquests of the Lombards, especially in the Western portion, that its full name, 'Venetia et Istria', was often abbreviated, and it was called 'Istria' alone. The chief city of the province was Aquileia, for which, notwithstanding its awful destruction by Attila, its ecclesiastical supremacy had procured a fresh lease of life, though doubtless with greatly diminished splendour.

The Patriarch of Aquileia was still therefore an important ecclesiastical personage, perhaps the most important between Ravenna and Constantinople. Paulinus, who was Patriarch of Aquileia from about 558 to 570, raised the standard of ecclesiastical rebellion against the Fifth Council and the condemnation of the Three Chapters, and refused to communicate with Pope Pelagius, the successor of Vigilius, whom he regarded as a betrayer of the faith. The Pope retorted by urging Narses, who was then ruling Italy with an all-powerful hand, to seize both Paulinus of Aquileia and the bishop of Milan (who had consecrated Paulinus in defiance of a Papal mandate, and who probably shared his views), and to carry both these ecclesiastics to Constantinople, where they were no doubt to be subjected to the same gentle arguments which had enlightened the mind of Vigilius as to the damnation of the three Syrians. Narses, however, seems to have wisely refused to meddle in such matters; and though the schism was now formally begun, and was apparently shared by all the bishops of Istria, the dispute seems to have slumbered, till in 568 the Lombard avalanche descended upon Italy.

It was probably very soon after this event that Paulinus, fearing the barbarity of the Lombards, fled the island of Grado, taking with him all the treasures of the Church. He died soon after, about the year 570, very likely worn out with the terrors of the times and the hardships incidental to his new abode, for Grado is a poor little island at the mouth of the Isonzo, and probably offered no accommodation for a Patriarch and his retinue at all comparable to that which they had enjoyed in the neighbouring Aquileia. His successor Probinus also died, after a very short enjoyment of his dignity (about 570-571), and a man bearing the name of the prophet Elias was elected in his stead (571-586). In his days a step was taken which gave a new importance to the little island of Grado. For ten years or so the settlement in that island had been considered a mere temporary expedient. The Istrian clergy, like so many other subjects of the Emperor, looked upon the Lombard invasion as the overflow of a barbaric flood, which would soon pass away, allowing the dry land of the Roman Republic once again to appear. But by the year 579 this cherished hope had been of necessity abandoned, and on the third of November in that year a Council was held at Grado, under the presidency of Council of Elias, at which it was formally decreed that the city of Grado should receive the title of 'the new Aquileia,' and should be declared in perpetuity the metropolis of the whole province of Venetia and Istria. The alleged proceedings of this Council are unfortunately regarded with much suspicion by scholars. If genuine, they present an interesting picture of the times. We see in them the bishops of the whole important province assembled. Padua and Verona in the Venetian plain; Concordia and Opitergium (Oderzo) in the neighbourhood of the lagunes, Trieste, Pola, and Parenzo on the Istrian coast, Aemona (Laybach) in Camiola, Celeia (Cilli) in Styria; and Avoricium, which is perhaps Avronzo, the well-known resort of travellers, under the shadow of the Dolomites: all of them sent their representatives to the Council, which assemble in the new basilica of St. Euphemia. Then, while the bishops and presbyters sat, the deacons stood round them, and a copy of the Gospels having been placed in the middle of the assembly, Elias stood forth to explain his reasons for summoning the Council. 'Unspeakable,'

said he, 'is the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, who condescends to help our weakness. Amid the pangs of the Church of God, and the fierce massacres of the heathen who cease not to shake and devastate the remnants of our miserable province, I confess that it was beyond my hopes to see you all collected in this venerable assembly. For I feared lest anything should thwart the fulfillment of our common prayers; but now that by the mercy of Christ we are all met together, let me tell you wherefore I have summoned you. Long ago, by Attila, king of the Huns, our city of Aquileia was destroyed from top to bottom. Shaken afterwards by the inroads of the Goths and other barbarians, it had scarcely time to recover its breath under the rule of Narses, and now it absolutely cannot bear the daily scourge of the unutterable nation of the Lombards. Therefore with the consent of the blessed Pope Pelagius of the Apostolic See before whom I have laid our case, I ask, does it please your Holinesses to confirm this city of Gradus as our metropolis for ever, and to call it the new Aquileia?'

The presbyter Laurentius, legate of the Apostolic See, handed in the Papal 'privilegium', bestowing the new dignity on Grado; and when this was read by the notary Epiphanius, the bishops all shouted, 'Hear, O Christ: grant long life to Pelagius', and unanimously ratified the proposal of Elias. Epiphanius read the Nicene Creed as contained in the acts of the Council of Chalcedon : and the members of the synod then all affixed their signatures to the record, Patriarch Elias first, the Pope's legate next, then the bishops, probably in order of age, and then the presbyters.

If we have here a genuine record of the acts of the Council of 579, it is clear that some sort of reconciliation must have taken place between the sees of Rome and Aquileia, or such a letter as the 'privilegium' handed in by the legate Laurentius could never have left the Roman chancery. Possibly the deaths of both the original disputants (Pelagius I having died in 560, and Paulinus in 570) may have smoothed the way of peace. No doubt also the Roman pontiffs saw the great advantage which would accrue to the cause of orthodoxy from the transference of the patriarchal see. At Aquileia the heretical defenders of the Three Chapters could shelter themselves under the wing of those deadlier heretics, the Lombards, and defy both Pope and Emperor. At Grado they were of necessity the obedient servants of the Empire, and a visit from the Imperial galleys could at any time reinforce the cause of orthodoxy. And in fact, not many years had elapsed after the meeting of the Council at Grado, before the Patriarch of New Aquileia received an earnest admonition from the Pope as to the necessity of no longer delaying his condemnation of the Three Chapters.

In this letter the Pope said that he took advantage of the interval of peace procured by the anxious labours of the Exarch Smaragdus to write to the bishop Elias, and the rest of his dear brethren the bishops of Istria, exhorting them no longer to continue in schism from the Church. He solemnly protested his unwavering faith in the decisions of the four great Councils, Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon; his veneration for the Tome of his great predecessor Leo, and his determination to uphold its authority unimpaired. He did not in this letter condescend to the details of the Three Chapters controversy, but desired the Istrians to choose out from among themselves bishops or presbyters whom they might send to Rome, and he promised to receive such messengers with love, meekly to offer them satisfaction on all the points as to which they were in doubt, and to allow them to return unhindered to their homes.

The messengers were sent; but they brought what seemed to the Pope neither submission to his will, nor an answer to his arguments, nor open minds to receive his explanations, but a short and sharp definition of the Istrian position; in fact a summons to the Pope himself to surrender, under pain of interdict from Elias and his brethren.

The receipt of this letter filled Pelagius with such grief that, as he told the Schismatics, he 'kept silence even from good words'. In his second letter he told them that they did not understand what they were talking about. He had shown, he said, to the envoys the passages

which they had quoted from the proceedings of the Councils, as they stood in the ancient documents still preserved in the Papal chancery, and had argued that when taken in their proper connection, and not read in garbled extracts in the Encyclicals of hostile bishops, they by no means sustained the contention of the defenders of the Chapters. Especially with much diplomatic skill, but hardly equal candour, he laid stress on some reservations of the great Leo, who, in assenting to the decrees of Chalcedon, had expressly stated that he only ratified that which was therein decided with reference to the faith. Doubtless Pope Leo himself, if he could have been questioned, would have replied that this exception did not refer to the alleged Nestorianism of Theodore, Ibas, and Theodoret (which was a question of faith), but did refer to the rash attempt of the Council of Chalcedon to raise the see of Constantinople to an equality with the see of Rome. Long extracts followed from Augustine and Cyprian on the necessity of keeping in unity with the visible Church, founded on the rock of St. Peter; and the letter closed with a somewhat peremptory demand that instructed persons, able to give and to receive a reason in the debate, should be sent to Rome, or (if they feared the length of the journey and the unsettlement of the times) to Ravenna, where they would be met by envoys from the Pope.

The Istrian bishops, however, were quite immovable; refused to come either to Rome or Ravenna, and sent another letter in which, as the Pope declared, they hardly condescended to argue, but announced their own authoritative decision, and seemed to command the Pontiff to accept it. That there were, however, some arguments in this letter (now lost, like almost all the documents on that side of the controversy), we may infer from the reply which Paulus Diaconus calls ‘a very useful Epistle, composed by the blessed Gregory while he was still deacon, and sent by Pelagius to Elias, bishop of Aquileia’.

In the interval between the second and third letters dispatched by Pelagius II, Gregory had returned from Constantinople, and even without the express statement of Paulus, we could hardly be mistaken in attributing to him the altered tone now assumed by the Pope at whose elbow he was standing.

‘I have hitherto’, he says, ‘written to you words full of sweetness, and rather by prayer than by admonition have sought to guide you into the right way. But I now see with grieving wonder the lengths to which you dare to proceed, confiding in your own wisdom, and I have to confess to myself that my example of humility has been wasted upon you. Like Jeremiah I must say, “We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed”. I have tried to kindle the fire of charity, and burn off your schismatic rust, but with the same prophet I must say “the bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire, the blower bloweth in vain : his ashes are not consumed”.’

The Pope, or rather the deacon by his side (for in these passages we recognize all the characteristics of Gregory, his familiarity with the old prophets, and his desperate love of allegorical interpretation), proceeds to ply the recalcitrant bishops with passages from Jeremiah, Paul and Ezekiel to convince them of their error.

“Is there no resin in Gilead, is there no physician there? Why then is not the scar of the daughter of my people healed?”. What does he mean by *resin*, which feeds the flames, and which for the adornment of a palace cements together severed marbles? What can he mean but charity, which kindles our hearts to love, and binds together the discordant minds of men by the longing after peace, for the adornment of Holy Church? And *Gilead*, which is by interpretation the heap of witness—what can he mean by that but the mass of sentences piled up on high in Holy Scripture? The *physician*, is not he the preacher? The *daughter’s scar*, is not that the fault of the erring multitude laid bare before the eyes of God?’

After a few more remarks of this kind the Papal champion plunges into the thick of the controversy, and goes over all the weary battlefield, whither we need not follow him, showing that Leo had not confirmed all the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon, but had expressly

reserved private and personal matters; that the case of the three Syrian bishops might be considered as included in these private and personal matters : that Chalcedon must have implicitly condemned them, since it approved of Cyril and the Council of Ephesus which they opposed : that there was good patristic authority for anathematizing heretics even after their death: and that the long reluctance of Vigilius and the western bishops to accept the decrees of the Fifth Council arose from their ignorance of Greek, and gave all the more value to the sentence which they at last, after such rigorous scrutiny, consented to pronounce.

On the whole, if the course taken by the Popes in this dismal controversy had to be defended, it was probably impossible to put forth a better defence than that here made by Gregory, and he did well in sending a copy of it six years later, when he was himself Pope, to each of the schismatic bishops, inviting their candid and unprejudiced study of its contents, and predicting that they would then speedily return to the bosom of the Church.

This was not the effect, however, of the ‘useful letter’, when issued either by Pope Gregory or his predecessor. In 5862 the Patriarch Elias died, apparently unreconciled, and was succeeded by Severus, who for twenty years ruled the Church of Aquileia. Soon after his accession, to end this troublesome business, the Exarch Smaragdus came (probably with a few Imperial ships) from Ravenna to Grado, dragged the new Patriarch forth with his own right arm from the basilica itself, and carried him off in ignominious captivity to Ravenna. Severus went not alone, for there were carried off with him three bishops, John of Parenzo, Severus of Trieste, and Vindemius of Cissa, and an aged defensor of the Church of Grado named Antonius. At Ravenna the captive ecclesiastics were detained for a year till their spirit was broken by the violence used, and the further exile threatened; and they consented, doubtless with heavy hearts, to communicate with John, bishop of Ravenna, who was on the now winning side, and condemned the Three Chapters.

Violence, however, now, as so often before and since in affairs of the conscience, failed of its purpose. When the bishops were at length at the year’s end allowed to return to Grado, neither their brother bishops nor the lay multitude would have aught to say to them: and thus the end of the schism was as far off as ever. Smaragdus, the audacious violator of the sanctity of the Church of Grado, became insane, and men saw in his mental disease the work of a demon to whom he was given over for his crime. He returned to Constantinople, and Romanus, as we have seen, was sent as his successor to Ravenna.

A Council was now held at Marano, a place on the mainland, but overlooking a broad lagune, and about twelve miles west of Aquileia. From this place, where the Lombard rather than the Byzantine was supreme, the Schismatics could venture to hurl unabated defiance both at Constantinople and at Rome. The names of the sees represented at this Council are not quite the same as those which took part in the former one. They wear a more Venetian, and less Istrian character, as might be expected from the fact that the men who bore them were now leaning on Lombard protection, and somewhat estranged from the rule of the Empire. We find the bishops of Verona, Vicenza, Treviso, Belluno, Feltre, and Zuglio from continental Venetia, to which names must be added Asolo, which I mention separately for the sake of its Cypriote queen, and its English poet. Altino and Concordia on the shores of the lagunes, Trient and Seben from the country which we now call Tyrol, all sent bishops to the Council. The Istrian peninsula was apparently represented by Pola alone. At this Council the Patriarch Severus handed in a paper in which he humbly confessed his error in having communicated with the condemners of the Three Chapters. He was hereupon received again into fellowship with his suffragans.

This Council of Marano was probably held in 589, during a pause of something like peace in Italy. Next year the great Gregory ascended the pontifical Gregory throne, and one of his earliest acts was to write a letter, short, sad, and stern, to the Patriarch of Aquileia,

lamenting his willful departure from the way of truth (of which, having once walked in it, he could no longer pretend ignorance), and summoning him, with his followers, to the threshold of St. Peter, there to be judged by a synod concerning all the matters about which doubt had arisen.

This summons purported to be issued in accordance with the commands of ‘the most Christian and most Serene lord of all things’, but in point of fact, since the substitution of Romanus for Smaragdus, the Pope had neither the Emperor nor the Exarch at his back.

On the receipt of this Papal summons two Councils were assembled, one of the bishops in Lombard territory, and one of those who dwelt in the Imperial cities on the coast. From these two Councils and from Severus in his individual capacity three letters were sent to the Emperor. Of these only the first has been preserved but the contents of all were probably similar. The bishops who were under the Lombard yoke expressed their unshaken loyalty to the Empire, recalled with a sigh the happy days of peace which they had once passed under its shadow, congratulated Maurice on the recent successes of his arms in Italy, and predicted the speedy arrival of the day when the ‘Gentiles’ would be suppressed, and all would be once more subject to the beneficent rule of the ‘Holy Roman Republic’. When that day should come they would gladly present themselves before a synod in the sacred city of Constantinople. Meanwhile, however, let a religious truce be proclaimed, and let them not be compelled to appear before Gregory, who was really a party to the cause, since they had renounced communion with him, and could not accept him as their judge. In all that they were now doing, they were only upholding the authority of Chalcedon, and maintaining the position which Pope Vigilius had himself ordered them to take up when he anathematized the condemners of the Three Chapters. If their enemies were allowed to persecute them, and destroy the rights of the Metropolitan Church of Aquileia, the inevitable result would be that on the death of the present occupants of the Venetian and Rhaetian sees, their successors would be appointed by a Gaulish Metropolitan, and would transfer their allegiance to him (a thing which had already happened in three churches of the Province): and where ecclesiastical obedience had gone, political obedience would probably follow. Thus even from a political point of view it was important for Maurice to uphold the rights of the struggling Church of Aquileia.

This, and the kindred petitions drew forth a letter addressed ‘In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ’, by ‘the Emperor Caesar Flavius Mauritius Tiberius, the faithful in Christ, the Peaceful, the Mild, the Mightiest, the Beneficent, the victor of the Alamanni;—to the very holy Gregorius, most Blessed Archbishop of the fair City of Rome, and Pope’. After referring to the three petitions, the Emperor says that he has learned from them (one imagines with some surprise) that the Pope has himself sent a tribune and a guardsman to enforce his summons on Severus and his brother bishops. He also mentions their prayer for a religious truce, and concludes, ‘Since therefore your Holiness is aware of the present confusion in Italian affairs, and knows that we must adapt ourselves to the times, we order your Holiness to give no further molestation to those bishops, but to allow them to live quietly until by the providence of God the regions of Italy be in all other respects restored to peace, and the other bishops of Istria and Venetia be again brought back to the old order. Then, by the help of your prayers, all measures will be better taken for the restoration of peace, and the removal of differences in doctrine’. To which the Emperor added in his own handwriting, ‘May God preserve you for many years, holiest and most blessed Father!’.

Gregory had certainly some reason to complain of such a mandate as this. The question of the Three Chapters was none of Rome’s raising. It was an Emperor at Constantinople who had dug up the bones of Theodore, Theodoret and Ibas, and set the whole Christian world at variance over the question of their damnation. The Popes had been merely the instruments, at first the most unwilling instruments, of the State in enforcing conformity with the decrees of

the Fifth Council on their suffragans, and now, when the unity of the Western Church was endangered, and Rome was threatened with the uprising of a new and insolent rival at Aquileia, Constantinople intervened, and would not allow the use of one tribune and one life-guardsmen in order to put pressure on the Schismatics. Doubtless the remembrance of that letter about the Istrian bishops was one of the things which rankled in the breast of Gregory, when, eleven years after, he sang his lamentable hosannas over the murder of Maurice and his sons. However, for the present the Pope bowed his head to the hard necessity of the times, and, as far as we can see, during the whole Exarchate of Romanus (that is till 597) made no attempt to invoke the powers of the State in order to end the Istrian schism.

It was during this interval that, as has been said, he reissued the 'useful letter' which he had himself composed for his predecessor Pelagius, and sent a copy to each of the schismatic bishops, informing them that if, after reading that document, they still remained unconvinced, their error could only be imputed to sheer obstinacy. He also pointed out to them that they were entirely in error in saying that they were 'persecuted'. Persecution, martyrdom and words of that kind can only be rightly used of those who hold the truth. Men who are in error have no right to claim them. This reasoning would have been cheerfully adopted by Diocletian or Galerius.

Towards the end of this period (July 595), two bishops, Peter of Altinum, and Providentius of an unknown see, made overtures for reconciliation to the Pope, and were invited to visit him at Rome. We are not informed, however, of the result of the negotiations. A little later on (June 596), we find one solitary monk, Joannes by name, returning from the schismatic fold. He takes refuge in Sicily, and Gregory makes him a small annual allowance from the Church patrimony; but his conversion cannot be considered a signal triumph for the cause of orthodoxy.

With the appointment of Callinicus to the office of Exarch a slight change comes over the scene. The Imperial veto on compulsory conversion remains in force, but it is evidently felt that the man in power at Ravenna is now more friendly to the Roman See, and that the Istrians may have a harder struggle to maintain their position of independence. A certain Magister Militum with the barbaric name of Gulfaris receives the warm thanks of Gregory for his watchful care over the souls of those under his rule, and his desire to bring them back from schism into the bosom of the Church.

But our attention is especially attracted by the case of the *Insula Capritana*, which appears to be the island in the lagunes at the mouth of the Piave, upon which was soon to arise the city of Heraclea, the precursor of Venice. The story is somewhat obscurely told us in Gregory's letters, but seems to have been something like this. A certain man named John, coming from Pannonia, had been appointed bishop of the Venetian 'Newcastle', (*Castellum ad Novas*), and had violently annexed to his diocese the adjoining island of Caprea, expelling its bishop. He had then temporarily abjured his schismatic profession, and had, together with the laity on the island, sought through the Exarch Callinicus reconciliation with the Roman Church. Before long, however, the bishop relapsed into schism, while the congregation, or at least a considerable portion of them, still desired to re-enter the Catholic fold. The expelled bishop also, who had made his way to Sicily, that chosen home of all the Roman 'emigration', showed some signs of willingness to condemn the Three Chapters. A deputation from his late flock having arrived in Rome, Gregory invited the bishop to come himself to the 'threshold of the Apostles' in order to be confirmed in his new faith. Whether he accepted the invitation or not, a meeting was to be arranged between the Istrians and their bishop, and the new converts were sped upon their homeward way (the journey being apparently accomplished by water, and therefore taking them round by Sicily), and were supplied with letters of amplest commendation to the Exarch, to the bishop of Ravenna, and to all their fellow countrymen of

the island of Caprea. The result of this affair, as of so many others which have been opened to us by the Papal correspondence, does not seem to be anywhere disclosed. But there is an interesting passage in the first of Gregory's letters to the Exarch about these poor returning Capritans. Two pieces of news have just been communicated by the Exarch which have equally gladdened the Pope's heart. One is a series of victories over the Sclavonians, and the other this return of the inhabitants of Caprea to their ecclesiastical obedience. The Pope assures him that his victory over the enemies of the State is the reward of his exertions to bring back the enemies of God under the yoke of their true Lord. But Callinicus had some doubts whether he was not transgressing the Emperor's commands in going even as far as he had gone to meet the returning heretics. To this Gregory answers that the Imperial prohibition, itself obtained under false pretences, only restrained the Exarch 'during this time of uncertainty', from forcibly compelling the unwilling, and by no means ordered him to repel those who were willing to return to the unity of the Church; 'wherefore it is necessary that you should hasten to make this suggestion to our most pious Emperors, so that they may understand that under their reign, by the help of Almighty God, and of your labours, the Schismatics are of their own accord returning to the Church.

'Know, however, that it caused me no little sorrow that your Intendant [Major Domus], who had received the petition of a bishop desirous to return, professes to have lost it, and that it afterwards fell by accident into the hands of the adversaries of the Church. I think this was done, not through negligence, but for a bribe: wherefore I wonder that your Excellency should have so slightly punished such a fault. But after saying "I wonder", I at once corrected myself, for where my lord Justin is allowed to give advice, a man who is himself out of the peace of the Catholic Church, one cannot expect that heretics will be punished'. Dark hints these as to cabals in the Exarch's cabinet, to which we have no further clue.

In May 602, as we find from another letter of Pope Gregory, Firminus, bishop of Tergeste (Trieste), returned to his obedience to the Roman See. He suffered, we are told, many things at the hands of his schismatic Metropolitan Severus, who even endeavored to stir up an insurrection against him in his own city. The conversion of the bishop of so important a city was doubtless a great triumph for the condemners of the Three Chapters, and we are not surprised to find Pope Gregory earnestly entreating the Exarch Smaragdus to protect the new convert.

It was not only on the shores of the Northern Adriatic that this miserable controversy about the the Three Chapters disturbed the peace of the Church. Constantius, bishop of Milan, the firm friend and adherent of Gregory, was beset by entreaties, both from above and below, that he would separate himself from the see of Rome in this matter. The bishop and citizens of Brescia called upon him to write them a letter, in which he was to assert upon oath that he had never condemned the Three Chapters. Pope Gregory forbade him to give them any assurances of the sort. Three of his suffragan bishops solemnly informed him that they renounced his communion because he had condemned the Chapters, and had given a bond for his perpetual adherence to the Fifth Council. And not only so, but the pious Theudelinda herself, 'seduced by the words of evil men', consented to the course pursued by the three bishops, and withdrew for a time from communion with Constantius. Here was indeed a blow for the Catholic cause, if the royal influence so hardly won, after the long contest with Arianism, was to be lost again over the souls of the three Syrians. Gregory wrote to the queen expressing his regret that she should endanger the result of all her good works and all her pious tears by listening to the talk of 'unskilled and foolish men, who not only were ignorant of what they were talking about, but could scarce understand what they heard,' and at their persuasion separating herself from the communion of the Catholic Church. He assured her that whatever had been done 'in the times of the pious Emperor Justinian, had been so done as in no degree to impair the authority of the

great council of Chalcedon'. This letter was sent to Constantius for delivery, but was prudently suppressed by him, for he knew that an allusion to the Fifth Council, however faint and indirect, would ruin all chance of its reception by Theudelinda. Thus warned, the Pope wrote another letter, in which he dwelt with earnest emphasis on his adherence to the four councils (the number of which, like that of the four gospels, the four living creatures in the Apocalypse, the four rivers of Eden, had a charm for devout minds), and, in slightly different words, renewed his entreaties that she would submit herself to the judgment of the priests of God.

The entreaties of the Pope probably availed to induce Theudelinda to resume her communion with Constantius, and her relations with Pope Gregory seem thenceforward to have been those of unbroken friendship. He sent her a copy of his marvellous 'Dialogues' with the deacon Peter, and in 599 he wrote to her that letter of congratulation, which has been already quoted, on the great peace obtained through her mediation.

One last letter, as we have seen, Pope Gregory wrote to the Lombard queen in December 603, only three months before his death. In it, while congratulating her on the birth and Catholic baptism of her son Adalwald, he excused himself on the plea of sickness from writing an elaborate answer to the paper sent him by 'his dearest son the abbot Secundus'. We have here an interesting glimpse of the Tridentine Ecclesiastic, to whom we are indirectly indebted for so much of the early history of the Lombards. It is evident that Secundus was on the side of the vindicators of the Three Chapters, and we are thus enabled to understand why the allusions to the controversy in the pages of his copyist Paulus are written with so obvious a bias towards the schismatic side. We may conjecture also that Secundus, who, according to Paulus, lived on till the year 612, exerted his influence till the close of his life on behalf of the defenders of the Three Chapters. Theudelinda would seem, at any rate after the year 594, to have occupied a middle position, heartily cooperating with the Pope in all good works, but not renouncing the communion of the Istrian schismatics, perhaps at heart well inclined to their cause.

Along with the letter just referred to, Gregory sent a copy of the Acts of the Fifth Council, which the royal infant was, at some future time, to read and thereby convince himself that all that was alleged against the Apostolic See was utterly false, and that the Popes had deviated in nothing from the Tome of the sainted Leo. There is evidently here some change in the relations of the two parties from the time when the Pope did not venture even to mention the name of the Fifth Council to Theudelinda.

At the time of Gregory's death the Schism was not closed, but had assumed a geographical character. All becomes round the coast of Istria, at Grado itself, and probably among the lagunes of Venetia—in fact, wherever the galleys of Constantinople could penetrate—churchmen were desirous to return into unity with the Emperor and the Pope, and were willing to admit that Theodoret, Theodore and Ibas were suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. On the mainland, at Aquileia itself, in the great old desolate Venetian cities, Padua, Vicenza, and the like, in the little towns under the shadow of the Dolomites, wherever the swords of the Lombards flashed, men took a more hopeful view of the spiritual prospects of the three Syrians. At the death of Severus, in 606, the divergence became manifest. The abbot John was chosen by one set of ecclesiastics, assembled at old Aquileia, as their Patriarch, and the champion of the Three Chapters, while the bishop Marcianus, and, after him, Candidianus, both in full communion with the Pope, were chosen Patriarchs of Grado by the bishops and clergy of the coast.

'And from henceforth' as Paulus relates, 'there were two patriarchs'. The detailed history of the schism after this point does not greatly interest us, nor indeed are there many materials from which it could be written. Its effect, however, in throwing the defenders of the Three Chapters into the arms of the Lombard invaders is vividly shown by a letter from the Aquileian Patriarch John to King Agilulf. In it the Patriarch complains bitterly of the severities practised

by the 'Greeks' and asks what sort of unity is that which is obtained at the point of the sword, by imprisonment, by the blows of the cudgel, by long and dreary banishment. The old grievance of the forcible abduction of the bishops to Ravenna by Exarch Smaragdus is again brought up, and the king is informed that in more recent times three Istrian bishops have been dragged away by the soldiers of the Empire from their churches, and forced to communicate with Candidianus at Grado. Now, however, at the hour of writing, that worthless prelate has departed this life and gone to the place of eternal torment, and Agilulf is entreated to interpose on behalf of the Catholic faith and prevent another unjust ordination of a Patriarch from taking place in the village of Grado. However, the election was held, and the schism continued. Some years later, a certain Fortunatus, though a secret champion of the Three Chapters, was chosen Patriarch of orthodox Grado. He soon found his position untenable, and fled, with all the Church's treasure, to the mainland, where the Lombard duke of Friuli obtained for him the Patriarchate of Aquileia. In vain was application made to the Lombards by his successor Primogenius (a faithful adherent of the Pope) for the surrender of the fugitive Patriarch, or at least of the stolen treasure. Both were steadfastly refused, and, on the 'lamentable petition' of Primogenius to the Emperor Heraclius, setting forth the sad condition of the Church of Grado, bereft of all her wonted ornaments, a large sum was transmitted from the Imperial treasury to enable the Patriarch to make good the deficiency.

So the Schism smouldered on till near the very end of the seventh century, when the reigning Lombard king Cunincpert summoned a council at Pavia, which was attended by a full representation from the lately schismatic Patriarchate of Aquileia. With shouts of triumph they entered the church, declaring that they renounced the heresy of Theodore and his companions, and wished to be restored to the unity of the Church. Tears and sobs expressed the overpowering emotion with which the spectators, Catholics and Schismatics alike, witnessed this ending of so long a struggle. Legates were sent to bear the joyful news to Pope Sergius, who returned for answer to King Cunincpert, 'He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save his soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.' At the same time he gave orders that all the MSS. setting forth the doctrines of the now defeated sect should be burned, lest their errors should ever again infect the souls of the new converts.

So ended the heresy of the Three Chapters; a heresy which at one time had all that was best and wisest in the Western Church, including the Pope's own authority, on its side. But not even thus was peace restored to the Church, nor were occasions of strife between Rome and Constantinople done away. The Monotheletic word-war had already tormented Christendom for half a century, and the dispute about the worship of images was shortly to ascend above the horizon.

BOOK VI
THE LOMBARD KINGDOM
A.D. 600-744

CHAPTER I.
THE SEVENTH CENTURY.

The century whose early years witnessed the death of Pope Gregory the Great, and the establishment of something like peaceful relations between the Empire and the Lombards in Italy, was one of a strangely mingled character. As far as Western Europe was concerned (perhaps we might say as far as the Aryan races were concerned) it was, on the whole, monotonous, uneventful, unimportant; but the changes wrought during its course in the regions of the East, the immense spiritual revolution which it witnessed among the Semitic peoples, and which has profoundly modified the condition of a quarter of the human race at the present day,—these characteristics entitle the seventh century to a place in the very foremost rank of the great epochs of the world's history

Let us briefly survey the events which were happening in the rest of Europe and round the Mediterranean Sea during the hundred years which now lie before us.

In England, the great achievement of Gregory (the introduction of Christianity) was carried triumphantly forward. Edwin of Deira, in his youth the hunted outlaw, in his manhood the king of Northumbria, and the mightiest in all the land of Britain, wrought with brain and sword for the supremacy of the faith which he had learned from Paulinus. Benedict Biscop introduced into the barbarous land the architecture and the mosaics of Italy. The statesman-archbishop Wilfrid of York won for Rome that victory over the usages and teaching of Iona which even the memory of the saintly Aidan was unable long to postpone. When the century closed, the body of St. Cuthbert, monk and bishop, had been for thirteen years lying in its first resting place at Lindisfarne; and the chief herald of his fame, that Beda who was to be known by the title of Venerable, was still a young deacon of twenty-seven years of age. The great Northumbrian kingdom to which they both belonged, and of which the seventh century had beheld the glory, was already slowly falling into ruins.

In France the chief characteristic of the century was the decay of the Merovingian race, and the ever-increasing importance of the Mayors of the Palace. The Frankish kingdoms were indeed for a few years reunited under Chlotochar II, the son of Fredegundis, and both that king himself and his son Dagobert (628-638) showed some traces of the old daemonic energy which had made the first Merovingians terrible, if not beloved.

But the realm was soon again parted asunder, the 'Germany' and the 'France' of a future day already beginning to reveal themselves, as Austrasia on the one hand, and Neustria with Burgundy on the other. The kings of this divided realm, a wearisome succession of Chilperics and Childeberts and Theodorics, scarcely exhibit even a vice which can help us to distinguish them from one another. They are already 'rois fainéants', for the possession of whose persons rival Mayors of the Palace fight and conspire, but who have no self-determining character of their own.

Of these Mayors of the Palace we, of course, watch with most interest the 'Arnulfings', who will one day be known as the 'Karlings', the descendants of two Austrasian grandees, Pippin, and Arnulf, bishop of Metz, whose combined desertion (as will be hereafter told) delivered over Brunehildis and her great-grandchildren into the hands of her hereditary enemy. But owing to the premature clutch at the name as well as the reality of the kingly power, made by Grimwald, son of Pippin (656), the fortunes of the Arnulfings were for a time during the latter part of the century under a cloud, and other figures fill the confused picture. Ebroin, Mayor of the Palace for the three kingdoms, governs with a strong and grasping hand,

is imprisoned, emerges from confinement, gets hold of one of the royal puppets, and again rules in his name. A bewildering succession of Mayors of the Palace, for Neustria, for Austrasia, even for a mere section of Austrasia, such as Champagne, pass before us, and civil war and assassination supply the staple of the dreary annals of the chronicler.

At length (689) the waters of chaos begin to subside. The Arnulfings reappear on the scene. Pippin, second of the name, grandson of Arnulf on the paternal, of the first Pippin on the maternal side, becomes Mayor of the Palace of all the three kingdoms; and, in the strong hands of that able general and administrator, the Frankish realm enjoys some degree of rest from tumult, and peace from external enemies when the seventh century closes.

Already we have to note in these Arnulfing statesmen, sprung as they were from the loins of a man who in later life became a bishop, and even a monk, a strong tendency to link their cause with that of the Church, perhaps to oppose to the ghastly licentiousness of the later Merovingian kings something of that higher standard of morality and religion, for which the barbarized Church of the Franks was dimly and fitfully striving.

In Spain the seventh century was a period of dreary and scarce interrupted decline. The Visigothic nation, which had, under Recared (589), solemnly renounced the Arian heresy, now rushed into the other extreme of narrowest and most bigoted orthodoxy. The king was an elected ruler, who never succeeded in founding; a dynasty that lasted for more than two generations. The nobles, turbulent and rapacious, were perpetually conspiring against their king, or oppressing their poorer neighbors. The bishops were now the most powerful order in the state: their assemblies, the councils of Toledo, of which fourteen were held during the seventh century, were the real Parliaments of the realm. There was a scanty infusion of the lay nobility in these councils, but the predominant voice belonged to the ecclesiastics, whose influence was seen in the ever sterner and more cruel legislation directed against the unhappy Jews (so long the faithful clients of the Arian Goths), and in the sickening adulation with which usurper after usurper, if only successful and subservient to the Church, was addressed by the Council, and assured of the Divine favour and protection.

Every symptom showed that the Visigothic kingdom in Spain was 'rotten before it was ripe'. Eleven years after the seventh century had closed, judgment was pronounced upon the earth-cumbering monarchy. The Moors, that is, the Saracen conquerors of Africa, crossed the straits of Gibraltar; and in one victorious battle brought the whole fabric of the Gothic state to the dust. A slender remnant of the nation fled for shelter to the mountain fastnesses of the Asturias, but the great mass of the Spanish population bowed beneath the Moorish yoke, and repeated the prayer of Islam when the voice of the muezzin was heard from the minaret. The work of the Scipios was undone, and Spain, lost to the Aryan world, had once more a Semite lord. The same fate had previously overtaken Egypt, Cyrene, and Carthage. These fair provinces, once the granary of Rome, were now for ever lost to her Empire, and only in our own century have the civilization and religion of Europe been able to exert an influence, and that but a superficial influence, on the great Orientalised, Mohammedanised regions of Northern Africa.

The rapid conquests of the Saracens along the Southern shore of the Mediterranean invite us to give a brief glance at the events which had meanwhile been occurring at Constantinople and in the regions of the East. The seventh century, in the story of the Roman Empire, must be remembered as the period of the dynasty of Heraclius.

We left Phocas, the murderer of Maurice, wearing the Imperial diadem, and receiving the shameful congratulations of Pope Gregory. For eight years this coarse and brutal soldier filled the highest place in the civilized world. We are bound to look with some distrust on the record of the crimes of a fallen sovereign when written by the servants of a hostile dynasty; but after making every deduction on this score we cannot doubt that Phocas was a cruel and jealous

tyrant, as well as an utterly incapable ruler, and that the Empire passed through one of its deepest gulfs of humiliation while he was presiding over its destinies.

At length deliverance for Constantinople came from distant Carthage, still a member of the great Roman Republic, though not long to remain in that condition. Heraclius, Exarch of Africa, after two years of preparation, sent two armaments forth for the delivery of the Empire. One, embarked on high, castle-like ships, went by sea; the other, consisting chiefly of infantry, assembled at Alexandria, and went by land. Each was under the command of a young general; the navy under Heraclius, junior, the Exarch's son,—the land force under his nephew Nicetas; and it was understood that the diadem was to be worn by him who first arrived at Constantinople. The winds were favorable to the sailors, and in this race for Empire the young Heraclius won. The servants of the hated Phocas made but a feeble and faint-hearted resistance. Heraclius tarried for a while at Abydos, where a host of exiles driven into banishment by the tyrant gathered round him.

The brother of Phocas, to whom the custody of the lone walls had been committed, fled with precipitation, and soon Heraclius, with his castled ships, was anchored in the harbor of St. Sophia. A short battle, perhaps a naval engagement, followed. The African troops won a complete victory, and Phocas, deserted by all his followers, was brought into the presence of his conqueror with his arms tied behind his back. According to the well-known story, a short dialogue took place between them. Heraclius said, "Is it thus, oh! miserable man, that you have governed the Empire?" Phocas answered, "May you be able to govern it better!". Heraclius, seated on his *curule* chair, kicked the fallen tyrant, and ordered him to be cut up like dogs' meat. His body, and those of his brother and two of his most hated ministers, were then burned in a place called the Bull.

The young Heraclius, as liberator of the Empire, has something about him which attracts our sympathy and admiration; but when we are reading his story, as told by John of Antioch or the monk chronicler Theophanes, it is impossible not to feel how thoroughly barbarized were all, even the best men of this epoch of the Empire. The same thought strikes us when we look upon the grotesquely barbarous coins of Heraclius. The Greek Republics had had their young and chivalrous tyrannicides, their Aristogeitons and their Timoleons; but great as is the descent from the glorious *stater* of Rhodes or Cyxicus to the strange *aureus* of Heraclius, so great is the fall from the tragic beauty of the deeds of the Greek tyrannicides to the coarse brutality of the murderers of Phocas.

It was indeed at a perilous and difficult crisis that Heraclius seized the helm of the state. The Avars, who about this time made a terrible raid into Italy, almost obliterating Friuli from the list of Lombard duchies, were now at the height of their power, and were able to roam over Thrace unchecked right up to the long wall of Anastasius. On the other hand the Persian king Chosroes, grandson of the great Nushirvan, under pretence of avenging the death of his benefactor Maurice (who had won for him the throne), had not only overrun Syria, but had sent a victorious army through the heart of Asia Minor, to encamp finally at Chalcedon, within sight of Constantinople. Thus the Roman Empire, though still owning in theory the fairest part of three continents, was in danger of seeing itself confined within the narrow limits of the capital. The overthrow of Phocas and consequent change of dynasty at Constantinople did not arrest the Persian career of conquest.

The overtures for peace made by Heraclius resulted only in an insulting answer from "the noblest of the gods, the king and master of the whole earth, Chosroes, to Heraclius, his vile and insensate slave". Syria was again overrun, Egypt was turned into a Persian province, the army of the Persians was again seen encamped at Chalcedon. None of the Persian triumphs, not even the conquest of Egypt (which involved the loss of the chief corn supplies of Constantinople), affected either Emperor or people so profoundly as the capture of Jerusalem, and, with it, of

that identical Holy Cross which Helena believed herself to have discovered three centuries before, and which had given its name to so many churches in Italy and in every province of the Empire. Nevertheless, for twelve years Heraclius seemed to be sunk in lethargy, and to endure with patience the insolence of the Persians. It is probable that he was really during this time consolidating his power, disciplining his forces, and persuading the factious nobles of the state to acquiesce in his assuming something like an ancient dictatorship for the salvation of the Republic.

Heraclius and the Persian War. 622-628.

At length, in 622, a fateful year for Asia and the world, Heraclius, having completed his preparations, and having coaxed the Chagan of the Avars into temporary good humour, set forth on the first of his great Persian campaigns. These campaigns were six in number, and presented some of the strangest vicissitudes recorded in history; but through all, the untiring patience, the resourceful generalship, the unfaltering courage of Heraclius, revealed themselves, and once again, as eleven hundred years before, the disciplined armies of Greece proved themselves mightier than the servile hordes of Persia.

Heraclius, after penitential exercises and in reliance on the virtue of a heavenly picture of the Virgin, set sail from Constantinople on the day after Easter, and voyaged through the Archipelago, and along the southern coast of Asia Minor till he reached the shores of Cilicia and the neighborhood of Issus, already memorable for one great victory of Hellas over Iran. From thence he plunged into the defiles of Taurus, succeeded by a series of brilliant maneuvers in utterly baffling the Persian generals, and at length won a decisive victory in the highlands of Cappadocia. He was thus encamped upon the line of communication between the Persian king and his generals at Chalcedon, hoping doubtless to compel the retreat of the latter. But for some years the Persian standards were still visible at Chalcedon, and once, half way through the war, Constantinople was straightly besieged by the combined forces of Persians and Avars. But not all their endeavors could recall Heraclius from his career of conquest, nor force the Roman mastiff to relinquish his hold of the Persian leopard. At one time he would be wintering in the passes of the Caucasus, forming a network of alliances with the rough tribes of Colchis and Albania. Then he would descend into Media, lay waste the plains of Azerbaijan, and avenge the desecration of Jerusalem by burning the birthplace of Zoroaster.

Then would follow a campaign by the upper waters of the Euphrates, or among the difficult ranges of Taurus, and in almost all of these campaigns victory followed the Roman eagles, and the Persian generals, serving a suspicious and unreasonable master, grew more and more disheartened and bewildered by the strategy of their foe. At length a decisive victory within sight of Nineveh, followed by the capture and spoliation of the royal palace of Dastagherd, completed the ruin of the Persian king. The long-stifled rage of his subjects broke forth against a tyrant who was safe only while he was presumed to be irresistible. Chosroes fled: his son Siroes, whom he had sought to exclude from the succession to the throne, conspired against him; eighteen of his other sons were slain before his eyes, and he himself perished miserably in the Tower of Oblivion, to which he had been consigned by his unnatural offspring. Heraclius had little to do but to look on at the death-throes of the Persian kingdom. He was able to dictate his own terms, which were just and moderate: the restoration of the conquered provinces of the Empire, and of the precious Cross, which he brought in triumph to Constantinople, and next year carried back in pilgrim fashion to Jerusalem. In all the long duel between the Republic and the Arsacids of Parthia, between the Empire and the Sassanids of Persia, a duel which had been going on since the days of Crassus the Triumvir, no victory had been won, so brilliant, so complete, apparently so final, as these wonderful victories of Heraclius.

And yet these seeming brilliant triumphs of western civilization were only the prelude to its most disastrous and irreparable defeat. The darkly brooding East renounced the worship of Ormuzd, and the belief in Ahriman, she abandoned the attempt to substitute a Monophysite creed for the cautious compromise of Chalcedon; but it was only in order to emerge from the burning deserts of Arabia with blood-dripping scimitar in her hand, and with this cry upon her fanatic lips, 'There is no God but God : Mohammed is the Prophet of God.'

The career of the Saracen conquerors, though in after years it was to include Sicily, and even parts of Italy within its orbit, did not immediately exercise any direct influence on the Hesperian land. The Arabs are not among the invaders whose deeds this history has undertaken to describe; and therefore it will be sufficient here to enumerate a few dates which indicate their onward whirlwind course of conquest through the seventh century.

In 622, the year when Heraclius set forth for his death-grapple with Persia, Mohammed made that celebrated retreat from Mecca to Medina, which has been, ever since, the great chronological landmark for the world of Islam. In 628, he wrote to the Emperor, as well as to the Kings of Persia and Abyssinia, calling upon all to accept the new divinely given creed. In 629 was the first shock of battle between the Empire and the Children of the Desert, when Khalid, 'the Sword of God', won a doubtful victory. In 630, Mohammed returned in triumph to Mecca, where he died on the 8th of June, 632.

Under Mohammed's successor, the Caliph Abu Bekr, though he only reigned two years, great part of Syria was overrun by the Arab swarms, the decisive battle of Yermuk was won by Khalid in 634, and in the year after Abu Bekr's death (635), Damascus was taken. Omar, the next Caliph (634-643), saw the conquest of Syria and Palestine completed, Jerusalem itself taken (637), and Egypt wrested from the Roman Empire. Heraclius himself, so lately the brave and resourceful general, seemed struck by mental impotence, and fled in terror to Chalcedon (638), bent apparently only on saving his own imperial person, and the precious wood of the Holy Cross which he carried with him from Jerusalem. In the midst of the ruin of his Empire, with provinces which had once been kingdoms wrested from the grasp of his nerveless arm by the followers of an Arabian camel-driver, it seems to have been a consoling thought that at least that precious relic would not fall again into the hands of the infidel.

Meanwhile, Persia, enfeebled by her disastrous struggle with Heraclius, and having no energy of religious conviction in her people which could struggle against the faith of the Arabians, hot as the sand of their own deserts, fell, but not quite so speedily as Syria and Egypt. The war of Saracen conquest began in 632. In 636 the great battle of Cadesia was lost by the Persians, and their famous banner, the jewel-loaded leathern apron of a blacksmith, fell into the hands of the invader. But the struggle was still continued by the sons of Iran, and it was not till 641 that the battle of Nehavend destroyed their last hopes of successful resistance.

The conquest of Northern Africa seems to have been one of the hardest tasks that were undertaken by the followers of the prophet. Carthage was not taken till 697: it was retaken by the Imperial general, and not finally captured till 698, two years before the close of the century. But if the conquest was slow, it was sure, and the path of the conquerors was prepared for that final onrush which, in 711, added the great peninsula of Spain to the dominions of the Caliph.

In one generation, not the conquering power, but the fervor of faith, the absolute oneness of purpose which at first animated all the followers of Mohammed, had departed. Omar's successor, Othman (644-655), was more of a worldly king and less of an apostle than any of his predecessors, and he perished in a rebellion caused by his weak favoritism, and fomented by the ambitious and intriguing Ayesha, widow of the Prophet. The murder of Othman was used, most unjustly, to stir up popular feeling against Ali the next Caliph (655-659), the brave, pious, simple-hearted son-in-law of the Prophet. Schism and civil war followed, and the

student who has followed with any sympathetic interest the story of the early believers in Islam, finds with indignation that the story ends with the assassination of Ali, and the murder of his two sons Hassan and Hosein, grandsons of the Prophet, by order of the descendants of his most persistent enemy (661-680). In the person of Moawiyah this hostile family ascended the throne (now indeed a throne) of the Caliphs, and fixed their luxurious abode among the gardens of Damascus. The faith of Islam, like the faith of Christ, but with a far more rapid decline, had fallen away from its first fervor, and was accepting the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them at the hands of the Dark Spirit. Like Christianity also, but again with swifter development, it was rent asunder by a mighty schism. The well-known division between the Shiites, who venerate the memory of Hassan and Hosein, and the Sunnites, who at least condone the guilt of their murderers, still cleaves the Moslem world with a chasm quite as deep as that which separates the Latin Church from the Greek, or the Protestant from the Catholic.

Still, notwithstanding its spiritual decay, the spirit of Islam was a mighty force in that effete world of Hellenic Christianity. Still, as the drilled and uniformed Jacobins of France carried far the standards of Napoleon, did the Saracen warriors, with the religious maxims of the Koran on their lips, do the bidding of the sensual and worldly-minded Ommyad Caliph at Damascus. It was in the year 672, fifty years after the Hegira, under the reign of the great-grandson of Heraclius, that the fleets and armies of Moawiyah set sail for Constantinople, eager to earn the great blessing promised by the Prophet: "The sins of the first army that takes the city of Caesar are forgiven". But not yet, nor for near eight centuries to come, was the fulfillment of that promise to be claimed. For five years (673-677) (magnified by tradition to seven) did the Arab wave dash itself in vain against the walls of Constantinople. The fire-ships of the Greeks carried havoc into their great Armada, the land army sustained a disastrous defeat with the loss of 30,000 men, and at last the baffled armament returned, not without fatal storm and shipwreck, to the Syrian waters. Then was peace made on terms most honorable to the Empire, including the restoration of captives, and a yearly tribute from Damascus to Constantinople; and for a generation peace in the Eastern waters of the Mediterranean seems to have been maintained, though North Africa was during this very time witnessing the steady progress of the Saracen arms.

Monothelism.

While such tremendous conflicts as these were going forward, conflicts in which the very existence of the Empire, the mere continuance of the Christian Church, would seem to have been at stake, it might have been supposed that theological metaphysics would at least be silent, that all who professed and called themselves Christians would be drawn together by the sense of a common danger, and would agree at least to postpone, if they could not absolutely relinquish, the verbal disputations on which they had wasted so much energy. On the contrary, the seventh century was disastrously distinguished by the fury of one of the bitterest and least intelligible of all these disputes. Monophysitism had filled the world with turmoil for nearly two hundred years. Now Monothelism took its place as chief disturber of the nations.

It was in that eventful year 622, which witnessed the withdrawal of Mohammed to Medina, and the departure of Heraclius for the Persian war, that the Emperor seems to have first conceived the idea that the Monophysite dissenters might after all be reconciled with the Church, which accepted the decrees of Chalcedon, by a confession on the part of the latter that, though the Savior had two natures, he had only one will, "only one theandric energy". Through all the later events of his chequered reign, his successes against the Fire-worshippers of Persia,

his defeats by the Allah-worshippers of Arabia, he seems to have held fast to this scheme of reuniting the Church by the profession of *Monothelite* doctrine.

Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul, the successive Patriarchs of Constantinople, zealously and ably abetted his designs. The Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria subscribed to the same doctrine: even the Pope Honorius I, when appealed to gave judgment in words which might be understood as at least permitting, if not ordaining, the teaching of the Monothelite faith. For a time only Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, stood, like another Athanasius, alone against the world. But the current soon began to set in the contrary direction. The very willingness of the Monophysite schismatic to accept the new doctrine aroused suspicion among those who had been for two centuries fighting the battle of Chalcedon; and the Popes of Rome, far from the fascination of the Imperial presence, and under no political compulsion to propitiate the Monophysites of Egypt and Syria, resisted with vehemence the new Eirenicon.

The Emperor, however, still persevered in his plan, though he tried to broaden the issue by withdrawing from it one or two terms of technical theology which appeared unnecessary. In 638, the year after the loss of Jerusalem, the year before the Saracen invasion of Egypt, there appeared at Constantinople an *Ecthesis*, or exposition of the Faith, which was affixed by the orders of Heraclius to the great gates of the church of St. Sophia. This document, after repeating in orthodox terms the doctrines of the Trinity, of the Incarnation, of the two natures in Christ, declared that many were scandalized by the thought of two operations, two warring wills of the Savior, that not even Nestorius in his madness, though he had divided Christ into two persons, had dared to say that their wills were contrary one to the other. "Wherefore", said the *Ecthesis*, "following the holy Fathers in this and in all things, we confess one will of our Lord Jesus Christ, the very God, so that there was never a separate will in His body when animated by the intellect, which worked by a contrary motion natural to itself, but only such a will as operated when and how, and to what extent the God who was the Word willed".

Then followed the usual profession of faith in the five great Councils, including Chalcedon, and the usual anathema of all the great heretics, from Novatus and Sabellius to Theodore, Theodoret, and Ibas.

This new declaration of faith, accepted generally in the East, except by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, was energetically repudiated at Rome, where Honorius, the peaceful and the unmetaphysical, no longer filled the Papal chair. First Severinus and then John IV set themselves to combat the new doctrine, and latter Pope, while piously shielding the memory of Honorius, visited with absolute anathema the *Ecthesis* of Heraclius. The tidings of this condemnation, however, can hardly have reached the ears of the Imperial theologian. The anathema was probably pronounced in January, 641, and on the eleventh of February in the same year, Heraclius, who had long been suffering from a painful disease, died; thus ending one of the most glorious and one of the most disastrous reigns in the whole long history of the Eastern Caesars.

With the death of Heraclius, a dispute, which had probably been long foreseen, broke out concerning the succession to the throne. Heraclius, after the death of his first wife Eudocia, had married his niece, the beautiful but ambitious Martina. Such a union, forbidden by Church law, and repugnant to the general feeling of Christendom, had been denounced even by the friendly Green faction in the Circus, and the Patriarch Sergius, who was ever the loyal henchman of Heraclius, wrote him a long letter, entreating him not thus to sully his fair fame; but passion won the day, and, in spite of all remonstrances, Martina became the Augusta of the Romans. Now, however, when after the death of her husband the middle-aged woman, whose beauty was probably faded, presented herself in the Hippodrome before the citizens of Constantinople, and claimed under her husband's will the right to administer the Empire as the senior partner of two Emperors, her stepson Constantine and her own son Heraclonas, the voices of the

multitude clamored against such a partition of power, crying out (as if Pulcheria and Theodora had been forgotten names), "You are honored as the mother of the Emperors, but they as our Emperors and lords".

For the moment Martina retired into the background, and Constantine, third of that name, was recognized as Emperor, with Heraclonas for his younger colleague. After three months and a half, Constantine, apparently a weak and delicate man, died at Chalcedon, not without suspicion of foul play; and then Martina, as mother of Heraclonas, became again the chief person in the Empire. Neither she nor her children, however, were popular in Constantinople, and a large part of the army supported the claims of the young Heraclius, a boy of ten years old, son of the lately deceased Constantine. For a short time Heraclonas and the young Heraclius, whose name was changed to Constans, reigned together in apparent harmony; but there were mutual suspicions and jealousies, a sort of veiled civil war, and a popular insurrection. The upshot of the whole business was that Martina and her son Heraclonas were banished, after punishments of that barbarous kind which was becoming characteristic of the Eastern Empire had been inflicted upon them. The tongue of the widowed Empress was cut out and her son's nose was slit. These punishments were inflicted by order of the Senate (September 641), by whose vote the child Constans became sole ruler of the Roman Empire. We shall meet with him again in a future chapter, and shall see his heavy hand laid on the Pope of Rome and on the people of Italy.

Constans reigned from 641 to 668, and was succeeded by his son Constantine IV (or V), who in 685 was followed by his son Justinian II. With this strange, powerful, savage man, who, though named Justinian, resembled much more closely Nero or Commodus than the astute, diplomatic legislator whose name he bore, the dynasty of Heraclius came to an end (711). Something will have to be said in future chapters about all these three Emperors. It will be enough for our present purpose to repeat and emphasize the fact that the seventh century, which in the history of religion will ever be remembered as the century of Mohammed, was, in Imperial history, the century of the dynasty of Heraclius.

CHAPTER II.

THE FOUR GREAT DUCHIES.

I.

The Duchy of Trent.

We are already confronted with that difficulty of treating the history of Italy from one central point of view, which recurs in a far more embarrassing form in the history of the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages.

The Lombard Monarchy, as the reader must have already perceived, was a very loosely aggregated body; the great Duchies were always tending to fly off from the central mass, and to revolve in orbits of their own. Two of them, Spoleto and Benevento, did in the end succeed in establishing a virtual independence of the Kingdom which had its seat at Pavia. There were two others, Trent and Friuli, which never quite succeeded in accomplishing the same result, being nearer to the heart of the monarchy, and not being liable, as the southern duchies were, to have their communication with the Lombard capital intercepted by bodies of Imperial troops moving between Rome and Ravenna. But though these great northern dukes did not achieve their independence, there can be little doubt that they desired it, and there is, to say the least, sufficient evidence of a separate political life in their states to make it desirable to treat their histories separately, though this course will involve us in some unavoidable repetition.

DUKES OF TRIDENTUM.

EUIN or EVIN,

569-595 (?),

married a daughter of Garibald, duke of the Bavarians.

GAIDWALD,

595

ALAHIS,

circa 680-690.

TRIDENTUM, which I generally speak of under its modern name Trent, has made a great mark in the position ecclesiastical history of the last three centuries, owing to the choice that was made of this city as the seat of the Council that was summoned to define the faith, and so regulate the practice of the Churches still obedient to the see of Rome after the storms of the Reformation.

In Roman times, and in the centuries with which we are now dealing, its importance was derived from the fact that it was one of the chief border towns of Northern Italy, an outpost of Latin civilization far up under the shadow of the Alps, and the capital of the district watered by the upper Adige.

The modern province of Tyrol, as every traveler among the Eastern Alps knows, is composed of two main valleys, one running East and West, the valley of the Inn, and another running in the main North and South, the valley of the impetuous Adige. With the former, which constitutes Northern Tyrol, we have here no concern, and we have not to deal with quite the whole of the latter. The Adige descends from the narrow-watershed which separates it from the Inn, and flows through the long trough of the Vintschgau (called in old times

Venosta) to Meran, situated at the confluence of the stone-laden Passeyer, and proud of its memories of the Tyrolese patriot Hofer. Here in the days of the Emperors was the Roman station *Castrum Magense* (the modern Mais). About twenty miles further down the valley, the Adige, which here flows over dark slabs of porphyry rock, is joined by the Eisach, coming down from Brixen, and from the long Pusterthal. The next important stream that joins it is the Noce, which falls in from the West, after flowing round the base of the mighty mountain mass of the Adamello, and through the interesting valleys of Italian-speaking people known as the Val di Sole and the Val di Non. A little lower down, the Avisio, which has risen at the foot of the noble Dolomitic mountain, the Marmolata, after then flowing through the Val di Cembra, joins the Adige from the East. Soon afterwards we reach at last the battlemented walls of the city of Trent, the true centre, as has been before said, of the Adige valley, being about equally distant from Meran in the North, and from Verona in the South. An unimportant stream, the Fersina, is all that here brings its contribution to the central river; but the position of Tridentum is important for this reason, that only a few miles off, and across a low watershed, we enter the broad valley which is known as the Val Sugana, and through which flows the stream of the Brenta, a stream that takes its own independent course past Bassano and Padua to the Adriatic, and there, more than any other single river, has been 'the maker of Venice'.

For the rest of its course the Adige flows through the narrow Val Lagarina, shut in by high hills on either side, and receiving no affluent of importance till it emerges upon the great Lombard plain, and darts under the embattled bridges of Verona, beyond which city we must not now follow its fortunes.

On the west, however, side by side with the Adige, during the last thirty miles of its course above Verona, but studiously concealed from it by the high barrier of Monte Baldo, stretches the long Lago di Garcia, largest if not loveliest of all the Italian lakes; the sheet of water whose sea-like billows and angry roar when lashed by the tempest were sung by the great bard of not far distant Mantua. Into this lake at its northern end pours the comparatively unimportant stream of the Sarco, which draws its waters from the melted snows of the southern sides of Monte Adamello, as the Noce draws its waters from the North and West of the same great mountain-chain.

Every one who has travelled in the Tyrol knows that it is emphatically a land of mountain ridges and intervening valleys. Lakes like those of Switzerland are hardly to be met with there, but we find instead a cluster of long sequestered valleys, each of which is a little world in itself, and which, but for the artificial necessities of the tourist, would have little communication one with another. In order, therefore, to describe the territory of the Duchy of Trent under the Lombards, we have only to enumerate the chief valleys of which it was composed.

According to Malfatti (whose guidance I am here following), when the Lombards first entered this region (probably in the year 569), and established themselves there under the rule of their duke Euin (or Evin), they took possession of the central valley of the Adige, about as far northward as the *Mansio* of Euna (represented by the modern town of Neumarkt), and southward to a point not far from the present Austro-Italian frontier, where the mountains are just beginning to slope down to the Lombard plain.

Of the lateral valleys, those watered by the Noce, the Avisio and the Sarco were probably included in the Duchy; and with the Sarco may have been also included the whole of the long and narrow valley of the Giudicarie, which touches that stream at its lower end. The short valley of the Fersina, of course, went with Tridentum, and probably also some portion, it is impossible to say how much, of the Val Sugana.

The boundary to the north is that which is most difficult to determine. As has been said, Malfatti fixes it in the earliest period at Euna. At that time we are to think of Bauzanum

(Botzen), Castrum Magense (in the neighborhood of Meran), and the valley of Venosta (Vintschgau), as all in the possession of the Bavarians, who were subject to the overlordship of the kings of the Austrasian Franks. But as the tide of war ebbed and flowed, the Lombard dominion sometimes reached perhaps as far north as Meran in the valley of the Adige, and Brixen in the valley of the Eisach; and the Venostan region may have seen the squadrons of the Lombards, though it hardly can have owned them as its abiding lords.

The first duke of Tridentum, as has been said, was Duke *Euin* or *Evin* (569-595?), who seems to have been a brave and capable man, and a successful ruler. It was he who began that system of alliance with the Bavarian neighbors on the north which was afterwards carried further by Authari and Agilulf: for he, too, married a daughter of Duke Garibald, and a sister of Theudelinda.

It was probably a short time after Duke Euin's marriage (which we may date approximately at 575), that an army of the Franks, under a leader named Chramnichis, entered the Tridentine territory, apparently in order to avenge the Lombard invasion of Gaul by the three dukes Amo, Zaban, and Bodan, which had been valiantly repelled by Mummolus. The Franks captured the town of Anagnis (above Trent, on the confines of Italy), which seems to be reasonably identified with Nano in the Val di Non. The inhabitants, who had surrendered the town, seem to have been considered traitors to their Lombard lords, and a Lombard count named Ragilo, who (under Euin, doubtless) ruled the long Val Lagarina south of Trent, coming upon Anagnis in the absence of the Franks, retook the town and plundered its citizens. Retribution was not long in coming. In the Campus Rotalianus, the meadow plain at the confluence of the Noce and the Adige, Chramnichis met Ragilo returning with his booty, and slew him, with a great number of his followers. The Frankish general then, we are told, laid waste Tridentum, by which we are probably to understand the territory round the town rather than the town itself, as the capture of so important a place would have been more clearly indicated by the historian. For Chramnichis also the avenger was nigh at hand. Duke Euin met him and his allies, possibly some Roman inhabitants of the Tridentine who, like the citizens of Anagnis, had embraced the cause of the Catholic invader. The battlefield was Salurn on the Adige, a little north of the Campus Rotalianus. This time fortune favored the Lombards. Chramnichis and his allies were slain, the booty was recaptured, and Euin recovered the whole Tridentine territory.

Not only did Euin resume possession of his Duchy after the Frankish inroad, but he seems to have extended its limits; for when the Franks next invade the country, all the valley of the Adige as far as Meran, and that of the Eisach nearly up to Brixen, appear to be in the keeping of the Lombards. It is a probable conjecture, but nothing more, that this extension of the territory of the Lombards may have been connected in some way with the domestic trouble of their Bavarian neighbors, when Garibald their duke was attacked, possibly deposed, by his Frankish overlords.

In the year 587, Duke Euin commanded the army sent by Authari into Istria. Conflagration and pillage marked his steps, and after concluding a peace with the Imperialists for one year, he returned to his king at Pavia, bearing vast spoils.

The next Frankish invasion of the Tridentine duchy was in 590, the year of Authari's death, when, as we under have already seen, the Austrasian king and Roman Emperor joined forces for the destruction of the unspeakable Lombards. We need not here repeat what the generals of the western armies, Audovald and Olo, accomplished, or failed to accomplish, against Bellinzona and Milan. Chedin, the third Frankish general, with thirteen 'dukes' under him, invaded the Lombard kingdom by way of the valley of the Adige, coming probably through the Engadine and down the Vintschgau to Meran. Thirteen strong places were taken by them : the sworn conditions upon which the garrisons or the inhabitants surrendered these

towns were disregarded with characteristic Frankish faithlessness, and the citizens were all led away into captivity. The names of these captured fortresses can for the most part be identified, and enable us to trace the southward progress of the invaders through the whole Tridentine territory. Tesana and Sermiana (Tiseno and Sirmian) are placed on the right bank of the Adige, some ten or twelve miles south of Meran. The position of Maletum is uncertain, but it was probably at Male, in the Val di Sole. Appianum is the castle of Hoch Eppan on the mountains opposite Botzen. Fagitana is probably Faedo on the hilly promontory between the Adige and the Avisio, overlooking the former battlefield of the Rotalian plain. Cimbra must be placed somewhere in the lower part of the valley of the Avisio, which is still known as the Val di Cembra. Vitianum is Vezzano, a few miles west of Trent. Bremtonicum is Brentonico between the Adige and the Lago di Garda, nearly on a level with the head of the latter. Volaenes is Volano, a little north of Boveredo. The site of Ennemase must remain doubtful. If it is intended for Euna Mansio it is mentioned out of its natural order, as that station, whether rightly placed at Neumarkt or not, was certainly not far south of Botzen. The names of the other three camps captured are not given us, but we are told that two were in Alsua (the Val Sugana), and one in the territory of Verona.

But where during this inflowing of the Frankish tide was the warlike duke of Tridentum? We are not expressly told, but, remembering that the letter of the Exarch of Italy to Childebert mentions not only that Authari had shut himself up in Pavia, but that the other dukes and all his armies had enclosed themselves in their various castles, we may conjecture that Euin, in obedience to the plan of defence devised for the whole kingdom, was holding Trent with a strong force, ready to resist a siege, but renouncing the attempt to prevent the ravage of his territory.

Over against the capital city of Trent on its western side stood the high hill-fortress of Verruca, as to the construction and repair of which, under Theodoric, we have some interesting information in the letters of Cassiodorus. This castle probably it was which the historian calls *Ferruge castrum*, and which underwent a rigorous siege by the invading army. The fortress would have been compelled to surrender, but two bishops, Agnellus of Tridentum and Ingenuinus of Savio, interceded for the garrison, who were permitted to ransom themselves at the rate of a solidus a head. The total ransom amounted to 600 solidi.

It will be remembered that the campaign of the allied powers in 590 ended in a treaty between the Franks and the Lombards, which the Imperialists viewed with deep disgust, but the conclusion of which they were powerless to prevent. Probably the ransom of the garrison of Verruca was arranged for in these negotiations. The Frankish historian mentions the unwonted heat of the Italian summer as having exercised an unfavorable influence on the health of the invaders, and describes them as returning to their homes, decimated by dysentery, worn by hunger, and compelled to part with their raiment, and even with their arms, in order to procure necessary food. We can well understand that the Tridentine duchy was not at this time a highly cultivated or wealthy district, and that after three months of ravage not even the license of a brutal soldiery could extract any more plunder from the exhausted peasantry.

This, however, was the last invasion—as far as we know—that the Tridentine territory had to undergo for more than a century. The peace concluded by Agilulf with the Frankish kings must have been an especial blessing to this district, which had no other foes to fear except those who might enter their country from the north; since high mountain ranges secured them from invasion on the east and west, and on the south was the friendly territory of Verona.

It was probably about five years after the Frankish invasion that Duke Euin died, and was succeeded by *Gaidwald*, perhaps not a member of Euin's family, but who is spoken of as "a good man and a Catholic". With peace, and probably some measure of prosperity, the relations between the Lombards and the Romano-Rhaetian population in the valley of the Adige were

growing more friendly, and now both ruler and people were no longer divided by the difference of creed.

The centrifugal tendency, as it has been well called, so often to be found in these Teutonic states, and so especially characteristic of the Lombards, carried both Gaidwald of Trent and his neighbor of Friuli into opposition, estrangement, perhaps, rather than open rebellion, against King Agilulf. How long this estrangement may have lasted, or in what overt acts it may have borne fruit, we cannot say. All that we know is that the joyful year 603, perhaps the very Eastertide which witnessed the baptism of Theudelinda's son in the basilica of Monza, saw also the reconciliation of Gaidwald and his brother duke with Agilulf.

From this point we hear very little more of the separate history of the Adige valley. We know neither the date of Gaidwald's death, nor the names of any of his successors save one. That one is a certain Alahis, who about the year 680 fought with the Count (Gravio) of the Bavarians, and won great victories over him, obtaining possession of Botzen (which had evidently therefore passed out of Lombard hands), and of many other strong places. These successes so inflated his pride that he rebelled against the then reigning king Cunincpert (688-700), with results which will have to be recorded when we come to that king's reign in the course of general Lombard history.

For the earliest period of the Lombard monarchy our information as to the duchy of Trent, doubtless derived from its citizen, 'the servant of Christ', Secundus, is fairly full and satisfactory; but after his death (612) this source dries up, and none other is opened to us in its stead.

II.

Duchy of Friuli.

From the Armenian convent, or from any island on situate the north of Venice, the traveler on a clear afternoon in spring sees the beautiful outline of a long chain of mountains encircling the northeastern horizon. He enquires their names, and is told that they are the mountains of Friuli. Possibly the lovely lines of Byron's *Childe Harold* recur to his memory :

The moon is up, and yet it is not night;
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains;

and the very name Friuli bears to his ears a sound of idyllic beauty and peace. Yet the name really speaks of war and of prosaic trade; of the march of legions and the passage of long caravans over dusty Alpine roads to the busy and enterprising Aquileia. Friuli, once Forum Julii, derived its name, perhaps its origin, from the greatest of the Caesars, who probably established here a market for the exchange of the productions of Italy with those of the neighboring Noricum, with which it communicated by means of the Pass of the Predil. Reading as we do in Caesar's Commentaries so much about his operations in Trans-Alpine Gaul and in Britain, we are in danger of forgetting the vast amount of quiet work of an organizing kind which he achieved while tarrying in winter quarters in his other two provinces, Cisalpine Gaul (that is, Northern Italy), and Illyricum. This northeastern corner of Italy is eloquent of the memory of that work. The mountains which part it off from the tributaries of the Danube are called the Julian Alps; the sequestered valley of the Gail is said to have been named Vallis Julia, and two towns, Julium Carnicum, north of Tolmezzo, and this Forum Julii, in the valley of the Natisone, also tell of the presence of the great dictator.

This place, Forum Julii, now known not as Friuli but as *Cividale* (as having been the chief *Civitas* of the district), was chosen as the capital of the great frontier duchy. Aquileia had been the chief city of the province, and the high roads which still converged towards that Venice of the Empire, the Pontebba and Predil Passes, the Pass of the Pear Tree, the road which skirted the Istrian coast—all these gave its distinctive character to the region. But Aquileia, though, as we have seen, it still retained its ecclesiastical importance, was not the place chosen for the seat of the Lombard duke. It was probably too near the sea to be altogether safe from the galleys of Byzantium; it was perhaps already beginning to be tainted with malaria; it was possibly considered not the best place for watching the passes over the mountains. Whatever the cause, the place chosen by the Lombards was, as has been said, Forum Julii, a town which held a respectable position under the Empire, but which attained its highest pitch of prosperity and importance under its Lombard rulers. Though now shorn of its old glory, Cividale is still one of the most interesting and picturesque cities of the Venetian mainland. It is situated on the north-eastern margin of that great alluvial plain, and clings, as it were, to the skirts of the mountains which are climbed by the highway of the Predil Pass. The city is divided from one of its suburbs by a deep gorge, through which, blue as a turquoise, flow the waters of the river Natisone on their way to the ruins of desolate Aquileia. The gorge is spanned by a noble bridge (Il ponte del Diavolo), and its steep cliffs are crowned by the tower of the church of St. Francesco, and—more interesting to an archaeologist—by the quaint little building called Il Tempietto. This was once a Roman temple, dedicated, it is said, to Juno, but afterwards converted into a Christian basilica. The low marble screen which separates the choir from the nave, and the six statues at the west end, stiff and Byzantine in the faces, but with some remembrance of classical grace in the fall of their draperies, give a decidedly archaic character to the little edifice, and may perhaps date from the days of the Lombards.

The museum of Cividale is rich in objects of interest; a Roman inscription of the end of the second century making mention of *Colonia Forojuliensis*; a very early codex of the Four Gospels, with autographs of Theudelinda and other illustrious personages of the Middle Ages; the Pax of St. Ursus, and ivory slab about six inches by three, representing the Crucifixion and set in a silver-gilt frame, which used to be handed to strangers to kiss, in token of peace; and many other valuable relics of antiquity. But the relic which is most important for our present purpose is the so-called Tomb of Gisulf. This is an enormous sarcophagus, which, when opened, was found to contain a skeleton, a gold breast-plate, the golden boss of a shield, a sword, a dagger, the end of a lance, and a pair of silver spurs. There was also an Arian cross of gold with eight effigies of Christ, and a gold ring with a coin of Tiberius I attached to it, which perhaps served as a seal. Undoubtedly this is the tomb of some great barbarian chief; but, moreover, there are rudely carved upon the lid the letters GISULG, which are thought by some to indicate that we have here the tomb of Alboin's nephew, Gisulf I, or his great-nephew, Gisulf II. This opinion is, however, by no means universally accepted, and it has been even asked by a German critic whether local & patriotism may not have so far misled some enthusiastic antiquary as to induce him in clever fashion to forge the name of the city's hero, Gisulf.

Such then is the present aspect of the little city which now bears the proud name of Cividale, and which once bore the even greater name of Forum Julii. No doubt the chief reason for making this a stronghold of Lombard dominion was to prevent that dominion from being in its turn overthrown by a fresh horde of barbarians descending from the mountains of Noricum. Alboin remembered but too well that entrancing view of Italy which he had obtained from the summit of the royal mountain, and desired not that any Avar Khan or Slovene chieftain should undergo the same temptation, and stretch out his hand for the same glittering prize.

It was then with this view that (as has been already related) Alboin selected his nephew and master of the horse, Gisulf, a capable man, probably of middle age, and made him duke of Forum Julii, assigning to him at his request some of the noblest and most warlike *faras*, or clans, of the Lombards for his comrades and his subjects. Horses also were needed, that their riders might scour the Venetian plain and bring swift tidings of the advance of a foe; and accordingly Gisulf received from his sovereign a large troop of brood mares of high courage and endurance.

The boundaries of the duchy of Forum Julii cannot be ascertained with even the same approximation to accuracy which may be reached in the case of the duchy of Tridentum. Northwards it probably reached to the Carnic, and eastwards to the Julian Alps, including, therefore, the two deep gorges from which issue the Tagliamento and the Isonzo. Southwards it drew as near to the coast-line as it dared, but was limited by the hostile operations of the Byzantine galleys. The desolate Aquileia, however, as we have already seen, was entirely under Lombard, that is, under *Forojulian* domination, and Concordia was won from the Empire about 615. Opitergium (Oderzo) was a stronghold of the Empire in these parts till about the year 642. The Lombard king (Rothari), who then captured the city, beat down its fortifications, and a later king, Grimwald, about 667, having personal reasons of his own for holding Opitergium in abhorrence, razed it to the ground, and divided its inhabitants among the three duchies of Friuli, Treviso and Ceneda. The fact of this threefold division gives us some idea how far westward the duchy of Forojulii extended. In this direction it was bounded neither by the Alps nor by the unfriendly sea, but by other Lombard territory, and especially by the duchy of Ceneta (Ceneda). The frontier line between them is drawn by some down the broad and stony valley of the Tagliamento, by others at the smaller stream of the Livenza.

On the latter hypothesis Gisulf and his successors ruled a block of territory something like fifty miles from west to east and forty miles from north to south. Broadly speaking, while Aquileia and the roads leading to it gave the distinctive character to this duchy, the necessity of guarding the passes against barbarous neighbors on the north gave its dukes their chief employment. It was emphatically a border principality, and *markgraf* was the title of its chief in a later century. The neighbors in question were perhaps the Bavarians at the northwest corner of the duchy; but far more emphatically all round its northeastern and eastern frontiers, the Slavonians, from whom are descended the Slovenic inhabitants of the modern duchy of Carniola. Behind these men, in the recesses of Pannonia, roamed their yet more barbarous lords, the Asiatic Avars, the fear of whose terrible raids lay for centuries as a nightmare upon Europe.

For a reason which will shortly be stated, the information vouchsafed to us by Paulus as to the earliest history of the duchy of Friuli is less complete than that which he gives us as to the neighboring duchy of Trent; an inferiority which is all the more noticeable since the Lombard historian saw in Friuli the cradle of his own race. From the year 568 till about 610, we have only two or three meager notices of the history of Forum Julii in the pages of Paulus; but some hints let fall in the correspondence of the Exarch of Ravenna with the Frankish king enable us partly to supply the deficiency. *Gisulf*, the nephew of Alboin, was, as we are expressly informed, still living at the time of the commencement of the interregnum (575). His reign, however, was apparently not a very long one, for in the year 589 we find another person playing a prominent part in the politics of northeastern Italy, by name *Grasulf*; and this man, who was in all probability a brother of Gisulf I, was almost certainly duke of Forum Julii. To this *Grasulf*, who was evidently an influential personage as he was addressed by the title 'Your Highness', a strange but important letter was addressed in the name of the Frankish king Childebert by a secretary or other official named Gogo. In this letter the Frankish secretary acts as a sort of 'honest broker' between the Emperor and the Lombard chief. He says in brief:

“Your Highness has made known to us by your relation Biliulf a certain proposition very desirable for all parties, which ought to be put into shape at once, that we may break the obstinacy of our foes. The most pious Emperor has signified that he is going to send a special embassy, and we may expect its arrival any day; but as time presses we will lay before you two courses and leave it to you to decide between them.

I. If you can give the Republic sufficient security for the fulfillment of your promises, we are prepared to hand over to you the whole sum of money in hard cash. Thus the injuries done to God will cease; the blood of our poor Roman relations will be avenged and a perpetual peace will be established between you and the Empire.

II. But if you are not satisfied with the authority of the document which conveys to you the Emperor’s offer, and therefore cannot yet come to terms, the most pious Emperor will send plenipotentiaries, and you also should send men to meet them somewhere in our territory. Only we beg that there may be no more delay than such as is necessarily caused by a sea voyage in this winter season; and that you will send persons who have full power finally to settle everything with the representatives of the Emperor.

Do this promptly, and we are prepared to join our forces with yours for the purpose of revenge [on the common foe], and to show by our actions that we are worthy to be received by the most pious Emperor into the number of his sons”.

Obscure as is the wording of this letter, there can be no doubt as to its general purport. Grasulf, evidently a man of high rank and great power, is a traitor to the national Lombard cause, and is preparing to enter into some sort of federate relation with the Empire, if he can receive a sufficiently large sum of money; and for some reason with which we are not acquainted, the Frankish king, or rather his secretary, is employed as the go-between to settle the price of Grasulf’s fidelity, and the terms of payment.

If the intending traitor was, as I believe him to have been, a nephew of Alboin, and the duke of the great frontier-province of the new kingdom, it is evident that we have here a negotiation which might have been of the utmost importance to the destinies of Italy. And the suggestion that one motive for Grasulf’s meditated treason may have been resentment at his own exclusion from the throne when, at the end of the interregnum, he, Alboin’s nephew, was passed over, and the young Authari was invested with the robes of the restored kingship, seems to me one which has much to recommend it on the score of probability, though we can produce no authority in its favor.

However, the negotiations for some reason or other fell through, and Grasulf did not surrender the duchy of Forum Julii to the Empire. For in the year 590, the Exarch Romanus, writing to King Childebert, and describing the course of the war, says: “Returning [from Mantua] to Ravenna, we decided to march into the province of Istria against the enemy Grasulf. When we arrived in this province Duke Gisulf, *vir magnificus*, son of Grasulf, desiring to show himself in his youthful manhood better than his father, came to meet us that he might submit himself, his chiefs, and his entire army with all devotion to the holy Republic”.

Here again, though we have no express identification of the actors in the drama with the ducal family of Friuli, everything agrees with the theory that they are the persons concerned. Duke Grasulf, as we may reasonably conjecture, was only half-hearted in his treachery to the Lombard cause. When it came to the point of actually surrendering fortresses, or giving any other sufficient security for the fulfillment of his compact with the Roman Republic, the negotiation broke down. His son Gisulf, who had perhaps succeeded his father Grasulf in the course of this campaign of the Exarch’s, took an opposite line of policy to his father, and professed that he would do that which Grasulf had failed to do. He would show himself more loyal to the Empire than his father, and would bring over all the heads of the Lombard *faras*, who were serving under him, and all their men, to the holy Republic.

However, as far as we can discern the misty movements of these Sub-Alpine princes, Gisulf did not in the end prove himself any more capable friend to the Empire than Grasulf had done. If there had been any wholesale surrender of Foro-Julian fortresses to the Exarch we should probably have heard of it from Paulus. As it is, all that the Lombard historian tells us is that Gisulf of Friuli, as well as his brother-duke Gaidwald of Trent, having previously stood aloof from the alliance of King Agilulf, was received by him in peace after the birth of his son, and that Gisulf concurred with the king in promoting the election of Abbot John as the schismatic Patriarch of Aquileia after the death of Severus in 606.

But terrible disaster from an unexpected quarter, was impending over the house of Gisulf and the duchy of Friuli. We have seen that hitherto, from the tie of the Lombards' departure from Pannonia, their relations with the Avar lords of Hungary had been of the most friendly character. There had been treaties of alliance; menacing cautions to the Frankish kings that if they would have peace with the Avars they must be at peace with the Lombards also; joint invasions of Istria; help given by Agilulf to the Great Khan by furnishing shipwrights to fit out his vessels for a naval expedition against the Empire. Now, for some reason or other, possibly because the Lombards were growing too civilized and too wealthy for the taste of their barbarous neighbors, the relations between the two peoples underwent a disastrous change. Somewhere about the year 610, the Khan of the Avars mustered his squalid host, and with 'an innumerable multitude' of followers appeared on the frontier of Friuli. Duke Gisulf set his army in array, and went boldly forth against the enemy, but all his Lombard *farax* were few in number in comparison with that multitudinous Tartar horde : they were surrounded and cut to pieces; few fugitives escaped from that terrible combat, and Gisulf himself was not among the number. There was nothing left for the remnant of the Lombards but to shut themselves up in their stronghold, and to wait for the help which doubtless they implored from King Agilulf. Seven strong fortresses, partly in the valley of the Tagliamento and partly under the shadow of the Julian Alps, are expressly mentioned as having been thus occupied by the Lombards, besides the capital and several smaller castles.

But the kernel of the national defence was, of siege of course, Forum Julii itself, where the few survivors of Gisulf's host, with the women and the lads who had been too young for the battle, manned the walls, whence they looked forth with angry, but trembling hearts on the Avar hordes wandering wide over the fair land, burning, robbing and murdering. Hardly more than a generation had passed since the Lombards had been even thus laying waste the dwellings of the Romans, and now they were themselves suffering the same treatment at the hands of a yet more savage foe. The family of the dead warrior Gisulf, as they stood on the battlements of Forum Julii, consisted of his widow Romilda and his four sons, of whom two, Taso and Cacco, were grown up, while Radwald and Grimwald were still boys. There were also four daughters, two of whom were named Appa and Gaila, but the names of the other two have perished.

The Avar host of course besieged Forum Julii, and bent all their energies to its capture. While the Grand Khan was riding round the walls of the city, seeking to espy the weakest point in its fortifications, Romilda looked forth from the battlements, and seeing him in his youthful beauty, felt her heart burn with a shameful passion for the enemy of her people, and sent him a secret message, that if he would promise to take her for his wife she would surrender to him the city with all that it contained. The Khan, with guile in his heart, accepted the treacherous proposal; Romilda caused the gates to be opened; and the Avars were within the city. Every house was, of course, plundered, and the citizens were collected outside the walls that they might be carried off into captivity. The city itself was then given to the flames. As for Romilda, whose lustful heart had been the cause of all this misery, the Khan, in fulfillment of his plighted oath, took her to his tent, and for one night treated her as his wife; but afterwards

handed her over to the indiscriminate embraces of his followers, and finally impaled her on a stake in the middle of the plain, saying that this was the only husband of whom Romilda was worthy. The daughters of the traitress, who did not inherit her vile nature, succeeded by strange devices in preserving their maiden honor; and though sold as slaves and forced to wander through strange lands, eventually obtained husbands worthy of their birth, one of them being married to the king of the Alamanni, and another to the duke of the Bavarians.

As for the unhappy citizens of Forum Julii, their the captors at first somewhat soothed their fears by telling them that they were only going to lead them back to their own former home in Pannonia. But when in the eastward journey they had arrived as far as the Sacred Plain, the Avars either changed their minds, or revealed the murderous purpose which they had always cherished, and slaughtered in cold blood the Lombard males who were of full age, dividing the women and children among them as their slaves. The sons of duke Gisulf, seeing the wicked work begun, sprang on their horses, and were about to take flight. But it was only Taso, Cacco, and Radwald who were yet practiced horsemen, and the question arose what should be done with the little Grimwald, who was thought to be yet too young to keep his seat on a galloping horse. It seemed a kinder deed to take his life than to leave him to the squalid misery of captivity amongst the Avars; and accordingly one of his older brothers lifted his lance to slay him. But the boy cried out with tears, "Do not pierce me with thy lance; I, too, can sit on horseback". Thereupon the elder brother stooped down, and catching Grimwald by the arm, swung him up on to the bare back of a horse, and told him to stick on if he could. The lad caught hold of the bridle, and for some distance followed his brothers in their flight. But soon the Avars, who had discovered the escape of the princes, were seen in pursuit. The three elder brothers, thanks to the swiftness of their steeds, escaped, but the little Grimwald fell into the hands of the foremost of the band. The captor deemed it unworthy of him to smite with the sword so young an enemy, and determined rather to keep him, and use him as a slave. He therefore caught hold of his bridle, and moved slowly back to the camp, delighting in the thought of his noble prize : for the slender figure of the princely boy, his gleaming eyes, and thick clustering locks of flaxen hair were fair to behold, especially to one accustomed to nought but the mean Kalmuck visages of the swarthy Avars. But while the captor's heart was swelling with pride, grief at his captivity burned in the soul of Grimwald.

‘And mighty thoughts stirred in that tiny breast’.

He quietly drew from its sheath the little sword which he carried as the child of a Lombard chief, and watching his opportunity dealt with all his might a blow on the crown of the head of his Avar captor. Wonderful to tell, the stripling's stroke was fatal. The Avar fell dead from his horse, and Grimwald, turning the head of his steed rode fast after his brothers, whom he overtook, and who hailed him with shouts of delight both at his escape, and at his first slaughter of a foe.

So runs the story of Grimwald's escape as told in the pages of Paulus. It is Saga of course; and in order to magnify the deeds of one who became in after years the foremost man of the Lombard nation, it is very possible that the bards have somewhat diminished the age of the youthful warrior. But it is not worthwhile to attempt the now hopeless task of disentangling poetry from prose. A historian who is so often compelled to lay before his readers mere names of kings and dukes without one touch of portraiture to make them live in the memory, may be excused for wishing that many more such Sagas had been preserved by the Lombard chronicler.

Story of the ancestors of Paulus Diaconus

Happily at this point Paulus interrupts the course of the general history, in order to give us some information as to the fortunes of his own forefathers; and this little chapter of family history helps us to understand the immense and terrible importance of the Avar raid into Friuli, a raid which in many ways reminds us of the Danish invasions of Anglo-Saxon England in the ninth and tenth centuries; like them blighting a young and tender civilization, and like them probably destroying many of the records of the past.

The first of his ancestors mentioned by Paulus is Leupchis, who came into Italy in the year 568 at the same time with the great body of his countrymen. After living many years in Italy he died, leaving behind him five young sons, who having apparently escaped death by reason of their tender age, were all swept by the tempest of the invasion from Friuli into Avarland. Here they groaned under the yoke of their captivity for some years; but when they had reached man's estate, the youngest, named Lopichis, by an inspiration from above, conceived the thought of returning to Italy, and regaining his freedom. Having resolved on flight he started, taking with him only his quiver and his bow, and as much food as he could carry. He was utterly ignorant of the road, but, strange to say, a wolf was his guide through the mountain solitudes. When he halted the wolf halted too: when he lagged behind, the creature looked around to see if he were following, and thus he at length perceived that the wild beast was his divinely appointed guide. But after some days' wandering amid the desolate mountains (probably in the district of the Kavawanken Alps) his provisions came to an end, and his death seemed nigh at hand. Faint with hunger, he fitted an arrow to the string and aimed at his heaven sent guide, thinking that even its flesh might save him from starvation. The wolf, however, seeing what he meditated, vanished from his sight. Then Lopichis, despairing of life, fell to the ground and slept; but in his slumber he saw a man who seemed to say to him, "Arise! why sleepest thou? Resume thy journey in the opposite direction to that in which thy feet are now pointing, for there lies the Italy of thy desire". He arose at once, journeyed in the direction indicated, and soon came among the dwellings of men. It was a little Slavonic village that he entered; and there he found a kindly woman who, perceiving that he was a fugitive, received him into her cottage, and hid him there, and perceiving moreover that he was nearly dead with hunger, gave him food gradually and in small quantities as he was able to bear it. At length, when he had sufficiently recovered his strength, she gave him provisions for the journey, and pointed out to him the road to Italy, which country he entered after certain days. He at once sought his old home, but found no trace of the ancestral dwelling left, only a vast tangle of thorns and briars. Having cleared these away, he came upon a large elm growing within the old enclosure of his home, and in this tree he hung up his quiver. Some of his relatives and friends gave him presents which enabled him to rebuild his house and to marry a wife; but the property which had once been his father's he could not recover, as the men who had occupied it pleaded successfully the rights of long possession. Lopichis was the father of Arichis, Arichis of Warnefrit, and Warnefrit, by his wife Theudelinda (named no doubt in honor of the great Lombard queen) had two sons, one of whom was the historian, and the other (named after his grandfather) was his brother Arichis.

We return to the history of the duchy of Friuli, of which, after the death of Gisulf, and the withdrawal of the Avars, Taso and Cacco, the two eldest sons of Gisulf, became joint lords. They seem to have been valiant in fight, for they pushed the boundaries of their territory northward as far as Windisch-Matrei, adding the whole long valley of the Gail to their dominions, and compelling the Slovene inhabitants of that region to pay tribute, which they continued to do for more than a century.

It seems probable that Paulus has omitted some links in the family genealogy. Three generations are very few to cover the period between the Avar invasion and Charles the Great, between Leupchis, who came (presumably as a full-grown man) into Italy in 568, and Paulus

himself, who was born about 720. Besides, it is strange that Leupchis, a grown man in 568, should leave five little children ('pueruli') at the time of the Avar invasion in 610. Most likely, then, owing to the destruction of records during that invasion, a generation has been omitted from the historian's own pedigree, as well as from that of duke Gisulf. Even after Lopichis' return the number of generations (say three to 120 years if Lopichis was born in 600) is somewhat scanty, though not impossibly so.

But the two sons of Gisulf, who had escaped from the swords of the Avars, fell before the vile treachery of a Byzantine official. The Exarch Gregory invited young duke Taso to come and meet him at the Venetian town Opitergium (*Oderzo*), which was still subject to the Empire, promising to adopt him as his "*filius per arma*", the symbol of which new relationship was the cutting off of the first downy beard of the young warrior by his adoptive father. Fearing no evil, Taso went accordingly to Opitergium with Cacco, and a band of chosen youthful warriors. As soon as they had entered the city, the treacherous governor caused the gates to be shut, and sent a band of armed men to attack the young Forojulian chiefs. Seeing that death was inevitable, they resolved to sell their lives dearly, and having given one another a last farewell, the two dukes and their comrades rushed through the streets and squares of the city slaying all whom they met. The slaughter of Roman citizens was terrible, but in the end all the Lombards were left dead upon the pavement of Opitergium. The Exarch ordered the head of Taso to be brought to him, and with traitorous fidelity cut off the beard of the young chieftain, so fulfilling his promise.

Fredegarius (so-called) tells a story which seems to be derived from this, as to the murder of Taso, duke of Tuscany, by the Patrician Isaac. According to him Charoald (Ariwald), king of the Lombards, offers Isaac that he will remit one of the three hundredweights of gold which the Empire pays yearly to the Lombards if he will put Taso out of the way. Isaac accordingly invites Taso to Ravenna, offering to help him against Charoald, whom Taso knows that he has displeased. Taso repairs to Ravenna with a troop of warriors, who, through fear of the Emperor's displeasure, are prevailed upon to leave their arms outside the walls. They enter the city, and the prepared assassins at once rush upon and kill them. Thenceforward the yearly beneficia from the Empire to the Lombards are reduced from three hundredweights of gold to two. Soon after Charoald dies. As Ariwald's reign lasted from 626 to 636, and as Isaac did not become Exarch till 620, it seems to me absolutely impossible in any way to reconcile this wild story with the events described by Paulus, which must have happened many years earlier. Either Fredegarius, who is a most unsafe guide, has got hold of an utterly inaccurate version of the death of Taso, son of Gisulf II, or the coincidence of name is accidental, and the story of Fredegarius relates to some completely different series of events to which we have lost the clue.

Such is the story of the massacre of Opitergium as related to us by the Lombard historian. It is possible that there is another side to the story, and that some excesses of Taso's henchmen may have provoked a tumult, in which he and his brother perished; but as it is told to us the affair reminds us of the meditated massacre of Marcianople; and like that massacre it was bitterly avenged.

The two young dukes of Friuli being thus cut off in their prime, their uncle Grasulf, brother of Gisulf, succeeded to the vacant duchy. Badwald and Grimwald, sore at heart at being thus passed over, took ship, and sailed for Benevento, where, as we shall see, they had an old friend in the person of the reigning duke. We, too, will follow their example and leave Friuli for Benevento, for there is nothing further recorded of the history of the former duchy for half a century after the invasion of the Avars.

III. *Duchy of Benevento.*

Benevento stands in an amphitheatre of hills overlooking the two rivers Calore and Sabato, which meet near its western extremity, and flowing on together for about thirty miles, pour their waters into the channel which bears the name of the Voltorno, and so pass out by Capua to the sea.

The city of Beneventum, as we have already seen, laid claim to a high antiquity, professing to have been founded by Diomed, and to show the tusks of the monstrous boar, which in the days of his grandfather ravaged the territory of Calydon. Leaving these mythical glories on one side, we remark only that it was a city of the Samnites possibly at one time inhabited by the Etruscans of Campania, and that about the time of the Third Samnite War (BC 298-290) it passed under the dominion of Rome. In its neighborhood (BC 275) Manius Curius won that decisive victory over Pyrrhus, which settled the question whether the Roman or the Greek was to be master in the Italian peninsula. Seven years after this (BC 268) the Romans, true to their constant policy of pinning down newly conquered territories by the establishment of miniature Roman republics among them, sent a colony to the city by the Calore; and on this occasion that city, which had previously been called Maleventum, had that name of evil omen, which it had accidentally received, changed into the more auspicious Beneventum, by which it has thenceforth been known in history. The chief importance of Beneventum arose from its being situated on the great *Via Appia*, which led from Rome through Capua to Tarentum and Brundisium. Many a schoolboy has read the passage in the *Iter Brundisium* in which Horace describes the officious zeal of the innkeeper at Beneventum, who, while blowing up his fire to roast a few lean thrushes for his illustrious guests, narrowly escaped burning down his own house. Some portion of the bridge by which the Appian Way crossed the river Sabato is still standing, and is known by the somewhat mysterious name of *Il Ponte Lebbroso* (The Leprous Bridge).

But a century after Horace's Brundisian journey the greatest of the Roman Emperors stamped his name on Beneventum by a noble work of public utility, and by a stately monument. The old road to Brundisium, over which Horace travelled, had apparently been a mere mule-track where it crossed the Apennines, the road which was passable by wheeled carriages making a bend to the south, and circling round by Tarentum. In order to avoid this deviation, and to save a day in the through journey from Rome to the east, the Emperor made the new and splendid road across the mountains which thenceforward bore the name of *Via Trajana*.

To commemorate this great engineering work there was erected on the north side of the city in the year 114, a triumphal arch dedicated to '*Nerva Trajanus Optimus Augustus, Germanicus et Dacicus*' by the Senate and people of Rome. This noble work, which has hardly yet received from archaeologists the attention which it deserves, though it has suffered much at the hands of sportive barbarians, still casts a light upon the reign of the best of Roman Emperors, only less bright than that thrown by the celebrated column at Rome. It is like the same Emperor's Arch at Ancona, but not despoiled of its bas-reliefs; like the Arch of Constantine, but with its best works of art restored to their rightful owner; like the Arch of Titus save for the incidental interest which the latter derives from the fact that it records the calamity of the chosen people. Here, notwithstanding the irritating amputations effected by the mischievous hands of boys of many generations, we can still discover the representation of the chief scenes in the life of Trajan, his adoption by Nerva, his triumphal entry into Rome, his victory over the Dacian chief Decebalus. Here we can see him achieving some of his great peaceful triumphs, giving the '*congiarium*' to the citizens of Rome, founding an asylum for

orphans, and hailed by the Senate's enthusiastic acclamations as *Optimus Princeps*. And lastly, here we see the Roman sculptor's conception of an Imperial apotheosis : Trajan's sister Marciana welcomed into the assembly of the Immortals by Capitolian Jupiter, while Minerva and Ceres, Bacchus and Mercury, look on approvingly.

It was not only the Via Appia and the Via Trajana that entered the gates of Beneventum. A branch of the other great southern road, the Via Latina, led off to it from the neighborhood of Teanum, and another road skirting the northern side of Mons Tifernus connected it with Aesernia and the northeast end of Latium. The more we study the Roman itineraries the more are we impressed with the importance of Beneventum as a military position for the Lombards commanding the southern portion of Italy, watching as from a hostile outpost the movements of the duke of Neapolis, blocking the great highroad between Rome and Constantinople, and cutting off the Romans on the Adriatic from the Romans on the Tyrrhenian Sea. Yet though doubtless strategic considerations weighed heaviest in the scale when the Lombard chiefs were choosing their southern capital, the character of the climate had also probably something to do with their selection. Children of the north, and denizens of the forest and the moorland, the Lombards (or at any rate some of the Lombards) shrank at first from fixing their homes in the sultry alluvial plains. The cooler air of the uplands, the near neighborhood of the great Apennine chain, even the boisterous wind which blustered round the walls of Beneventum were all additional recommendations in the eyes of the first generation of invaders who had crossed the Alps with Alboin.

The duchy of Benevento is often spoken of by Paulus as the duchy of the Samnites. At first the use of so archaic a term of geography strikes us as a piece of mere pedantry, and only provokes a smile; but when we look a little more closely into the matter our objection to it almost disappears. The attitude of the old Samnite mountaineers to the lowlanders of Campania, Greek, Etruscan, Oscan, or Roman, seems reproduced in the attitude of the Lombards of Benevento to the Imperialist duke of Neapolis, and the citizens of Salernum and Paestum. The pass of the Caudine Forks, the scene of Rome's greatest humiliation (whether it be placed at S. Agata dei Goti or at Arpaia), was within fifteen miles of Benevento. Though wars, proscriptions and the horrors of the Roman *latifundia* may have well-nigh exterminated all the population in whose veins ran a drop of the old Samnite blood, the faithful memory of the mountaineer may have retained some trace of those great wars, which once made each pass of the Apennines memorable; and even as the Vandals of Carthage avenged the wrongs of their long vanished Punic predecessors, so possibly some faint tradition of the ungenerous treatment of that noble Samnite general C. Pontius of Telesia by his Roman conquerors may have reached the ears of Arichis or Grimwald, and nerved them to more bitter battle against the Roman dwellers in the plain below.

I have briefly touched on the history of Beneventum before it became the seat of a Lombard duchy. The chief architectural monuments of Lombard domination belong to the reign of Arichis II, and are therefore outside the limits of this volume. But having followed the fortunes of the city so far, I may here record the fact that the Lombard duchy of Benevento lasted as an independent state till the latter part of the eleventh century, when the Norman conquest of Southern Italy, contemporaneous with the Norman conquest of England, extinguished its existence along with that of its old Greek or Imperial foes. The city of Benevento itself, in the troubles connected with the Norman invasion, became a part of the Papal territory (1053), though entirely surrounded by the dominions of the Neapolitan kings, and seventy miles distant from the frontier of the States of the Church. In the plain below the city walls, on the banks of the river Galore, was fought in 1266 that fatal battle in which Manfred, the last the Hohenstaufen princes, was defeated by Charles of Anjou, the first, but by no means the last, of the French lords of Southern Italy. From various causes Benevento lost

much of the importance which had belonged to it at the beginning of the Middle Ages. During the Saracen invasions of the ninth and tenth centuries the old Roman roads fell into decay, and the great Via Appia and Via Trajana no longer brought traders to its gates. When Naples ceased to be under a Byzantine ruler, it naturally took the place of Benevento as capital of Southern Italy. Later on the position of the city as a mere enclave of the Popes, surrounded by the territory of sometimes unfriendly princes, was doubtless unfavorable to its commercial growth. Thus it has come to pass that Benevento now possesses only a little over 20,000 inhabitants, and has played no important part in the later history of Italy. In fact the historian of the nineteenth century will perhaps find his chief reason for remembering it in the fact that in the short-lived Empire of Napoleon it gave the title of Prince to that strange and shifty intriguer, the Sisyphus of modern politics, Bishop or Citizen Talleyrand. It now, however, of course, forms part of the kingdom of Italy, and is capital of a province. With good roads, and becoming again by the construction of two or three converging railroads, somewhat of a focus of communication for Southern Italy, it is likely to be an important agricultural centre, and may perhaps regain by trade some of the importance which it lost by politics and war.

But we have wandered thirteen centuries away from our proper subject. We must return to the middle of the sixth century. The still existing city walls, to a large extent of Roman workmanship, the eight gates by which they are pierced, the arch immediately outside them, the remains of the baths and amphitheatre, the ruins of a vast warehouse outside the city, all help us to imagine its appearance as it lay in desolate grandeur for some twenty years or more after Totila had thrown down its walls, and before the “unspeakable Lombard” came marching along the Appian Way to ravage and to rule.

It was probably about the year 571, three years after Alboin’s first entrance into Italy, that a Lombard chief named Zotto entered the city—an easy prey by reason of its ruined walls—and established himself there as its duke. From this centre, in the course of his twenty years’ reign, he extended his dominions far and wide over Southern Italy. Naples, which was no doubt the chief object of his desire, he never succeeded in capturing, though he besieged it in 581. But Aquinum, more than sixty miles north-west of Benevento (that little Volscian town which was one day to become famous as the birthplace of a great theologian and philosopher), was laid waste about the year 577 by the swords of barbarians, who were probably the soldiers of Zotto. And towards the end of Zotto’s reign, about the year 590, the little town of Atina, somewhat north of Aquinum, and not far from Arpinum (the birthplace of Marius and Cicero), was entered by the ruthless Lombards, and its bishop, Felix, after an episcopate of thirty years, died as a martyr under the hands of the Beneventan duke, the city and the great church being also destroyed at the same time.

It was apparently about the same time, or perhaps a year earlier (589), that the great convent, which the saintly Benedict had reared sixty years before on Monte Cassino, was stormed in the night by Zotto’s savage followers. They laid hands on everything valuable that they could find in that abode of willing poverty, probably not much besides the vessels of divine service, and perhaps some ornaments of the founder’s tomb. Not one of the monks, however, was taken, and thus was fulfilled the prophecy of their father Benedict, who long before, predicting the coming calamity, had said, “With difficulty have I obtained of the Lord that from this place the persons alone should be granted me”. The fugitive monks escaped to Rome, carrying with them the original manuscript of the Benedictine Rule, and some other writings; the regulation weight for the bread, and measure for the wine, and such scanty bed furniture as they could save from the general ruin.

It was under the fourth successor of St. Benedict that this ruin of the great convent took place, and notwithstanding all the softened conditions of life in Italy during the generations that

were to follow, it was 130 years before the *Coenobium* of Monte Cassino rose again from its ruins.

In the year 591 Duke Zotto died, having pushed the terror of his ravages, as we can see from the early letters of Pope Gregory, far into Apulia, Lucania and Calabria. In all this career of conquest he had been apparently acting on his own responsibility, with very little regard to the central power, such as it was, in Northern Italy; and indeed, during half of his reign there 'had been no king over Israel', only that loose confederacy of dukes of which he must have been nearly, if not quite, the most powerful member. But either Zotto left none of his own family to succeed him, or the obvious danger to the Lombard state, involved in the independence of Benevento, stirred up the new king, Agilulf, to a vigorous assertion of the right which was undoubtedly his in theory, to nominate Zotto's successor. His choice fell on Arichis, who was a kinsman of Gisulf, duke of Friuli, and who had, according to Paulus, acted for some time as instructor of his younger sons in all manly exercises.

The reign of Arichis I lasted fifty years, from 591 to 641, and was an important period in the history of the new duchy. I have called it a reign advisedly, for whatever may have been the theory of his relation to Arichis, the Lombard king ruling at Pavia, it is clear that in practice Arichis acted as an independent sovereign. We have seen him, in a previous chapter, making war on his own account with Naples and Rome : nay more, we have seen that King Agilulf himself could not conclude a peace with the Empire till Arichis was graciously pleased to come in and give his assent to the treaty. It is suggested that if Agilulf, on Zotto's death, had taken proper measures for ensuring the dependence of the duchy of Benevento on the central monarchy, he might still have accomplished that result; but whether this be so or no, it is clear that the long and successful reign of a great warrior like Arichis, a reign, too, which coincided with many weak and short reigns of his nominal superiors at Pavia, established the virtual independence of the southern duchy. There was apparently no royal domain reserved in all that long reach of territory; there were no officers acting in the king's name, or appointed by him; and when at last the reign of Arichis came to an end his successor was chosen without even a pretence of consulting the Lombard sovereign.

It was during this reign that the duchy of Benevento received that geographical extension which, in the main, it kept for centuries. Roughly speaking, it included the old Italian provinces of Samnium, Apulia, Campania, Lucania, and Bruttii, except such parts of the coast—and they were considerable, and included all the best harbors—as were still held by the Empire. The capital and heart of the duchy were in the province of Samnium, and 'the people of the Samnites' is, as we have seen, the phrase generally used by Paulus when he is speaking of the Lombards of Benevento. It is certainly with a strange feeling of the return of some great historic cycle that we find Rome engaged in a breathless struggle for her very existence with Carthage in the fifth century after Christ, and with 'the Samnites' in the sixth.

The limits of the Samnite duchy cannot now be very exactly defined. On the northwest the frontier must have run for some distance side by side with that of the *Ducatus Romae* along the river Liris, and under the Volscian hills. In the Sabine territory and Picenum, the Fucine lake and the river Pescara probably formed the boundary with the other great Lombard duchy of Central Italy, that of Spoleto. The easternmost peninsula (sometimes called the heel of Italy), which lies between the gulf of Taranto and the Adriatic, and which includes Taranto itself, Otranto and Brindisi, was still held by the Empire at the death of Arichis. So did the extreme south, the toe of Italy, forming large part of the ancient province of Bruttii. Consentia (Cosenza) seems here to have been close to the border line between the Imperial and the Lombard dominions. Rossano was still Imperial, and a line drawn across the peninsula from that city to Amantia formed the frontier between 'Romania and Varbaricum'. The patient monks of Cassiodorus therefore, in their convent at Squillace, could study theology and

grammar, and transcribe the treatises of their founder, undisturbed under the aegis of the Empire. Further north all the lovely bay of Naples, with its fine harbors and flourishing cities, owned the sway of the Roman Augustus. It was not till towards the end of the reign of Arichis (probably about 640) that the city of Salerno passed, apparently by peaceful means, into the keeping of the Lombards.

The few facts which illustrate the internal history of the duchy, and especially those which throw any light on the condition of the conquered Roman inhabitants, will come under our notice in later chapters. It will be enough to say here that all the symptoms would seem to show that the oppression was harder, the robbery of cities and churches more ruthless, the general relation of the two nations more unnatural, in the duchy of Benevento (and probably in that of Spoleto also) than in the northern kingdom. No Theudelinda was at work here to help forward the blessed work of amalgamation between the races. It is true that in the spring of 599 we find Pope Gregory writing to Arichis, and asking for help in the felling of timber in the forests of Bruttii for the repairs of the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. As before said, we must not conclude that because the Pope in this letter addresses 'Arogis' as his son, he had joined the Catholic Church. It is true that Gregory would hardly have used this mode of address to a notorious idolater, perhaps hardly to a bitter Arian persecutor; but these Lombard conquerors were not as a rule sufficiently interested in theology to be persecutors. They were simply rough, sensual, boorish children of the forest, men who, if there were any object to be gained, would address the great bishop of Home as 'Father', and would be glad to be addressed by him as 'Glorious Son', but would not surrender an ounce of church plate, nor recall a single bishop from the exile into which their suspicions had driven him, for all the loving exhortations of the Holy Father.

Thus it came to pass that all through the long reign of Arichis, the Catholics of his duchy were in a lamentable state of spiritual destitution. The unusually large number of episcopal cities which were once to be found in Southern Italy seem to have remained widowed of their bishops, and the convents, like Monte Cassino itself, lay, probably for the greater part of the seventh century, in ruins. Even Benevento, the capital of the duchy, had perhaps no resident bishop till shortly before St. Barbatus came to it (in 663) to restore the ruins of many generations. The life of this saint (from which some quotations will be made in a note to a later chapter) draws a lamentable picture of the foolish and degrading superstitions by which the people of Benevento, though calling themselves baptized Christians, were still held in bondage. Salerno seems to be the only city in this region (except those that remained in the possession of the Empire) which can show an absolutely unbroken line of bishops during all this troubled time; and this exceptional prosperity is probably accounted for by the fact of its peaceful surrender to the conquerors.

Arichis had probably been reigning some twenty or five-and-twenty years when (as was told in the last section) his young kinsmen, Radwald and Grimwald, having left Friuli in disdain, landed from their little bark, and made their way to the court of Benevento. They were received by Arichis with the utmost cordiality, and brought up as his own sons. He had indeed one son of his own named Aio, but over him there hung a mystery which clouded the last years of the life of Arichis. When the great King Rothari took his seat on the Lombard throne, Arichis ordered his son to repair to Pavia, probably with a message of dutiful submission from one who, though in fact king of all Southern Italy, yet owned the king of the Lombards as his lord. On his way, the young prince tarried at Ravenna. Whether he ever completed his journey to Pavia we are not informed, but when he returned to Benevento all men noted a strange alteration in his behavior. Dark rumors were spread abroad that by the malice of the Romans some maddening potion had been brewed for him at Ravenna. Perhaps we may conjecture that the maddening potion was only that Circean cup of enchantment which the dissolute cities of

the Romans have so often held out to the easily-tempted sons of the Teutons; but, whatever the cause, Aio from that time forth was never again in full mental health.

Seeing this fatal change, Arichis, when he felt his last hour approaching, commended Radwald and Grimwald to the Lombards as his own sons, and advised that one of them rather than Aio should be his successor. The advice, however, was disregarded, and on the death of Arichis, the brain-sick Aio became 'leader of the Samnites'. Neither chief nor people seem to have taken any heed of the right which the king of the Lombards must have in theory possessed to name the new duke of Benevento. We are told that Radwald and Grimwald, not murmuring at their exclusion from the throne, to which the will of Arichis had seemed to open the way, obeyed Aio in all things as their elder brother and lord. His reign, however, was not to be of long duration. A year and five months after his accession, a cloud of Slavonic invaders descended on Apulia. They came by way of the sea, with a multitude of ships, and landed at Sipontum; a city which has now disappeared from the face of the earth, but which stood under the peninsular mount of Garganus, near to the spot where, six centuries later, the last of the Hohenstaufens built out of its ruins his capital of Manfredonia. Here the Slavonians pitched their camp, which they fortified with pits dug all round it, and covered probably with brushwood. Thither came Aio with an army, but unaccompanied by his two friends. Riding rashly forward, he fell into one of the hidden pits, and was killed, with many of his followers, by the on-rushing Slavonians. The news was brought to Radwald, who, in order to avenge his patron's death, dealt wilily. He had not forgotten the Slavonic speech which he had learned long ago in the mountains of Friuli, and, approaching the camp of the invaders, he spoke to them friendly words in their own tongue. Having thus lulled their suspicions to sleep, and made them less eager for the battle, he fell upon them at unawares, and wrought great slaughter in their ranks. Thus was Aio's death avenged, and the remnant of the Slavonians returned in haste to their own land. Radwald, who now became without dispute duke of Benevento, reigned for five years only, and at his death was succeeded by his brother Grimwald. The only event which is recorded of the latter's reign as mere duke of Benevento is that 'the Greeks' (as the Romans of the East are now beginning to be called) came to plunder the sanctuary of the Archangel Michael on Mount Garganus; a deed which recalls the ignoble raid upon Apulia made by the ships of Anastasius in the days of Theodoric the Ostrogoth. Grimwald, however, fell upon the sacrilegious invaders with his army, and destroyed them with a great destruction.

At this point we rejoin for a time the main stream of Lombard history : for Grimwald, who is certainly its greatest name in the seventh century, became, as we shall see, in the latter years of his life, king of all the Lombards. Thus the history of the lad who so marvellously escaped from his Avar captors binds together the two duchies of Friuli and Benevento, and the kingdom of Pavia. The eventful story of that last stage of the life of Grimwald must be reserved for a future chapter.

IV.

The Duchy of Spoleto.

The geographical importance of the duchy of Spoleto has been already brought before the reader's notice. We have seen that it represented that struggle for the possession of the Flaminian Way which, since Rome and Ravenna were the two great foci of Imperial dominion in Italy, must have been always going on with more or less vigour for nearly two centuries.

It is true that the great Via Flaminia itself went from Narnia to Mevania, and so passed about twenty miles west of Spoletium; but the road which branched off from Narnia to the east, and led through Interamna, Spoletium and Fulginium northward, and so on through Petra

Pertusa to Ariminum, was also a great highway, and we have seen reason in the course of the previous history to believe that it was looked upon, at any rate so long as the tunnel of the Petra Pertusa was open, as the great highway between Rome and Ravenna. Evidently the object of the Lombard dukes who placed their capital at Spoleto was to keep their hands on the throttle-valve of the Empire, and they probably always nourished the hope of being able to close all the three roads across the Apennines which lay in their immediate neighborhood, and so to conquer Rome.

Spoleto itself, a city rich in historical associations of widely-parted centuries, and standing in the midst of one of the loveliest landscapes of Italy, was well worthy of the high place which it held in the early Middle Ages, and deserves far more careful study than it has yet received either from the artist or the historian. It stands upon a high hill, half encircled by the little stream of the Tessino. Faintly seen on the northern horizon are the long terraces of Assisi and the high rock-citadel of Perugia. Round it on all sides rise the beautiful hills of Umbria, with all that charm of outline and of color which assuredly helped to train the eyes of Raffaele and Perugino to discern the Beautiful. The traveler winds his way under the city walls, whose Cyclopean masonry tells of races that fought and built in the peninsula while the hills of Rome were still a sheep-walk. He climbs under many an intersecting archway up the steep lanes which lead him to the heart of the city. Bright-eyed little children and gaily-kerchiefed women come out to look at *the forestiere* : a little tired, he reaches the top, and suddenly, between two picturesque street-lines, he sees a bit of the beautiful amphitheatre of plain, a bit of the deep purple of the mountains of Umbria.

Yet, as so often in Italy, the visitor to Spoleto finds the historic interest even more powerful to attract him than the beauty of landscape with which Nature woos his regards. Here, near the bottom of the city wall, stands an arch bearing the name of the Porta Fuga, and commemorating the memorable repulse of Hannibal on that day when, flushed with his victory by Lake Trasymene, he marched up to its walls, expecting an immediate surrender; but, beaten back with heavy loss, began to understand, from the resistance of that one brave colony, how great a task he had taken in hand when he set himself to war down Rome.

We mount higher to the crest of the hill, and find ourselves under an arch erected probably twenty-one years after the birth of Christ, bearing an inscription on its front, which states that it is dedicated to Germanicus and Drusus, the adopted and the real sons of Tiberius. The palace of the Municipality, which stands on the highest ground of the city, is erected over the remains of a spacious Roman house which is believed, apparently on sufficient evidence, to have belonged to the mother of Vespasian.

We leave the city by one of its eastern gateways and we find ourselves under the splendid mass of the citadel (fitly called by the townspeople La Rocca), which, standing on its great promontory of cliff, towers above us on our left. Round the base of the cliff far below us circles the tiny torrent of the Tessino. But another, an artificial river, calls away our attention from the natural streamlet. For before us rise the ten lofty and narrow arches of a noble aqueduct, which, at a height of nearly 300 feet, spans the valley and bridges the stream, carrying the pure water from the mountains into the heart of the city. It is called the Ponte delle Torri, and it carries a roadway at a little lower level than the channel of the aqueduct. Both these two splendid structures speak to us of the Teutonic invaders of Italy. The citadel is undoubtedly on the site of the fortress raised by Theodoric, though there may be none of the actual work of the great Ostrogoth in the present building, which was reared in the fourteenth century by Cardinal Alborno. A very strong local tradition connects the aqueduct with Theudelap, who, as we shall see, was the Lombard duke of Spoleto during the greater part of the seventh century. The pointed character of the arches makes it scarcely possible that they, at least, are of so early a period, and probably much of the grand structure which we now behold dates from the

thirteenth century or even later; but cautious and accurate enquirers are inclined to admit that there is some value in the tradition which I have mentioned, and that at least in the great stone piers which support the brick arches, we may see the actual work of the subjects of Duke Theudelap.

This is not the place for anything like a complete enumeration of the monuments of medieval antiquity at Spoleto; and I must leave undescribed the Doric columns of some Pagan temple which now form part of the church of the Crucified One, the joyously grotesque bas-reliefs on the exterior of S. Pietro, and the gigantic stones—surely of pre-Roman workmanship—which form the base of the tower of S. Gregorio. But as illustrating what was said above as to the wealth of various memories that is stored up in these Italian cities, I may observe that the cathedral—not in itself extremely interesting, having suffered much transformation at the hands of Renaissance architects—is connected with the tragic story of Fra Filippo Lippi. His half-faded frescoes telling the story of the Virgin, line the choir of the church. His sepulchral monument, erected by Lorenzo dei Medici with an inscription in Politian's finest Latinity, is to be seen in a chapel on the north side of the choir. In this city it was that the artist monk won the love of a nobly-born lady, Lucrezia Buti, and here it was—so men said—that her indignant relatives mixed for him the fatal cup which ended his stormy life.

If we descend to our own times we learn that in 1860 the fortress of Theodoric and Albornoz was one of the last positions that held out for the Pope-King when all Italy was rallying round the standard of Victor Emmanuel. The garrison, chiefly composed of Irishmen, bravely resisted the besiegers, but was at last forced to capitulate by a cannonade from the surrounding heights.

At present Spoleto, which contains about 11,000 inhabitants, has suffered some diminution of its importance, owing to having lost its position as *capo luogo* of the province, and this has led to a decay of interest in its antiquities. But, as I before said, there are probably few cities in Italy which would better reward the spade of the excavator or the brush of the artist.

Isaac the Hermit.

At the time when the savage hordes of the Lombards swarmed through the gateways of Spoleto, the minds of the citizens were still tilled with the memory of a certain holy hermit named Isaac, who many years before came from Syria, and suddenly appearing in Spoleto, craved from the guardians of the great church permission to remain there as long as he might desire, in order to oiler up his prayers. So small a request was readily granted; but when the holy man had remained standing for three days and nights in the attitude of prayer, one of the attendants, deeming him an impostor, slapped him on the cheek, and ordered him out of the church. At once a foul spirit seized the too hasty custodian, and caused him to fall prostrate at the feet of the unknown hermit, crying out, "Isaac is casting me forth". The holy man—whose name the unclean spirit alone knew—delivered his assailant from the evil one, and at once the news of his spiritual victory spread through the city. Men and women, noble and ignoble, flocked into the church to behold him, besought him to take up his abode with them, offered him houses and lands for the erection of a monastery. But Isaac, who feared peril to his poverty as the miser fears peril to his wealth, refused all their offers, saying continually, "The monk who seeks for possessions in this world is no monk", and built himself a humble cell in a desert place not far from the city. Here he abode many years, performing many wonderful works, the recital of which may be read in the Dialogues of Gregory the Great, from which the preceding narrative is taken. As we are told that he continued almost to the very end of the Gothic domination, the fame of his sanctity must still have been fresh when Spoletium was severed

from the Empire, and when her churches were profaned by the tread of the ‘unspeakable Lombard’.

Such then was the city which became the capital of the Lombard domination in Central Italy. Its dukes ruled over a territory bounded by the Adriatic on the east, and by the Tiber valley (or the hills which enclosed it) on the west. On the south, a line drawn across from Subiaco by the Fucine Lake, and along the river Pescara, may roughly represent the boundary between Spoleto and Benevento. On the north the little river Musone was perhaps the boundary which separated the Spoletine dukes from hostile Ancona, while the Imperial garrisons along the Flaminian Way probably disputed with varying success the possession of all the territory northward of Tadino. Thus, stated in terms of classical geography, the dukes of Spoleto ruled the southern wedge of Umbria, the greater part of Picenum, and almost the whole of the territory which upon the maps is usually allotted to the Sabines.

Duke Farwald, 571-591

The first duke of Spoleto was *Farwald*, who, if it be true that Zotto was ruling in Beneventum in 571, had probably established himself at least as early in his more northern capital.

The chief exploit of Farwald’s reign was the capture of Classis, which occurred probably about 579 or 580 while the inefficient Longinus was still the Imperial governor of Italy. A great achievement truly this must have been, and one which, had the Lombards possessed the same fertility of resource which was shown by their Vandal kinsfolk, might have turned Classis into a second Carthage, and given them the empire of the Mediterranean. As it was, it seems difficult to suppose that they ever seriously interrupted the communications even of Ravenna, and Constantinople; for Exarchs came and went, and letters seem to have been freely interchanged between the Emperor and his representatives. It was therefore probably only the town, not the whole even of the harbor of Classis, of which the Lombards kept possession; but even so, it must have been a galling thing for the ‘Romans’ of Ravenna to feel that the invaders had established themselves in that place, which with Caesarea was joined by one continuous line of houses to their own city, that the domes and towers from which in its pictured semblance on the walls of S. Apollinare, the procession of Virgin martyrs set forth to adore the Holy Child were now in the hands of heretics and idolaters.

Classis seems to have been held by the Lombards of Spoleto for eight or nine years, and was finally reconquered for the Empire (perhaps in the year 588), by that Romanized Teuton Droctulf, on whose tomb, as we have seen, this military operation was recorded as one of the proudest of his triumphs.

Against the older and more venerable capital by the Tiber, it is possible that Farwald also urged his savage soldiery. When we hear that before the consecration of Pope Benedict I, there was an interval of more than ten months and three days, during which the Papal throne remained unoccupied; we may reasonably conjecture that Lombard pressure, either from the side of Tuscany, or from that of Spoleto, was the cause of this long delay. At the next vacancy, when, after an interval of nearly four months, Pelagius II was chosen without the leave of the Emperor, we are expressly told that this was done because Rome was being besieged by the Lombards, and they were making great ravages in Italy. And this besieger of Rome is more likely to have been Farwald than any other of the Lombard dukes.

Duke Ariulf, 591-601

Farwald died about the year 591, possibly of the pestilence which was then ravaging Italy. He was succeeded by *Ariulf*, apparently not a relation; certainly not a son. Possibly in this case the theoretical right of the king to nominate all the dukes was successfully claimed by the

new sovereign Agilulf. Thanks to the letters of Pope Gregory, this duke of Spoleto is to us something more than a mere name. We saw him, in the summer of 592, addressing that boastful letter to Gregory about the promised surrender of Suana which caused the Pope such strange searchings of heart, whether he should advise the Suanese citizens to keep or to break their promise. Soon after, negotiations for peace followed with Gregory himself; but Ariulf still kept up his somewhat swaggering tone, and insisted that the gratuities for his allies (or subordinates), Auctarit and Nordulf, should be handed over to him before he would say one word about peace. While Ariulf appears to make war and peace with sublime independence of his nominal overlord at Pavia, he throughout cooperates loyally with his brother duke Arichis of Benevento, and whenever the latter attacks Naples he helps him to the utmost of his power by a demonstration against Rome, or against one of the outposts on the Flaminian Way.

But Ariulf's campaign of 592, including, as it probably did, a virtual siege of Rome, ended in a partial peace concluded by Gregory with the Lombard duke; and this concession on Ariulf's part seems to have been due to the feelings of veneration aroused in his heart by a personal interview with the pontiff. And though the peace itself was disavowed at Ravenna, and exposed the Pope to bitter reproaches at Constantinople for his 'fatuity' in listening to the promises of such an one as Ariulf, the good understanding thus established between Pope and Duke seems never to have been entirely destroyed; and in a dangerous sickness the Lombard chief asked for and obtained the prayers of Gregory for his recovery. In the final negotiations, however, which at last resulted in the great peace of 599, the Pope complained with some bitterness of the hindrances which came from the side of Ariulf. To Gregory the duke of Spoleto's stipulations that there should be no act of violence committed against himself, and no movement against the army of Arichis, seemed altogether unfair and deceitful and the fact that a certain Warnilfrida, by whose counsel Ariulf was ruled in all things, refused to swear to the peace, confirmed his suspicions. It is, of course, impossible for us to apportion the precise share of praise and blame due to each of the parties to these obscure negotiations; and, as I before remarked, the change of Gregory's tone with regard to Ariulf between 592 and 599 is an important feature in the case. But, on the other hand, it may fairly be urged on Ariulf's behalf, (1) that his previous dealings with the Imperial court had taught him caution, since he had seen, a treaty which had been concluded by him with Rome torn up at Ravenna, and followed by an aggressive movement on the part of the Exarch; and (2) that his stipulations on behalf of Arichis showed his steadfast truth to the duke of Benevento, and his determination not to make himself safe by the sacrifice of that faithful ally.

The only other incident in the life of Ariulf that has been recorded is that curious story which has been already extracted from the pages of Paulus, and which seems like a barbaric version of the share taken by the Great Twin Brethren in the battle of the Lake Regillus. It was when he was warring against Caraerinum that Ariulf saw a champion, unseen by others, fighting bravely by his side, and it was soon after the battle that he identified his ghostly defender with St. Sabinus, whose figure he saw depicted on the walls of his basilica. Paulus assigns no date to this story, which is connected with his obituary notice of Ariulf. Seeing how near Camerinum is to Spoletium, we should feel inclined to *put* the campaign against the former city early in the victorious reign of Ariulf: indeed, it is difficult to understand why his predecessor should have penetrated as far north as Chassis, leaving such a stronghold as Camerinum in his immediate neighborhood untaken.

Ariulf's reign, though a memorable, was not a long one. He died in 601, about ten years after his accession; and on his death a contest arose between the two sons of his predecessor Farwald, which should succeed to the vacant dignity. The dispute was decided by the sword—we have again to note how little voice King Agilulf seems to have had in regulating the

succession to these great duchies—and Theudelap, the victor in the fight, was crowned duke on the field of battle. We know neither the name nor the fate of his unsuccessful rival.

Theudelap. 601-653

Theudelap wore for more than half a century the ducal crown of Spoleto. This long reign, which during the greater part of its course coincided with that of Arichis at Benevento (591-641), had doubtless an important influence in rendering both of the southern duchies more independent of the northern kingdom. At Pavia during this half century four kings bore sway; two of whom were able and successful rulers, but the other two were an infant and an usurper. It cannot be doubted that, during this long period, that part of Lombard Italy which lay south and east of the Flaminian Way would be growing less and less disposed to respond to any effectual control on the part of the kings who dwelt north of the Apennines.

Of the events of the long reign of Theudelap we are absolutely ignorant. It is generally supposed to have been peaceful; but this may be only because record fails us of the wars in which he may have been engaged. Some of the early mediaeval buildings of Spoleto are traditionally attributed to his reign; but of this also there appears to be no clear proof; though (as I have already said) there is some reason to think that popular tradition is not altogether wrong in assigning to Theudelap some share at least in the construction of that noble aqueduct which is the great glory of the city of Spoleto. There has been, to use a geological term, a complete denudation of all this part of the history of Lombard Italy; and if we know little of Theudelap himself, we know still less of his successor *Atto*, who is to us a mere name in the pages of Paulus Diaconus. The story of the later dukes will be told chiefly in connection with that of the Lombard kings, against whom they were frequently found in rebellion.

NOTE

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTICES OF THE LOMBARDS OF SPOLETO.

We have some hints as to the proceedings of the Lombards in Central Italy, furnished to us by the church writers of the period, which from their character we cannot accept as sober history, and yet which supply us with too vivid a picture of the times to be altogether omitted.

I. Chief among these are the marvelous stories told by Pope Gregory in his strange wonder-book the *Dialogues*. This book was composed in 593, in the early years of his pontificate, before he had tamed Ariulf, or corresponded with Theudelinda, or hurled meek defiance at the Emperor Maurice. Possibly in the later years of his life, after peace with the invaders had been brought about by his means, he might have spoken with rather less bitterness concerning them. The geographical indications furnished by the *Dialogues* all point, as we might have expected, to the Lombards of the duchy of Spoleto as the ravagers with whom Gregory's friends were chiefly brought in contact. In one place we hear (and it is an almost solitary instance of religious persecution) of their putting four hundred captives to death because they refused to worship a goat's head, round which the Lombards themselves circled in rapid dance, singing an unholy hymn. Of course, these barbarians must have been mere idolaters, who did not pretend to the name even of Arian Christianity. We may perhaps be allowed to conjecture that they belonged rather to that *colluries gentium*, Bulgarians, Sarmatians, Gepidae, who came with the Lombards into Italy, than to the Lombards properly so called.

At Spoleto itself, the Arian bishop of the Lombards demanded of the bishop of the city a church which he might dedicate to his error. On the firm refusal of the Catholic prelate he

announced that he should come next day and forcibly enter the church of St. Paul. The guardian of that church hastened to it, closed and bolted the doors, extinguished all the lights at eventide, hid himself in the recesses of the church, and awaited the result. In the early morning twilight the Arian bishop came with a multitude of men prepared to break open the doors of the church. Suddenly, by an unseen hand, all the bolts of the doors were loosed, the doors opened with a crash, the extinguished lamps burst into flame, and the intruding bishop, seeking to pass the threshold of the church, was struck with sudden blindness and had to be led back by a guide to his home. The miracle of light at the same instant given to the church, and taken away from the heretical bishop struck all the Lombards in that region with awe, and there was no further attempt to deprive the Catholics of their churches.

Some of Gregory's most characteristic stories are told us concerning a certain presbyter of the province of Nursia, named Sanctulus, who had recently died and appeared to him in vision at the hour of his departure. This Sanctulus passing by saw some Lombards toiling in vain at an olive-press, from which no oil would run forth. He brought a skin and told them to fill it for him. The barbarians, already chafed by their wasted labor, answered him with angry and threatening words; but the holy man called for water, which he blessed and cast into the press, and now there gushed forth such a stream of oil that the laboring Lombards filled not their own vessels only, but his bladder also.

In a similar way he fed the workmen employed in rebuilding the church of St. Lawrence destroyed by the Lombards, with a large and beautiful white loaf miraculously hidden in that which was supposed to be an empty oven. All these miracles seem to have procured for him a certain amount of favor from the barbarians, and when a deacon was brought into the city, whom some Lombards had taken prisoner, and were about to put to death, they consented to hand him over to the custody of Sanctulus, but only on condition that he should answer for his safe keeping with his own life. At midnight, when the Lombards were all wrapt in slumber, the saint aroused the deacon and commanded him to fly, saying that he was in the hands of God and feared not the consequences for himself. Next morning, when the Lombards came and found their bird flown, they were of course vehemently enraged.

'You know', said they, 'what was agreed upon between us'.

'I know it', he answered.

'But you are a good man : we would not willingly torture you. Choose by what death you will die'.

'I am in God's hands: slay me in any manner that He shall permit'.

Then they consulted together and decided that his head should be cut off by the stroke of a strong Lombard swordsman. At the news that so great a saint and one whom they so highly revered was to be put to death, the Lombards gathered from far and near to witness the famous sight. The saint asked leave to pray, which was granted him; but as he remained a long time on the ground prostrate in prayer, the executioner gave him a kick and said, "Rise, kneel down, and stretch out your neck". He obeyed; he stretched out his neck; he saw the flashing sword drawn to slay him, and uttered only the prayer : "Saint John, receive my soul". The executioner swung his sword high in air, but there it remained, for his stiffened arm was unable to bring it down again. Then all the Lombards crowded round the holy man and begged him to arise. He arose. They begged him to release the executioner's arrested arm, but he replied, "I will in no wise pray for him, unless he will swear never to slay a Christian man with that hand". The penitent executioner swore the oath, and at the saint's word of command brought down his arm, and plunged the sword back into its sheath. The miracle struck a deep awe into the hearts of all the barbarians, who crowded round the saint and sought to buy his favor by presents of horses and cattle which they had plundered from the country-folk; but he refused all

these and only claimed, and this successfully, that all the captives whom they had taken should be restored to freedom.

Less fortunate, or less strong in faith, was a certain abbot named Soranus, who, having at the news of the approach of the Lombards given away all the stores laid up in the monastery and therefore having nothing to give when the barbarians came round him, clamoring for gold, was carried off by them to a forest among the mountains. He succeeded in escaping, but one of the Lombards finding him, drew his sword and slew him. When his body fell to the ground the mountain and the forest were shaken together as though the trembling earth confessed herself unable to bear the weight of his holiness.

A deacon in the land of the Marsi being beheaded by a Lombard, the foul fiend at once entered into the murderer, who fell prostrate at the feet of his victim. Two monks in the province of Valeria being taken by the raging Lombards were hung on the branches of a tree and died the same clay. At evening the two dead monks began to sing with clear and sweet voices, to the joy of their fellow-captives who yet remained alive, but to the terror and confusion of the barbarians who had murdered them.

Such are the chief stories told by the great Pope concerning the evil deeds of the Lombards of Central Italy.

Life of St. Cetheus.

Another source of information of a similar kind is opened to us by the Life of St. Cetheus (or Peregrinus), bishop of Amiternum, a city now destroyed, which once stood about forty miles southeast of Spoleto, at the foot of the Gran Sasso d'Italia.

In the time of Pope Gregory, Emperor Phocas, and Farwald duke of Spoleto, the Lombards entered Italy and overflowed the boundaries of the Romans, Samnites and Spoletines. Of this nation, two most evil and ignoble men, sons of concubines, named Alais and Umbolus, came to the city of Amiternum, which they ravaged and plundered in their usual barbaric fashion. Unable to bear their cruelty, Cetheus bishop of the city fled to Rome and besought the protection of Pope Gregory, who assured him that in no long time the Lombards would repent and seek the Papal blessing. For this Cetheus prayed, and before long his prayer was granted, the Lombards from Amiternum coming to implore the Pope's benediction, which he would only grant them on condition of their receiving back their bishop. All the priests and other clergy poured forth from the gate of the city to meet him on his return and welcomed him in the name of the Lord.

Now dissensions arose between the two Lombard dukes, of whom Alais held the eastern and Umbolus the western gate. Each sought to kill the other, and there was great sadness among the Christians in that city. Alais, plotting with his friends the ruin of the city, sent messengers to Vesilianus [the Roman] count of Orta, praying him to make a midnight attack on the city of Amiternum, and utterly destroy it. Of this design the blessed bishop Cetheus, abiding in his cell, was utterly ignorant. Now there were in that city a Godfearing couple named Fredo and Bona, who went at eventide into the church and prayed, and then having received the bishop's blessing returned to their home. When bed-time came, Fredo did not take off his clothes, but lay down as he was. On his wife asking him the reason he answered, "I am shaken with an immense trembling and I greatly fear that tonight this city will perish". "God will forbid it", said she; but he said, "Bring me my weapons of war and place them by my head, and then we shall sleep secure". This he said, being warned by the Holy Ghost, for he knew naught of the counsels of Alais.

At midnight a cry was heard, "Arise, arise, an enemy attacks the city!". The most Christian Fredo rose from his wife's side, and donning his arms, ran through the streets crying, "Rise most holy father Cetheus, rise and pray for us! The city perisheth, we shall lose all our

goods and shall ere daybreak be slain with the sword". Bishop Cetheus arose, and rushed into the street, calling aloud on Christ who delivered Daniel from the lions and the Three Children from the fiery furnace, to save the people of Amiternum from their foes. The prayer was heard, the invaders were struck with panic and retired having lost many of their number.

Next day all the citizens came together to see by what means the enemy could have entered the city. They found ladders raised near the church of St. Thomas, and discovered that all this had been done by the counsel of Alais. He was brought bound into the midst of the people, who thundered forth the words, "Death to the traitor!" and began to consider how best to torture him. But Cetheus besought them not to lay hands on him but to cast him into prison and call a meeting of all in that city, both small and great, who should lay upon him a penance lasting many days, that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

At once uprose the impious Umbolus in wrath and fury, and said, "Thou too, O Cetheus, was certainly privy to this treacherous scheme, for the ladder set against the church of St. Thomas was placed there by thy magic arts. Thou art unworthy to be bishop any longer". The blessed Cetheus swore by the crucified Son of God, by the undivided Trinity, and by the holy Gospels, that he was innocent of any such design; but Umbolus, stopping his ears, ordered him and Alais to be led bound into the midst of the city and there beheaded in the sight of all the people. On the road to execution Cetheus sang Psalms with such a loud and triumphant voice that the awe-stricken guardsman, though he gladly struck off the head of Alais, refused to strike a blow at the holy man. Full of fury, Umbolus ordered Cetheus to be brought before him and began to taunt him with his bonds. The bishop declared that the curse of Cain the fratricide should rest upon him, and that he should dwell for ever with the Evil One. Turning then to his guards he said, "Why, oh sons of iniquity and servants of darkness, do ye keep me thus in chains? Is it because ye recognize in me a servant of the true God? In His name I will gladly bear not chains only, but death itself: but you, Arians and infidels that ye are, shall have your mansions with Judas Iscariot in the unquenchable Tartarus, and among the wandering spirits shall be your portion : yea, and cursed for ever shall ye be, because ye have scorned my preaching and have refused to listen to the corrections of Truth. But to thee Umbolus, most unutterable of men, none shall ever give the kiss of peace. He who blesses thee shall be accursed, for the curser of Satan curses thee". Filled with rage, Umbolus ordered him to be bound and led away to the river Pescara and thrown into it from the marble bridge. So was he thrown in, but by the blessing of God he came to shore safe and sound. Again and again was he thrown in at the tyrant's command by the raging people, but always came safely to the shore. Then the most impious Umbolus ordered them to bring the holy man into his presence, and to fasten under his feet a millstone weighing live hundredweight, and drown him in the deepest part of the river. Then after another prayer he was thrown into the stream, and at once yielded up his breath, but his body was carried [down the river and across the Adriatic] to the city of Jaterna [Zara in Dalmatia], where a fisherman found it with the millstone still attached to it and surrounded by a holy light. News of the discovery was brought to the bishop and clergy of Zara, who at once perceived that it was the body of a holy man, and buried it near the shore in the odour of sanctity. Often at night was a light like that of a lamp seen to hover round the corpse's head; and a blind man received sight by visiting the tomb. But as none knew the martyr's name, the men of Zara called him only by this name, Peregrinus.

With all the marks of the handiwork of the conventional martyrologist, there are some touches in this narrative which indicate a real knowledge of the circumstances of the time, and point to a nearly contemporary origin. The Lombards are still 'unspeakable': the split between the two Lombard dukes and the intrigue of one of the rivals with the Imperial general are events of only too frequent occurrence in Lombard history: and lastly the martyrdom as it is called, is not due to religious intolerance on the part of the Lombards, but to merely political

causes. Bishop Cetheus is drowned, not because he upholds the creed of Nicaea, but because he is suspected of complicity in the betrayal of the city to the Greeks, and various circumstances suggest even to us the thought that the suspicion was not altogether without foundation.

CHAPTER III.

SAINT COLUMBANUS.

IN relating the history of the four great duchies, we have travelled far down through the seventh century. We must now retrace our steps to the very beginning of that century, and follow the fortunes of the Lombard kingdom established at Pavia, from the year 603 onwards. It will be remembered that this year witnessed the greatest of King Agilulf's triumph. Cremona, Mantua, Brexillum, all surrendered to his generals; the whole valley of the Po became a Lombard possession; the Exarch Smaragdus was forced to conclude peace on terms humiliating to the Empire; the kidnapped daughter of Agilulf, with her husband Gottschalk, was restored to her father; and, most fortunate event, as it seemed, of all, the new dynasty was consolidated by the birth of Theudelinda's son Adalwald, who was baptized according to the Catholic rite by Bishop Secundus of Trient.

Agilulf lived for twelve or thirteen years after this year of triumph, but, with one exception, that period seems to have been marked by no political events of great importance for the Lombard kingdom. The exception referred to—and it was a lamentable one—was that terrible invasion of the once friendly Avars which (as was told in the last chapter) blasted the reviving prosperity of the border duchy of Friuli.

Relations with the Empire consisted chiefly of a series of renewals of the peace of 603. It had been arranged that that peace should endure till the first of April, 605. In the summer of that year we must suppose the war to have been in some measure renewed, and the Lombards to have been successful, for two cities on the east of Lake Bolsena, Orvieto and Bagnorea, were lost by the Empire. In November of this year (605) Smaragdus was fain to conclude a year's peace with Agilulf at a cost of 12,000 solidi. In 606 the peace was renewed for three years more. It was, perhaps, in 609, at the end of this interval that Agilulf sent a great officer of the household to the Emperor Phocas. He returned, accompanied by the Imperial ambassadors, who brought gifts from their master, and renewed the yearly peace. And so the diplomatic game went on, somewhat in the same fashion as between Spain and the United Provinces in the early part of the seventeenth century. The Roman Emperor could not recognize the Lombards as lawful possessors of any part of the soil of Italy, but he was willing to postpone from year to year the effort to expel them; and the Lombard king, sometimes by the inducement of a large payment of money, was made willing to allow the operation to be so postponed. Emperor succeeded Emperor at Constantinople—the revolution which placed Heraclius on the Imperial throne broke out in the autumn of 610—and Exarch succeeded Exarch at Ravenna, but the long-delayed war never came during that generation.

With his powerful neighbors on the west, the relations of Agilulf were also in the main peaceful. When in July, 604, the infant Adalwald was solemnly raised upon the shield in the Roman hippodrome at Milan, and declared king over the Lombards, the ambassadors of the Austrasian king, Theudebert II, were standing by, and in their master's name they swore to a perpetual peace between the Lombards and the Franks, to be sealed by the marriage of the royal babe with their master's daughter.

A few years later we hear of Agilulf as joining a quadruple alliance against Theodoric II of Burgundy. This young king, sensual and profligate like all the Merovingian brood, had

repudiated with insult the daughter of the Visigothic king, Witterich. Some said that the divorce was suggested by Theodoric's grandmother Brunichildis, who in her eager clutch of regal power would rather that her descendant wallowed in sinful lusts than that she herself should be confronted in the palace by the influence of a lawful queen. But however this may be—and Brunichildis, struggling against the increasing power of the great nobles of the Court, was bitterly assailed by the calumnies of her foes—the offence seemed likely not to go unpunished. A powerful combination was formed. The insulted Witterich obtained the alliance of the culprit's brother, Theudebert of Austrasia, of his cousin Chlotochar of Neustria, and even, strange to say, of Agilulf of Italy, who perhaps considered himself bound to follow his ally Theudebert wheresoever he might lead him. However, this formidable combination led to no results, and the meager annals of the time do not even inform us whether Burgundy was ever invaded by the confederate kings. Evidently Theodoric II, the resources of whose kingdom were directed by the wary old politician Brunichildis, was the most powerful of all the Frankish monarchs. The long-smoldering feud between him and his brother broke out in 612 into open hostilities. Theodoric was twice victorious, took his brother prisoner, and put him, together with his infant son, to death. What became of the little princess, the affianced bride of Adalwald, we are not informed. Theodoric then turned against the only remaining Frankish king, Chlotochar of Neustria, whose neutrality in the previous struggle he had purchased by a promised cession of territory. It seemed as if the long rivalry between the offspring of Fredegundis and that of Brunichildis was about to end in the triumph of the latter, and as if the grandson of Sigibert was to reunite under his scepter all the wide dominions of Clovis and Chlotochar I. But just at this critical moment Theodoric II died, leaving four infant, but bastard, children behind him. In the name of her great-grandson Sigibert, eldest of the four, Brunichildis aspired to rule over Burgundy and Austrasia, and hoped to conquer Neustria. But the deadly enmity of the Austrasian nobles to the old queen prevented this consummation. Two great nobles, Arnulf, bishop of Metz, and Pippin, went over to the party of Chlotochar, and by their defection determined the result of the campaign. The battle, which was to have been fought near the banks of the Aisne, was only a sham fight, the armies of Austrasia and Burgundy turning their backs without striking a blow. Brunichildis and her great-grandchildren were captured. Two of the latter were put to death; one escaped, but vanished from the eyes of men; the life of the fourth was spared because he was the godson of the conqueror. Brunichildis herself, after being—so it is said—tormented for three days, and then paraded through the Frankish camp on a camel, was tied by her hair, her hands and her feet to a vicious horse, and so dragged and trampled to death. The long strife between the two houses was at an end, and while Fredegundis, unquestionably the most wicked of the two queens, had died quietly in her bed sixteen years before, the able, unscrupulous, and beautiful Brunichildis lived on into old age only to meet this shameful and terrible end.

With the unfortunate Frankish queen and her descendants is closely connected the name of one who exercised a mighty influence on the spiritual history of Theudelinda, and, through her, on the religious history of Italy—the Irish saint Columbanus.

Columbanus or Columba (the second) was born in West Leinster probably in 543, the same year which saw the death of the greatest of monks, St. Benedict. He was well born, and was educated in those arts and sciences a knowledge of which still lingered in Ireland while Gaul and Italy were almost submerged under the flood of barbarian invasion. When the fair and noble youth was growing up into his comely manhood, visions of beautiful women began to haunt his imagination. Marriage was hopeless, for he had been in some sort vowed by his mother to the service of the Church. Renewed earnestness in his studies, devotion to grammar, rhetoric, geometry, the reading of the Scriptures, failed to banish the alluring dream. At length, by the advice of a pious nun, though against the earnest entreaties of his mother, he resolved to

leave his paternal home in Leinster; and, after spending some time in the school (which was probably also a monastery) taught by St. Sinell on an island in Lough Erne, he entered the great monastery which had then been recently founded by St. Comgall at Benchor or Bangor in the county of Down. Here, too, he was doubtless still engaged in intellectual labor, for this was one of the most learned monasteries of the time. Ovid and Virgil were studied within its walls; music was held in high honor; some, probably, of those beautiful Irish MSS. which are among the most precious possessions of our great libraries were illuminated by the monks of Bangor.

Columbanus, however, though no foe to liberal culture, was possessed by the missionary spirit, and, after spending many years at Bangor, he set forth with twelve companions, bent on preaching the Gospel, but not knowing whether they should go. They reached the shores of Brittany; and after they had pursued their missionary career in this country for some time, the fame of St. Columbanus reached the ears of Sigibert, king of Austrasia, the husband of Brunichildis. He sent for the Irish saint, begged him to remain in his kingdom, and at length overcame his reluctance to do so by the gift of a ruined village named Anagratis, in a wild and rocky region of the Vosges.

Here Columbanus established his monastery, and here he dwelt in peace during the stormy years that followed the death of Sigibert. There was nothing in his possessions to tempt the cupidity of the fierce dukes and simoniacal bishops of the Frankish kingdoms. The diet of Columbanus and his monks was for some time the bark of trees, wild herbs, and little crab apples, but, as we afterwards hear of the monks ploughing and reaping, we may infer that, at any rate from their second season onwards, they were not destitute of bread. For the saint himself, even the austerities of the coenobitic life were not sufficient. Leaving his monastery to govern itself for a time, he retired to a cave in the rocks, which was already the abode of a bear. On hearing the word of command from the saint, "Depart hence, and never again travel along these paths", the wild beast meekly obeyed. The fame of the preaching of the saint, and, still more, the fame of his miracles and exorcisms, drew so large a number of postulants to Anagratis that Columbanus found it necessary to establish another monastery, larger and more famous, at Luxovium (now Luxeuil), which was situated within the dominion of Guntram of Burgundy, and was eight miles south of Anagratis. This place, though a ruin like the other, was the ruin of a larger and less sequestered settlement. It still shows the remains of a Roman aqueduct, and when Columbanus and his companions settled within its walls, the hot springs which had supplied its baths were still flowing, and the marble limbs of the once-worshipped gods of the heathen gleamed through the thickets which had been growing there probably since the days of Attila. Eventually, even Luxovium was found to be insufficient to hold all the monks who flocked to its holy shelter, and a third monastery was reared on the neighboring site of Ad Fontanas.

But all this fame and popularity brought its inevitable Nemesis of jealousy and dislike. Columbanus was revered by the common people, but with the high ecclesiastics of Gaul his relations were probably unfriendly from the first. We can see that there was not, and could not be, sympathy between the high-wrought, mystical Irish saint, and the coarse and greedy prelates of Merovingian Gaul. He was, intensely, that which they only pretended to be. To him the kingdom of God was the only joy, the awful judgment of Christ the only terror. They were thinking the while of the sensual delights to be derived from the revenues of the bishoprics which they had obtained by simony. If they trembled, it was at the thought of the probable vengeance of the heirs of some blood-feud, the next of kin of some Frankish warrior whom they had lawlessly put to death. Intellectually, too, the gulf between the Gaulish bishops and Columbanus was almost as wide as the moral divergence. He retained to the end of his days that considerable tincture of classical learning which he had imbibed under Sinell and Comgall. He and his Irish companions were steeped in Virgil and Horace. When they sat down to write

even on religious subjects, quotations from the Aeneid flowed with only too great copiousness from their pens; and the Latin prose of Columbanus himself, though often stilted and somewhat obscure, is almost always strictly grammatical. Comparing him with one of the most learned of his Gaulish contemporaries, Gregory of Tours, whose countless grammatical blunders would be terribly avenged on an English schoolboy, we see that the Irish saint moved in an altogether different intellectual plane from his Gaulish episcopal neighbors, and we can easily believe that he did not conceal his contempt for their ignorance and barbarism.

Another cause of difference between Columbanus and his Frankish neighbors, and one which could be decorously put forward by the latter as the reason for their dislike, was the divergence between him and them as to the correct time for keeping Easter. In this matter the Irish ecclesiastics, with true Celtic conservatism, adhered to the form of cycle which had been universal in the West for almost two centuries, while the Frankish bishops reckoned their Easter-day according to the table which was published by Victorius in the year 457, and which, though advocating the old Roman usage, noted also that of Alexandria, and in cases of divergent Easters left the ultimate decision to the Pope. The difference, much and earnestly insisted upon in the letters of Columbanus, turned chiefly on two points: (1) The Irish churchmen insisted that in no case could it be right to celebrate Easter before the 25th of March, on which they placed the vernal equinox, while the rest of Christendom had adopted the 21st; (2) they maintained that since the Passover had been ordained to fall on the 14th day of the lunar month, it was right to celebrate Easter upon it, and they consequently allowed the great festival to range between that and the 20th day. The Alexandrian Church restricted the celebration to the interval between the 15th and 21st days: Victorius, in conformity with the old Latin rule, to that between the 16th and 22nd. In theory it would probably be admitted that the Irishmen were nearer to the primitive idea of a Christian festival based on the Jewish Passover; but in practice—to say nothing of the unreasonableness of perpetuating discord on a point of such infinitely small importance—by harping as they did continually on the words the “14th day” they gave their opponents the opportunity of fastening upon them the name of *Quartodeciman*, and thereby bringing them under the anathema pronounced by the Nicene Council on an entirely different form of dissent.

On this subject, the celebration of Easter, which absorbed an absurdly large amount of his time and thoughts, Columbanus addressed a letter to Pope Gregory the Great. The dedication is too characteristic not to be given in full:

“To the holy lord and father in Christ, the most comely ornament of the Roman Church, the most august flower, so to speak, of all this languishing Europe, the illustrious overseer, to him who is skilled to enquire into the theory of the Divine causality, I Bar-Jonah (a mean dove) send greeting in Christ”.

It will be seen that Columbanus, here, as in several other places, indulges in a kind of bilingual pun on his own name. The Hebrew equivalent of Columba, a dove, is Jonah. So here he makes Columbanus equivalent to Bar-Jonah, which in his modesty he translates “vilis Columba”; and elsewhere he recognizes that it is his fate to be thrown overboard like his namesake Jonah, for the peace and safety of the Church.

The letter itself argues with much boldness and some skill against the practice of celebrating Easter at a time when the moon does not rise till after two watches of the night are past, and when darkness is thus triumphing over light. He warns the Pope not to set himself in opposition to the great Jerome by condemning the Paschal calculations of Anatolius, whom Jerome had praised as a man of marvelous learning. He asks for advice on two points, (1) whether he ought to communicate with simoniacal and adulterous bishops, and (2) what is to be done with monks who, through desire of greater holiness, leave the monasteries in which they have taken the vows, and retire to desert places, without the leave of their abbot. He

expresses his deep regret at not being able to visit Rome for the sake of seeing Gregory, and asks to have some of the Pope's commentary on Ezekiel sent to him, having already perused with extreme pleasure his book, sweeter than honey, on the *Regula Pastoralis*.

It would be interesting to know what reply the great Roman Pope made to the great Irish abbot, but Gregory's letter to Columbanus, if written, has not come down to us. Some years later, about 603 or 604, a synod was held (probably at Chalons-sur-Saone) at which the question of the schismatical observance of Easter in Luxovium and the sister monasteries was the chief subject of discussion. To the Gaulish bishops "his holy fathers and brethren in Christ, Columba the sinner" addressed a remarkable letter. He praised them for at last assembling in council, even though it was in order to judge him; and this praise recalls Gregory's oft-repeated censure of the Gaulish bishops for their neglect of synodal action. After exhorting them to the practice of humility, he discusses at some length the great Paschal question, and begs them not to celebrate the Resurrection before the Passion by allowing Easter to fall before the equinox, and not to overpass the 20th day of the lunar month, "lest they should perform the sacrament of the New Testament without the authority of the Old". Then he turns to more personal affairs, and utters a pathetic prayer for peace. "In the name of Him who said, 'Depart from Me : I never knew you', suffer me, while keeping your peace and friendship, to be silent in these woods, and to live near the bones of my seventeen departed brethren. Suffer me still to live among you as I have done for these past twelve years, and to continue praying for you as I have ever done and ought to do. Let Gaul, I pray you, contain both you and me, since the kingdom of heaven will contain us if we are of good desert, and fulfill the hope of our one calling in Christ Jesus. Far be it from me to contend with you and to give our enemies, the Pagans and the Jews, occasion to triumph in our dissensions. For if it be in God's ordering that ye should expel me from this desert place, whither I came from across the seas for the love of my Lord Jesus Christ, I can only say with the prophet [Jonah] : 'If for my sake this tempest come upon you, take me and cast me into the sea, that this turmoil may cease'."

Thus not only amid the increasing cares of his three great monasteries, but amid increasing conflicts with the hostile bishops of Gaul, passed the middle years of the life of Columbanus. If men hated him, the brute creation loved him. Many of the stories told of him reveal that mysterious sympathy with the lower animals which he shared with an even greater religious revivalist, St. Francis of Assisi. One of his disciples long after told his biographer that often when he had been walking lonely in the desert, his lips moving in prayer, he had been seen to call birds or wild creatures to him, who never disobeyed the call. Then would the saint stroke or pat them, and the shy, wild things rejoiced like a little dog in his caresses. Thus, too, would he call down the little squirrels from the tops of the trees, and they would nestle close to his neck, or play hide and seek in the folds of his great white scapular.

We have already heard how the bear at the summons of Columbanus quietly yielded up to him its dwelling in the cave. One day when he was walking through the forest, with his Bible hung by a strap to his shoulder, he pondered the question whether it were worse to fall into the hands of wild beasts or of evil men. Suddenly, as if to solve the problem, twelve wolves rushed forth, and surrounded him on the rip-lit hand and on the left. He remained immovable, but cried aloud, "Oh! Lord, make haste to help me". The savage creatures came near, and gathered round him, smelling at his garments; but, finding him unmoved, left him unharmed, and disappeared in the forest. When he came forth from the wood, he thought that he heard the voices of Suevic robbers roaming: through the desolate region, but he saw not their forms, and whether the sounds were real, or an illusion of the Evil One to try his constancy, he never knew.

One day, when he came into the monastery at Luxovium to take some food, he laid aside the gloves which had shielded his hands while working in the field. A mischievous raven

carried off the gloves from the stone before the monastery doors on which the saint had laid them. When the meal was ended, and the monks came forth, the gloves were nowhere to be found. Questions at once arose who had done this thing. Said the saint, "The thief is none other than that bird which Noah sent forth out of the ark, and which wandered to and fro over the earth, nor ever returned. And that bird shall not rear its young unless it speedily bring back that which it has stolen". Suddenly the raven appeared in the midst of the crowd, bearing the gloves in its beak, and, having laid them down, stood there meekly awaiting the chastisement which it was conscious of having deserved. But the saint ordered it to fly away unharmed. Once upon a time a bear lusted after the apples which formed the sole fruit of the saint and his companions. But when Columbanus directed his servant, Magnoald, to divide the apples into two portions, assigning one to the bear, and reserving the other for the use of the saint, the beast, with wonderful docility, obeyed, and, contenting itself with its own portion, never dared to touch the apples which were reserved for the man of God. Another bear, howling round the dead body of a stag, obeyed his bidding, and left the hide untouched, that out of it might be made shoes for the use of the brotherhood; and the wolves, which gathered at the scent of the savoury morsel, stood afar off with their noses in the air, not daring to approach the carcass on which the mysterious spell had been laid.

But the time came when the saint had to solve his own riddle, by proof that men, and still more women, could be harder and more un pitying even than the wolves. The young king of Burgundy, Theodoric, already, at the age of fourteen, had a bastard son born to him, and by the year 610 he had several children, none of them the issue of his lawful wife. These little ones their great-grandmother, Brunichildis, brought one day into the holy man's presence, when he visited her at the royal villa of Brocoriacum. Said Columbanus, "What do you mean by bringing these children here?". "They are the sons of a king", answered Brunichildis, "fortify them with your blessing". "Never", said he, "shall these children, the offspring of the brothel, inherit the royal scepter". In a rage, the old queen ordered the little ones to depart. As the saint crossed the threshold of the palace, a thunderstorm or an earthquake shook the fabric, striking terror into the souls of all, but not even so was the fierce heart of Brunichildis turned from her purpose of revenge.

There were negotiations and conversations between the saint and the sovereign. Theodoric, who throughout seems to have been less embittered against the saint than his grandmother, said one day, in answer to a torrent of angry rebuke for his profligacy, "Do you hope to win from me the crown of martyrdom? I am not so mad as to perpetrate such a crime". But the austere, unsocial habits of the saint had made him many enemies. There was a long unsettled debt of hatred from the bishops of Gaul for the schismatical Easter and many other causes of offence; and the courtiers with one voice declared that they would not tolerate the continued presence among them of one who did not deem them worthy of his companionship. Thus, though the harsh words concerning the royal bastards may have been the torch which finally kindled the flame, it is clear that there was much smoldering indignation against the saint in the hearts of nobles and churchmen before ever these words were spoken. By the common people, on the other hand, Columbanus seems to have been generally beloved.

The resultant of all these conflicting forces was an order from the Court that Columbanus should leave his monastery of Luxovium, and take up his residence in a sort of *libera custodia* at Vesontio (*Besançon*). Finding himself laxly guarded, he went up one Sunday to the top of the mountain which overlooks the city of Besançon and the winding Doubs. He remained till noon, half expecting that his keepers would come to fetch him; but, as none appeared, he descended the mountain on the other side, and took the road to Luxovium. By this daring defiance of the royal orders he filled up the measure of his offences, and Brunichildis at once sent a cohort of soldiers to arrest the holy man and expel him from the kingdom. They found

him in the church of the monastery, singing psalms with the congregation of the brethren. It seemed as if force would have to be used in order to tear him from his beloved Luxovium, but at length, yielding to the earnest entreaties of his monks, and of the soldiers, who prayed for forgiveness even while laying hold of the saint's garments, he consented to go with them quietly. The monks all wished to follow him, but only his Irish fellow-countrymen and their Breton comrades were allowed to do so, while those of Gaulish birth were ordered to remain behind. He was taken by way of Besançon and Autun to Nevers, and there was put on shipboard and conveyed down the Loire to Nantes. Many miracles, especially the cure of those afflicted with evil spirits, marked his progress. At Auxerre he said to a certain Ragamund, who came to act as his escort, "Remember, oh! Ragamund, that this Chlotochar, whom you now despise, will within three years be your lord and master". The prophecy was the more remarkable because the king of Neustria was at that time much the weakest member of the Frankish partnership, and quite overshadowed by his cousins of Austrasia and Burgundy. Theodoric, especially, was then at the zenith of his power; and the route traversed by Columbanus and his guards shows that something like three-quarters of that which is now France must have owned his dominion. When, in their voyage down the stream, they came opposite the shrine of the blessed Martin of Tours, Columbanus earnestly besought his keepers to let him land and pay his devotions at the holy sepulcher. The inexorable guards refused, and Columbanus stood upon the deck, raising sad eyes to heaven in mute protest against their cruelty. But suddenly the vessel stopped in her course, as though she had let down her anchor, and then began mysteriously to turn her head towards the watergate of Tours. Awed by this portent, the guards made no further resistance to his will; and Columbanus, landing, spent the night in vigils at the tomb of St. Martin. It was a memorable scene, and one worthy to be celebrated by an artist's or a poet's genius; for there the greatest Gaulish saint of the sixth century knelt by the tomb of his greatest predecessor of the fourth century, the upbraider of Brunichildis communed with the spirit of the vanquisher of Maximus.

When day dawned Columbanus was invited by Leuparius, bishop of Tours, to share his hospitality. For the sake of his weary brethren he accepted the invitation, though it came from a Gaulish bishop, and spent the day at the Episcopal palace. At the evening meal, when many guests were present, Leuparius, either through ignorance or want of tact, asked him why he was returning to his native country. "Because that dog, Theodoric, has forced me away from my brethren", said the hot-tempered saint. At the table was a guest named Chrodoald, a kinsman by marriage of Theudebert, but loyal to Theodoric. He, with demure face, said to the man of God, "Methinks it is better to drink milk than wormwood", thus gently hinting that such bitter words ill became saintly lips. Columbanus said, "I suppose you are a liege man of Theodoric?". "I am", he answered, "and will keep my plighted faith so long as I live". "Then you will doubtless be glad to take a message from me to your master and friend. Go, tell him that within three years he and all his race shall be utterly rooted up by the Lord of Hosts". "Oh! servant of God", said Chrodoald, "why dost thou utter such terrible words?". "Because I cannot keep silence when the Lord God would have me speak". Like another Jeremiah denouncing woe on the impious Jehoiakim was this Irish saint, as he hurled his fierce predictions among the trembling courtiers of Theodoric.

After all, the dauntless Irishman was not carried back to his native land. When he arrived at Nantes, the bishop and count of that city, in obedience to the king's orders, set him on board a merchant vessel carrying cargo to "the Scots", that is to the inhabitants of Ireland. But though the ship, impelled by the rowers and by favoring gales, was carried out some way from the land, great rolling waves soon forced her back to the shore. The ship-master perceived that his saintly cargo was the reason of his disappointment. He put Columbanus and his friends ashore, and the ship proceeded on her voyage without difficulty.

Settlement in Switzerland.

Columbanus, who seems to have been left at liberty to go whither he would, so long as he did not return to Burgundy, visited Chlotochar in his Neustrian capital, gently chided him for his Merovingian immoralities, and advised him to remain neutral in the war which had now broken out between Theodoric and Theudebert. Under the protection of an escort given him by Chlotochar he reached the dominions of Theudebert, who gave him a hearty welcome, and invited him to choose some place in the Austrasian territory suitable for the erection of a monastery, which might serve as a base of operations for the missionary work planned by him among the pagans on the border. (In the course of this journey he arrived at the villa of Vulciacum on the banks of the Marne, where he was welcomed by its lord, Autharius, and his wife Aiga. He gave his blessing to their children Ado and Dado, who afterwards rose high in the service of the kings Chlotochar and Dagobert, but retired from the world, and founded monasteries in the Jura according to the rule of Columbanus. Note here the names of this Austrasian nobleman and his wife, so similar to those of two successive Lombard kings, Authari and Ago = Agilulf). Such a retreat, after two abortive attempts by the lake of Zurich and at Arbon, he found finally at Bregenz, by the Lake of Constance. whither he travelled up the Rhine, doubtless with much toil of oar to the rowers assigned him by the king. The barbarous Alamanni who dwelt by the banks of the Upper Rhine were still worshippers of Wodan, and filled a large barrel, holding ten gallons, with the beer which they brewed and drunk in his honor. When the saint heard from the idolaters what hateful work they were engaged in, he drew near and breathed upon the barrel, which suddenly burst asunder with a loud crash, spilling all the liquor on the ground.

In the 'temple' of Bregenz (a ruined Christian oratory once dedicated to St. Aurelia) the stranger found three brazen images fixed to the wall. These images received the idolatrous worship of the people, who said, "These are our ancient gods, by whose help and comfort we have been preserved alive to this day". His friend and follower, Gallus, who was able to preach not only in Latin, but in the "barbaric tongue", exhorted the multitude who had assembled in the temple to turn from these vain idols and worship the Father and the Son. Then, in the sight of all, Columbanus seized the images, hammered them into fragments, and threw the pieces into the lake. Some of the bystanders were enraged at this insult to their gods, but the more part were converted by the preaching of Gallus. Columbanus sprinkled the temple with holy water, and, moving through it in procession with his monks chanting a psalm, dedicated it afresh to God and St. Aurelia.

Spirits of the Mountain and the Lake.

This Gallus, whose knowledge of the Suevic tongue proved so helpful on this occasion, was the same St. Gall who, by the monastery which he founded, has given his name to one of the cantons of Switzerland. He was an Irishman of noble birth who came with Columbanus to the country of the Franks, and accompanied him in all his journeys but the last. From his life we learn some comparatively unimportant particulars about the life of the saint and his followers in Switzerland which need not be repeated here. But it would be wrong to omit one narrative which has in it a touch of poetry, and which shows how the grandeurs of the Swiss landscape blended themselves with those thoughts of the spirit world which were ever uppermost in the souls of these denizens of the convent. St. Gallus, who was the chief fisherman of the party, and who in fact provided all their food except the wild fowl and the fruits of the wilderness, was once, in the silence of the night, casting his nets into the waters of Lake Constance, when he heard the Demon of the mountain calling from the cliffs with a loud voice to the Demon of the lake. "Arise", said he, for my help, and let us cast forth these

strangers from their haunts; for, coming from afar, they have expelled me from my temple, have ground my images to powder, and drawn away all my people after them". Then the Demon of the Lake answered, "All that thou complainest of I know too well. There is one of them who ever harasses me here in the water, and lays waste my realm. His nets I can never break, nor himself can I deceive, because the divine name which he invokes is ever on his lips; and by this continual watchfulness he frustrates all our snares". Hearing these words, the man of God fortified himself with the sign of the cross, and said, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I command you that ye depart from this place, and do not presume to injure any one here". Then he returned and told the abbot what he had heard. The brethren were assembled at once in the church, though it was the dead of night, and their voices filled the air with psalmody. But even before they began the holy song, there were heard dread voices of the Demons floating about from summit to summit of the mountains, cries and wails as of those who departed in sadness from their home, and confused shrieks as of those who were pursued by the avenger.

About this time visions of missionary service among the Slavonic tribes on the border or Venetia began to float before the mind of Columbanus, but an angel appeared to him in a dream, and, holding forth a map of the world, indicated to him Italy as the scene of his future labors. Not yet, however, was the time come for this enterprise : meanwhile he was to wait in patience till the way should open for his leaving Austrasia. It was by the bloody sword of fratricidal war that the way to the saint's last harvest-field was laid open. It has been told how the long grudge between the two grandsons of Brunichildis burst at last into a flame, and hostilities began. Columbanus, with prophetic foresight of the result, perhaps also with statesmanlike insight into the comparative strength of the two kingdoms, left his solitude, sought the Court of Theudebert, and exhorted him to decline the contest and at once enter the ranks of the clergy. The king and all his courtiers raised a shout of indignant derision. "Never was it heard that a Merovingian, once raised to the throne, of his own will became a priest". "He who will not voluntarily accept the clerical honor", said Columbanus, "will soon find himself a clergyman in his own despite"; and therewith he departed to his hermitage. The prophecy was soon fulfilled. The two armies met on the field of Toul. Theudebert was defeated, fled, gathered a fresh army, and was again defeated on the field of Tolbiac, where a terrible slaughter was made in the ranks of both armies. Betrayed by his friends, he was captured by his brother and carried into the presence of their grandmother, who had never forgiven him or his for her exile from Austrasia. She at once shorn his long Merovingian locks, and turned him into a tonsured cleric; and not many days after, she or Theudoric ordered him to be put to death. Close upon these events followed, as has been already related, the sudden death of Theudoric II, the murder of his children, and the reunion of the whole Frankish monarchy under the scepter of the lately despised and flouted Chlotchar.

The bloody day of Tolbiac was seen in a dream by Columbanus, overtaken by sudden slumber as he was sitting reading on the rotten trunk of a fallen oak tree in his beloved wilderness. The disciple who listened to his story of the battle said, "Oh, my father, pray for Theudebert, that he may conquer his and our enemy, Theudoric". "Unwise and irreligious is thy advice", said Columbanus. "Not thus hath the Lord commanded us, who told us to pray even for our enemies". Afterwards, when the tidings came of the great encounter, the disciple learned that it had been fought at the very day and hour when the saint beheld it in his vision.

The battle of Tolbiac broke the last thread that connected Columbanus with the kingdom of the Franks, and accordingly, leaving Gaul and Germany behind him, he pressed forward into Italy. One only of his faithful hand of followers did not accompany him. Gallus, who had sickened with fever, and who perhaps felt that his special gifts as a missionary to the Suevi would be wasted when he had crossed the Alps, remained behind on the shores of Lake

Constance, which he had learned to love. As St. Paul with Mark when he departed from him and Barnabas at Perga, so was Columbanus deeply grieved with the slackness of spirit of his disciple, upon whom he laid a solemn injunction never to presume to celebrate mass during the lifetime of his master.

Retires to Bobbio.

Columbanus was received with every mark of honor and esteem by Agilulf and Theudelinda. He remained apparently for some months at Milan, arguing with the Arian ecclesiastics who still haunted the Lombard Court. "By the cautery of the Scriptures", as his biographer quaintly says, "he dissected and destroyed the deceits of the Arian infidelity, and he moreover published against them a book of marvelous Science". But all men who knew Columbanus knew that he would not be content to dwell long in palaces or cities, but that he must be sighing for the solitude of the wilderness and the silence of the convent. It was doubtless from a knowledge of this desire that a certain man named Jocundus came one day to King Agilulf, and began to expatiate on the advantages for a monastic life afforded by the little village of Bobium (Bobbio), about twenty-five miles from Placentia. This place, situated on the banks of the little river Trebia (which witnessed the first of Hannibal's great victories over the Romans), lies away from the great high-roads of the Lombard plain, its cities and its broad river, and nestles in a fertile valley shut in by the peaks of the central Apennine chain. It has its own little stream, the Bobbio, confluent with the Trebia and abounding in fish. Everything marked it out as being, according to the description of Jocundus, a place well suited for the cultivation of monastic excellence; and thither Columbanus joyfully retired. He found there a half-ruined basilica of St. Peter, which he at once began to restore with the help of his followers. The tall firs of the Apennines were felled, and their trunks were transported over rough and devious ways down into the fertile valley. The alacrity of the aged saint, who personally helped in the pious toil, became in the next generation the subject of a miracle. There was a beam which, if placed on level ground, thirty or forty men would have drawn with difficulty. The man of God, coming up to it, placed the immense weight on the shoulders of himself and two or three of his friends; and where before, on account of the roughness of the road, they had, though unencumbered, walked with difficulty, they now, laden with the beam's weight, moved rapidly forward. The parts seemed reversed, and they who were bearing the burden walked with triumphant ease, as if they were being borne along by others.

Such were the beginnings of the great monastic house of Bobbio. It has for us a special interest (and this is our justification for spending so long a time over the life of its founder), for there can be little doubt that the monastery of Bobbio, even more than the holiness and popularity of Queen Theudelinda, was the means of accomplishing that conversion of the Lombards to the Catholic form of Christianity, which at last, though not in the first or second generation, ended the religious duality of Italy. True to his early literary and philosophical instincts, Columbanus seems, with all his austerities, ever to have preserved the character of an educated Churchman. Learned as the Order of Benedict became in after years, we shall probably not err in supposing that at this time it was surpassed in learning by the Order of Columbanus. The library of Bobbio was for many centuries one of the richest, probably *the* richest, in Italy, and many of the most precious treasures now deposited in the Ambrosian library at Milan have been taken thither from the monastery of Columbanus.

Classical Recreations.

It is noteworthy that among these treasures are to be found some considerable fragments of the Gothic Bible of Ulfilas, and of his Commentary on the Gospel of John. Apparently Columbanus, in his controversies with the Arians at Milan, did not neglect the wholesome practice of studying his opponents' arguments in their own books, and to this wise liberality of

thought may have been due some portion of his success. Nor was the secular, Pagan side of literature unrepresented in the library of Bobbio. The great palimpsest now in the Vatican, in which Cardinal Mai discovered, under St. Augustine's Commentary on the Psalms (119-140), Cicero's lost treatise, *De Republica*, bears yet this inscription on one of its pages, "Liber Sancti Columbani de Boboi".

A quaint exemplification of the saint's unextinguished love for classical literature is furnished by the verses which, at the age of seventy-two, and probably within a few months of his death, he addressed to a certain friend of his named Fedolius. They are written in a metre which he calls Sapphic, but which a modern scholar would rather call Adonic, being entirely composed of those short lines (dactyl and trochee) with which the Sapphic verse terminates :—

Take, I beseech you,
 Now from my hands this
 Trumpery gift of
 Two-footed verses;
 And for your own part
 Frequently send us
 Verses of yours by
 Way of repayment.
 For as the sun-baked
 Fields when the winds change
 Joy in the soft shower,
 So has your page oft
 Gladdened my spirit.

Columbanus then proceeds through about eighty lines to warn his friend against avarice. The examples of the curse of riches are all drawn from classical mythology. The Golden Fleece, the Golden Apple, the Golden Shower, Pygmalion, Polydorus, Amphiarus, Achilles, are all pressed into the poet's service: and as the easy and, on the whole, creditable lines flow on, the idea is suggested to the reader's mind that probably Fedolius was no more inclined to avarice than his adviser, but that the commonplaces about avarice expressed themselves so easily in the Adonic metre that the saint had not the heart to deny himself the pleasant exercise. He ends at last thus :—

"Be it enough, then,
 Thus to have spun my
 Garrulous verses.
 For when you read them,
 Haply the metre
 May to you seem strange.
 Yet 'tis the same which
 She, the renowned bard
 Sappho, the Greek, once
 Used for her verses.
 You, too (the fancy
 Haply may seize you
 Thus to compose verse).
 Note my instructions :
 Always a dactyl
 Stands in the first place;
 After it comes nex
 Strictly a trochee,

But you may always
 End with a spondee.
 Now then, my loved one,
 Brother Fedolis,
 Who when you choose are
 Sweeter than nectar,
 Leave the more pompous
 Songs of the sages,
 And with a meek mind
 Bear with my trifling.
 So may the World-King,
 Christ, the alone
 Son Of the Eternal,
 Crown you with Life's joys.
 He in his Sire's name
 Reigneth o'er all things
 Now and for ever.
 Such is the verse I have framed, though tortured by cruel diseases,
 Born of this feeble frame, born too of the sadness of old age.
 For while the years of my life have hurried me downward and onward,
 Lo! I have passed e'en now the eighteenth Olympian milestone.
 All things are passing away : Time flies and the traitor returns not.
 Live : farewell. In joy or in grief remember that Age comes".

These dallyings with the classic Muse surprise us, not unpleasantly, in the life of so great a saint, who was the founder of a rule more austere than that of St. Benedict. Still greater becomes our surprise when we learn that, according to a tradition which, though late, seems to be not wholly unworthy of belief, even monastic austerity was not sufficient for the saint in these years of his failing strength, and that he must needs resume the life of a hermit. To this day a cave is pointed out in a mountain gorge a few miles from Bobbio, to which Columbanus is said to have retired—for the last few months, perhaps years, of his life, only returning to the monastery on Sundays and saints' days to spend those seasons of gladness with his brethren.

We hear more of Columbanus in the monastery and in the cave than in the palace, but there can be no doubt that his interviews with Agilulf and Theudelinda were frequent and important, he helped the Bavarian queen with all the energy of his Celtic nature in fighting against Arianism, but he also (unfortunately for his reputation with the ultraorthodox) threw himself with some vehemence into her party in the dismal controversy of the Three Chapters. For Theudelinda, it is evident, notwithstanding the pious exhortations of popes and archbishops, still remained unconvinced of the damnation of the three Syrian ecclesiastics; and now, finding that the new light which had risen upon Italy was in the same quarter of the theological heaven with herself, she determined to use his influence on behalf of the cause which she held dear. At her request and Agilulf's, Columbanus addressed a long letter to Pope Boniface IV, the third successor of Gregory the Great in St. Pete's chair.

Letter to the Pope.

The address of his letter is peculiar. Columbanus often alludes to the garrulity which has been for centuries the characteristic of his race, and as we seem to hear the words of this fulsome dedication, uttered in the rich, soft Irish brogue, an epithet unknown to the dignity of history seems the only one which will describe the saintly communication :—

“To the most beautiful Head of all the Churches of Europe, to the sweetest Pope, to the lofty Chief, to the Shepherd of Shepherds, to the most reverend Sentinel, the humblest to the highest, the least to the greatest, the rustic to the citizen, the mean speaker to the very eloquent, the last to the first, the foreigner to the native, the beggar to the very powerful : Oh, the new and strange marvel! a rare bird, even a Dove, dares to write to his father Bonifacius”.

However, when Columbanus has fairly commenced the letter thus strangely precluded, no one can accuse him of indulging in “blarney”. He speaks to the Pope with noble independence, recognizing fully the importance of his position as representative of St. Peter and St. Paul, but telling him plainly that he, the Pope, has incurred suspicion of heresy, and exhorting him not to slumber, as his predecessor Vigilius did, who by his lack of vigilance has brought all this confusion upon the Church.

It is not very clear what Columbanus desired the Pope to do, for the letter, which is inordinately long and shows traces of the garrulity of age as well as of the eloquence of the Irishman, is singularly destitute of practical suggestions, and evinces no grasp at all of the theological problem. It appears, however, that he recommends the Pope to summon a council, and that he does not recognise “a certain so-called fifth council in which Vigilius was said to have received those ancient heretics, Eutyches, Nestorius, and Dioscorus”. What we are concerned with, however, is the information afforded us by this letter as to the sentiments of the Lombard king and queen; and this is so important that it will be well to extract the sentences containing it in full. “If I am accused of presumption, and asked as Moses was : Who made thee a judge and a ruler over us?, I answer that it is not presumption to speak when the edification of the Church requires it; and if the person of the speaker be caviled at, consider not who I, the speaker, am, but what it is that I say. For why should the Christian foreigner hold his peace when his *Arian neighbor* has long said in a loud voice that which he wishes to say, “For better are the wounds of a friend than the deceitful kisses of an enemy?” ... I, who have come from the end of the world, am struck with terror at what I behold, and turn in my perplexity to thee, who are the only hope of princes through the honor of the holy Apostle Peter. But when the frail bark of my intellect could not, in the language of the Scriptures, “launch out into the deep”, but rather remained fixed in one place (for the paper cannot hold all that my mind from various causes desires to include in the narrow limits of a letter), I found myself in addition *entreated by the king* to suggest in detail to your pious ears the whole story of his grief; for he mourns for the schism of his people, for his queen, for his son, perchance also for himself: since *he is reported to have said that he, too, would believe if he could know the certainty of the matter...* Pardon me, I pray, who may seem to you an obscure prater, too free and rough with his tongue, but who cannot write otherwise than he has done in such a cause. I have proved my loyalty, and the zeal of my faith, when I have chosen to give opportunity to my rebukers rather than to close my mouth, however unlearned it be, in such a cause. These rebukers are the men of whom Jeremiah has said, “They bend their tongues like their bow for lies”. . . . But *when a "Gentile king begs a foreigner, when a Lombard begs a dull Scot to write,* when the wave of an ancient torrent thus flows backward to its source, who would not feel his wonder overcome his fear of calumny? I at any rate will not tremble, nor fear the tongues of men when I am engaged in the cause of God. . .

“Such, then, are my suggestions. They come, I admit, from one who is torpid in action, from one who says rather than does; from one who is called Jonah in Hebrew, Peristera in Greek, Columba in Latin; and though I am generally known only by the name which I bear in your language, let me now use my old Hebrew name, since I have almost suffered Jonah’s shipwreck. But grant me the pardon which I have often craved, since I have been forced to write by necessity, not from self-conceit. For almost at my first entrance into this land I was met by the letters of a certain person, who said that I must beware of you, for you had fallen

away into the error of Nestorius. Whom I answered briefly and with astonishment that I did not believe his allegation; but lest by any chance I should be opposing the truth, I afterwards varied my reply, and sent it along with his letter to you for perusal.

“After this, another occasion for writing was laid upon me *by the command of Agilulf*, whose request threw me into a strangely blended state of wonder and anxiety, for what had occurred seemed to me hardly possible without a miracle. For these kings have long strengthened the Arian pestilence in this land by trampling on the Catholic faith; but now they ask that *our* faith shall be strengthened. Haply Christ, from whose favor every good gift comes, has looked upon us with pitying eye. We certainly are most miserable, if the scandal is continued any longer by our means. Therefore *the king asks you*, and the queen asks you, and all men ask you, that as speedily as possible all may become one; that there may be peace in the country, peace among the faithful; finally, that all may become one flock, of which Christ shall be the shepherd. Oh, king of kings! do thou follow Peter, and let all the Church follow thee. What is sweeter than peace after war? What more delightful than the union of brethren long separated? How pleasant to waiting parents the return of the long-absent son! Even so, to God the Father the peace of His sons will be a joy for countless ages, and the gladness of our mother the Church will be a sempiternal triumph”.

The letter ends with an entreaty for the prayers of the Pope on behalf of the writer, “the vilest of sinners”.

Discussion as to Agilulf's Conversion.

Now I must ask the reader to set over against this letter of Columbanus, written probably about 613 or 614, very shortly before Agilulf's death, the following statement of Paulus, which occurs at an early point in the history of his reign :—“By means of this queen [Theudelinda] the Church of God obtained much advantage. For the Lombards, when they were still involved in the error of heathenism, plundered all the property of the Churches. But the king, being influenced by this queen's healthful intercession, *both held the Catholic faith*, and bestowed many possessions on the Church of Christ, and restored the bishops, who were in a depressed and abject condition, to the honor of their wonted dignity”.

These words certainly seem to imply that Agilulf was persuaded by his wife to embrace her form of faith. We should indeed have expected some other word than “held” to describe the conversion of a heretic, and throughout the paragraph the historian is thinking more of the outward and visible effects of the king's conversion than of the internal process. Still, the passage cannot, as it seems to me, be made to assert anything less than the catholicity of Agilulf, and it does not describe a deathbed conversion, but the whole character of his reign.

On the other hand, the letters of Gregory for the first fourteen years of that reign, and this letter of Columbanus within a couple of years of its close, bring before us an entirely different mental state. The Agilulf whom they disclose to us is tolerant, and more than tolerant, of the religion of the queen who has invited him to share her throne. He allows his son, the heir to the Lombard crown, to be baptized with Catholic rites. He is anxious that the Three Chapters Schism should be ended, and that there should be religious peace in his land. If the orthodox would but agree among themselves, and not worry him about the damnation of Theodore, Ibas, and Theodoret, he is almost ready himself to believe as they believe, but meanwhile he is still “vicinus Arius”; and in the Arian faith, for anything that the contemporary correspondence shows us, he died as well as lived. Different readers will perhaps come to different conclusions on such conflicting evidence, but upon the whole I am inclined to disbelieve the alleged conversion of Agilulf.

The whole discussion is to my mind another evidence of the loose, limp hold which the Lombards had on any form of Christian faith. The Vandals, in the bitterness of their Arianism,

made the lives of their Catholic subjects in Africa miserable to them. Visigothic Alaric, Arian though he was, would rather lose a campaign than fight on Easter Day; and his successors, when they at length embraced the orthodox form of faith, became such ardent Catholics that they virtually handed over the government of the state to the councils of bishops. But the Lombards, though heterodox or heathen enough to plunder and harry the Church, had no interest in the theological battle, and whether their greatest king was Arian or orthodox was probably more than many of his counselors knew, perhaps more than he could himself have told them.

The last event recorded in the life of Columbanus was the visit of Eustasius, his dear friend, disciple, and successor in the Abbotship of Luxovium. He came on an embassy from Chlotchar, now, after the death of Theodoric, unquestioned lord of all the Frankish kingdoms. Chlotchar knew well how the saint had been harassed by their common foe, Brunichildis, and how in the days of his own humiliation Columbanus had predicted his coming triumph. Gladly, therefore, would the king have had him return to Luxovium, that all things might go on as aforetime in the Burgundian monastery. But Columbanus probably felt himself too old and weary to undertake a second transplantation. He kept Eustasius with him for some time, giving him divers counsels as to the government of the monastery, and then dismissed him with a grateful message to Chlotchar, commending Luxovium to his special protection.

After a year's residence at Bobbio Columbanus died, on the 21st of November, 615, having on his death-bed handed his staff to a deacon, with orders to carry it to Gallus as a sign that he was forgiven for his old offence, and was now at liberty to resume his ministrations at the altar. The rule of Columbanus, somewhat harsher than that of Benedict, both in respect of abstinence from food and of corporal chastisement for trivial offences, spread far and wide over Gaul. Luxovium (or Luxeuil) became the mother of many vast monasteries, the schools of which were especially renowned for the admirable education which the sons of Frankish nobles there received from the disciples of Columbanus. In Italy, already preoccupied by the followers of Benedict, the spread of the Columbanian rule was probably less universal, as Bobbio does not seem to have vied with Luxeuil in the number of her daughter convents. But in all, whether Gaulish or Italian, the rule of Columbanus early gave way to that of Benedict, in whose monastic code there was perhaps less of the wild Celtic genius, more Roman common sense, less attempt to wind men up to an unattainable ideal of holiness, more consideration for human weakness than in that of the Irish saint. Above all—and this was perhaps the chief reason for the speedy triumph of the Benedictine rule—Gregory the Great had given the full, final, and emphatic sanction of Papal authority to the code of his master, Benedict; while in Columbanus, with all his holiness of life and undoubted loyalty to the chair of St. Peter, there had been a touch of independence and originality, a slight evidence of a disposition to set the Pope right (in reference both to the keeping of Easter and the controversy about the Three Chapters), which perhaps prevented the name of the Irish saint from being held in grateful remembrance at the Lateran. Whatever the cause, in Burgundy at any rate, at the Council of Autun in 670, the rule of Benedict was spoken of as that which all persons who had entered into religion were bound to obey. Thus little more than fifty years after his death the white scapular of Columbanus was disappearing before the black robe of Benedict.

We have seen that Columbanus died in the year 615. In the same or possibly the following year, Agilulf king of the Lombards, died also, and Theudelinda was a second time left a widow.

CHAPTER IV.

THEUDELINDA AND HER CHILDREN.

The story of the joint reign of Theudelinda and Adalwald, after the death of the strong and statesmanlike Agilulf, is obscure and melancholy. We might conjecture that we should find in it a repetition of the tragedy of Amalasueta and her son; but there is no trace in our authorities of those domestic dissensions which brought the dynasty of Theodoric to ruin. We might also with more reason conjecture that the fervent zeal of Theudelinda for the Catholic faith provoked a reaction among her Arian subjects; and certainly the fact that the rival who succeeded in hurling Adalwald from his throne was a zealous Arian would lend some probability to the hypothesis. But, though it is true that Paulus tells us that "under this reign the churches were restored, and many gifts were bestowed on sacred places", there is no evidence of anything like aggressive war being waged by the royal rulers against the Arian sect. On the contrary, we may still read a most curious letter in which Sisebut, king of the Visigoths, exhorts the young king to greater zeal in "cutting off the putrid errors of the heretics by the knife of experience", inveighing with all the zeal of a recent convert against the Arian contagion, and lamenting that so renowned a nation as the Lombards, so wise, so elegant, and so dignified, should sit down contented under the yoke of a dead and buried heresy. Of course it is possible that this and similar exhortations may have lashed the young ruler into a fury of persecution on behalf of the now fashionable orthodoxy, and that this may have been one of the things which cost him his crown; but our scanty historical evidence tells rather against than in favor of that suggestion. The historian of the Lombards distinctly attributes the fall of Adalwald to his own insanity. A strange but contemporary story connects that insanity in a mysterious way with the influence of the court of Ravenna; and this will therefore be a fitting place to piece together the scanty notices that we possess of the Byzantine governors of Imperial Italy during the first quarter of the seventh century.

We have already seen how the ineffectual Longinus was superseded, probably in 585, and his place given to the energetic but hot-headed Smaragdus; how Smaragdus, interfering too violently in the Istrian schism, was recalled in 589, and was succeeded by Romanus, the Exarch whose apparent indifference to the fate of Rome aroused the indignation of Pope Gregory; how, on the recall of Romanus, Callinicus succeeded to the government, and administered the affairs of Italy, generally in a friendly spirit to the Pope, from 597 to 602, and then, on the downfall of the Emperor Maurice, was superseded in favor of Smaragdus, who a second time sat as Exarch on the tribunal of Ravenna. The second administration of Smaragdus lasted in all probability from 602 to 611. Its chief political events, the dastardly abduction of the daughter of the Lombard king with her family, and the heavy price which the Empire had to pay for that blundering crime, in the loss of its last foothold in the valley of the Po, have already been related. One proof of Smaragdus' servile loyalty to the usurper Phocas (fitting master of such a man) has not been mentioned. All visitors to Rome know the lonely pillar with a Corinthian capital, which stands in the Forum, near the Arch of Severus, and which, when Byron wrote his fourth canto of *Childe Harold* was still

"the nameless column with the buried base".

They know also how, in 1816, an English nobleman's wife caused the base to be unburied, and recovered the forgotten name. It was then found that the inscription on the base

recorded the fact that Smaragdus, the Exarch of Italy, raised the column in honor of an Emperor whose innumerable benefits to an Italy, free and peaceful through his endeavors, were set forth in pompous terms. The Emperor's name had been obliterated by some zealous adherent of his successful rival; but there could be no doubt that the name which was originally engraved there in the year 608 was Phocas.

Not to Smaragdus himself was left the humiliating task of thus effacing the memorials of his former devotion to a base and cruel prince. It was on the 5th of October, 610, that the brave young African governor, Heraclius, was crowned as Emperor by the Patriarch of Constantinople, and it was probably early in the following year that Smaragdus was recalled for the last time, and a new governor, Joannes, took his place. The five years of this Exarch's rule were marked by no brilliant achievement. He renewed the peace with Agilulf (probably from year to year; he saw probably the Lombard fugitives from the terrible Avar invasion of Istria sweep across the plain, but we hear nothing of this, and are told only of the disastrous termination of his rule. An insurrection seems to have taken place at Ravenna, and Joannes was killed in the tumult. Eleutherius was appointed to succeed him; but when he arrived he found all his district in a flame, and the last remains of Imperial government in Italy apparently on the verge of Rebellion ruin. For Joannes of Compsa, either a general in the Imperial army, or possibly a wealthy Samnite landowner (if any such men were still left in Italy), seeing the apparent dissolution of all the bonds of Imperial authority, took military possession of Naples, and declared himself—Emperor, Exarch, Duke, Ave know not what—but it was such an usurpation of authority as justified the chronicler from whom we get these facts in calling him “tyrannus”. His usurped rule, however, lasted not long, for after not many days we are told the Patrician Eleutherius expelled and slew him. On his march to the scene of conflict, the new Exarch had passed through Rome, and had there been graciously received by the reigning pontiff Deusdedit, from whose life we derive this information. After the Neapolitan revolt came a renewal of the Lombard war. Agilulf was now dead, but Sundrar, the Lombard general, who had been thoroughly trained by Agilulf in all the arts of war, valiantly upheld the cause of his nation, and struck the Imperial armies with blow upon blow. At last the Exarch found himself obliged to sue for peace, but only obtained it on condition of punctually paying the yearly tribute of five hundred pounds weight of gold, which (as we are now told) had been promised to Agilulf to induce him to raise the siege of Rome.

When peace was thus concluded with the Lombards, Eleutherius, who well knew the necessities of the Emperor Heraclius, at that time hard pressed by the Avars on the North, as well as by the Persians on the East, began to entertain treasonable thoughts of independent sovereignty. In the fourth year of his rule (619) he assumed the diadem and proclaimed himself Emperor. Though wielding the great powers of Exarch, he was himself but an Eunuch of the Imperial household. That such a man should aspire to be Emperor of the Romans seemed to bring back the shameful days of Eutropius and Arcadius. Eleutherius set forth from Ravenna at the head of his troops for Rome, intending probably to get himself crowned by the Pope and to sit in what remained of the palace of the Caesars on the Palatine. But the ignominy of such a rule was too great even for the degenerate Byzantines who made up the “Roman” army in the seventh century. When the Eunuch-Emperor had reached the village of Luceoli on the Flaminian Way (a few miles north of the place where his great prototype the Eunuch Narses won his victory over Totila), the soldiers revolted, and slew the usurping Exarch, whose head they sent as a welcome present to Constantinople

The next Exarch of whom we have any certain and satisfactory information is Isaac the Armenian, but as he died in 644, and his epitaph records that he ruled Italy for eighteen years, we have about five years unaccounted for, between 620, when we may consider that a new Exarch in succession to Eleutherius would have arrived at Ravenna, and 626 (or rather,

probably 625), when the rule of Armenian Isaac seems to have begun. It is possible that this gap should be filled by the name of a certain Eusebius, who comes before us as the representative of the Emperor in that dark, mysterious story to which I have already referred as containing almost our only information as to the causes of the fall of the young king, Adalwald. The story is thus delivered to us by the anonymous Burgundian historian who is conventionally known as Fredegarius. In that same fortieth year of Chlotharius [Chlotchar II, king of the Franks, whose accession was in 584], Adloald, king of the Lombards, son of king Ago [Agilulf], after he had succeeded his father in the kingdom, received with kindness an ambassador of the Emperor Maurice named Eusebius, who came to him in guile. Being anointed in the bath with certain unguents whose nature I know not, he thenceforward could do nothing else but follow the counsels of Eusebius. Under his persuasion he set himself to slay all the chief men and nobles in the kingdom of the Lombards, intending, when they were put out of the way, to hand over to the Empire himself and all the Lombard nation. But after he had thus slain with the sword twelve of their number for no fault assigned, the rest of the nobles, seeing that their life was in danger, chose Charoald [= Ariwald], duke of Turin, who had to wife Gundeberga, sister of King Adloald, and all the oldest and noblest of the Lombards conspiring in one design raised this man to the kingdom. King Adloald, having received poison, perished.

And at this point we get a side-light on these mysterious events from the correspondence in the Papal chancery. Pope Honorius I, who succeeded Boniface V in November, 625, addressed a letter, apparently in the early months of his pontificate to Isaac, the new Exarch of Ravenna. In this letter the Pope says that he has learned with regret that some bishops in the regions beyond the Po have embraced the cause of the usurper so warmly that they have spoken most unepiscopal words to Peter, son of Paul, declaring that they will take on their consciences the guilt of his perjury if he will agree with them not to follow Adulubald, but the tyrant Ariopalt. The glorious Peter (he is evidently some layman high in office) has scorned their words, and persists in holding fast the faith which he swore to Ago, father of the aforesaid Adulubald; but the crime of the bishops, whose advice should have been given on the other side to strengthen him in his observance of his oath, is none the less odious to the Pope; and as soon as, by the decree of Providence, Adulubald has been restored to his kingdom, he desires the Exarch to send the offending bishops into the regions of Rome, that they may be dealt with according to their sins. But the pious hopes of Honorius for the triumph of the righteous cause were not fulfilled. King Adalwald died of poison, and a modern historian unkindly insinuates that the fatal draught was administered by order of Isaac, desirous to rid himself of a guest whose unwelcome presence at his court was certain to involve him in disputes with the new Lombard king. Of this, however, we have no hint in our authorities, and we must be careful not to record our imaginations as facts.

Only so much can we safely say as to this mysterious passage in Lombard history, that the young king fell in some strange way under the power of a certain Eusebius, who is called an ambassador, but who may have been sent as an Exarch into Italy; that the voluptuous character of Roman civilization (not idle here is the allusion to the *bath* as the medium of enchantment) proved too much for the brain of the Teuton lad, who lent himself with fatuous readiness to all the sinister purposes of his treacherous friend. It was not a case of Catholic against Arian, otherwise the Transpadane bishops (though probably upholders of the Three Chapters) could hardly have supported so vigorously the cause of the usurper. But it probably was a plan such as Theodahad the Ostrogoth, Huneric the Vandal, Hermenigild the Visigoth, conceived, and such as very likely other weak-brained barbarian kings had often dallied with, of surrendering the national independence, and bartering a thorny crown for the fattened ease of a Byzantine noble. The plan, however, failed. Adalwald lost his crown and life. The Exarch

Eusebius (if Exarch he were) was recalled to Constantinople, and succeeded by Armenian Isaac, and Ariwald, son-in-law of Agilulf and Theudelinda, sat, apparently with the full consent of the people, on the Lombard throne. The chronology of all these events is somewhat uncertain; but on the whole it seems probable—that the strife between Adalwald and his successor, if it began in 624, lasted for about two years, and that it was not till 626 that the death of the former left Ariwald unquestioned ruler of the Lombard people.

And Theudelinda, the mother of the dethroned and murdered king, what was her part in the tragedy? It is impossible to say. No hint of interference by her for or against her unhappy son has reached our ears. If it is true, as Fredegarius tells us, that the successful claimant was husband of her daughter, it is easy to conjecture the motives which may have kept her neutral in the strife. But she did not long survive her son. On the 22nd of February, 628, the great queen passed away. She left her mark doubtless on many other Italian cities, but preeminently on the little town of Modicia (*Monza*), where she and her husband loved to spend the summer for the sake of the coolness which came to them from the melting snows of Monte Rosa. Here she built the palace on whose pictured walls were seen the Lombards in that Anglo-Saxon garb which they brought from their Pannonian home. Here, too, she reared a basilica in honor of John the Baptist, which she adorned with many precious ornaments of gold and silver, and enriched with many farms. The church has been more than once rebuilt, but there may perhaps still remain in it some portions of the original seventh-century edifice of Theudelinda, and in its sacristy are still to be seen not only the Iron Crown of the Lombards but the gold-handled comb of Theudelinda, and the silver-gilt effigies of a hen and chickens which once probably served as a centerpiece for her banquet table.

Of the ten years' reign of Ariwald after his rival's death Paulus honestly confesses that he has nothing to relate. We have again to draw on the inaccurate but contemporary historian Fredegarius for information as to two events which made some stir in the court of Pavia during his reign, the degradation of a queen, and the murder of a Lombard duke.

Gundiperga (as Paulus calls the wife of Ariwald) was a lovely and popular queen, zealous for the faith, and abounding in works of charity to the poor. But there was a certain Lombard nobleman named Adalulf, who was frequently in the palace, being busied in the king's service; and of this man the queen in the innocence of her heart chanced one day to say that Adalulf was a man of goodly stature. The favored courtier hearing these words, and misreading the queen's character, presumed to propose to her that she should be unfaithful to her marriage vow, but she indignantly scorned the proposal, and spat in the face of the tempter. Hereupon, fearing that his life would be in danger, Adalulf determined to be beforehand with his accuser, and charged the queen with having three days previously granted a secret interview to Taso, the ambitious duke of Tuscany, and having at that interview promised to poison her present husband, and raise Taso to the throne. Ariwald (or Charoald, as Fredegarius calls him), believing the foul calumny, banished his queen from the court, and imprisoned her in a fortress at Lomello.

More than two years Gundiperga languished in confinement; then deliverance reached her from a perhaps unexpected quarter. Chlotchar II, king of the Franks, sent ambassadors to Ariwald, to ask why such indignities were offered to the Lombard queen, who was, as they said, a relation of the Franks. In reply Ariwald repeated the lies of Adalulf as if they were true. Then one of the Frankish ambassadors, Answald by name, suggested on his own account, and not as a part of his master's commission, that the judgment of God should be ascertained by two armed men fighting in the lists, and that the reputation of Gundiperga should be cleared or clouded according to the issue. The counsel pleased Ariwald and all the nobles of his court. The cause of Gundiperga was now taken up by her two cousins, Gundipert and Aripert (the sons of her mother's brother Gundwald), and, perhaps hired by them, an armed man named

Pitto entered the lists against Adalulf. The queen's champion was victorious; her traducer was slain, and she, in the third year of her captivity, was restored to her royal dignity.

But though King Ariwald was convinced that he had done his gentle queen injustice, his suspicion of the treasonable designs of the Tuscan Duke Taso remained, and was perhaps not without foundation. In the year 631 he sent ambassadors to the patrician Isaac, asking him to kill Duke Taso by any means that were in his power. If the Exarch would confer this favor upon him, the Lombard king would remit one of the three hundred-weights of gold which the Empire was now by treaty bound to pay to him. The proposition stirred the avaricious soul of Isaac, who at once began to cast about for means to accomplish the suggested crime. He sent men to Taso, bearing this message : "I know that you are out of favor with King Ariwald, but come to me and I will help you against him". Too easily believing in the Exarch's goodwill, Taso set out for Ravenna, and with fatal imprudence left his armed followers outside the gate of the city. As soon as he was well within the walls, the assassins prepared for the purpose rushed upon him and slew him. News of the murder was brought to King Ariwald, who thereupon fulfilled his promise, and graciously consented to remit one third of the usual tribute "to Isaac and the Empire". Soon after these events King Ariwald died.

No doubt there are some improbabilities in the story thus told by Fredegarius as to the murder of Taso, and possibly Pabst is right in rejecting it altogether. The name and the circumstances look suspiciously like a repetition of the story told by Paulus of the assassination of Taso of Friuli. and the title "Dux Tusciae" is almost certainly wrong, for, at any rate a little later on, there was more than one duke in "Tuscia". On the other hand, it is possible that two men of the name of Taso (not an uncommon name among the Lombards) may have been murdered by a treacherous Roman governor, and it is also possible, if the two stories describe the same event, that the contemporary though alien Fredegarius may have heard a more correct version than the native but much later historian Paulus.

Rothari and Gundiperga.

On the death of Ariwald, if we may, trust Fredegarius, the precedent set in the case of Theudelinda was repeated, and the widowed queen was asked to decide for the Lombard nation as to his successor. Her choice fell on Rothari, duke of Brescia, whom she invited to put away his wife and to be joined with her in holy matrimony. Rothari swore by all the saints to love and honor Gundiperga alone, and thereupon by unanimous consent of the nobles was raised to the throne. Both queen and nobles, however, if Fredegarius is to be believed, had soon reason to repent of their choice. He drew tight the reins of discipline (which had probably been relaxed under the reign of the usurper Ariwald), and, in pursuit of peace, struck terror into the hearts of the Lombards, and slew many of the nobles, whom he perceived to be contumacious. Forgetful also of his solemn promises to Gundiperga, and perhaps partly influenced by dislike to her Catholic ways (he being himself an Arian), he confined her in one little room in the palace of Pavia, and forced her to live there in privacy, whilst he himself held high revel with his concubines. She however, "as she was a Christian woman", blessed God even in this tribulation, and devoted herself continually to fasting and prayer. The chronicler makes no mention of the earlier divorced wife of Rothari, but one would fain hope that the remembrance of that injured woman's wrongs helped to reconcile Gundiperga to her own fate, and gave reality and truth to her words of penitence. At length, after five years of seclusion, an embassy from the Frankish king, Clovis II, again brought the wrongs of this "relation of the Franks" before the notice of the Lombard ruler. Again the Frankish intercession prevailed, and Gundiperga, being brought forth from her seclusion, wore once more her regal ornaments, and sat in the high seat by the side of her lord. All the farms and other possessions of the royal fisc belonging to her, which had been apparently impounded during her seclusion, were restored to

her, and to the day of her death she lived in queenly splendor and opulence. Aubedo, the Frankish ambassador who had so successfully pleaded her cause, received in secret large rewards from the restored queen. This is the last that we hear of Queen Gundiperga, who probably died some about the middle of the seventh century. As her mother had done at Monza, so she at Pavia reared a basilica in honor of St. John the Baptist, which she adorned with lavish wealth of gold and silver and precious vestments. There, too, her corpse was interred.

The careers of these two women, mother and daughter, Theudelinda and Gundiperga, present some points of resemblance and some of striking contrast. Each was twice married to a Lombard king; each was entrusted by the nation with the choice of a successor to the throne; one saw a son exiled and slain, the other a brother; each was the Catholic wife of an Arian husband, but one apparently preserved to her death the unswerving loyalty of the Lombard people, while the other had twice to undergo imprisonment, and once at least the stabs of cruel calumny. Their united lives extended from Alboin to Rothari, from the first to the last Arian king of Italy, and covered the whole period of an important ecclesiastical revolution—the conversion of the Lombards to the Catholic form of Christianity.

We have hitherto seen only the unfavorable side of the character of Gundiperga's second husband. We may now listen to the more favorable testimony of Paulus, who says :

“The kingship of the Lombards was assumed by Rothari, by birth an Aroodus. He was a man of strong character, and one who followed the path of justice, though he held not the right line of the Christian faith, being stained by the infidelity of the Arian heresy. For in truth the Arians, to their own great harm and loss, assert that the Son is inferior to the Father, and the Holy Spirit inferior to the Father and the Son; but we Catholics confess the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit to be one true God in three persons, with equal power and the same glory. At this time in almost all the cities of the realm there were two bishops, one a Catholic, the other an Arian. In the city of Ticinum the place is still shown where the Arian bishop had his baptistery, residing near the basilica of St. Eusebius, while another bishop resided at the Catholic church. However, the Arian bishop who was in that city, Anastasius by name, being converted to the Catholic faith, afterwards ruled the Church of Christ. This King Rothari arranged in a series of writings the laws of the Lombards, which they were retaining only in memory and by practice, and ordered that the Edict thus prepared should be called a *Code*. But it was now the seventy-seventh year since the Lombards had come into Italy, as the same king has testified in the prologue to his edict”.

“Now King Rothari took all the cities of the Romans which are situated on the sea-coast from Luna in Tuscany up to the boundary of the Fanks. In the same way also he took and destroyed Opitergium (*Oderzo*) a city placed between Treviso and Friuli; and with the Romans of Ravenna he waged war at the river of Aemilia, which is called Scultenna (*Panaro*). In which war 8000 fell on the side of the Romans, the rest taking flight”.

It is evident that we are here listening to the exploits of one who, however harsh a ruler either of his nobles or of his wife, did at least know how to rule successfully. His conquests from the Empire are hardly less extensive than those of Agilulf. Genoa and the coast of the Riviera (“di Ponente” and “di Levante”) are wrested finally from the grasp of Constantinople. Oderzo is taken, and its walls are demolished. So must we understand the word used by Paulus in this place, since the utter destruction of Opitergium is placed by him about twenty-five years later, and is attributed to another king of the Lombards, Grimwald. Finally, Rothari wins a great victory over the forces of the Exarch on the banks of the river which flows past Modena, and perhaps at the very point where it intersects the great Emilian highway.

These victories were probably won at the expense of Isaac of Armenia, whose eighteen years' tenure of the Exarchate (625-644) included one half of the reign of Rothari. Visitors to

Ravenna may still see the stately sarcophagus of this Byzantine governor of fragments of Italy, which is placed in a little alcove behind the church of S. Vitale. Upon the tomb is carved an inscription in twelve rather halting Greek iambs, with a poor modern Latin translation. The inscription may be rendered into English thus :

A noble general here is laid to rest,
 Who kept unharmed Rome and the Roman West.
 For thrice six years he served his gentle lords,
 Isaac, ally of kings, this stone records.
 The wide Armenia glories in his fame.
 For from Armenia his high lineage came.
 Nobly he died. The sharer of his love,
 The chaste Susanka, like a widowed dove
 Will spend her rest of life in ceaseless sighs.
 She mourns, but his long toil hath won its prize,
 Glory alike in East and Western Land,
 For either army owned his strong command.

It is not difficult to read through the conventional phrases of this vapid epitaph the unsuccessful character of Isaac's Exarchate. Had there been any gleam of victory over the Lombard army, the inscription would have been sure to record it. As it is, the utmost that can be said of him is that he "kept Rome and the West unharmed", but if our reading of his history be correct, he probably kept the beautiful Riviera unravaged by surrendering it to the enemy.

Some of the events of Isaac's government of Italy, to which his epitaph makes no allusion, are brought before us by the meager narratives of the Papal biographer

It was in 638, six years before the death of Isaac, that his old correspondent, Pope Honorius, died. A Roman ecclesiastic, Severinus, was chosen as his successor, and the Exarch, who had at this time the right of strange approval of the Papal election, sent the *Chartularius*, Maurice (by whose advice, we are told, he wrought him much evil), as his representative to Rome. Maurice, taking counsel with some ill-disposed persons, stirred up "the Roman army" (that is, probably, the civic militia) by an inflammatory harangue concerning the wealth of the Papacy. Pointing to the episcopal palace of the Lateran, he exclaimed, "What marvel that you are poor when in that building is the hoarded wealth of Honorius, to whom the Emperor, time after time, sent your arrears of pay, which he, holy man that he was, heaped up in the treasure-chambers of yon stately palace". At these words burning resentment against the Church filled all hearts, and the whole body of citizens, from the greybeard down to the stripling, rushed with arms in their hands to the Lateran palace. They were, however, unable to force an entrance, so strongly was it guarded by the adherents of Severinus. For three days the armed band besieged the Lateran, and at the end of that time Maurice, having persuaded the "Judges" (that is, the civil authorities of the City) to accompany him, claimed and obtained admission to the palace. Then he sealed up all the rich vestments which he found in the Church's wardrobe and all the treasures of the Lateran palace, "which Emperors, Patricians and Consuls had left, for the redemption of their souls, to the Apostle Peter, to be employed in almsgiving and the redemption of captives". Having done this, he wrote to the Exarch Isaac that all was ready and he might now come and help himself at his leisure to the splendid spoil. Soon Isaac arrived, and immediately banished the leading clergy to various cities of Italy. Having thus disarmed ecclesiastical opposition, he proceeded to take up his dwelling in the Lateran palace, where he abode eight days, calmly appropriating its wealth of centuries. To the indignant members of the Papal household the spoliation must have seemed not less cruel and even more scandalous (as

being wrought in the name of a Roman Emperor) than that celebrated fortnight of plunder when Gaiseric and his Vandals stripped the gilded tiles from the roof of the Capitol. Part of the booty Maurice sent to Heraclius, thus making the Emperor an accomplice in his deed. The soldiers may have received their arrears of pay out of the proceeds of the plunder, but assuredly no contemptible portion found its way to the Exarch's palace at Ravenna, whence it may have been transported by the widowed dove Susanna, after her husband's death, to their Armenian home.

Pope Severinus, after this act of spoliation, was installed by the Exarch in St. Peter's chair, but died little more than two months after his elevation. Another short pontificate followed, and then Theodore, 642-649, a Greek by birth, but as stout as any Roman for the defence of the Roman see against the Patriarchs of Constantinople. In his pontificate Isaac and Maurice reappear upon the scene in changed characters. The *Chartularius* again visited Rome, again allied himself with the men who had helped him in his raid upon the treasures of the Church, and persuaded the soldiers in the City and the surrounding villages to swear fidelity to him and renounce their allegiance to Isaac, whom he accused of seeking to establish an independent throne. The Exarch, however, whether loyal or not to the Emperor, showed himself able to cope with his own rebellious subordinate. He sent Donus the *Magister Militum* and his treasurer to Rome, doubtless with a considerable body of troops. At once all the "Judges" and the Roman militia, who had just sworn fealty to Maurice, struck with fear, abandoned his cause and gave in their adhesion to his enemy. On this Maurice fled for refuge to the church of S. Maria Maggiore, but being either forced or enticed from that sanctuary was sent, with all his accomplices, heavily chained with collars of iron to Ravenna. By the Exarch's orders, however, he was not suffered to enter the city, but was beheaded at a place twelve miles distant, and his head, the sight of which gladdened the heart of the Armenian, was exhibited in the circus of Ravenna. His followers, with the iron collars still round their necks were led away into strict confinement while Isaac revolved in his mind the question of their punishment. But before he had decided on their fate, he himself died, "smitten by the stroke of Death of God", and the liberated captives returned to their several homes. Isaac was succeeded in the Exarchate Exarch by Theodore Calliopas, who was twice the occupant of the palace at Ravenna. In his second tenure of office, 653-664, Italy witnessed strange scenes—the banishment of a Pope and the arrival of an Emperor; but the description of these events must be reserved for a future chapter.

CHAPTER V.

THE LEGISLATION OF ROTHARI

In the last chapter we were concerned with the external events of the reign of Rothari, who for sixteen years (636-652) wore the Lombard crown. Our information as to those events is certainly meager and unsatisfactory enough, but the main interest of the reign for us is derived from a feature of its internal politics, the fact, namely, that Rothari was the first great legislator of his people.

The Lombards had now been for two generations encamped on the soil of Italy, yet during all that time, as Paulus tells us, their laws had lived but in the memory of unlettered judges, who remembered only so much as frequent practice rendered familiar; and this, in a country which had been subject to the most scientific system of jurisprudence that the world has ever seen, and had witnessed its gradual development from the Laws of the Twelve Tables to the Code, the Institutes, and the Digest of Justinian. It was time that this reproach should be in some measure removed from the Lombard nation, and accordingly on November 22, 643, King Rothari published to the world his "Code" in 388 chapters, written by the hand of the notary Answald. The Prologue of this monument of barbarian jurisprudence is worth quoting:

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ begins the Edict which with God's help the most excellent man Rothari, king of the Lombards, hath renewed, with the nobles who are his judges. In the name of Almighty God, I, Rothari, most excellent man and king; and seventeenth king of the nation of the Langobardi; by the blessing of God in the eighth year of ray reign, and the thirty-eighth of my age, in the second Indiction; and in the seventy-sixth year after the Langobardi marching under Alboin, at that time their king, were brought by divine power into the province of Italy; prosperously given forth in my palace at Ticinum:

"How great has been our care and anxiety for the welfare of our subjects, the tenor of the following Edict will declare: both on account of the constant oppressions of the poor, and also on account of the extravagant exactions from those who are known to have larger property, but how they suffer violence we well know. Therefore, considering the compassion of Almighty God, we have thought it necessary to correct the present law, [inviting] our chief men to renew and amend it, adding that which is lacking, and removing that which is superfluous. And we have provided that it shall be all embraced in one volume, that each one may have permission to live quietly, according to law and justice, to labor against his enemies on behalf of his own opinion and to defend himself and his borders.

"Therefore, since these things are so, we have judged it useful to preserve to future ages the memory of the names of the kings our predecessors, from the time when kings first began to be named in the Lombard nation, as far as we have been able to learn them from ancient men, and we have ordered the Notary to affix them to this parchment".

Then follow the names of sixteen kings, with the families from which they sprang.

1. AGILMUND, of the family Regugitatus (Gugingus).
2. LAAJISIO (LAJAMICHO).
3. LETH (LETHUC).
4. HILDEOCH (ALDIHOC).
5. GUDEOGH (GODEHOC).
6. CLAFFO.
7. TATO.

8. WACHO.
9. WALTHARI (WALTARI), son of WACHO.
10. AUTHARI or AUDOIN, of the family of Gaisus (Gausus).
11. ALBOIN, son of AUDOIN, who, as aforesaid, led the army into Italy.
12. GLEPH, of the family Beleos.
13. AUTHARI.
14. AGILULPH(ACQUO): a Thuringian of the family of Anawas.
15. ADALWALD.
16. HARIWALD (AROAL), of the family of Caupus.

In the seventeenth place he names himself, "I, who as aforesaid am in God's name King Rothari", and he recounts the uncouth names of his progenitors belonging to the family Harodos through twelve generations.

USTBORA
 MAMMO
 FRANCHONO
 WEO
 WEHILO
 HILTZO
 ALAMAN
 ADHAMUND
 NOCTZO
 NANDINIG
 ROTHARI

He then proceeds :

"And this general order we give lest any fraud creep into this Edict through the carelessness of copyists. But it is our intention that no such copies be received or have any credit except such as are written or certified (?) on request by the hand of Arswald, the notary who has written it by our orders".

The reader will not expect nor desire that in this book, which is not a law-book but a history, I should give a complete analysis of the 388 chapters, short as they are, which make up the Code of Rothari. I will only notice those provisions of the Code which illustrate the condition of Lombard society, will quote some of the curious words which the barbarians from beyond the Danube added to the vocabulary of Latium, and above all will notice any provision—if such is to be found in the Code—which illustrates in the most remote manner the condition of the conquered Romans under their Lombard lords. The importance of calling attention to this point (which is connected with one of the most difficult questions in the whole history of the Middle Ages) will abundantly appear in a later chapter. The reader must not look for anything like orderly arrangement or scientific division of the field of law. It would not be the Lombard Code if it possessed either of these qualities.

The Code begins with offences against the person of the king and the peace of the state. The conspirator against his life, the inviter of his enemies into the kingdom, the harbinger of brigands, the exciter of the soldiers to mutiny, the treacherous officer who deserts his comrades on the field of battle, are all to be punished with death.

But on the other hand, the man who takes counsel with the king himself concerning the death of one of his subjects, or who actually slays a man by the royal order, is to be held guiltless, and neither he nor his heirs are to suffer any disquietude by reason of the murder, "because the king's heart is in the hand of God, and it is not possible for a man to escape whom he has ordered to be slain". If one man accuses another of a capital offence, the accused may appeal to the *camfio* or wager of battle. If he fail his life may be forfeited, but if his accuser fail

he must pay the *guidrigild*, or price of blood, of which half shall go to the king, and half to the man whom he has slandered. This word *guidrigild* is explained shortly after. If two free men without the king's order have plotted together as to the death of a third, and have carried their intention into effect, he who was the actual murderer shall compound for the dead man according to the price fixed, "that is to say, his *guidrigild*". If many persons of honorable birth have conspired together to kill a man, they shall be punished in *angargathungi*. This barbarous word is explained as meaning that they shall compound for the murder according to the rank of the person slain. If they have carried off plunder from the dead man's body, that is a plain case of *ploderaub*, or robbing the dead, and must be atoned for by a payment of 80 solidi.

"If any of our barons", says Rothari, "wishes to come to us let him come and go in safety and unharmed. Anyone doing him any injury on the road shall pay a composition according to the terms set forth below in this Edict". We note this early appearance of the word "barons" without venturing to define its exact value.

Laws 26-28 provide for the security of travelers by the highway, under the strange title, "*De Wegworin id est horhitariam*". The German word (derived from *wec* = way, and *werran* = to block or hinder) explains itself pretty easily as an obstruction of the high road. Its Latin equivalent is the aspirated form of the word which we use for the *orbit* of a planet. As to those sturdy rogues who do violence to travelers on the highway, the law is that "if any one shall place himself in the way before a free woman or girl, or do her any injury, he shall pay 900 solidi, half to the king, and half to her to whom the injury shall have been done, or to the person to whom the right of protecting her (*mundium*) belongs". This *mundium*, or claim to represent the rights of a female relative, is a word which we shall meet with again later on.

"If any one shall place himself in the way before a free man, he shall pay him 20 solidi, always supposing that he has not done him any bodily injury. If he have, he shall pay for the wounds or blows which he has inflicted according to the rate to be hereafter mentioned, and shall also pay the 20 solidi for stopping him on the highway".

"If any one shall place himself in the way before another man's slave or handmaid, or *Aldius*, or freed-man, he shall pay 20 solidi to his lord".

This word *Aldius*, which we shall meet with again in the laws of Rothari, might introduce us to a long and difficult controversy, which I shall not enter upon at this time. It is clear that the *Aldius* was in a state of imperfect freedom. He is named between the slave and the freedman, and his claim for damages from the highway robber is not paid to himself, but handed over to his lord. It is suggested that the vast mass, of formerly free Romans, or non-Lombard inhabitants of Italy, were reduced by the conquest to this condition of *Aldionate*, a suggestion which for the present shall neither be accepted nor rejected, but which I will ask the reader to bear in mind when next the word *Aldius* meets him in Rothari's Code.

Law 31 is headed *De Walapauz*: "If any man shall unjustly do violence to a free man by way of *walapauz*, he shall pay him 80 solidi. *Walapauz* is the act of one who stealthily clothes himself in the garments of another, or changes the appearance of his head or face with the intention of thieving". Apparently the modern burglar, who with blackened face breaks into a house by night, is guilty, though he knows it not, of the crime of *Walapauz*.

And this leads us to a curious custom which prevailed when a man was found, with however innocent intentions, by night in another man's courtyard. "If a free man shall be found by night in the courtyard of another, and shall not give his hands to be tied—if he be killed, no claim for compensation shall be made by his relations. And if he shall give his hands to be tied, and shall be bound, he shall pay for himself 80 solidi: because it is not according to reason that a man should enter in the night-time silently or stealthily into another man's courtyard; but if he have any useful purpose or need of his own, let him cry out before he enters".

Similarly a slave found at night in the courtyard of a householder, and not giving his hands to be tied, if he be slain shall furnish no claim for compensation to his lord : and if he give his hands, and is bound, shall be set free on payment of 40 solidi.

Scandalum, that is, an act of violence committed in a church, was to be atoned for by a special fine of 40 solidi, laid on the altar of the church. Within the king's palace it was a capital offence, unless the culprit could move the king's soul to mercy. *Scandalum* committed by a free man in the city where the king was abiding, required a fine of 12 solidi, even if no blow were struck ; of 24 solidi in addition to the ordinary tariff for wounds if the brawler had struck a blow. In the case of a slave these fines were diminished one half. One half again all round was the abatement, if the city in which the brawl took place were not one in which the king was residing .

We now come to the laws fixing the fines that were to be paid for all sorts of bodily injuries, and these will be best exhibited in tabular form. We begin with the cases in which the injured person is a free man :

Blows struck in sudden quarrel causing a wound or bruise . . 3 solidi apiece up to 12 solidi. "If more blows are inflicted they are not to be counted, but let the wounded man rest content with himself".

Blow with the fist ... 3 solidi.

Blow with the palm of the hand ... 6 solidi

Blows on the head, only breaking the skin ... 6 solidi up to 18.

Blows on the head, breaking bones: (per bone) 12 solidi (no count to be taken above 36 solidi). "But the broken bones are to be counted on this principle, that one bone shall be found large enough to make an audible sound when thrown against a shield at 12 feet distance on the road. The said feet to be measured from the foot of a man of moderate stature, not the hand".

The deprivation of an eye is to be atoned for by the payment of half the fine due for actual homicide, "according to the quality of the person injured".

The cutting off of the nose to be atoned for by half the fine for homicide.

Cutting the lip ... 13 solidi.

If so cut that one, two, or three teeth appear ... 20 solidi.

Knocking out the front teeth ... 16 solidi per tooth.

Knocking out the grinders ... 8 solidi per tooth

Cutting off an ear—a quarter of the fine for homicide.

Wound on the face ... 16 solidi.

Wound on the nose, causing a scar ... 16 solidi.

Similar wound on the ear ... 16 solidi.

Fracture of the arm ... 16 solidi.

Wounding without breaking the arm ... 8 solidi.

Blow on the chest ... 20 solidi.

Piercing the rib ... 8 solidi.

Cutting off a hand—half the fine for homicide; if so stricken as to cause paralysis, but not cut off—a quarter of the full fine.

Cutting off a thumb—a sixth part of the fine for homicide.

Cutting off the second finger ... 17 solidi.

Cutting off the third finger (which is the middle one) ... 6 solidi.

Cutting off the fourth finger ... 8 solidi.

Cutting off the fifth finger ... 16 solidi.

Cutting off a foot—half the fine for homicide.

Cutting off the great toe ... 6 solidi.

Cutting off the second toe ... 6 solidi.

Cutting off the third toe ... 3 solidi.

Cutting off the fourth toe ... 3 solidi.

Cutting off the fifth toe 2 solidi.

At the end of this curiously minute tariff of penalties for injuries to the person, we have the following interesting exposition of the motive of the law :

“For all the wounds and blows above mentioned, which may pass between free men, we have purposely ordained a larger composition than was in use among our ancestors, in order that the *faida* (feud), which is enmity, may be postponed after the receipt of the above-mentioned composition, and that more may not be required, nor any thought of guile be harbored in the heart; but let the cause be finished between the parties, and friendship remain. And should it happen that within the space of a year he who was wounded dies of the wounds themselves, then let the striker pay an *angargathungi*, that is [the full fine for homicide] according to the quality of the person injured, what he was worth”.

The Increased wealth of the Lombards after the settlements in Italy evidently had made them able to pay a higher sum for the luxury of vengeance on an enemy, and justified the sufferer in demanding an ampler compensation for his wounds. At the same time, the motive of the royal legislator in lightening his penal code is clearly apparent. As the Lombard nation was putting off a little of its old savagery in the light of Roman civilization, it was becoming more and more necessary that feuds should cease, and that the old right of private war and the notion of vengeance as the inalienable right of the kinsmen of a murdered man should be restricted within the narrowest limits, and if possible should vanish out of the nation's life. A provision follows for the case of a man who has unintentionally caused the death of an unborn child. It is said that if the mother of the child is free, and has herself escaped death, her price shall be fixed as that of a free woman according to her rank in life, and the half of that price shall be paid for her dead child. If she dies, her composition is paid apparently without any compensation for the death of her offspring. And as before, let the feud cease because the injury was done unwittingly. This provision, that the composition shall be paid according to the mother's rank in life, seems again to point to a table of compositions graduated according to the sufferer's place in the social hierarchy, which appendix to the laws of Rothari we no longer possess.

The twenty-six laws which next follow deal with household injuries inflicted on another man's *Aldius*, or household slave. At first sight we might think that *Aldius* and *Servus Ministerialis* were equivalent terms: but remembering the way in which *Aldius* was used in a previous law along with “slave” and “freedman”, cannot doubt that we have here to deal with two classes of men differing in their degree of dependence, whose services, generally speaking, were of the same value to their lord. The one is the *Aldius*, the client or serf, generally perhaps a member of the vanquished Roman population; the other is the household slave, who may belong to any nationality whatever, who by the fortune of war or the stress of pestilence or famine has lost his liberty, and like our countrymen the boys from Deira who excited the compassion of Gregory, has been brought to Italy by the slave-dealer, and sold to a Lombard master.

For a member of either of these two classes, the composition for wounds and bruises (paid doubtless to his master, not to himself) was generally about a third of that which was payable for a similar injury to a free man. In the case of the loss of an eye, a hand or a foot, the fine was half of that for homicide, the same proportion but not the same amounts as in the case of the corresponding injury to a free man. And for many of the more important injuries it is provided that the culprit shall pay to the lord not only the fixed composition, but an allowance for the loss of the man's labor and the doctor's fees.

The next section, containing twenty-three laws, deals with injuries inflicted on a yet lower class—*servi rusticani*, the “plantation hands” of whom we used to hear in the days of American slavery. Here again the same general principle prevails : for serious injuries, the loss of an eye or a hand, half the fine for homicide : for others a composition which is generally about a sixth or an eighth of that which is paid for a free man, and in many cases compensation for loss of labor and the doctor’s charges.

Any blow on hand or foot to either *Aldius* or slave which results in paralysis of the stricken member is to be atoned for as if it had been cut off.

All wounds and blows inflicted on the *Aldius*, the household slave or rustic slave, as also on the *Aldia* and the servant-maid, are to be atoned for according to the tenor of this decree. But if any doubt arise either as to the survival or the speedy cure of the injured person, let the lord receive at once half of the composition for the wound: the remainder being kept in suspense till the event be ascertained.

Within a year’s space, if the man recover, the balance unpaid for the wounds themselves shall be handed over to the lord; but if he dies the lord shall receive the whole composition for the dead man, allowing for that which has already been paid for the wounds.

The man who has inflicted a wound is himself to go and seek a physician. If he fail, then the wounded man or his lord is to seek the physician, and the other shall pay for loss of labor and doctor’s fees as much as shall be adjudged by learned men.

Now at length, after all these minute details as to minor injuries inflicted on men of less than free condition, we come to the full composition to be paid in event of their actual murder:

He who kills another man’s *Aldius* must pay (doubtless to the lord, though this is not expressly stated) 60 solidi.

He who kills another man’s household slave “approved and trained” ... 50 solidi.

He who kills a household slave of secondary importance to the foregoing, who bears nevertheless the name of household slave ... 25 solidi.

He who kills a foreman swineherd who has two or three or more men in training under him ... 50 solidi. For an inferior swineherd 25 solidi.

He who kills a farm servant, a cowherd, a shepherd, goatherd or other herdsman, if a foreman ... 20 solidi.

If one of his under-men ... 16 solidi.

He who kills a rustic slave under the farm-laborer ... 16 solidi.

Anyone who by accident kills the infant child of a slave or farm-laborer shall be assessed by the judge according to the age of the child, and the money which it was able to earn, and shall pay accordingly.

The provision as to accidents connected with the craft of the forester has an interesting bearing on the current legal doctrine of “common employment”. If two or more men are felling a tree which falls upon a passer-by and kills or injures him, they shall pay the composition for homicide or maiming in equal proportions. If the like accident befall one of the workers, they shall reckon one portion for the dead man, and pay the rest in equal shares. Thus, if two men were felling the tree and one were killed, the survivor would pay half the composition for his comrade; if three, each survivor would pay a third, and so on. And the feud shall cease inasmuch as the injury was accidental. In a later law (152) it is expressly enacted that if a man hires workmen, one of whom is drowned or struck by lightning, or crushed by a blown-down tree, his composition shall not be claimed from the hirer of his labor, provided the death was not directly caused by the hirer or his men.

A curious little group of laws on poisoning next comes before us. The free man or woman who mixed a cup of poison for another, but never found an opportunity to administer the fatal dose, was fined 20 solidi. If the poison were administered, but without a fatal result, the fine

was half the composition for homicide. If death ensued, of course the whole composition was paid.

So, too, if a slave presented the poisoned cup, but failed to kill his victim, the master of the slave must pay half the composition which would have been due in case of death; and the whole composition if death ensued. In either event, however, the slave was to be handed over to be put to death, and the master had a right to deduct his market value from the penalty which he paid for the slave's crime.

But all this machinery of the *quidriqild*, however carefully worked, would sometimes fail to efface from the mind of the sufferer the memory of his wrongs. The retaliatory blow would after all be struck, and the terrible *faida* would begin once more. In order to guard against this recrudescence of the blood-feud, it was enacted that anyone who, after he had received the composition for a slaughtered relative, and after accustomed oaths of mutual amity had been sworn, took vengeance with his own right hand and slew the murderer, should, besides paying the ordinary composition for the new homicide repay twice the composition which he had received; and similarly, if it were only a wound or a bruise which had been inflicted upon him, he should repay double the composition paid him for that injury.

Again, we are brought by the next pair of laws face to face with one of the most difficult questions of modern legislation, that of "employers' liability". If we rightly interpret the words of the code there was a guild of master masons who took their name from the town of Como, the headquarters of the building trade of that day. According to Muratori, even down to the middle of last century troops of masons from the Italian lakes used to roam over the other provinces of Italy, seeking employment as builders. Possibly the fact previously noticed that the Lake of Como was for so many years a stronghold of the dying Imperial cause in Upper Italy, may have had something to do with this continued existence of an active building trade in the hands of the *Magistri Comacini*. However this may be, it was enacted that if in the course of their building operations the fall of material caused a fatal accident either to one of the workmen, or to a passer-by, the composition should not be payable by the owner of the house, but by the *Comacine Master*. For after by the contract he has received good money for his hire, it is not unreasonable that he should bear the loss.

Laws as to fire-raising follow. The man who has intentionally and with evil mind kindled a fire in his neighbor's house must repay the damage threefold; the value of the burnt property to be assessed by "neighboring men of good faith". An accidental fire caused by a man carrying burning coals nine feet or more away from his own hearth was to be compounded for by a payment merely equivalent to the value of the things destroyed.

From fire the legislator passes to mills, probably water-mills. Any one breaking down another man's mill was to pay 12 solidi to the injured miller. For some reason or other, judicial fairness was more than usually doubtful in cases of this kind, and accordingly a judge who delayed his decision, or wrongfully gave leave for the destruction of a mill, was to pay 20 solidi to the king's palace. On the other hand, wrong might be done by building as well as by destroying a mill. There were men who did illegally what the "free selectors" of Australia do in virtue of the laws of the colony—who settled themselves down on another man's land and built a mill beside his stream. In such a case, unless the intruder could prove his right, the mill and all the labor that he had expended upon it went to the rightful owner of the soil.

We now come to the section of the Code which deals with the laws of inheritance. The feature which to our ideas seems the most extraordinary, and which is, I believe, peculiar to the Lombard laws, is the provision which is made for illegitimate alongside of legitimate children. If a Lombard left one legitimate and any number of illegitimate sons, the former took two-thirds of his property at his death, the latter all together one-third.

If he left two sons born in wedlock, they inherited each two-fifths, the collective bastards one-fifth. If there were three of the former class, they took each two-sevenths, and one-seventh was divided among the bastards.

If there were four, the bastards took a ninth; if five, an eleventh; if six, a thirteenth; if seven, a fifteenth. Beyond this point apparently the law-giver would not go in providing for the division of the inheritance.

In all cases where there was legitimate male issue, the daughters took nothing; but if a man left one daughter born in wedlock, and a number of illegitimate sons, the former took one-third of the inheritance, the latter one-third, and the remaining third went to the other next of kin. If the daughters were two or more in number they took a half, the bastards a third, and the next of kin a sixth.

Where there was no next of kin to claim under these provisions, the king's court claimed the vacant inheritance. As relationship did not count beyond the seventh generation we may believe that in that barbarous age, and with a roving population, the king's court was not seldom a successful claimant.

No man might declare his illegitimate sons legitimate, or put them on an equality with the sons born in wedlock, except with the consent of the latter given after they had attained "the legitimate age". This was reached, however, at the early period of twelve years. As with the Romans, so with the Lombards, a father had not absolute power over the disposal of his property. Except in the case of certain grievous crimes against filial duty (if a son had purposely struck his father, or plotted his death, or committed adultery with his stepmother), no father might disinherit his son, nor even *thing* away to another in his lifetime the property that should rightly devolve upon him. And the obligation was a mutual one : except to his own offspring, the son might not *thing* away his property to prevent it from being inherited by his father. The Latinized German word *thingare*, which meets us in this and many other Lombard laws, gives us an interesting glimpse into the political life or primeval Germany. In an earlier chapter of this work a slight sketch was attempted of the Folks-Thing, or national assembly of the Germans. Referring to that chapter for a fuller discussion of the subject, I may add that not many miles from the place where I am now writing there was discovered about ten years ago an altar which bore the inscription DEO MARTI THINGSO, and which, in the opinion of some of the best German archaeologists, was dedicated to Mars, the god of the assembly, in whose name the priests commanded silence and punished the offenders who were brought up for judgment. Thus from a bare hillside in Northumberland has come in recent years a testimony to the widespread institution of the *Thing* among our Teutonic forefathers. Before such an assembly it was the custom of the Lombards that all transactions connected with property (especially perhaps property in land) should take place, and it was for this reason that a too generous (or perhaps spiteful) father was forbidden *thingare* his property to the detriment of his natural heirs.

From this custom of making every donation of property in the presence of the *Thing*, the donation itself came to be called *Thinx* or *Gairethinx*. As *ger* in the Old High-German language signifies a spear, and as we know that the Germans always came armed to their assemblies, it is suggested that the *gairethinx* or spear-donation may have been an especially solemn form of transfer of property. One of the laws of Rothari said, "If any man wishes to thing away his property to another, let him make the *gairethinx* itself not secretly, but before free men, inasmuch as both he who things and he who is the receiver are free men, that no contention may arise in future".

Now however solemnly a childless man might have *thinged* away his property, when for any cause he despaired of having issue of his own, if he afterwards begat legitimate sons, the previous *thinx* was utterly null and void, and the sons succeeded to the property as if it had

never taken place. And even daughters and illegitimate children ousted the claim of the receiver of the *thinx* to all but a fraction of the inheritance

On the other hand, a childless man who at the solemn thing should pronounce the word *lidinlaib*, thereby expressing that the donee was to enter upon the property at his death, incurred obligations which, if he continued childless, he could not lightly set aside. He became in fact, what our lawyers call "tenant for life", and not "without impeachment of waste", for he must thenceforward confine himself to the reasonable use of the property, and must in no wise fraudulently dissipate the same. If, however, necessity came upon him, and he found himself compelled to sell or mortgage the property with the slaves upon it, he might appeal to the receiver of his *thinx* : "You behold under what compulsion I am about to part with that property which I gave to you at my death. If it seem good to you, help me now and I will preserve this property for your benefit". If the donee of the *thinx* thus called upon refused to help his benefactor, then any alienation or encumbrance of the estate made by the latter remained valid in spite of the donation.

We now come to the marriage laws of Rothari, an interesting section of the Code. But before entering upon it we must notice one important law which governs the whole relations of Lombard womanhood, whether married or single : "It shall not be lawful for any free woman, *living* according to the law of the Lombards under our sway, to live under the power of *mundium* her own free will, or as it is called to be *selpmundia*, but she must always remain under the power of men, if not a husband or relative under that of the king's court, nor shall she have the power of giving or alienating any property, moveable or immoveable, without the consent of him in whose *mundium* she is living". The principle here laid down was recognized by most, if not all the German tribes whose laws have come down to us, though none deals quite so minutely with this question of the guardianship of women as the Lombard Code. The wording of the law may seem at first sight inconsistent with that high honor in which the Germans from the time of Tacitus downward are said to have held their women. But on reflection we perceive that the institution of this *mundium* or guardianship is chiefly intended for the woman's protection, and is a necessary consequence of the barbaric character of the rest of the Code. In a state of society where the *faida* or blood-feud was still a recognized principle, slowly and with difficulty giving way to the scarcely less barbarous *guidrigild*; under a system of laws which, as we shall see, tolerated the *camfio*, or wager of battle, as the test of right and wrong, what chance would a poor weak woman, if self-championed (*selpmundia*), have had of maintaining her rights? It was evidently necessary that she should have some male protector and representative, who if he had to assume responsibility for her acts, must have the deciding voice in the disposition of her property: and accordingly under the *mundium* of some man the Lombard woman lived from her cradle to her grave; if not under the *mundium* of a father, under that of a husband or a brother; if all these failed her, then under the *mundium* of the king's court. At the same time, though the institution of the *mundium* may have been originally designed for the woman's protection, it was undoubtedly sometimes a coveted prize. The regulations in the Lombard Code as to the division of the *mundium* among the brothers, even the illegitimate brothers, of the daughters of the house show that this view was taken of the guardian's position : and when the king's court came in and claimed the *mundium* of a wealthy heiress, we can well believe that some of the abuses of the right of wardship and marriage which prevailed in feudal times may have been in measure anticipated by the Lombard rulers. This, however, is a mere conjecture, not supported so far as I know by anything that is to be found in the scanty documents that have come down to us.

I must direct the reader's attention to one clause in the sentence above quoted from the 204th law of Rothari : "Any free woman living under our sway *according to the law of the Lombards*". This passage clearly implies that King Rothari had subjects who were not living

according to the law of the Lombards. This has a bearing on a very wide and important controversy which will be referred to in a subsequent chapter.

Meanwhile our business is with the Lombard law alone, and we may now trace by such indications as that law affords us the history of the courtship and marriage of a Lombard woman. We must not, however, expect that the Code will reveal to us the sentimental aspect of a Lombard marriage : on the contrary, some of the provisions will remind us of the discussions which take place in many a French farmhouse at the present day concerning the precise amount of the dot of the daughter of a thrifty *propriétaire*.

When a Lombard suitor asked for the hand of a woman in marriage, if her guardian accepted him, a ceremony of betrothal was solemnized, and a written contract (*fabula*) was drawn up between the parties. The suitor covenanted to give a price which was called the *meta*; and some substantial guarantor joined in the covenant with him. If all went well, and the course of the matrimonial negotiations flowed smoothly, the father or brother in whose *mundium* the bride had hitherto been gave, probably on the eve of the wedding, a certain dowry to the bride which was called her *faderfio* (father's money) To this was added on the morning after the marriage a substantial present from the newly-wedded husband to his wife, according to the universal custom of the German tribes; and this present, which was called the *morgangebe* by the Alamanni, and the *morgengifa* among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, was modified into *morgincap* among the sharp-speaking Lombards

But if the progress of the suit were not prosperous, and if the solemn betrothal did not ripen into marriage, the laws of Rothari had much to say about that contingency. If for two years after the betrothal the suitor kept on delaying the fulfillment of his promise, the father or brother, or he who had the *mundium* of the affianced woman, might exact from the guarantor the payment of the *meta*, and might then give the damsel in marriage to another. But perhaps the reluctant suitor alleged as a reason for his refusal that the woman had lost her chastity. In that case her parents must get twelve neighbors or kinsfolk to swear with them that the accusation was false. If they could do this the woman's reputation was considered to be cleared, and the suitor must either take her to wife, or pay a double *meta* as a penalty for the wrongful accusation.

If, however, for her sins it should happen that a woman was sorely afflicted after her betrothal, if she became a leper or a demoniac, or lost the sight of both eyes, then the suitor might reclaim his *meta*, and was not bound to take her in marriage. If, on the other hand, the guardian of a woman, after solemnly betrothing her to one man, connived at her marriage to another, he had to pay twice the *meta* to the injured suitor.

Once married, the woman passed under the *mundium* of her husband, and if she survived him remained under the *mundium* of his representative. If she had a son grown to adolescence it seems probable that he would be her guardian, but of course this would often not be the case, and she would then be under the *mundium* of some brother or kinsman of her late husband, who might be indisposed to relinquish the profitable trust. The royal legislator therefore clearly stated that the widow had the right to betake herself to another husband if he was a free man. In this case the second husband was bound to repay to the heir of the first, half of the *meta* which had been paid on the first espousals, and if the latter refused to accept this, then the wife might claim her whole *faderfio* and *morgincap* and she returned under the *mundium* of her parents, who might give her in marriage to whom they would.

We have several indications that this enforced *mundium* of the widow under her late husband's heir led sometimes to strained and painful relations. Anyone having the *mundium* of a free wife or maiden who falsely accused her of adultery, or called her a witch or conspired against her life, lost the *mundium* unless he were the father or the brother of the injured woman; and in this and several other cases the *mundium* went, in default of relations, to the

king's court. Lastly, to end the story of the matrimonial life of the Lombard woman, if a man slew his wife for any cause which was not sufficient in law to justify her death, the murderous husband had to pay 1200 solidi, half to her parents or relations, and half to the king. If the murdered woman had left sons, these inherited the *morgincaq* and *faderfio* : if not, they went to her parents, or failing them, to the king's court. But if the wife plotted against her husband's life, she was at his mercy and he might do to her whatsoever he would. If she slew him, she was herself to be put to death, and her property, if she left no children, went to the husband's heirs. Always, even in presence of the ghastliest domestic tragedies, the Lombard legislator keeps a cool head, and remembers to say what shall be the destination of the *faderfio* and the *morgincaq*.

Interspersed with the marriage laws of which I have spoken are some which deal somewhat more with the moral side of the relation between the sexes. Thus the seduction of a free woman was punished by a fine of 20 solidi, which was increased to 100 solidi if the seducer refused to marry his victim. If a man persuaded the betrothed bride of another to marry him he had to pay 20 solidi to the parents as penalty for seducing their daughter from her duty and 20 more in order to end the feud (*faida*) caused by his misconduct. Moreover he had to pay to the injured affianced suitor twice his *meta*. These comparatively light punishments fell on him who had by gentle means won the forbidden prize. Crimes of violence were rightly punished much more severely. Forcible compulsion of a woman to marry subjected the offender to a fine of 900 solidi, half of which went to the parents of the damsel, and half to the king's court. The injured wife was at liberty to go forth from the offender's house with all her possessions, and might place herself under the *mundium* of a father, a brother, an uncle, or the king, as she might choose.

In this connection we meet with a law which has given rise to much discussion : " If any man shall commit fornication with a female slave belonging to the nations, he shall pay to her lord 20 solidi. If with a Roman, 12 solidi".

It is only in this casual reference to an act of immorality that we find in all the laws of Rothari the slightest express reference (doubtless there are many implied references) to the great mass of the subject population of Italy who called themselves, and were called by their conquerors, by the once proud name of Roman. And this reference carries us but a little way. The poor bondswoman of Roman extraction is evidently compared unfavorably with her fellow slave of "Gentile", that is of Teutonic or Slavonic origin, the kinswoman it might be of the Anglian lads whom Gregory saw in the market-place. But, after all, it is not her wrong, but the injury done to her master, that is in the mind of the legislator. It is to him that the fine is paid, and all that we learn from this passage is that the stout, strong "gentile" woman who had come across the seas or from the countries beyond the Alps was a more valuable possession to her master than one of the oppressed, emaciated, famine-wasted daughters of Italy.

Acts of immorality committed chiefly against women of servile condition are dealt with in laws 205-214, and we then come to the interesting subject of marriages contracted between persons of unequal status, one free, the other unfree.

In these marriages the general rule seems to have been that which also prevailed in the Roman law, that the issue of the marriage shared the condition of the mother. Thus if an *Aldius* married a free woman, on his death she and her sons might go forth from his house free, but on condition of renouncing the *morgincaq* which her late husband had given her, and giving back to his lord the sum which he had once paid to her parents for her *mundium*. If a slave married a freed woman or an *Aldia* she lost the qualified freedom which she had possessed, during the marriage, but might reclaim it on her husband's death, and go forth free with her children. If an *Aldius* married an *Aldia* or a freed woman the sons became *Aldii* on the estate of their father's lord. If he married a female slave, the children of the marriage were slaves of their mother's

master. But if he ventured to lift his eyes to a free woman, and make her his wife, he ran the risk of hearing sentence of death pronounced upon him. The relations of the woman who thus demeaned herself had the right to slay her, or to sell her for a slave into foreign parts, and divide her substance among themselves. If they failed to do this, the king's officers might lead her away to the king's court, and set her to work among: the female slaves at the loom. So jealous was the Lombard law of the honor and reputation of the free woman

But, lastly, there was the possible alternative case, that a free man might wish to marry one of his own female slaves. For such a union the law had no such terrors as those inflicted in the converse case of the marriage of a free woman with a slave. But he might only marry her on condition of first enfranchising her, which he must do in a solemn manner by way of *gairethinx* before the assembly of the people. The enfranchised slave, who was now declared to be *wurdi-bora*, might now become her late master's lawfully-wedded wife, and could bear him legitimate sons, with full claim to succeed to his inheritance.

From this subject, by a natural transition, the legislator passes to that of the manumission of slaves.

Of this manumission, as he informs us, there were four kinds.

(1) The fullest and most complete was that which was practiced when a man wished to give his male or female slave absolute freedom to go where he pleased, and dispose of his property as he would. To accomplish this, he first handed over the slave by solemn *gairethinx* to another free owner; that second owner to a third, and the third to a fourth. This last owner led the slave to a place where four roads met, handed him in the presence of witnesses an arrow the free man's weapon, murmuring a certain form of words which had been handed down from dim antiquity, and then pointing to the crossroads, said, "You have unfettered power of walking whither you will".

A slave or *Aldius* thus enfranchised became folk-free (that is, a sharer in the freedom of the Lombard people), and entirely out of his late master's *mundium*. If he died without natural heirs, neither his patron nor his patron's heirs succeeded to his property, but it went to the king's court.

(2) The second form of manumission was that of the slave who was remitted *impans*, that is, "to the king's wish". This passage remains hopelessly dark to us, but we are told that the slave thus liberated was *amund* (perhaps, however, not folk-free).

(3) The third form of manumission made its subject folk-free, but not *amund*. He lived like a free Lombard in the family of his late master, and under his *mundium*. He had received the "liberty of the four ways", and could go where he willed, and do what he pleased, but his property, in default of natural heirs, went to his late master.

(4) The fourth form of manumission, an incomplete and partial affair, not accompanied with "the liberty of the four ways", left its subject only an *Aldius*, that is, as we have seen, it left him in a semi-servile condition, not folk-free on the one hand, but on the other able to contract a valid marriage with a free woman, and probably not liable to the indignity of personal chastisement

The section on manumission ends with the following law, which has an important bearing on the question hereafter to be discussed, of the condition of the subject Romans under the Lombards :

"All freedmen who shall have received their liberty from Lombard lords ought to live under the laws of their lords, and for their benefactors, according to the concession which shall have been made to them by their own lords".

This provision certainly looks as if for some persons, and at some times, the *living* according to the law of the Lombards was not a privilege to be sighed for, but a duty, to be if possible evaded. But more of this hereafter.

The law of vendors and purchasers comes next in order but there is not much here that need claim our attention, except that we notice that the period required to give a prescriptive title to property is very short, only five years. So short a prescription perhaps points to a semi-barbarous state of society still existing among the Lombards, and to frequent changes of ownership by violence. If a man had been left as long as five years in undisturbed possession of land, or slaves, or jewels, it might be presumed that he was the rightful owner.

Also we observe that no slave, and even no *Aldius*, could sell property of any kind without the consent of his master or patron. An exception was necessarily made in the case of a slave who had charge of a farm (*servus massarius*), whose business it was to sell off the young stock, and who did not require the formal consent of his master for each transaction of this kind.

Six laws follow concerning the removal of boundaries the usual punishment for which offence was a fine of 80 solidi in the case of a free man; a fine of half that amount or death in the case of a slave. It is interesting to observe that a frequent method of marking the boundaries was by notching the forest trees.

The slave who thus falsified the markings on the forest trees was punished by amputation of his right hand; and here, with that delightful discursiveness which characterizes the Lombard code, we learn that the same punishment was inflicted on anyone who, without the king's order, stamped gold or coined money, and also on any one who forged a charter or other document.

A measure of police, for the peace and good order of the cities, follows. "If any free man enters any city or village *by the wall*, or leaves it in the same manner, without the cognizance of his magistrate he shall pay the king's court a fine of 20 solidi. An *Aldius* or slave committing the same offence is to pay a fine of 10 solidi. If he commits a robbery he shall pay the fine for such robbery imposed by this edict in addition.

Then follow some obscure and difficult laws which I will not presume to interpret, as to the custom of *pignoratio*, which was a sort of distraint upon the goods of a debtor executed by a creditor on his own responsibility. He was not allowed to resort to this process of self-compensation till after he had on three successive days called upon the debtor to pay his debt, and if he made any mistake in executing it (for instance, if he took the slave of A as security for the payment of the debt of B), he might have to restore eight times the value of the pledge so taken, unless he could swear that he had done it inadvertently. So too the man who had given a pledge (*wadia*) for the maintenance of an action and failed to redeem it within six days was fined 12 solidi.

The section of the edict which deals with theft contains eleven short and simple laws; the next section, that which is concerned with the case of fugitive slaves, is about twice as long, though it contributes only thirteen laws to the collection. Evidently under the Lombard kings, as under the Presidents of the United States who reigned before Abraham Lincoln, the recapture of fugitive slaves was a matter which occupied a considerable part of the thoughts of the local magistrates.

As for theft, if the article stolen was of the value of 10 *siliquae*, the thief, if a free man, had to restore the value of the object ninefold, and to pay a fine of 80 solidi. He might, it is true, escape from this heavy fine by accepting the penalty of death. For the slave the fine was 40 solidi, the rest of the punishment was the same. The free woman (if folk-free) arrested in the act of theft was only called upon to pay the ninefold value. No other fine was to be exacted from her, but she was to go back to her home and muse on the injury which she had done to her reputation by attempting so indecent an action. Any one finding gold or an article of raiment on the highway, and raising it higher than his knee, if he did not declare what he had discovered to the magistrate was to restore ninefold.

We pass to the laws which deal with the case of slaves escaping from their masters. If such a slave or a free man escaping from justice were caught, it was the duty of the magistrate of the place where the capture occurred to hand over two solidi as a reward to the captor, and keep the slave that he might restore him to his master, or the fugitive that he might restore him to his pursuers. Did such a fugitive, having once been caught, escape, his keeper must swear that he had not intentionally released him, but had guarded him to the utmost of his power. Otherwise (apparently) he made himself responsible for the consequences of his escape. If the fugitive, when challenged and summoned to surrender, did not give his hands to be tied, the pursuer slaying him was not to be held answerable for his death.

All men were bound to hinder the slave in his flight, and to assist in detaining him. If a ferryman rowed him across a stream he was put on his defence, and unless he could swear a solemn oath that he was ignorant of the fugitive slave's condition, he was compelled to join in the quest, and if that were unsuccessful, to pay to the owner a sum equal to the slave's value, and a fine moreover of 20 solidi to the king's court. If the slave took refuge in a private house, the owner was justified in breaking into it, the fury of the pursuing master being deemed sufficient justification for the technical offence against the rights of property. If anyone knowingly harbored a fugitive slave, or supplied him with food, or showed him the way, or gave him a lift on his journey, the man who had thus helped the fugitive was bound first of all to go forth and find him, and if he failed to do that must pay the value of the slave; and of any property which he might have carried off with him, together with compensation for the work which had been damaged by the slave's flight.

As a rule, any one in whose house a slave sought shelter was bound to send a message to the master announcing the fact. If he failed to do so, and kept the slave more than nine nights he was responsible for any injury that the slave might commit, or for the loss to the owner caused by his death.

These rules applied to all classes. Even the officers of the king's court, the *Gastaldius*, or Actor Regis, the dignitaries of the Church, a priest or a bishop might not permanently shelter a fugitive slave, but having been summoned three times were bound to surrender him to his lord. If it happened, however (as seems often to have been the case), that the householder with whom the slave had taken refuge came forth and made peace between the slave and his master, persuading the latter to receive him back in favor and peace, and if afterwards the master, breaking his promise, avenged himself on his slave for his flight, he must for such violation of his plighted word pay to an ordinary householder 20 solidi, or twice that amount to one of the king's officers, or to a dignitary of the Church, if it was one of these whose intercession had thus been rendered of no avail. In the last case, that of broken faith with a bishop or priest, the forty solidi were to be deposited on the sacred altar where the injury had been done.

The general tenor of these laws seems to show that the sympathy of the whole community, not of the semi-servile rustics only, but also of the rich and powerful, was wont to be on the side of an escaping slave, and that the royal legislator must raise his voice loudly to secure a hearing for the rights of property in human flesh as then recognized by the law.

We come to a short section of the Code which deals with offences against the public peace. To enter another man's house in wrath and passion was such an offence, and was called *hovers*, a word which perhaps signifies "house-storming". The penalty for such an offence, if committed by a man, was 20 solidi, but a woman cannot commit the offence of breach of the house-peace, which is *hovers*: because it seems to be absurd that a woman, whether free or bond, should be able, like a man, to do violence with arms.

The next two laws point to the danger to the State arising from the oppressed condition of the slaves or *coloni*.

“If the slaves, by the advice of the country-folk (*rusticani*), shall enter a village with an armed band wretched to do mischief, any free man under the sway of our kingdom who shall put himself at their head shall run the risk of losing his life, and shall at all events pay 900 solidi, half to the king, and half to him to whom the injury was done. If the leader be a slave, and not a free man, let him be put to death. The slaves are to pay 40 solidi, to be divided as aforesaid”.

The second law deals with something like a resisted eviction. Here the *rusticani*, whom I take to be equivalent to *coloni*, are the movers in the tumult, and their punishment is less heavy than that of slaves.

“If for any cause the country-folk shall collect together to make a conspiracy and a sedition, and shall threaten any one or forcibly carry off a slave or a beast which the lord may have wished to remove from the house of his slave, then he who has put himself at the head of the rustics shall die, or redeem his life according to his fixed price, and all who have run into that sedition to do evil shall pay 12 solidi, half to the king, and half to him who has suffered from the act of violence”. Assaults committed by the rustics on the lord attempting to recover his property are to be compounded for according to the before-mentioned tariff. If any of the rustics be killed, no claim for compensation is to arise.

These two laws are of considerable importance for their bearing on the question hereafter to be discussed as to the extent of the application of these laws of Rothari; whether meant for Lombards alone, or for Lombards and Romans equally. It will be noticed that the words of the first law are very general—“any free man under the sway of our kingdom”. These words should certainly cover the case of a free but subject Roman as well as of a Lombard. But then it is enacted that he shall be put to death, or shall at least pay a fine of 900 solidi. It may be argued that while the free Roman was to be put to death without question, the free Lombard was to have the chance of redeeming himself by a fine. A somewhat similar alternative is offered in the next law to the ringleader of the rustics, perhaps in view of the same difference of nationality.

The seventy-three laws which follow take us over a wide field, and I regret that the space at my disposal does not allow me to copy in detail the picture which they give us of the economic and social condition of the Lombards. More than we might have expected from the inhabitants of a land so rich in cities as Italy, these laws seem to bring before us a population of country-dwellers, I had almost said of country-squires, who still, like their ancestors in the first century, “shun the continuous row of houses, and settle, scattered over their various homes, as the fountain, the moor or the grove may have caught the fancy of each”. We see them fencing round their meadows with planks or quickset hedges, and often trying to claim more than they can thus encompass. One lawless neighbor breaks down the fence entirely, and is fined 6 solidi : or he pulls out one plank or one bough, and has to pay 2 solidi; or whole squares of lattice-work and pays 3 solidi. Another with unjust mind hacks to pieces the woodwork of a plough (which our Lombard kinsmen called *plovum*), or steals the bell from a horse’s neck, or the yoke or the harness-thongs from the patient ox. The fine for the first of these misdeeds is 4 solidi; for the other acts, and for most of those offences against rural peace which are about to be enumerated, the fine is 6 solidi.

The elaborate laws for the protection of vines show that the Lombards appreciated that slender and delicate tree which is married so happily to the elm everywhere in the rich plain of Lombardy, and by the fame of whose joyous fruitage they themselves, according to the Saga, had been tempted into Italy. But we read with astonishment that though the wayfarer might help himself to three grapes without offence, for any taken above that number he must pay the regulation fine of 6 solidi.

The announcement that the maker of a hedge by which man or beast is injured or slain will be held responsible for the injury, or even for the homicide, strangely reminds us of modern controversies about barbed wire-fencing; but he who digs a ditch round his plot of land is liable to no claim for compensation for man or beast injured by falling into it, "because he did it for the safety of his field, and not with guile"; and the same exception applies to the digger of a well, "because the well-water is a common gift for the benefit of all"

We find a similar allusion to natural right in the laws relating to the taking of honey. If a man steal a bee-hive with the bees inside it he pays 12 solidi; if he find a swarm of bees on a tree on which the owner has set his mark, he pays 6 solidi; but if there be no mark on the tree he may take the honey and keep it "by the law of nature". Only this "law of nature" does not apply to the *gahagia* or game-coverts of the king; and even in other forests, if the lord chances to come riding by, the finder of the honey must give it up to him, but shall not be liable to any further blame for taking it.

A similar rule applies to the finding of young falcons on an unmarked tree. Here, too, the finder may keep them unless the lord of the forest comes upon the scene. But if on any pretence, from trees marked or unmarked, he takes young falcons from the nest in the king's *gahagium*, he must pay a fine of 12 solidi.

The Lombards were apparently a nation of horsemen, and many laws are devoted to questions connected with matters equestrian. To knock out a horse's eye, or cut off its ear, or do it any other bodily injury, subjected the offender to the penalty of restoring another horse of equal value to that which he had maimed. To cut off the hairs of its tail was punished with a fine of 6 solidi. To make any disfiguring marks upon it, whereby the owner might be prevented from knowing his own, was so obviously the next step to theft that it was punished accordingly by a fine of ninefold the horse's value. To mount another man's horse and ride it about in the neighborhood was an offence punishable with a fine of 2 solidi; but to take it off on a journey without the owner's leave was virtual theft, and punished by the ninefold fine. But sometimes a man would find himself quite innocently in possession of a horse that did not belong to him. It had come straying into his courtyard, and was doing damage there. What must an honest Lombard do in such a case? He must take the horse to the local magistrate or to the congregation assembling at the church door four or five times, and must make proclamation to all men by the voice of the crier: "I have found a horse and I know not whose it is". Having done this, if no owner appeared, he might safely keep it and ride it as his own; but when the horse died he must keep a note of the markings on its skin, that he might have somewhat to show to the owner should he at last make his appearance. If he complied with these regulations he was free from all further responsibility; if he failed in any of them he was liable to the ninefold fine.

Perhaps a man who had lost his horse would entrust the quest for it to a servant, telling him the marks by which to know the missing animal, and the searcher would in his ignorance lay hands upon the wrong horse and ride it off to his master's stable. Thereupon the real owner of the second horse appears upon the scene and brings a charge of horse-stealing. Then let him in whose keeping the horse is make solemn oath that the mistake was involuntary, and if he have treated the horse well while it was in his stables he shall be subject to no further action.

The laws respecting the pursuit of game are numerous, but except for those previously quoted, which imply that the king's own *gahagium* was strictly preserved, they do not seem to indicate that jealous monopoly of the pleasures of the chase which was characteristic of feudal times. If a stag or any other wild creature has been shot by a man it becomes his, but the right of property in it lasts for only twenty-four hours. If a passer-by finds a wild beast wounded by a hunter or caught in his snares, it is his duty to carry the prize to the hunter, for which he shall be rewarded by the right shoulder and seven ribs. If he conceals the capture, he shall pay the

hunter a fine of 6 solidi. If he be injured by a wild beast which has been caught in a snare, he has a right to compensation from the setter of the snare. But if of his own free-will and out of desire of gain he goes to such a wild beast, either ensnared or surrounded by dogs, and tries to make it his prey, then the consequences are on his own head, and he has no redress against the first huntsman

If a beast being wounded by the hunter meets a man, and slays him in its fury, the hunter will be held answerable for homicide. But this holds good only so long as the hunter is actually pursuing his quest with his dogs and his artillery. When he has given it up, and turned homewards, he ceases to be liable for the consequences of the rage of the wounded animal.

This whole section with which we are now dealing is concerned mainly with laws relating to animals, but after reading that he who strikes a cow in calf, and causes her to miscarry, must pay one *tremissis* (the third part of a solidus), and he who does a similar injury to a mare in foal shall pay one solidus, we are shocked to find that he who strikes another man's female slave, thereby causing abortion, pays only 3 solidi, only half the fine for stealing a horse's baiter, or pulling the hairs out of its tail. There is nothing in the Code of this strange semi-barbarous people which goes so far to justify St. Gregory's phrase "nefandissimi Langobardi" as this.

Incidentally to the discussion of injuries wrought by animals (which must, as a rule, be compounded for by their masters) we learn that "if, as a punishment for his sins, a man becomes rabid or demoniac, and does damage to man or beast, compensation shall not be claimed from his heirs", and conversely, if he himself be killed while in that state of frenzy, his heirs shall not be entitled to claim *guidrigild* on his behalf.

The various laws about swine and swineherds show that the unclean creature which Virgil does not condescend to notice in the Georgics played an important part in the husbandry of the Lombards. If a man found a herd of swine rooting about in his meadow, he might kill one, and not be asked to compensate the owner. If not in a meadow, but still feeding on land which was not their owner's, he might keep one as a hostage, and claim compensation for the rest at the rate of 3 *siliquae* (amounting to the eighth of a solidus) per pig. The champion boar of one of these great herds of swine was a valuable animal and went among the Lombards by the name of *sonorpair* and the theft of this hero among swine was punished by a fine of 12 solidi. But it was ordained that unless the herd consisted of at least 30 swine, its champion should not be considered to have attained to the dignity of a *sonorpair*. The swineherds (*porcarii*) were evidently a quarrelsome class of men, themselves often the slaves of serfs, and two laws are devoted to the special question of the quarrels with "assault and battery" which arose among them.

Lastly, to close this agricultural section of the Code, it is ordained that "no one shall have liberty to deny to travelers the right of grazing their horses, except it be in a meadow at haytime, or in a harvest-field. But after the hay or other crops have been gathered in, let the owner of land only vindicate the possession of so much of it as he can surround by a fence. For if he shall presume to remove the horses of travelers from the stubbles or from the pastures where other cattle are feeding, he shall pay the ninefold fine for these horses because he has dared to remove them from the open field which is *fornaccar* (land that has yielded its crop). We ask ourselves here what it was that the churlish Lombard landowner had to repay in *ahugild*. It seems hardly credible that it can have been the actual value of the horse to which he had denied a meal. Was it the computed value of the horse's grazing?

From these pastoral and agricultural provisions we pass to the laws which regulate the judicial procedure of the Lombards. A rude and primitive kind of procedure it was, one from which the barbarous "wager of battle" was not yet entirely eliminated, but in which that appeal to brute force was being gradually superseded by a rough, but generally effective appeal to the conscience of the accused person and his friends. For we have now to deal with that system of

combined swearing to the truth of a fact, or the falsehood of an accusation, which is generally called compurgation, and out of which probably sprang the Anglo-Saxon jury. But as the word “compurgation” is a term of later introduction—unknown, I believe, to any of the barbaric codes—and as the functions of a modern jury are altogether unlike, almost opposed to those of the fellow-swearers of the Lombard law, we shall do well to avoid the use of either term, and confine ourselves to the word *sacramentales*, which is that always used in the Codes not only of the Lombards, but of the Alamanni, the Frisians, and the Bavarians. The Lombard name for these persons seems to have been *Aidos*, a word obviously connected with the Gothic *Aiths*, the German *Eid*, and the English *Oath*, and meaning swearers; but the Lombard legislator writing in Latin prefers to use the words *sacramentum* and *sacramentalis*, connected of course with the modern French *serment*. The principle involved in this judicial process, so unlike our modern ideal of judicial investigation, but so widely spread through all the Teutonic nations, was evidently this :

One free German warrior accuses another of a certain offence, say of having stolen his horse, or murdered his slave. The accused man denies the fact; a multitude of his friends gather round him, and echo his denial; it seems as if there would be a bloody quarrel between the two parties. In earlier centuries the matter would have been thus settled by the strong hand, but now in the age of the migration of the peoples, a somewhat clearer vision of a possible “Reign of Law” has dawned upon the Teutonic mind. In order to prevent the interminable *faida* (blood-feud) from breaking out upon this trivial occasion, it is ordained that a given number of the friends of each disputant shall by solemn oath, either upon the Holy Gospels or upon their weapons of war consecrated by a Christian priest, assert their belief in the truth of the statements made by him whose cause they favor. It may be said, “And how much further does that process carry you? Of course each group will swear till sunset to the truth of its own side of the question”. Apparently it was not so; there was still much reverence for truth in these rough, Rome-conquering Teutons. They were not like some modern party-politicians, or like a jury of Celtic farmers. They recognized in some degree the inviolable claims of truth, and this old pagan virtue of theirs was reinforced by the awful sanctions of the Church and by the dread of endless torment awaiting him who swore falsely on the Holy Gospels or the consecrated arms. Some rough examination or discussion of the facts of the alleged offence probably took place among the *sacramentales*, and at length it was generally found (this must have been the case, or the practice would have fallen into disuse) that on one or other side a “swearer” yielded to the force of evidence, and admitted either that the plaintiff had failed to make good his attack, or the defendant his defence. When this was done, when either one of the litigants or any of his supporters said “I no longer dare to swear to the truth of our cause”, then the *sacramentum* was said to be broken, and the beaten party must pay his *guidrigild* if defendant, or if plaintiff must renounce his claim

These appear to be the general principles which governed the trial by *sacramentum*. It has been already remarked how utterly it differed from the trial by jury, which is in a sense its offspring. The modern juror is chosen expressly as a disinterested and impartial person : the *sacramentales* were chosen because they were friends and relatives of one or other of the litigants. The modern juror is exhorted to dismiss from his mind all previous knowledge that he may have acquired of the case, and to judge only on the evidence before him. The *sacramentalis* judged from his previous knowledge, and almost from that alone. Unanimity is required of a modern English jury, and one obstinate juror who holds out against the remaining eleven is an object of general dislike, and is labored with till he can be brought to a better mind. The one *sacramentalis* who yielded to conviction, and declared that he durst not swear to the truth of his principal’s assertion, was in the teutonic institution the hero of the day, and it was his act of “breaking the sacramentum” which decided the right and wrong of the dispute.

Having thus described the general principle of trial by *sacramentum*, let us briefly consider the manner in which such a trial was conducted according to the legislation of Rothari.

As soon as a matter of dispute arose between two free Lombards, the plaintiff (who was called *ille qui pulsatus*) called upon the defendant (*ille qui pulsatur*) to furnish security for the satisfaction of his claim. The defendant then gave some material pledge (*wadia*), probably of no great value, and “found bail”, as we should say, or in other words prevailed on some one of his friends to act as guarantor (*fidejussor*) that the plaintiff’s claim should be duly met. Twelve nights (in Teutonic phrase) were allowed him in which to appear and rebut the claim by his oath, and if, by reason of illness or for any other cause, he failed to do so, twelve more nights were allowed, and so on as excuse was pleaded. But if, on one pretext or other, he evaded his obligation for a whole year, judgment went against him by default. And similarly, he who made the claim, if he delayed for a whole year to establish it by means of *sacramentales*, lost all right to speak of the claim thereafter, and presumably had to restore the *wadia*. For the rule was, “Let him who is prepared to give the *sacramentum* have firm possession of the matter in dispute”. If neither party thus made delay, and the cause came on for trial, it was the duty of the plaintiff (if the case were a grave one, affecting values of 20 solidi or upwards) to nominate six *sacramentales* from among the near kindred of the defendant. In thus nominating, however, he might not choose any man who was known to be at enmity with his kinsman—for instance, any one who had struck him a blow, or conspired for his death, or who had *thinged* away property to another to which that kinsman had a claim. The defendant associated himself with these six men, and then apparently these seven chose five others, of whom it is only enacted that they should be free men. We should have expected to find that these last five were to be all kinsmen of the plaintiff, to match the six kinsmen of the defendant, but the law is not so written. The group of twelve *sacramentales* thus collected then proceeded to swear as to the rights of the case on the Holy Gospels, and it would seem that they must have gone on swearing until the strain upon the conscience became too great to be borne, and the *sacramentum* was broken by the defendant or one of his kinsmen refusing to swear any longer. If this did not happen, we must suppose that judgment was given for the defendant. Truly a strange way of arriving at truth in litigation, and one which seems unduly to favor the defendant, but in practice it cannot have been a complete failure, or men would not have continued to use it for centuries. If the cause were less important, represented by a value between 12 and 20 solidi, there were only six *sacramentales*, three chosen by the plaintiff, and two by the defendant, who himself became the sixth. And the whole number swore, not on the Gospels, but on the consecrated arms. If the matter in dispute were of less value than 12 solidi there were only three *sacramentales*, the defendant, the nominee of the plaintiff, and a third chosen by both. They swore simply *ad arma*, apparently without any special religious rite. There are various provisions with which I need not now weary the reader, for the case of the death of a litigant or a *sacramentalis* before the cause was decided, but the following law is worth quoting entire: “If a man be attacked (*pulsatus*) by another on account of any fault, and denies it, let it be lawful for him to justify himself (*se idoneare*) according to the law and the gravity of the accusation (*qualitatem causae*). But if he shall openly proclaim that he committed it, let him pay composition according to that which is set down in this Edict; for it shall not be allowable for any man after he has openly confessed, afterwards to deny by *sacramentum* the guilt which he has once admitted. Because we have known many in our kingdom who have set up such wicked contentions. These things have moved us to correct them by the present law and bring them to a better state of mind”.

Besides this system of trial by *sacramentales*, there evidently still survived the older and yet more barbarous system of the *camfio*, the warrior who offered what our forefathers called

“wager of battle”. As to this practice the laws unfortunately give us scarcely any information. We are told, however, that certain questions, such as the legitimacy of a son, the murder of a wife by her husband, the right to the *mundium* of a married woman, were to be decided by free *sacramentales*, because it appears to us unjust that so grave a matter should be disposed of in battle by the resisting power of one man’s shield. On the other hand, the man who has in anger called a free woman (in another man’s *mundium*) a harlot or a witch, if he repeats the charge in cold blood and maintains its truth, must prove it by a *camfio*. The woman accused of plotting the death of her husband may prove her innocence either by the *sacramentum* or by persuading some *camfio* to fight in her behalf.

It was ordained that no *camfio* in going forth to the judicial combat should presume to carry upon his person magical spells or anything of that kind. “Let him bring only the stipulated arms, and if any suspicion arise that he is privily wearing articles of magic, let enquiry be made by the judge; and if any such be found upon him, let them be torn out and cast away. And after these enquiries let the *camfio* himself lay his hand in the hand of his comrade in the presence of the judge, and declare in a satisfactory manner that he has nothing pertaining to enchantment on his person. Then let him go to the encounter”.

An important law defines the position of the *ware-gango* (or foreigner who has come to settle in the land under the shield of our royal power). It is declared that men of this class ought to live according to the laws of the Lombards, “unless they have obtained from our piety the right to live according to some other law. If they have legitimate sons, let them be their heirs just like the sons of the Lombards; but if they have no legitimate sons, they shall have no power to filing away their property, or to alienate it by any other form of conveyance without the king’s command”. The language of this law clearly shows that there were other laws besides those of the Lombard invaders prevalent within the peninsula; but here, as in a previous enactment, “living according to the laws of the Lombards” seems to be spoken of as rather a duty than a privilege. Probably the explanation at any rate of this law is, that the king’s court was determined to keep its grasp on the property of these wealthy *waregangi* in the event, perhaps a frequent event, of their dying without legitimate male issue.

This tendency of the king’s court to enforce and exaggerate all pecuniary claims against the private individual (a tendency which may be partly excused by the fact that apparently there was no regular system of taxation in the Lombard state) is further manifested by laws 369 to 373. In all cases in which the king is interested as plaintiff, the composition payable to him is to be double that payable to a subject, the only exceptions being that of forcible abduction and marriage of a woman, or murder, in both of which the already heavy fine of 900 solidi is not to be exceeded. If a slave of the king commit murder, the king’s court will pay the prescribed *guidrigild*, and the slave will then be hung over the dead man’s grave; but in all cases involving the fine of 900 solidi the king’s court is not to be called upon to pay the fine, though the slave will incur the risk of capital punishment.

Then, further, for the protection of the officers of the court who are executing the orders of their lord, it is enacted that if a *sculdhaizo* (which we may perhaps translate “justice of the peace”) or other agent of the king is killed or assaulted in the performance of his duty, the offender shall, over and above the ordinary *guidrigild*, pay a fine of 80 solidi to the king’s court. But in order to guard against those abuses of official position for the sake of private gain, which in the days of the Roman Republic made the government of the provinces a byword, it was enacted that no *gastaldius* receiving any gift by *gairethinx* from a private person during his tenure of office should be allowed to retain such gift except by a special precept of the king’s indulgence. Without such express sanction any property acquired by him during his administration went straight into the grasp of the king’s court .

The Lombards, as may be discerned from the character of their early sagas related to us by Paulus, were a somewhat superstitious people, haunted by the fearful and shadowy forebodings of the German forest-life, and especially afraid of the mysterious might of women who were in league with the powers of darkness. Hence the words *striga* and *masca*, signifying “witch”, were terms of deadliest insult; and it was ordained (as we have seen) that any man (except a father or a brother) who had the *mundium* of a woman, forfeited that profitable guardianship if he called her by either of these opprobrious names. Apparently some of the strange old superstitions about blood-sucking vampires increased the horror of these words, for, says the legislator, “Let no one presume to kill another man’s *Aldia* or female slave on the ground of her being a *striga*, which is commonly called *masca*. It is a thing not to be conceived of by Christian minds as possible that a woman can eat a living man from inside him. Therefore the penalty for any such offence shall be 60 solidi, in addition to the ordinary *guidrigild*; half of the fine to go to the owner, and half to the king’s court. And if any judge shall have ordered the man to do that wicked deed, he shall pay the above-written penalty out of his own pocket”.

Some curious belated laws about the fines for various forms of bodily injury form the conclusion of the Code. I will not describe them here, but will end with one strange provision as to the death of a brawling woman :

“If a free woman rushes into a brawl where men are striving, and receives a wound or a blow, or is slain, she shall be paid for according to her nobility; and the composition shall be so paid as if it had been the woman’s brother against whom the offence had been committed. No further blame (on account of her being a woman) shall be attached to the offender, nor shall the (regular) fine of 900 solidi be exacted, seeing that she herself rushed into the quarrel, because it is an indecent thing for a woman so to do”.

It will be seen that here the expression is used that the slain woman is to be compounded for “according to her nobility”; and in several of the laws of Rothari, especially the later laws, we have a similar expression : “let him be compounded for according to his computed price”. These words raise one of the most difficult questions in connection with Lombard jurisprudence. In most of these barbarian codes, as is well known, we have a nicely graduated table of social distinctions, with corresponding varieties in the *weregild* paid for each. Thus according to the Alamannic Code, the life of a member of the most noble class (*Priorissimus Alamannu*) is appraised at 240 solidi; of the middle class of nobility (*medianus Alamannus*) at 200 solidi; of the *minoflidis*, or simple free man, at 160 solidi. Among the Salian Franks the murderer of an *antrustion* or *grafion* (men belonging to the two highest classes of nobility) had to pay 600 solidi; of a *sagiharon* or legal assessor of the court 600 or 300 solidi, according to his rank; and of a Roman *conviva regis* (king's guest) 300 solidi. Among the Ripuarian Franks the *weregild* of a bishop was 900 solidi; of a priest 600; of a deacon 500; of a sub-deacon 400; and so in several other instances. Now these words, “according to her nobility”, and “as he shall have been appraised”, clearly point to some such gradations of *guidrigild* among the Lombards also, but it is not easy to find it in the Code. We have, it is true, the distinction between the compositions for a free man, an *Aldius*, and a slave, but there the differentiation apparently ends. What is the reason of this strange silence? An Italian commentator, whose main thesis is the utter subjugation and servitude of the Romans under the Lombard yoke, maintains that the silence was intentional, and veiled one of the state secrets (*arcana imperii*) of the conquerors. He calls that secret the *variable guidrigild*, and asserts that the composition to be paid for a slain Lombard noble being written down in no code, remained hidden in the breast of the governor, and might be imposed by him according to his will. This *variable guidrigild* he asserts to have been one of the main instruments used by the conquering tribe to “keep their vanquished neighbours in a state of semi-servitude”. This theory may be true, but I

confess that I have not yet met with any adequate proof of it. To me it seems more probable, either that the tariff of composition for a slain or wounded noble has been omitted for some reason or other by the copyists of Rothari's manuscript, or that it was never inserted in the Code because it was so well known to all men that its rehearsal seemed unnecessary.

We come now at last to the conclusion of the whole matter; to the "Peroration of King Rothari", which, like the Prologue, shall be translated in full:

"We now confirm this Edict, which by God's grace we have composed after earnest study and long vigils. By the Divine favor we have persevered in our task, enquiring into and calling to remembrance the ancient laws of our fathers. Those which were not written we have nevertheless learned; and we have added to them those things which seemed to be expedient for the common welfare of all, and of our own race (in particular); acting herein with the advice and by the consent of the nobles, the judges, and all our most prosperous army; and we now order them to be written down on this parchment, with this one reservation, that all things which by the Divine clemency have been ascertained by our own accurate enquiry, or which old men have been able to remember concerning the ancient laws of the Lombards, are to be subjoined to this Edict. We add, moreover, hereto our confirmation by *gairethinx*, that this law may be firm and enduring, and that both in our own most prosperous times and in all time to come it may be kept inviolably by all our successors.

"Here ends the law which King Rothari with his noble judges has renewed".

There is, however, appended to the Edict a provision that all causes already decided shall be left undisturbed, but that any which are still in progress on that twenty-second day of November, of the second Indiction (643), shall be decided according to the provisions of the Edict. Also that no copies of the Edict are to be deemed authentic but those which are written or attested by the hand of Answald the notary.

Thus then did King Rothari, standing on a spear, or holding a spear in his hand, in the assembly of the chiefs of his nation in the palace at Pavia, solemnly confirm by the ceremony of *gairethinx* the Code which contained the laws and customs of his barbaric forefathers, with such additions as the statesmen of his kingdom, after seventy-six years of residence on the soil of Italy, deemed it advisable to append thereto. But he and they were dwelling in a land which had witnessed the birth and development through nearly a thousand years of the most comprehensive and the most scientific system of jurisprudence that the world has yet seen. The Roman Law, as codified by Justinian, was then in force at Ravenna and at Naples, as it is now, with necessary modifications, in force at New Orleans and at Batavia. Yet to this Code, one of the most splendid achievements of the human intellect, King Rothari and his peers do not refer in one line of their Edict. Their only mention of the great name of Rome, as has been already pointed out, is in that passage where an injury done to a Roman female slave is assessed at a lower rate than a similar injury to her Teutonic fellow-sufferer. And so the Lombard invaders, like children, repeat the lessons which they have learned from their forefathers of the forest, and try to fit in their barbarous law terms into the stately but terribly misused language of Latium. Throughout, Roman ideas, Roman rights, the very existence of a Roman population, are not so much menaced or invaded, as calmly ignored. The Code of Rothari, promulgated on the sacred soil of Italy, in a land which had once witnessed the promulgation of the Code, the Institutes, and the Digest of Justinian, is like the black tent of the Bedouin pitched amid the colonnades of some stately Syrian temple, whose ruined glories touch no responsive chord in the soul of the swart barbarian.

CHAPTER VI.

GRIMWALD AND CONSTANS

The central figure of Lombard history in the seventh century is (as I have already said) King Grimwald. It is true that his reign (662-671) was not a long one, but it was filled with important events, and included the most serious encounter with the power of the Eastern Empire that had been witnessed since Alboin entered Italy. Moreover, the events of his early and middle life attached a kind of romantic interest to his career which powerfully affected the imaginations of his countrymen. No name, we may safely say, except those of Alboin and Authari, was dearer to the Lombard minstrel than that of Grimwald, and if he has therefore invested him with a robe of beautiful Saga, every fold of which may not accurately correspond to the truth of history, we can easily pardon the illusion for the sake of at last finding a man who is something more than a mere name in a pedigree. Telling the tale as it is told us by Paulus, I have already related how Grimwald, son of Gisulf, duke of Friuli, was carried captive by one of the terrible Avar horsemen,—how, though little more than a child, he slew his unsuspecting captor and rejoined his flying brethren; how, after his two elder brothers had been basely assassinated at Opitergium by a treacherous Exarch, Grimwald and his brother Eadwald, disdaining to be subject to their uncle, who succeeded to the duchy of Friuli, betook themselves to the court of the old friend of their family, Arichis, duke of Benevento. It has also been told how Aio, the hypochondriac son of Arichis, after a short reign (641-642) was slain by the Slavonian invaders, and how he was succeeded by his kinsman and friend, Radwald (642-647), and he in turn by Grimwald, who reigned for fifteen years (647-662) as duke of Benevento. We have now to trace the course of events which made the fugitive prince of Friuli and the guest-friend of Benevento king in the palace at Pavia, and lord of all Lombard Italy.

Rothari, the legislator of the Lombards, died in the year 652 and was succeeded by his son RODWALD, whose short and inglorious reign (of five months and seven days) was ended by the sword or the dagger of a Lombard whose wife he had seduced. He was succeeded by ARIPERT, nephew of the great queen Theudelinda, whose family, as has been before said, was the stock from whence most of the Lombard kings were drawn throughout the seventh century. Of the reign of Aripert, which lasted nearly nine years (653-661), all that we learn is that he built, adorned, and richly endowed a church in honor of the Saviour outside the western gate of Pavia, which was called Marenca. On his death he was succeeded by his two sons, Perctarit and Godepert, who reigned, the one at Milan and the other at Pavia. It was the first time that the Lombards had tried the Frankish plan of a royal partnership; and that without the justification which might be supposed to exist in the case of the vast Frankish Empire, for the two royal cities of the Lombards were only twelve miles asunder. The experiment answered as ill with the sons of Aripert as with any of the fratricidal posterity of Clovis. Jealousies and suspicions soon arose between the two brother kings, and the discord, fanned by artful councilors on both sides, broke out into an open flame of war. Hereupon, Godepert sent Garipald, duke of Turin, to sue for the help of Grimwald, duke of Benevento, promising him the hand of his sister as a reward for his championship. But Garipald, dealing deceitfully with his master, suggested to Grimwald that he should himself strike a blow for the Lombard crown, pointing out, with some truth, that a strong, experienced and fore-seeing ruler like himself would be better for the nation of the Lombards than these weak youths who were wasting the strength of the realm by their unnatural contest. The temptation was listened to, and Grimwald,

having nominated his son Romwald to the duchy of Benevento, set forth for Pavia with a chosen band of warriors. Everywhere on the road he gathered friends and helpers for his now scarcely veiled designs on the supreme power. Transamund, count of Capua, being sent through the regions of Spoleto and Tuscany, collected a band of zealous adherents in those two duchies, with whom he met Grimwald on the Aemilian Way. So the host, with ambiguous purpose, rolled on through the valley of the Po; and when Grimwald had reached Piacenza, he sent the traitorous Garipald to announce his coming to Godepert.

“And where shall I receive him?” asked the inexperienced and misdoubting king.

“You have promised him the hand of your sister”, answered Garipald, “and cannot do less than assign him quarters in the palace. Notwithstanding, when the solemn interview takes place between you, it might be prudent to put on a coat of mail under your royal robes, for I fear that he has designs on your life”.

With similar words did the cunning deceiver poison the mind of Grimwald : “Go to the interview well armed; be vigilant; I doubt the designs of Godepert. I hear that he wears a coat of mail under his mantle”.

Accordingly, Grimwald and his followers entered the palace of Pavia, and on the next day the duke of Benevento was ushered into the hall of audience. The two men met apparently in friendly embrace, but even in the act of embracing, Grimwald felt the coat of mail under the regal mantle of his host. The dark suggestions of Garipald seemed in that moment to be verified; and, slaying that he might not be slain, he drew his sword and killed the hapless Godepert. All disguise was then thrown off, and Grimwald reigned as king in Pavia. The infant son of Godepert, named Raginpert, was conveyed away to some safe hiding-place by the trusty servants of the late king, and Grimwald, despising his tender years, made no effort to arrest him.

When Perctarit, reigning at Milan, heard the tidings of his brother’s murder, fearing that he would be the next victim, he left the country with all speed and sought refuge at the barbarous court of the Khan of the Avars. His wife Rodelinda and his little son Gunincpert fell into the hands of Grimwald, who sent them for safe-keeping to Benevento. Except for the one foul deed, the murder of Godepert, into which he was entrapped by the perfidious counsels of Garipald, the hands of Grimwald were unstained by innocent blood.

As for Garipald, the contriver of all this wickedness he did not long rejoice in the success of his schemes. He had indeed deceived his employers all round, for he had embezzled some part of the presents which he had been ordered to carry to Benevento. The discovery of this fraud would probably before long have alienated from him the new king’s favor, but more speedy vengeance overtook him. A certain dwarfish retainer of Godepert, born at Turin, burned to avenge the murder of his master. Knowing that Duke Garipald was coming on Easter Day to pray in the basilica of St. John, he hid himself in the church, climbing up above the baptistery, and holding on by his left arm to the column which supported the canopy. When the duke entered the church the little Turinese drew his sword, but kept it concealed under his robes. As soon as Garipald came under the place of his hiding, up flew the robe, out flashed the sword, wielded with all the strength of which the dwarf was capable, and the head of Garipald rolled on the pavement of St. John’s basilica. All the followers of the duke rushed upon the dwarf, and pierced him with many wounds. But the little champion died happy, for he had avenged his master.

Grimwald, now, without a rival, king of all the Lombards, took for his second wife the sister of the slain Godepert, who had been betrothed to him before he set out from Benevento. He was probably twice as old as his new queen, but he was a man who, if there had not been that stain of kindred blood upon his hands, might have won the love even of a young bride. Tall, with well-knit limbs, with bald head and full flowing beard, he was, by the admission of

all, a man of absolutely dauntless courage, and as great in counsel as in war. Secure in the affections of the Northern Lombards, he sent back the mass of his Beneventan army to their homes, enriched by great gifts, but retained a few of the leaders at his court, endowing them with large possessions.

But though Grimwald was not by nature cruel or suspicious, the thought of the exile Perctarit could not but sometimes threaten the solidity of his throne. He sent an embassy to the Khan of the Avars, offering him a *modius* full of golden coins if he would surrender the fugitive into his hands. But the barbarian, who had sworn by his idol to Perctarit that he would never abandon him to his foes, replied, "Without doubt the gods would slay me if I sacrifice this man whom I have sworn in their presence to protect".

Another embassy came, not this time offering gold, but warning the Khan that the peace which had now long time subsisted between the Avars and the Lombards would not endure unless Perctarit departed from his borders. Evidently the Avars were weaker or the Lombards stronger, than in the day when Grimwald's own home was ravaged, and himself all but carried into captivity by these terrible barbarians from the Danube. And now the Khan, while still faithful to the oath which he had sworn in the presence of his idol, and refusing to surrender Perctarit to his foes, appealed to the generosity of his guest to go whither he would, but not to involve him in war with the Lombards. Thus adjured, Perctarit determined to return to Italy, and throw himself on the clemency of the new king, for all men said that Grimwald was merciful. Having arrived at Lodi, he sent forward a faithful henchman named Unulf, who announced to Grimwald Perctarit's approaching arrival, and received an assurance that since he thus trusted to the king's honor, he should suffer no harm. When admitted to the royal presence Perctarit sought to throw himself at Grimwald's feet, but was gently restrained from that humiliation, and received the kiss of peace. Said Perctarit, "I am thy servant. Knowing thee to be most Christian and kind, I determined, instead of continuing to dwell amongst Pagans, to trust thy clemency, and come to throw myself at thy feet". The king renewed his promise, and sealed it with his accustomed oath: "By Him who gave me life, since thou hast come into mine allegiance, no harm shall happen to thee, and I will arrange that thou shalt have the means of living in comfort". He then invited the weary fugitive to rest in a spacious dwelling, ordering that all his needs should be sumptuously supplied from the public treasury. But when Perctarit reached the guest-house provided for him by the king, troops of the citizens of Pavia waited upon him to renew their old acquaintance. Whispering tongues reported these visits to Grimwald, assuring him that Perctarit was forming so large a party in the city that he would undoubtedly deprive the reigning king of his crown and life together. Again Grimwald listened to the fatal suggestion, "Slay or be slain", and forgetful of his sworn promise, began to plan the death of the innocent and unsuspecting Perctarit. The deed was to be done on the morrow, and meanwhile Perctarit was to be intoxicated that he might not perceive his danger and escape. A great banquet was prepared in Perctarit's dwelling, and was shared by many guests. Costly meats and various kinds of wine were brought from the king's table to Perctarit, and he feasted right royally. But one of his father's old servants bringing to the guest a portion from the royal table, bowed so low in salutation that his head went below the board, and then whispered, "The king has a purpose to slay you". At once Perctarit gave a sign to the butler who waited upon him to fill his silver goblet with water only. Messenger after messenger brought generous wines from the king, and Perctarit seemed to drink them eagerly, while really imbibing only water. The servants carried back to the king the tidings that Perctarit was drinking heavily, to which Grimwald coarsely replied, "Let that drunkard drink today: tomorrow he will disgorge the wine mingled with blood". Meanwhile Perctarit found means to communicate with Unulf, and tell him of the impending danger. Then Unulf sent a servant to his own house with orders to bring his bedding from thence, and spread his couch beside that of Perctarit. The guards

whom Grimwald had by this time stationed to watch the doors of Perctarit's abode saw the slave enter with the bedding, and then after the supper was ended and all the other guests departed, they saw Unulf emerge, attended apparently by a young slave, whose head and neck were covered by the bed-clothes, the counterpane and the bearskin, under the weight of which he staggered. His brutal master urged him on with blows and curses, and more than once the overloaded youth fell to the ground while trying to escape from the blows. When they came to the place where the king's sentries were posted, these naturally enquired what was the matter. "My rascal of a slave", said Unulf, "spread my couch in the chamber of that tipsy Perctarit, who has filled himself with wine, and now lies like a corpse on the floor. But I have followed his mad courses long enough. So long as my lord the king lives, I shall henceforward stay in my own house". When the guards heard this they were glad, and let Unulf and the slave (who of course was Perctarit in disguise) pass without further question. Meanwhile Perctarit's valet who was the only other person that had been left in the house, made fast the door, and all was settled for the night. But Unulf let Perctarit down by a rope from a corner of the city wall overlooking the river Ticinus, and he, meeting with some of his friends, galloped away with them on some horses which they found grazing in the meadows, and the same night reached the city of Asti which had not yet submitted to Grimwald, but still held out for the lost cause. Thence one rapid journey to Turin; and the fugitive disappeared over the ridges of the Alps into the friendly country of the Franks. "Thus", says Paulus, "did Almighty God by His merciful providence deliver an innocent man from death, and at the same time preserve from blood-guiltiness a king who really desired to do what was right".

Morning came; the guards still paced up and down before the dwelling of Perctarit; at last the messengers of the king came and knocked at the door. The valet answered from within, "Have pity on him, and let him sleep a little longer, for he is weary with his journey and is wrapped in deep slumber". The messengers returned and told their tale to the king, who at once attributed Perctarit's heavy sleep to the potations of the preceding evening. "But it is time to rouse him now, and bring him to the palace", said the king. The messengers returned, knocked louder at the door, and were again entreated by the valet to let his master sleep a little longer. "The drunkard has slept long enough", said they in a rage, kicked open the door of the chamber, and rushed to the bedside. Finding no Perctarit there, and having hunted for him all over the house, they asked the valet what had become of his master. "He has fled", said the servant, who saw that further evasion was impossible. In their fury they seized him by the hair, and with many blows they dragged him into the presence of the king, clamoring loudly for his death as an accomplice in the flight of Perctarit. But the king ordered them to loosen their hold of the prisoner, and commanded him to tell the whole story of the escape. When the tale was ended, Grimwald said to the bystanders, "What think you ought to be done to the man who has wrought such a deed as this?". They all with one voice exclaimed that killing was not enough for him, but he ought to be put to death with many torments. "By Him who gave me life", said Grimwald, "the man is worthy of great honor who feared not to expose himself to death for the sake of his master. Let him be taken into my service as a valet". And with that he promised him great gifts, exhorting him to render to himself the same faithful service that he had rendered to his late lord. Unulf, for whom the king then enquired, had taken refuge in the church of St. Michael, but, receiving the royal promise of his safety, came forth, entered the palace, and threw himself at the feet of the king. From him, too, Grimwald would fain learn the whole story of the escape, and when he heard it he greatly commended his prudence and fidelity, and issued an order that he should be left undisturbed in the possession of all his property. After some time had elapsed, the king asked Unulf whether he now ever regretted not being with Perctarit, to which he answered with a solemn oath that he would rather die with Perctarit than live anywhere else in uttermost delights. The valet gave the same answer when asked whether

he would rather be with the king in his palace or with his late master in his wanderings. Their words met with a kindly reception from Grimwald, who praised their loyalty to their lord, and bade Unulf take from his palace what he would, slaves or horses or household furniture, and hasten to the master of his choice. The valet, too, received the same gracious dismissal, and with the help of the king's safe-conduct, and loaded with his generous presents, they entered France, and were again with their beloved Perctarit.

It may possibly have been the flight of Perctarit into Frankish territory that disturbed the peaceful relations of the two kingdoms; but, whatever was the cause, an army of the Franks, the first that had been seen in Italy in that century, crossed the Maritime Alps, and threatened the throne of Grimwald. They were defeated by an easy stratagem, which speaks ill for the discipline to which they had been subjected. Grimwald having pitched his camp near to theirs, feigned panic and flight, leaving his tents with all their treasures, and especially with good store of wine, open to the invaders. They came, they plundered, they drank, and at night, while they were stretched in the heavy slumber of drunkenness, Grimwald and his warriors came upon them and slew so great a multitude that few found their way back to their own land. The slaughter—battle it can hardly be called—took place at Frenchmen's River, a village not far from the walls of Asti. Thus the "walls of avenging Asta", as Claudian called them, a second time witnessed the repulse of an invader.

But a more formidable foe than the weak Merovingian king or his Mayor of the Palace was to trouble the repose of Lombard Italy. Constans II, the son of Heraclius, and the heir of his grandfather's fitful energy and of some of his grandfather's genius, conceived the idea of becoming in fact as well as in name Emperor of Rome. It will be desirable here briefly to retrace the earlier stages of his career, and at the same time to take up some dropped stitches in the history of the Popes and Exarchs during the years preceding his invasion of Italy. Constans II (or, as he is more correctly called, Constantine IV) was born in the year 631, and in 642, when only a boy of eleven, found himself by the death of his father, the dethronement of his uncle and the exile of his grandfather's widow, the ambitious and unscrupulous Martina, sole Emperor of the Romans. A military *pronunciamento* had prepared the way for his accession, but in the speech which he made to the Senate of Constantinople after the downfall of his rivals, he expressed his desire that he might have the Senators as his counselors, and judges of that which should be for the welfare of his subjects. This probably means that during the early years of his sovereignty the government was practically in the hands of a council of regency composed of the leading members of the Senate. Constans, however, grew up into a strong, self-willed man, and we may presume that while yet in early manhood he brushed aside his senatorial counselors, and governed as well as reigned. He could not wholly arrest—probably not the strongest of his Imperial predecessors could have arrested—the onrush of the children of Arabia, who wrested Armenia from the Empire, and made a temporary conquest of Cyprus and Rhodes. But he fought in person in the great naval engagement with the Saracens off the coast of Lycia, in which, though defeated and compelled to fly for his life, he seems to have inflicted enough damage on the enemy to prevent their fulfilling their intention of besieging Constantinople. Shortly afterwards came that great schism between the two rival claimants for the caliphate, Ali and Moawiyah, which still rends the Moslem world asunder, and which gave a welcome breathing-time to the hard-pressed champions of the Empire.

In ecclesiastical matters Constans II showed himself a hard-headed, unsympathetic, indifferent man of the world, determined that his Empire should not be harassed, if he could help it, by the speculative controversy which his grandfather had unwisely raised about the divine and human wills of Jesus Christ. The *Ecthesis* of his grandfather Heraclius had asserted the Monothelete doctrine, or as it is now decided to be, the Monothelete heresy, that there was but one will in the heart of the Saviour, and this doctrine had been eagerly upheld by

successive Patriarchs of Constantinople, and as eagerly denounced by successive Popes of Rome. Popes and Patriarchs were excommunicating each other—in one case, to give greater solemnity to the transaction, the Pope descended to the crypt which contained the body of St. Peter, and dipped his pen in the consecrated chalice, that he might thus write the damnation of his enemy in the blood of Christ—and all the miserable wrangle of the Monophysite controversy seemed about to be renewed with greater bitterness than ever, at a time when the very existence of Christianity and of the Empire was threatened by the swords of the followers of Mohammed. Utterly weary of the whole dispute, and sympathizing apparently neither with his Monothelete grandfather nor with his Dyothelete father, the young Emperor Constans (he was then but seventeen years of age) ordered the removal of the *Ecthesis* from the doors of the great church at Constantinople, and put forth the famous document called the *Type*, in which he attempted the impossible task of imposing silence on warring theologians. “Inspired by Almighty God”, said Constans, “we have determined to extinguish the flame of this controversy, and will not allow it any longer to prey upon the souls of men. The Sacred Scriptures, the works of the Fathers, the decrees of the Five General Councils are enough for us. Why should men seek to define beyond these? Therefore no one shall be allowed to speak of one will and one operation, or of two wills and two operations in the person of Christ. Any one transgressing this command shall, if a bishop, be deposed from his see; if a clergyman, from his clerical office; if a monk, he shall be confined, and banished from his monastery. If he holds any dignity or office, civil or military, he shall be deprived of it. If he is a nobleman, all his property shall be confiscated; if not noble, he shall not only be beaten with stripes, but further punished by perpetual banishment; that all men being restrained by the fear of God, and dreading the condign punishments with which we thus threaten them, may keep unmoved and untroubled the peace of the holy Churches of God”.

Vain hope, by decrees and banishments and chastisements to silence the subtle ecclesiastical intellect when once engaged in a war of words like that aroused by the *Ecthesis*! Bad as that Imperial document had been accounted by the See of Rome, the *impiissimus Typus* was soon discovered to be even worse. Pope Martin, who had just succeeded Theodore 653 (the excommunicator of Pyrrhus), convened a council of one hundred and five Italian bishops, who met in the Lateran palace, anathematized the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Constantinople, “the most impious *Ecthesis*, the wicked *Type* lately put forth by the most serene Emperor Constans”, and all receivers and defenders of the same.

The Pope had the Italian bishops and the general allies sentiment of the West on his side, but otherwise he stood alone against the Emperor and all the great Eastern Patriarchates. There are indications of his turning to the Frankish kings Clovis II and Sigibert II for aid, for moral at least, if not for physical support. Did he also invoke the assistance of the Arian king of the Lombards, Rothari, against the author of the *Type*, and the close confederate of the heretical Patriarch of Constantinople? This was charged against him, and in the difficult circumstances of his position it could not be imputed to him as a crime; but the meager annals of the period do not allow us to pronounce on the justice of the accusation. However, whether on religious or on political grounds a high-spirited young sovereign such as Constans II was not disposed to tolerate the insubordination of the Pope, who was still in theory only a subject of the most Serene Emperor. He sent his chamberlain Olympius as Exarch to Italy with orders to protect and cherish all bishops who accepted the *Type*, to sound the disposition of the army, and if he found it favorable, to bring Pope Martin a prisoner to Constantinople, after which display of power it was hoped that all the other bishops of Italy would readily subscribe the Imperial decree. If, however, he found the army hostile, he was to say as little as possible about the *Type*, and simply to strengthen his military hold on Ravenna and Rome. Arriving in the City with these somewhat ambiguous instructions, the new Exarch found all the bishops and clergy

of Rome enthusiastic in their defence of the Pope and their condemnation of the Monothelete doctrine. Probably also the army shared the general enthusiasm, for the Exarch renounced the perilous attempt to seize the Pope in the midst of his flock. An after generation, however, believed the improbable story that Olympius ordered the assassination of the Pope in the very act of celebrating Mass at the church of S. Maria Maggiore but that the soldier who was commissioned to do the unholy deed was struck by a supernatural blindness which prevented him from seeing Pope Martin when he was in the very act of handing the chalice to the Exarch, and thus the murder was prevented.

Whatever the truth may be as to this alleged attempt on the Pope's life, there is no doubt that Olympius completely renounced the attempt to force the Imperial *Type* on the Roman Church. A reconciliation took place between Exarch and Pope, so complete as to give some color to the charge that Olympius aimed at making himself Emperor, and that Martin countenanced him in his treason. But the next step taken by the Exarch showed no disloyalty to the Empire. He crossed over with his army into Sicily in order to combat the Saracens, whose invasions of that island (which were to be continued with more or less intermission for more than four centuries) had already begun. "For their sins", however, as we are told, the greater part of his army perished, apparently by sickness, not by the sword; and Olympius himself died also, probably a victim to the same pestilence which had ravaged his camp.

The death of Olympius enabled Constans to resume his plans for the arrest of the Pope and the forcible promulgation of the *Type*. Theodore Calliopas, who arrives in was sent a second time to Ravenna as Exarch, appeared in Rome with an army on June 15, 653. The position of affairs was not unlike that which had been seen more than a century before, when Belisarius received orders for the deportation of Pope Silverius. Now, as then, the ecclesiastical motive for the *coup d'état* and the unslumbering jealousy between the sees of Rome and Constantinople were veiled by the imputation of political crimes. Martin was accused of having corresponded with the Saracens (doubtless the Saracen invaders of Sicily), as well as of being irregularly elected, of changing the faith delivered to the saints, and of showing insufficient reverence to the Virgin Mary.

At first the Exarch temporized; professed that he desired to come and adore his Holiness, but he was wearied with his journey, and he was afraid that Pope Martin had filled the Lateran with armed men; an insinuation to which the Pope replied by inviting the Exarch's soldiers to make a visit of inspection, and see if they could find a weapon or a stone therein. The Pope, who with better reason feared violence, and who had been for eight months in weak health, had his bed placed before the altar in the Lateran Church. Thither came the soldiers of the Exarch in full armor, with swords and lances, and bows with the arrow on the string. "They there did unutterable things", says the horrified Pope; but though their conduct was doubtless indecorous, its atrocity seems somewhat diminished when we find that the only recorded detail relates to the overthrow of the candles, which fell all over the church like leaves in autumn, and the crash of the stricken candelabra, which filled the church with a noise like thunder. Desiring to prevent the effusion of Christian blood, the Pope came from his sanctuary, the people shouting as he emerged from the church, "Anathema to all who say that Martin has changed a jot or a tittle of the faith. Anathema to all who do not remain in his orthodox faith even to the death". So the Pope wended his way through the City up to the palace of the Exarch, which apparently still stood where the palace of the Caesars had stood, on the Palatine Hill. Multitudes of the clergy and laity, who declared that they would live and die with the Pontiff, on the invitation of the Exarch swarmed after him into the palace. They had hoped if he were banished that they would be allowed to share his exile, but soon after midnight on the morning of Wednesday, the 19th of June, Pope Martin, while all his adherents were kept under close

ward in the palace, was hurried on board a little ship which was lying at Portus, his only companions being six acolytes and one household servant.

On the 1st of July, the ship, slowly sailing, arrived at Misenum, but neither at Misenum nor any of the other cities of beautiful Campania (already called by the equivalent of its modern name, Terra di Lavoro), nor at any of the islands at which they touched was the exile from the Lateran palace allowed to leave the bark, which he felt to be indeed his prison. At last they reached the island of Naxos, where he was detained for more than a year, and there as a great favor he was permitted to reside in an inn in the city, and was twice or thrice indulged with the luxury of a bath. Possibly the Imperial Court hoped that if his courage were not broken as that of Vigilius had been by arrogance and insult, his sickly frame, known to be enfeebled by gout, would sink beneath the hardships which he endured. But the spirit and the bodily frame of the heroic Pope alike disappointed their expectations, and at length, on the 17th of September (654), he was brought into the harbor of Constantinople. There for ten hours on his pallet-bed on the deck of the vessel lay the venerable Pope, racked with gout, wasted by constant diarrhea, and feeling the nausea consequent on his long voyage. His adoring companions saw him thus “made a spectacle unto angels and to men”; but the populace of Constantinople, “men with wolfish faces and evil tongues”, crowded round him, crying out that he was not fit to live. At sunset a squad of guards came, who placed him in a litter, and carried him off to a prison called *Prandiaria*. For ninety-three days he languished in this dungeon, deprived of all the comforts which were now necessities to a high-bred Roman ecclesiastic. On the 19th of December (654) he was brought into the presence of the Sacellarius or Lord High Treasurer, who had summoned a meeting of the Senate for his trial. He was ordered to stand in the presence of his judges, and when the attendants pointed out that he was unable to stand, the Sacellarius thundered forth, “Then let two of you support him, one on each side, for he shall not be allowed to sit”.

The examination, which was conducted through the medium of an interpreter, for the Pope was as ignorant of Greek as his persecutors were of Latin, turned entirely on political matters. The absurd accusation of complicity with the Saracens, which only derived color from the fact that the Pope had sent money to be distributed as alms among the Sicilian poor, seems now to have been tacitly abandoned, and the only charge which was vehemently pressed against him was one of complicity with the treasonable designs of Olympius. Rough and illiterate soldiers from the Exarch’s army were brought to prove this charge; and the Pope asked in vain that they might be allowed to give their evidence unsworn, that they might not imperil their souls by perjury. The Pope began his answer to the charge against him thus :—“When the *Type* was prepared and sent to Rome by the Emperor...”— but the Prefect Troilus at once stopped him—“Do not bring in any questions about the faith. We are Romans and Christians and Orthodox. It is about the rebellion that we are examining you”. The Pope’s constant answer was that he had no power to resist the Exarch, who had the whole army of Italy at his disposal. “Was it I who made him Exarch, or you at Constantinople? But work your will upon me, and do it speedily”. After this he seems to have tried to give a long harangue, which was faithfully interpreted by an African nobleman named Innocent; but the Sacellarius roughly interrupted, “Why do you interpret what he is saying? We do not want to hear it”. With that he rose up, and all they that were with him, and going into the Emperor’s chamber announced that they were ready to pass sentence upon the Bishop of Rome.

That sentence appears to have been a capital one, for the Pope was dragged through the streets of the city with a drawn sword carried before him; but if such a sentence was pronounced it was commuted into imprisonment and exile. He was forced to stand for some time in the Hippodrome, as a spectacle to the people, the guards as before supporting him on either side, and the young Emperor looking on through the lattice-work of his banqueting-hall

at the humiliation of his great spiritual rival. Little could either persecutor or victim foresee how cruelly, more than five centuries later the indignities offered to the Roman Pope would be avenged on the Eastern Emperor by the sack of his own city of Constantinople.

The Sacellarius then came forth from the banqueting-hall and said, "See how the Lord has delivered thee into our hands. What hadst thou to hope for that thou shouldst strive against the Emperor? Thou hast abandoned the Lord, and He has abandoned thee". He ordered one of the guards to cut the strap which bound round his neck the satchel in which the Pontiff was accustomed to carry the sacred books, and then he handed him over to the Prefect, saying, "Take him, my lord Prefect, and cut him limb from limb".

Loaded with irons, with torn robes, but surrounded by a crowd not now shouting execrations, but saddened and awestruck at what was being done, the successor of St. Peter was dragged through the streets of Constantinople to the prison of Dioniede, in the Praetorian Prefect's palace. As he climbed up the steps of the prison, which were rough and steep, his swollen feet left upon them the stain of blood. He was then thrust into a cold and dreary cell, where the irons clanked upon his shivering limbs. One young ecclesiastic who had followed him, as Peter followed his Lord was permitted to share his dungeon, but the keeper of the prison was also always present, bound to the Pope by a chain, as was the custom in the case of culprits under sentence of death. There were, however, two kind-hearted women, mother and daughter, related apparently to the keepers of the prison, who succeeded in removing the chilled and exhausted Pontiff from the dungeon cell and from the continual presence of the gaoler. They carried him to their own bedroom, and laid him in a comfortable bed, where however he lay speechless till the evening. When evening came, Gregory, a eunuch and Grand Chamberlain, sent his majordomo with some scanty refreshment, who whispered words of intended comfort, "In all our tribulations we put our trust in God. Thou shalt not die". The Pope, however, who was worn out and longed for speedy martyrdom, only groaned. The heavy iron chains however were taken off from him and not again imposed.

One cause which led to some alleviation of the Pope's physical sufferings was the troubled conscience of Paul, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who had been fiercely anathematized by successive Popes, but who, being now upon his death-bed, could not endure the thought of the indignities which the remorseless Emperor was heaping on their common enemy. When Constans visited him the day after the trial, and told him what had been done, Paulus turned his face to the wall, and said with a groan, "Ah me! this too will be added to the number of my sins". At his earnest request, the capital sentence passed on the Pope was remitted by Constans, and the rigor of his confine was somewhat lessened.

Pyrrhus, Patriarch of Constantinople

To the patriarch Paul (who died December 26, 654) succeeded Pyrrhus, who, as we have seen, had once himself been a fugitive at Rome, had there renounced the Monothelete heresy, and had then returned, as the orthodox said, "like a dog to his vomit" when he found himself in the atmosphere of Monothelete Ravenna. This temporary departure from the ruling creed was however objected against him now, when he sought to recover the Patriarchal throne on which he had once before been seated. He declared that he had subscribed to the Pope's libellus (1) because he was his guest, and (2) under duress. On these two somewhat inconsistent pleas the imprisoned Pope was now examined by an Assistant-Treasurer who bore the great name of Further Demosthenes. The Court minion, when he entered the prison, said with an unworthy sneer, "Our lord the excellent Emperor has sent us to thee, saying. See in what height of glory thou once wast placed, and to what a depth thou now hast fallen. For all this thou hast only thyself to thank". To which the Pope only replied, "Glory and thanksgiving in all things to the only King, Immortal and Invisible". Demosthenes then proceeded to cross-question him about

his reception of the fugitive Patriarch Pyrrhus. “Whence did he draw his subsistence when he was in Rome?” “From the Roman Patriarchate” [the Lateran Palace]. “What was your object in thus supplying him with provisions?” “My good lord, you do not understand the ways of the Roman Church. For I tell you plainly, St. Peter does not repel any one, however poor and miserable, who comes to claim his hospitality, but gives them the whitest bread and divers kinds of wine. If then this is done even to miserable outcasts, in what guise ought we to have received one who came as the honoured bishop of the great see of Constantinople?” Then came the question as to duress, the heavy wooden chains which were said to have been fastened on the Patriarch's limbs, and the many grievous things that had been done to him. To which answered the Pontiff, “All this is utterly untrue, and there are men in Constantinople who were then in Rome, and who know how false is the accusation. There is Plato, once Exarch, who sent his messengers to Pyrrhus at Rome. Ask him, and if fear does not prevent him from speaking the truth, he will tell you. But I am in your hands. Tear me if you will, limb from limb, as the Treasurer said to the Prefect that he ought to do unto me. Work your own will upon me : but I will not communicate with the Church of Constantinople”.

After eighty-four days's confinement in the prison of Diomede, the unfortunate Pope was again put on ship-board and delivered to the mercies of the stormy Euxine. What object the guards can have had in keeping their unhappy prisoner so long exposed to the miseries of sea-sickness we know not: but it was not till May 15, two months after his embarkation, that he was permitted to land at Cherson, a place which was not the same as the modern city of Cherson, but was situated in the Crimea, then called the Tauric Chersonese. Here he languished for four months, and then died worn out by disease and hardship. From two letters which he wrote to his friends at Rome, we receive a most melancholy impression of his state during these last four months of his life. He complains bitterly of the lukewarmness and forgetfulness of his Roman friends, who wrote him no letters, and sent him no alleviations of his distress. Almost the only news which he did receive from Rome was the unwelcome intelligence that, yielding to Imperial pressure, the Roman clergy had acquiesced in his deposition, and elected another Pope, Eugenius I, as his successor. The inhabitants of the country to which Martin was exiled were, according to his accounts, barbarians and heathens, and he suffered from want not only of the comforts, but almost of the necessaries of life. His only chance of buying corn was in small quantities from vessels which came thither laden with salt from the southern shores of the Black Sea, and then he had to pay for it at the high price of one solidus for a bushel.

Pope Martin died on September 17, 655. He was buried in that wild Crimean land, and miracles, of which there had been some mention during his life, were believed to be wrought at his tomb. On the whole, he must be pronounced one of the noblest figures in the long line of Roman Pontiffs. The querulous tone of the letters of his exile contrasts somewhat unfavorably with the utterances of that other victim of Imperial persecution, St. Chrysostom. And, as I have before suggested, it is possible that there may have been some foundation for the political charges on which ostensibly his condemnation was based. But on the other hand there can be no doubt that if he had been willing to strike his flag to the Monotheletes, or to accept that arbitrary 'End of Controversy', the Type of the worldly-minded Emperor Constans, he might at once have ended his weary exile and had returned to the comforts and the splendors of the Lateran Palace. This he refused to do for conscience' sake, and he is therefore entitled to rank as one of the few martyrs who have sat in the chair of St. Peter.

Chronological notes

I must remind the reader, in returning to the course of Lombard history, that all the events with which we have been recently dealing occurred before the accession of Grimwald. Heraclius published his *Ecthesis* in 638, two years after the accession of Rothari. The *Ecthesis*

was taken down, and the *Type* was substituted for it by Constans II in 648, four years before the end of Rothari's reign. When Rothari died (in 652), Martin had been for three years Pope. Exarch Olympius died in that year, and his successor's capture of the Pope occurred in the following year, the date of Aripert's accession to the Lombard throne. Aripert during his reign must have heard of the death of Martin in exile at Cherson, of the death of his successor Eugenius (June, 657), and of the elevation of his successor Vitalian, whose long pontificate (657-672) covers the whole of the reign of Grimwald. Under the rule of this Pope the Monothelete dispute seems to have slumbered. Fairly amicable relations existed between the patriarchates of Rome and Constantinople: Vitalian, though not going as far as Honorius in acceptance of Monothelete doctrine, was apparently willing to leave the question undiscussed, and as this was the very result most desired by Constans, a politician but no theologian, there was peace and the exchange of outward courtesies between Emperor and Pontiff.

Thus we come down to 662, the year of Grimwald's accession. Towards the close of this year Constans II formed the resolution to quit for ever his capital by the Bosphorus, and to try his fortune as a re-establisher of the Empire in the Western lands. To his contemporaries, accustomed to think of the Roman Augustus as immovably settled in the East, the resolution seemed like a madman's dream. Even the virtues of this Emperor (for he had some virtues), his rough energy, his broad view of the needs of the Empire, his abhorrence of theological disputation, as well as his undoubted vices, made him unpopular with the enervated, wordy inhabitants of New Rome. Two years previously he had put to death his brother Theodosius, whom he had before forced into holy orders, and now it was said that Theodosius continually appeared to him in the visions of the night, arrayed in the dress of a deacon, and offering him the sacramental cup, saying, "Drink, my brother!" The Imperial dreamer would take the cup, see that it was filled with blood, and awake with a cry of anguish. This story, however, comes from a very late and doubtful source and perhaps attests only the animosity of Church historians against a Monothelete heretic and the persecutor of Popes. The cruel tortures inflicted on the Abbot Maximus, the great champion of orthodoxy, and two of his disciples, who were flogged, had their tongues and right hands cut off, and were banished to the inhospitable neighborhood of Poti, doubtless kindled the resentment of many of the Emperor's subjects against him. But after all it was perhaps statesmanship quite as much as passion which determined Constans to quit his native city and seek his fortune in the West. His grandfather Heraclius had come from Carthage to found his dynasty. He was himself called Emperor of Rome, yet Rome and Italy, were daily slipping from his grasp, the city to the Pope, the country to the Lombards. Constans would revive the great projects of Justinian, and be in fact as well as in name Emperor of Rome. We need not therefore believe the late and legendary story that when Constans was standing on the deck of his cutter, he turned round to look at the receding towers and domes of Constantinople, and spat at the Imperial City. Better vouched for, however, is the fact that he was obliged to take his departure alone, and that when he sent from Sicily for his wife and his three sons, the citizens (perhaps represented by the Senate) refused to allow them to depart.

Constans went first to Athens, where he apparently sojourned for some time, and then, probably in early part of 663, crossed over into Italy, landing at Tarentum. Both by his landing-place and in various other ways his expedition reminds us of that other attempt which Greece made 944 years before, under Pyrrhus king of Epirus, to conquer Italy. Like that Aeacid prince, Constans sought to ascertain by supernatural means the event of his enterprise. He asked, not the priestess at Delphi, but a certain recluse who was believed to have the spirit of prophecy. "Shall I vanquish and hold down the nation of the Lombards which now dwells in Italy?" The holy man's answer, vouchsafed after a night of prayer, was less ambiguous than the response of the oracle to Pyrrhus. "The nation of the Lombards cannot be overcome, forasmuch as a

pious queen, coming from another land, has built a basilica in their territory to the blessed John the Baptist, who therefore pleads without ceasing for that people. But the time will come when that sanctuary shall be held in contempt, and then the nation itself shall perish". The historian who records this prediction considered that he saw its fulfillment when the fall of the Lombard monarchy followed the simoniacal ordination of unworthy and adulterous ecclesiastics in the great basilica of Monza.

Undismayed by this unfavorable answer—if he ever received it—the Emperor pressed on from the region round Tarentum, where he still found subjects loyal to the Empire, and invaded the duchy of Benevento where Romwald the son of King Grimwald ruled. "The high nest of Acherontia", as Horace called it, a frontier fortress on one of the outlying buttresses of Monte Vulture, resisted all his attacks, but Luceria, "a wealthy city of Apulia", was captured, sacked and leveled with the ground. Certainly the Emperor of Rome practiced a strange method of delivering Italy. He then marched to Benevento, which he surrounded and tried hard to carry by storm. Young Romwald, sore pressed, sent his tutor Seswald to entreat his father's aid. On receipt of this message King Grimwald at once set out with a large army to the help of his son. Many of the Northern Lombards, however, deserted on the march. The jealousy or suspicion between Pavia and Benevento was too strong to be overcome even by the presence of the Roman Emperor on the soil of Italy: and the men of the northern provinces said to one another, with self-gratulations on their own superior wisdom, "The southern duke has helped himself to all that was best worth having in the palace at Pavia, and now he is going to Benevento to help his son. You will see that he will never return".

Meanwhile the Imperial army was pressing the siege of the city with all those engines of war the use of which the dexterous Greek understood so much better than the barbarian. By frequent sallies the gallant defenders inflicted grievous losses on the enemy, but the straitness of the siege was great, and day by day they looked for tidings of the approach of the Lombard king. At length they saw the messenger Seswald drawing near to the walls, but, alas! as a prisoner led by the Imperial generals. For while he was hovering near to the city seeking how he might enter, he had been captured by the enemy's scouts, who had brought him into the Emperor's presence. From him Constans learned of the near advent of Grimwald with a large army, and these tidings decided him to end the siege by all means as speedily as possible. Seswald was therefore allowed to approach the walls, having promised that he would assure the garrison that Grimwald could not help them. If he failed in this he was told that death awaited him. When the captive tutor was close to the walls, he asked to see his pupil, and as soon as Romwald came to the battlements he cried with a loud voice, "Stand firm, lord Romwald: thy father is at hand and will soon bring thee help. He is already at the river Sangro (about fifty miles from Benevento), and pitches his camp there tonight with a strong army. Have pity, I pray thee, on my wife and children, for I know that this perfidious race will not suffer me to live". As soon as he had finished his speech, the Emperor bade that they should cut off his head, and hurl it into the city from a catapult: an ungenerous revenge, and one in which a Teutonic warrior would have hardly permitted himself to indulge. The well-known features were kissed by the grateful lips of Romwald, and the head was deposited in a worthy shrine.

After all, no battle was fought under the walls of Benevento. Constans was now anxious to depart, and Romwald, whose troops were probably already suffering severely from famine, made "a bridge of gold for a retreating foe", handed over his sister Gisa to him as a hostage, and made peace on some terms, the nature of which is not recorded. Constans then started for Naples, where he was secure of a friendly reception, as that city belonged to the Empire; but on his way he was attacked by Mitola, count of Capua, at a place by the banks of the Galore (which a hundred years after was still called Pugna), and was defeated there with much

slaughter. This skirmish (for it was probably nothing more) apparently broke the truce concluded under the walls of Benevento. One of the Byzantine nobles, named Saburrus, asked the Emperor to entrust him with the command of 20,000 men with whom he made no doubt that he should vanquish the young duke of Benevento. He set forth, and pitched his camp at Forino, about twenty-five miles east of Naples, which city was now the Emperor's headquarters. When Grimwald, who had by this time joined his son, heard the tidings of the Imperial general's approach he thought to go forth also and fight with him, but with something of the spirit of a young knight of later days, Romwald begged that he, with only a portion of his father's army, might have the glory of this day's encounter. Accordingly Romwald and Saburrus with their small selected armies met on the field of battle. From four different sides sounded the trumpets of Saburrus, as the Imperial forces rushed to the fray.

But in the thick of the battle, a stalwart Lombard named Amalong, who bore "the king's wand" (probably a spear from which fluttered the royal banner), struck one of the little Greek soldiers through the body with his weapon, which he held stoutly with both hands, and lifting him from his saddle, held the spear high in air, with his victim writhing upon it. The sight of this deed so disheartened the Greeks that they turned to flight, and in that flight the army was cut to pieces. Romwald returned to his father with the glory of victory, and the boaster Saburrus brought back few of his 20,000 men to his master.

"Constans", says the Lombard historian, "seeing Rome that he could avail nothing against the Lombards, turned all his threats and all his harshness upon his own partisans, that is, the Romans". This may have been the secret reflection of the trembling clergy and citizens when the stern Monothelete Emperor came among them, but the outward signs of mutual amity were observed on the visit which Constans now paid to Rome. It was certainly a memorable event. Three hundred and seven years had elapsed since the awe-stricken Constantius gazed on the glories of yet unruined Rome : nearly two centuries since any person calling himself Emperor had stood upon the Palatine Hill : one hundred and thirty-seven years were yet to elapse ere a barbarian king was to be acclaimed with shouts of *Carolus Imperator* in the streets of Rome. Meanwhile here is this successor of Augustus, who bears by full right the title of Emperor of the Romans, but who is Greek by language, Greek by education, and who, it is to be feared, "does not hold the Catholic verity in his heart, since by that arrogant *Type* of his he forbids us even to make mention of the Two Wills in Christ. He has accomplished but little against the terrible Saracens : he has done nothing to deliver Italy from the unspeakable Lombards: we must receive him as our rightful lord, but our hearts fail us when we ask ourselves what he will do in Rome". Such were probably the feelings of Pope Vitalian and his clergy as they went forth along the Appian Way six miles from the gates of the City to meet the Emperor Constans. But his first devout behavior probably somewhat allayed their terrors. It was Wednesday, the 5th of July (663), when he entered the Eternal City, and he at once proceeded to worship at the great basilica of St. Peter, leaving there a gift upon the altar. On Saturday he went to the church of S. Maria Maggiore, and there, too, he offered his gift. On Sunday the church of St. Peter's was filled with the Greek soldiers. All the clergy went forth with due pomp of lighted tapers to meet the master of that glittering host who was present at the celebration of Mass—doubtless receiving the consecrated elements from St. Peter's successor—and again offered his gift upon the altar; this time a *pallium* stiff with gold. On the next Saturday he visited in equal state the Lateran Church, the home of the great Western patriarchate; he bathed in the porphyry font, which legend, then or at a later day, declared to have been used for the baptism of Constantine the Great, and he dined in the spacious banqueting-hall which was known as the Basilica of Vigilius. Lastly, on the second Sunday of his visit, he again attended High Mass at St. Peter's, and took a solemn farewell of Pope Vitalian on this the last day of his sojourn in Rome.

Twelve days was the length of the Emperor's visit, but his time was not wholly occupied in hearing Mass and offering gifts on the altars of the churches. Gold and silver had apparently long vanished from all places but the sacristies of the churches, but there was still much copper on the buildings and in the statues of the City. Between his visits to the basilicas the Emperor usefully employed his leisure in stripping the City of all these copper adornments, even proceeding so far as to strip off the copper tiles which covered the dome of the Pantheon, now the church of St. Mary of the Martyrs. These spoils, and much else, probably some works of art, possibly some of the treasures of the libraries, were put on shipboard and consigned to Constantinople, at which city however, as we shall shortly discover, they never arrived. It was certainly an unworthy mode of celebrating the Roman Emperor's visit to the City which gave him his title; and the abstraction of the roof of the Pantheon must have reminded Romans who knew anything of the history of their City of the similar procedure of Gaiseric and his Vandals upon the gilt roof of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. But the necessities of the Empire were great : some of its richest provinces were in the hands of the Saracens; and the robberies of Constans were probably not for himself but for the State. Had there been any blood spilled or any sacred vessels abstracted during the Imperial visit to Rome, we should assuredly have heard of such atrocities. Upon the whole, we may presume that when, on the 17th of July, Constans finally turned his back on the Imperial City, Pontiff and people alike congratulated themselves that they had not suffered greater evils at the hands of their stern sovereign.

From Rome he went to Naples, and from Naples by land to Reggio. He must have remained some weeks in Southern Italy, for it was in September (if not later) that he crossed over from Reggio into Sicily. He remained in that island for five years, 663-668, making Syracuse his headquarters. The object of this long sojourn in Sicily evidently was that he might use it as his base of operations against the Saracens, who were overrunning the provinces of Northern Africa. He did indeed temporarily recover Carthage, but this success was counterbalanced by a severe defeat which his troops sustained at Tripoli. In Sicily as elsewhere he showed himself grasping and impecunious. The cultivators of Sicily and Sardinia, of Calabria and of the province of Africa, long remembered the oppressive procedure of the tax-gatherers of Constans. So inexorable were their demands that, to satisfy them, husbands were sold into slavery away from their wives, and children from their parents, and, under this intolerable tyranny, life seemed not worth the living. Now too, if we may believe the papal biographer, who writes in great bitterness of spirit against the Monothelete Emperor, Constans exceeded even his Roman exploits by his sacrilegious spoliation of the churches. All over the two islands, and the two provinces which have been named, sacred vessels and other precious ornaments dedicated to the worship of the sanctuary were carried off by the command of the Emperor and by the avarice of the Greeks

At length the hard and oppressive reign came to an end, but that end seems to have come rather from the sudden rage of an insulted menial, than from any deep-laid popular conspiracy. One day when Constans entered the bath which was called Daphne, at Syracuse, the valet who attended him, a certain Andreas, son of Troilus, while the Emperor was scrubbing himself with Gallic soap, lifted high the box in which the soap was kept, smote his master on the head with it, and ran away. As the doors of the bath-house remained long unopened, the attendants who stood without at length burst them open, and found their master lying dead upon the floor. If there had been, as seems probable, no conspiracy, it was nevertheless easy to foresee that the existence of a conspiracy against so harsh and unpopular a monarch would be easily suspected. It was probably in order to guard themselves against the certain vengeance of the Heraclian house that the courtiers determined to raise a new Emperor to the throne. Their choice fell on a certain Armenian named Mizizius, who much against his will accepted the dangerous diadem. He had calculated the chances of success more truly than those who forced the honor upon

him. From all parts of Italy, from Istria and Campania, from Africa (the old home of the Heraclians), even from the island of Sardinia, soldiers flocked to Syracuse to suppress this ridiculous rebellion. When the young Constantine, the son of Constans, arrived in Sicily with a great fleet, he found the work already done, and the rival Emperor Mizizius slain. The pretender's head was taken to Constantinople, and with it many of the civil servants of the Empire who had taken part in the rebellion, and who, according to the cruel fashion of Byzantium, were mutilated before they were placed on board the ships which were to convey them to the place of execution.

Events such as these naturally weakened the resisting power of the Empire. We hear without surprise that the Saracens suddenly appeared with a large fleet in the Sicilian waters, entered Syracuse, made great slaughter among the people (a remnant of whom fled to fortified camps and the tops of the mountains), and then returned to Alexandria, bearing with them immense booty, including the brazen ornaments, and all the other precious things which Constans Augustus had carried off from Rome.

As for King Grimwald's daughter Gisa, whom the Emperor had borne off from Benevento as a hostage, she too was taken by him to Sicily, and died there. The way in which Paulus mentions her fate inclines us to suppose that it was in some way connected with the troubles of the Saracen invasion.

The remaining events of the reign of Grimwald may be briefly told, and all relate to three out of the four great duchies, whose history in an earlier chapter was brought down to this point. The duchy of Trient is not noticed here.

In SPOLETO, on the death of Duke Atto (663), Grimwald conferred the duchy on his old ally *Transamund*, count of Capua, to whom he was largely indebted for his success in winning the Lombard crown. Transamund, who married a daughter of Grimwald, appears to have governed the Umbrian duchy for about forty years, and his descendants, to the third generation, sat on his throne.

At BENEVENTO, young Romwald seems to have remained ever in cordial love and loyalty to his the duchy father, and we may conjecture that the kingdom and the duchy were more closely confederate together during the reign of Grimwald than at any other period of their joint existence. The chief event of the young duke's reign seems to have been the arrival of a colony of Bulgarians in Italy under their duke Alzecco, who, "with all the army of his duchy", came to King Grimwald, and promised faithful service on condition of being allowed to reside in his land. Him Grimwald passed on to his son, desiring the latter to provide suitable habitations for him and his people. They were heartily welcomed by the young duke, who assigned to them for their residence a spacious region to the north of his capital, which had lain desert until that time, and which included the cities of Bovianum, Sepinum, and Aesernia. The fact that this broad reach of territory (situated, it is true, among the highlands of Samnium) should have remained desert till these Bulgarians from the Danube country came to occupy it, tells its own sad story of the desolation of Italy. The Bulgarian Alzecco coming thus into the territory of Duke Romwald, in a relation which in a later century would have been described as that of vassalage, had to forego the title of duke which he had hitherto borne, and be content with that of *gastald*, a title which, as we shall hereafter see, expressed more of personal dependence on the sovereign than the title of duke. Even down to the days of Paulus, that is, for a full century after the settlement, though the descendants of these settlers had learned the Latin tongue, the rude Bulgarian speech was still heard in these cities and villages round the skirts of Monte Matese.

Meanwhile in the duchy of FRIULI, the old home of Grimwald, disastrous events were occurring. Grasulf, Grimwald's uncle, after apparently a long reign, had been succeeded by

Ago, of whom Paulus has only to tell us that a certain house called *Domus Agonis* was still visible at Forum Julii.

Duke *Ago* was followed by *Lupus*, an ambitious Duke and untrustworthy man. Instigated possibly by the patriarch of Aquileia, he led a band of horsemen by a highway cast up in old time across the sands to Grado, plundered that island city, and carried off the treasures of its church. Whether he deposited any of these treasures in the mother and rival church of Aquileia we are not informed. After this came the invasion of Italy by Constans, Romwald's cry for help to his father, Griniwald's rapid march to succor him. Before setting out the king committed his palace and all its treasures to *Lupus* of Friuli, perhaps an old Companion of his boyhood. But *Lupus* shared the general opinion of the northern Italians, that the Beneventan interloper, having once set his face towards the south, would never return to Pavia. He carried himself insolently in his delegated office; and perhaps—though this is not expressly told us—aimed at winning the kingdom for himself. When he learned that Grimwald was returning, *Lupus*, conscious of his misdeeds, retreated to his duchy of Friuli, and there openly raised the standard of rebellion.

On receipt of these evil tidings, Grimwald, unwilling to stir up a civil war between Lombards and Lombards, resorted to the strange and desperate expedient of inviting the Avars, the savages who, fifty years before, had slain his father and ravaged his home, to come and attack the rebel duke. The Chagan came with a great army, and was met by *Lupus* apparently on the old battle-ground of Theodosius by the Cold River below the pass of the Pear-tree.

For three days *Lupus* kept the savage horde at bay, at first with brilliant success, winning decided victories, and carrying great spoil out of their camp. But each day the number of his killed and wounded soldiers rose higher and higher, and still the apparently undiminished Avar horde rolled on towards him. On the fourth day *Lupus* was slain, and the remnant of his array scarcely succeeded in saving themselves by flight.

The surviving Lombards shut themselves up in the fortified cities, while the Avars as aforetime roamed over the duchy, carrying fire and sword through the wasted land. To Grimwald's ambassadors who came with a gentle suggestion that it was now time to cease from ravage, they replied that they had won Forum Julii by their arms, and did not mean to quit it. Hereupon Grimwald saw himself compelled to assemble an army for the expulsion of the Avars from Italian soil. But according to the *saga*, he effected his purpose not by force but by guile. The Chagan's ambassadors came and feasted at his board ere all his army was yet collected, but he dressed up the same squadrons in different attire on each succeeding day, and made them defile before the eyes of the ambassadors, leading them to suppose that each day fresh reinforcements were coming to his standard. "With all these multitudes", said he, "shall I burst upon the Avars and their Chagan, unless they speedily vanish from the territory of Forum Julii". The message carried back by the deluded ambassadors struck such terror into the heart of the Chagan that he made all haste to return to his own land.

The daughter of *Lupus*, *Theuderada*, was given in marriage to Romwald of Benevento, and in her new home, as we learn from the life of St. Barbatus, she played a part like that of *Theudelinda* in winning over the still half heathen, and wholly irreligious, Lombards of Benevento to the Christian faith.

His son *Arnefrit* sought to win his father's duchy, but fled at the approach of Grimwald, and took refuge with the Slovenes of Carinthia. Afterwards seeking by the help of these barbarians to recover possession of his duchy, he was slain by a sudden onset of the men of Friuli at a place called *Nemae* (now *Nimis*), about fifteen miles northwest of *Cividale*.

As the new duke of Friuli, Grimwald appointed *Wechtari*, a native of *Vicenza*, a man who had evidently already reached middle life, and who was, we are told, "a kind man, gently ruling the people". Though *Arnefrit* was dead, his Slavonic allies still troubled the duchy, and hearing

that Duke Wechtari, of whom they stood in great awe, had gone to Pavia—doubtless in order to concert measures of defence with King Grimwald—they came with a strong body of men, and pitched their camp at a place called Broxae, not far from the capital. It happened providentially that Wechtari had on the previous evening returned from Pavia, and hearing of this insolent advance of the Slovenes, he went forth with twenty of his followers to attack them. Seeing so small a troop issue from the city, the Slovenes said with jeers, “Lo, here come the patriarch and his clergy”. But when they came to the bridge over the Natiso, on the other side of whose deep gorge the invaders had pitched their camp, Wechtari took off his helmet and showed his bald head and his well-known countenance to the foe. A despairing cry of “Wechtari! Wechtari!” ran through their ranks, and they all began to think of flight rather than of battle. Then Wechtari, perceiving their panic, charged upon them with his scanty band, and inflicted such slaughter, that out of 5000 Slovenes, few returned to tell the tale in Carinthia. So runs the *Saga* of Wechtari.

Death of Grimwald, 671.

Throughout the long life of Grimwald he seems never to have forgotten the treachery practiced by the Patrician Gregory against his brothers Taso and Cacco. The Avars, as we have seen, he could forgive, he could even welcome as allies, but the Romans never. Especially did his anger burn against the city of Opitergium, in which the foul murder was committed. Not satisfied with the partial demolition of that city which had been accomplished some twenty or thirty years before by order of Rothari, he now utterly destroyed it, and parceled out the citizens who were left in it among the three neighboring cities of Forum Julii, Ceneta, and Tarvisium (Cividale, Ceneda, and Treviso). To this day the low estate of the little town, scarcely more than a village, of Oderzo, testifies to the vengeance of the Lombard king.

Equally hard was the fate of the city on the Emilian Way, twenty miles south of Ravenna, which still, in a slightly altered form preserves its classical name of Forum Populi. Many times had its inhabitants harassed his messengers going and coming in time of peace between Pavia and Benevento. Watching his opportunity, he burst, in the days of Lent, through the unguarded passages of the Apennines, came upon the city on Easter Sunday itself, when the children were being baptized, and slew the citizens with wide and indiscriminate slaughter, not sparing even the deacons who were officiating in the baptistery, and whose blood was mingled with the water of ablution. Then he beat down the chief buildings of the city, and left therein but a very few of its former inhabitants. Certainly the Lombard, even after a century's sojourn in Italy, fell far below the Visigoth in capacity for civilization. Alaric at Pollentia well-nigh ruined his cause by his unwillingness to fight on Easter-Day, the same day which Grimwald chose for a treacherous revenge and a cruel massacre.

At length the strong, hard, self-reliant man came to a characteristic end. He had been bled, probably for some trifling ailment, by the royal surgeons, and was resting in his palace on the ninth day after the operation. A dove flew past; he longed to reach it with his arrow; he took the bow and shot, but in doing so opened again the imperfectly closed vein, and died of the ensuing hemorrhage. The suggestion that his doctors had mingled poison in their drugs seems unnecessary to explain the death of so self-willed and impetuous a convalescent. He was buried in the basilica of St. Ambrose which he himself (evidently an orthodox Catholic by profession) had reared in the royal city of Ticinum.

It should be mentioned that in July 668, in the sixth year of his reign, Grimwald made a short addition to the code of Rothari. It will not be necessary here to examine this additional code minutely. It may be sufficient to say that it shows a general disposition to uphold the prescription of thirty years, whether against a slave claiming pardon, or against a free man resisting the attempt to reduce him to slavery; that wager of battle is discouraged, and trial by

sacramentum as much as possible substituted for it; and that there are some stringent provisions against the offence, then evidently increasing, of bigamy. The law of Grimwald also imports from the Roman law the principle of representation of a father by his children in the event of his having died before the ancestor whose property is being divided. From the stress laid on this principle by Grimwald we must suppose that it had been imperfectly recognized by the tribunals of Rothari.

THE STORY OF ST. BARBATUS.

THE life of St. Barbatus, the most eminent apostle of Catholic Christianity in Southern Italy, has an important bearing on the history of the duchy of Benevento in the seventh century, and especially on the invasion of Constans; but hagiology has a character of its own, and refuses to be wrought in harmoniously with secular history, even in that picturesque and saga-like form which that history assumes in the pages of Paulus. I have decided therefore to relegate to a note the condensed narrative of the saint's life and works.

This narrative is derived from two documents published in the great Bollandist collection of the *Acta Sanctorum* under the date 19th of February. One of these lives, we are told, is extracted from an ancient codex written in *Lombard characters* belonging to the Benedictine monastery of St. John at Capua. The other, an expanded and paraphrastic copy of the first, comes from the archives of the church at Benevento. Waitz, who has edited the life of the saint in *Scriptores Rerum Langobardicarum* (M. G. H.), mentions eleven MSS., most of which he has consulted, and three of which are "litteris Beneventanis exarati". He considers that even the earlier form of the history cannot have been written before the ninth century, and follows Bethmann in rejecting as valueless the later and paraphrastic form which he attributes to the tenth or eleventh century. From some slight indications (chiefly the description of the invading Emperor as "Constantinus qui et Constans appellatur"), I should be disposed to believe that there is a foundation of contemporary tradition for the earlier document. The following is a greatly condensed translation of the Life :

Barbatus (who was born in the year 602) became famous when Grimwald held the reins of the Lombard kingdom, and his son Romwald ruled the Samnites.

The Lombards, though baptized, worshipped the image of a viper; and moreover, they devoutly paid homage in most absurd fashion to a certain "sacrilegious" tree not far from the walls of their city. From the branches of this tree was hung a piece of leather; and all those who were to take part in the ceremony, turning their backs to the tree, rode away from it at a gallop, urging on their horses with bloody spurs. Then suddenly turning round, they hurled their lances at the leather, which quivered under their strokes; and each one cut out a little piece thereof, and ate it in a superstitious manner for the good of his soul. And as they paid their vows at this place, they gave it the name *Votum*, which [says the scribe] it still bears.

All these superstitious practices greatly distressed the soul of Barbatus, who told the people that it was vain for them thus to try to serve two masters. But they, in their blind and beastlike madness, refused to abandon this equestrian form of worship, saying that it was an excellent custom, and had been handed down to them by their ancestors, whom they mentioned by name, and declared to have been the bravest warriors upon earth.

However, by his miracles, Barbatus began to soften the hearts of the rude people, who even by drinking the water in which he had washed his hands after celebration of the Mass, found themselves healed of their diseases.

Then "Constantius, who is also called Constans", desiring to restore the kingdom of Italy to his obedience, collected an innumerable multitude of ships, arrived at Tarentum, and

ravaged nearly all the cities of Apulia. He took the very wealthy city of Luceria after severe fighting, and by the labor of his robber-bands leveled it to the earth. Then he went on to Beneventum, where Romwald abode, having a few very brave Lombards with him, and the holy father Barbatus remained there with them. Terrible was the attack of Constans, who harassed the defenders with ever-fresh bands of assailants. This lasted long, but Romwald, magnanimous and unterrified, made a brave resistance, now fighting from the walls, now making a sudden sally and hasty return into the city, for he was not strong enough to fight in the open plain. Still, though he had slain many of the assailants, his own ranks were thinned, and the inhabitants began to weep and wail, thinking that they would soon be destroyed by the robber-bands of Constans. As for Romwald, he, growing weary of fighting, gave a counsel of despair to his soldiers :—"It is better for us to die in battle than to fall alive into the hands of the Greeks, and so perish ignominiously. Let us open the gates of the city, and give them the hardest battle that we can". Perceiving this discussion, St. Barbatus said, "Never let so many brave young men be given over to destruction, lest they perish everlastingly. Good were the boldness of your hearts, if your minds were not so empty, and your souls so weak". Said Romwald, "What dost thou mean by emptiness of mind, and weakness of soul? Prithee, tell us". Thereupon Barbatus, promising them the palm of victory, if they would follow his counsels, preached a long sermon against idolatry, and exhorted his hearers to the steady and serious worship of Christ

Hereupon Romwald said, "Only let us be delivered from our foes, and we will do all that thou biddest us, will make thee bishop of this place, and in all the cities under our rule will enrich thee with farms and *colonies*".

Barbatus answered, "Know for certain that Christ, to whom ye have now turned in penitence, will set you free, and the assaults of Caesar and his people shall not penetrate the streets of Beneventum, but with changed purpose they shall return to their own borders. And that thou mayest know that I am telling thee the very truth, which shall shortly come to pass, let us come together under the wall. There will I show thee the Virgin Mary, the most pious Mother of God, who has offered up her health-giving prayers to God for you, and now, having been heard, comes to your deliverance".

After public prayers and solemn litanies, and after earnest private prayer offered up by Barbatus in the Church of the Virgin, the people, with Romwald at their head, assembled at the gate which is still called Summa. Then Barbatus desired them all to bow down to the dust, for God loveth a contrite heart, and went, in conversation with Romwald, close under the wall. Then suddenly appeared the Mother of God, at sight of whom the Prince fell to the earth and lay like one dead, till the holy man lifted him from the ground and spoke words of comfort to him who had been permitted to see so great a mystery.

On the following day the besieger, who had refused to be turned from his hostile purpose by an immense weight of silver and gold and a countless quantity of pearls and precious stones, now, receiving only the sister of Romwald, turned his back on Beneventum and entered the city of Neapolis. The blessed Barbatus at once took a hatchet, and going forth to Votum, with his own hands hewed down that unutterable tree in which for so long the Lombards had wrought their deadly sacrilege: he tore up its roots and piled earth over it, so that no one thereafter should be able to say where it had stood.

And now was Barbatus solemnly chosen bishop of Beneventum. Of all the farms and *coloniae* wherewith Prince and people offered to endow him, he would receive nothing, but he consented to have the house of the Archangel Michael on Mount Garganus, and all the district that had been under the rule of the bishop of Sipontum transferred to the See of the Mother of God over which he presided.

Still Romwald and his henchmen, though in public they appeared to worship God in accordance with the teaching of Barbatus, in the secret recesses of the palace adored the image of the Viper to their souls' destruction; wherefore the man of God, with prayers and tears, besought that they might be turned from the error of their way.

Meanwhile Romwald's wife, Theuderada, had forsaken the way of error, and was worshipping Christ according to the holy canons. Often when Romwald went forth to hunt, Barbatus would come to visit her, and discourse with her concerning her husband's wickedness. In one of these interviews she, heaving a deep sigh, said, "Oh! that thou wouldest pray for him to Almighty God. I know that it is only by thine intercession that he can be brought to walk in the path of virtue".

Barbatus.—"If thou hast, as I believe, true faith in the Lord, hand over to me the Viper's image, that thy husband may be saved".

Theuderada.—"If I should do this, I know of a surety that I should die".

Barbatus.—"Remember the rewards of eternal life. Such death would not be death, but a great gain. For the faith of Christ thou shalt be withdrawn from this unstable world, and shalt attain unto that world where Christ reigneth with His saints, where shall be neither frost nor parching heat, nor poverty nor sadness, nor weariness nor envy, but all shall be joy and glory without end".

Moved by such promises she speedily brought him the image of the Viper. Having received it, the bishop at once melted it in the fire, and by the help of many goldsmiths made of it during the prince's absence a paten and chalice of great size and beauty, for the offering up of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

When all was prepared, on the sacred day of the Resurrection, Romwald, returning from hunting, was about to enter Beneventum, but Barbatus met him, and persuaded him first to come and assist in celebration of the Mass in the church of the Mother of God. This he did, receiving the communion in the golden vessels made, though he knew it not, from the image of the Viper. When all was done, the man of God approached the prince, and rebuked him sharply for tempting God by keeping the Viper's image in his palace. Should the terrible day of the Divine vengeance come, in vain would he flee to that idol for protection. Hearing these words, Romwald humbly confessed his sin, and promised to give up the image into the bishop's hands. "That thou needest not do", said the saint, "since it has already been changed into the vessels from which thou hast received the body and blood of the Lord. Thus what the Devil had prepared for thy destruction is now the instrument through which God works thy salvation".

Romwald.—"Prithee tell me, dearest father, by whose orders the idol was brought to thee".

Barbatus.—"I confess that I, speaking in much sorrow to thy wife concerning thy spiritual death, asked her for the image, and received it at her hands".

Thereat one of the bystanders burst in, saying, "If my wife had done such a thing as that, I would without a moment's delay cut off her head". But Barbatus turned to him and said: "Since thou longest to help the Devil, thou shalt be the Devil's slave". Thereupon the man was at once seized by the Devil and began to be grievously tormented by him. And that this might be a token and a warning to the Lombard nation in after times, the saint predicted that for so many generations [the biographer is not certain of the exact number] there should always be one of his descendants possessed by the Devil, a prophecy which, down to the date of the composition of the biography, had been exactly fulfilled.

Struck with terror, all the other Beneventans abandoned their superstitious practices, and were fully instructed by the man of God in the Catholic faith, which they still keep by God's favor.

Barbatus spent eighteen years and eleven months in his bishopric, and died on the eleventh day before the Kalends of March (19th of February, 682), in the eightieth year of his age.

This curious narrative, however little worthy of credence as a statement of facts, is a valuable piece of evidence as to the spiritual condition of the Lombards of South Italy in the seventh century. We may safely infer from it that conversion to Christianity was a much more gradual process in the south than in the north of Italy. Lupus of Friuli is neither saint nor hero in the pages of Paulus, but his daughter Theuderada is like another Clotilda or Theudelinda to the barbarous, half-heathen rulers of Benevento.

In another Life, contained in the *Acta Sanctorum*, that of St. Sabinus, we have a slight notice of Theuderada as a widow. After the death of her husband she ruled the Samnites in the name of her young son [Grimwald II], and during her regency a certain Spaniard named Gregory came to Spoleto in order to find the tomb of St. Sabinus, who had died more than a century before (in 566). Not finding the sepulcher there, he persuaded the Princess Theuderada to go and seek for it at Canusium. She found the tomb, and on opening it perceived that pleasant odor which often pervaded the sepulchers of the saints. She also found in it a considerable weight of gold, which the biographer thinks had been stored there in anticipation of that invasion of the barbarians which St. Sabinus had foretold. Unmindful of the commission which Gregory had given her to build a church over the saint's tomb, she carried off the gold and returned in haste to Benevento. But when she arrived at Trajan's Bridge over the Anfidus, by the judgment of God her horse slipped and fell. She was raised from the ground by her attendants, but recognized in the accident the vengeance of the saint for her forgetfulness. She hastened back to the holy man's sepulcher, built a church with all speed, raised over his body a beautiful marble altar, and made chalice and paten out of the gold found in the tomb. To the end of his life Gregory the Spaniard ministered in the church of St. Sabinus.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BAVARIAN LINE RESTORED.

PERCTARIT (672-688).

KING GRIMWALD died, leaving a grown-up son Romwald, his successor In the duchy of Benevento, and a child Garibald, the nominal king of the Lombards under the regency of his mother, the daughter of King Aripert. It was not to be expected, however, that the banished Perctarit would tamely acquiesce in his exclusion from the throne by his sister's infant son : and in fact, if the story told by Paulus be true, he appeared upon the scene even sooner than men had looked for him. One of the latest acts of Grimwald's reign had been to conclude a treaty of alliance with the king of the Franks, and a chief article of that treaty had been the exclusion of Perctarit from the Frankish realms. The hunted exile had accordingly taken ship for "the kingdom of the Saxons" (that is to say, probably the coasts of Kent), but had only proceeded a short distance on his voyage when a voice was heard from the Frankish shore, enquiring whether Perctarit was on board. Receiving an affirmative answer, the voice proceeded, "Tell him to return into his own land, since it is now the third day since Grimwald perished from the sunlight". Hearing this, Perctarit at once returned to the shore, but found no one there who could tell him anything concerning the death of Grimwald, wherefore he concluded that the voice had been that of no mortal man, but of a Divine messenger. Returning in all haste to his own land, he found the Alpine passes filled with a brilliant throng of courtiers surrounded by a great multitude of Lombards, all expecting his arrival. He marched straight to Pavia, and in the third month after the death of Grimwald was hailed as king by all the Lombards. The child Garibald was driven forth, and we hear no more of the further fortunes of him or his mother. Rodelinda, the wife of Perctarit, and Cunincpert his son, were at once sent for from Benevento. Romwald seems to have given them up without hesitation, and to have peaceably acquiesced in the reign of the restored Perctarit, whose daughter eventually married his eldest son.

For about seventeen years did "the beloved PERCTARIT" rule the Lombard state; a man of comely stature, full habit of body, gentle temper, kind and affable to all, and with a remarkable power (attested in the history of his wanderings) of attaching to himself the affections of those beneath him in station. He was a devout Catholic, and one of the first acts of his reign was to build and richly endow a convent for nuns called the "New Monastery of St. Agatha", in that part of Pavia which adjoins the walls whence he had made his memorable escape. Queen Rodelinda also built a basilica in honor of the Virgin outside the walls of Pavia, which she adorned "with many wonderful works of art", of all which unfortunately not a trace now remains.

The only exception that we can find to the generally mild character of Perctarit's rule is his treatment of the Jewish people. Like the Visigoths, the Lombards would seem to have written their adhesion to their new faith in the blood and tears of the Hebrew. We learn from the rude poem on the Synod of Pavia that Perctarit caused the Jews to be baptized, and ordered all who refused to believe to be slain with the sword.

In the eighth year of his reign Perctarit associated with himself his son Cunincpert, with whom he reigned jointly for more than eight years.

The only break in the generally peaceful and prosperous reign of Perctarit was caused by the seditious movements of Alahis, Duke of Trient, who for some years was a great troubler of

the Lombard commonwealth. This Alahis had met in battle and signally defeated the count or *gravio* of the Bavarians, who ruled Botzen and the neighboring towns. Elated by this victory he rebelled against the gentle Perctarit, shut himself up in Tridentum, and defied his sovereign. The king marched into the valley of the Adige and commenced a formal siege, but in a sudden sally Alahis broke up his camp, and compelled him to seek safety in flight. No victory after this seems to have restored the honor of the king's arms, but by the intervention of the young Cunincpert the rebel duke was induced to come in and seek to be reconciled to his lord. Not forgiveness only, but a great increase of the power of Alahis was eventually the result of this reconciliation. More than once had Perctarit decided to put him to death, but he relented, and at the earnest request of Cunincpert (who pledged himself for the future fidelity of his friend), the great and wealthy city of Brescia, full of noble Lombard families, was added to the duchy of Alahis. Even in complying with this often-urged request, Perctarit told his son that he was compassing his own ruin in thus strengthening a man who would assuredly one day seek to upset his throne.

The kings of the Bavarian line appear to have been great builders. About this time Perctarit built, "with wonderful workmanship, a great gate to the city of Pavia, which was called Palatiensis, because it adjoined the royal palace. And when, soon after, his time came to die, he was laid near the church of the Saviour which his father Aripert had builded in Pavia.

CUNINCPERT (688-700), who had already, as we have seen, ruled for some years jointly with his father, was now sole king, and his reign lasted till the end of the century. A strangely compounded character, this large-limbed muscular man, of amorous temperament, and apt to tarry too long over the wine-cup, was also apparently a devout Catholic, a friend of the rulers of the Church, an "elegant" man, and famous for his good deeds. He had married a Saxon princess named Hermelinda, probably a relative of the king of Kent, in whose dominions he had been on the point of taking refuge. Hermelinda, who had seen in the bath a young maiden of the noblest Roman ancestry, named Theodote, incautiously praised in her husband's presence her comely figure and luxuriant growth of flaxen hair, descending almost to her feet. Cunincpert listened with well dissembled eagerness, invited his wife to join him in a hunting expedition to the "City" forest in the neighborhood of Pavia, returned by night to the capital, and gratified his unhallowed passion. How long the intrigue lasted or by what means it was brought to a close we are not told, but when it was ended, he sent her to a convent at Pavia, which long after bore her name. It was apparently soon after Cunincpert's accession that that "son of wickedness", Alahis, forgetful of the great benefits which he had received from the king, forgetful of his old intercession on his behalf, and of the faith which he had sworn to observe towards him, began to plot his overthrow. Two brothers, powerful citizens of Brescia, Aldo and Grauso, and many other Lombards, entered into the plot, for which, doubtless, there was some political pretext, perhaps Cunincpert's inefficiency as a ruler, perhaps his drunken revelries, perhaps his too great devotion to the interests of the Church. Whatever the cause, Alahis entered Pavia during Cunincpert's temporary absence from his capital, and took possession of his palace and his throne. When tidings of the revolt were brought to Cunincpert, he fled without striking a blow to that "home of lost causes", the island on Lake Como, and there fortified himself against his foe.

Great was the distress among all the friends and adherents of the fugitive king, but pre-eminently among the bishops and priests of the realm, when they learned that Alahis, who was a notorious enemy of the clergy, was enthroned in the palace at Pavia. Still, desiring to be on good terms with the new ruler, Damian, the bishop of the city, sent a messenger, the deacon Thomas, a man of high repute for learning and holiness, to give him the episcopal blessing. The deacon was kept waiting for some time outside the gates of the palace; he received a coarse and insulting message from its occupant; and, when at last admitted to his presence, he

was subjected to a storm of invective which showed the deep hatred of the clerical order that burned in the heart of Alahis. That hatred was mutual, and the bishops and priests of the realm, dreading the cruelty of the new ruler, longed for the return of the banished Cunincpert.

At length the overthrow of the tyrant came from an unexpected quarter. Alahis was one day counting out his money on a table, while a little boy, son of his Brescian adherent Aldo, was playing about in the room. A golden *tremisses* fell from the table and was picked up by the boy, who brought it to Alahis. The surly-tempered tyrant, little thinking that the child would understand him, growled out, "Many of these has thy father had from me, which he shall pay me back again soon, if God will". Returning home that evening, the boy told his father all that had happened, and the strange speech of the king, by which Aldo was greatly alarmed. He sought his brother Grauso, and took counsel with him and their partisans how they might anticipate the blow, and deprive Alahis of the kingdom before he had completed his design. Accordingly they went early to the palace, and thus addressed Alahis : "Why do you think it necessary always to remain cooped up in the city? All the inhabitants are loyal to you, and that drunkard Cunincpert is so besotted that all his influence is gone. Go out hunting with your young courtiers, and we will stay here with the rest of your faithful servants, and defend this city for you. Nay more, we promise you that we will soon bring back to you the head of your enemy Cunincpert". Yielding to their persuasions, Alahis went forth to the vast forest already mentioned called the "City forest", and there passed his time in hunting and sport of various kinds. Meanwhile Aldo and Grauso journeyed in haste to the Lake of Como, took ship there, and sought Cunincpert on his island. Falling at his feet, they confessed and deplored their past transgressions against him, related the menacing words of Alahis, and explained the insidious counsel which they had given him. After weeping together and exchanging solemn oaths, they fixed a day on which Cunincpert, was to present himself at the gates of Pavia, which they promised should be opened to receive him.

All went prosperously with the loyal traitors. On the appointed day Cunincpert appeared under the walls of Pavia. All the citizens, but preeminently the bishop and his clergy, went eagerly forth to meet him. They embraced him with tears : he kissed as many of them as he could : old and young with indescribable joy sang their loud hosannas over the overthrow of the tyrant and the return of the beloved Cunincpert. Word was at the same time sent by Aldo and Grauso to Alahis that they had faithfully performed their promise, and even something more, for they had brought back to Pavia not only the head of Cunincpert, but also his whole body, and he was at that moment seated in the palace.

Gnashing his teeth with rage, and foaming out curses against Aldo and Grauso, Alahis fled from the Eastern neighborhood of Pavia, and made his way by Piacenza into the Eastern half of the Lombard kingdom, a territorial division which we now for the first time meet with under a name memorable for Italy in after centuries, and in another connection : the fateful name of AUSTRIA. It is probable that there was in this part of the kingdom an abiding feeling of discontent with the rule of the devout drunkard Cunincpert, and a general willingness to accept this stern and strenuous duke of Trient as ruler in his stead. Some cities, indeed, opposed his party. Vicenza sent out an army against him, but when that army was defeated, she was willing to become his ally. Treviso was visited by him, and by gentle or ungentle means was won over to his side. Friuli collected an army which was to have marched to the help of Cunincpert, but Alahis went to meet them as far as the bridge over the Livenza, at forty-eight Roman miles distance from Friuli. Lurking there in a forest hard by, he met each detachment as it was coming up separately, and compelled it to swear fidelity to himself, taking good care that no straggler returned to warn the oncoming troops of the ambush into which they were falling. Thus by the energetic action of Alahis the whole region of "Austria" was ranged under his banners against the lawful ruler.

It may be noticed in passing that the language of Paulus in describing these events seems to show that the cities were already acquiring some of that power of independent action which is such a marked characteristic of political life in Italy in the Middle Ages. The turbulent personality of Duke Alahis is indeed sufficiently prominent, but he is the only duke mentioned in the whole chapter. It is “the cities” of Austria that, partly by flattery, partly by force, Alahis wins over to his side. The citizens of Vicenza go forth to battle against him, but become his allies. It is the “Forojulani”, not the duke of Forum Julii that send their soldiers as they supposed to assist King Cunincpert, but really to swell the army of his rival.

Thus then were the two great divisions of the Lombard kingdom drawn up in battle array against one another on the banks of the Adda, the frontier stream. Nobly desirous to save the effusion of so much Lombard blood, Cunincpert sent a message to his rival, offering to settle the dispute between them by single combat. But for such an encounter Alahis had little inclination, and when one of his followers, a Tuscan by birth, exhorted him as a brave warrior to accept the challenge, Alahis answered, “Though Cunincpert is a stupid man, and a drunkard, he is wonderfully brave and strong. I remember how in his father’s time, when he and I were boys in the palace together, there were some rams there of unusual size, and he would take one of them, and lift him up by the wool on his back, which I could never do”. At this the Tuscan said, “If thou darest not meet Cunincpert in single combat, thou shalt not have me to help thee in thy enterprise”. And thereat he went over at once to the camp of Cunincpert, and told him all these things.

So the armies met in the plain of Coronate, and when they were now about to join battle, Seno, a deacon of the basilica of St. John the Baptist (which Queen Gundiperga had built at Pavia), fearing lest Cunincpert, whom he greatly loved, should fall in the battle, came up and begged to be allowed to don the king’s armor, and go forth and fight Alahis. “All our life”, said Seno, “hangs on your safety. If you perish in the war, that tyrant Alahis will torture us to death. Let it then be as I say, and let me wear your armor. If I fall, your cause will not have suffered; if I conquer, all the more glory to you, whose very servant has overcome Alahis”. Long time Cunincpert refused to comply with this request, but at length his soft heart was touched by the prayers and tears of all his followers, and he consented to hand over his coat of mail, his helmet, his greaves, and all his other equipments to the deacon, who being of the same build and stature, looked exactly like the king when arrayed in his armor.

Thus then the battle was joined, and hotly contested on both sides. Where Alahis saw the supposed king, thither he pressed with eager haste, thinking to end the war with one blow. And so it was that he killed Seno, whereupon he ordered the head to be struck off, that it might be carried on a pole amid the loud shouts of “God be thanked” from all the army. But when the helmet was removed for this purpose, lo! the tonsured head showed that they had killed no king, but only an ecclesiastic. Cried Alahis in fury, “Alas! we have done nothing in all this great battle, but only slain a cleric”. And with that he swore a horrible oath, that if God would grant him the victory he would fill a well with the amputated members of the clerics of Lombardy.

At first the adherents of Cunincpert were dismayed, thinking that their lord had fallen, but their hearts were cheered, and they were sure of victory, when the king, with open visor, rode round their ranks assuring them of his safety. Again the two hosts drew together for the battle, and again Cunincpert renewed his offer to settle the quarrel by single combat and spare the lives of the people. But Alahis again refused to hearken to the advice of his followers and accept the challenge; this time alleging that he saw among the standards of his rival the image of the Archangel Michael, in whose sanctuary he had sworn fidelity to Cunincpert. Then said one of his men, “In thy fright thou seest things that are not. Too late, I ween, for thee is this kind of meditation on saints’ images and broken fealty”. The trumpets sounded again for the

charge: neither side gave way to the other: a terrible slaughter was made of Lombard warriors. But at length Alahis fell, and by the help of God victory remained with Cunincpert. Great was the slaughter among the fleeing troops of Alahis, and those whom the sword spared the river Adda swept away. The men of Friuli took no share in the battle, since their unwilling oath to Alahis prevented them from fighting for Cunincpert, and they were determined not to fight against him. As soon therefore as the battle was joined, they marched off to their own homes.

The head and legs of Alahis were cut off, leaving only his trunk, a ghastly trophy: but the body of the brave deacon Seno was buried by the king's order before the gates of his own basilica of St. John. Cunincpert, now indeed a king, returned to Pavia amid the shouts and songs of triumph of his exultant followers. In aftertime he reared a monastery in honor of St. George the Martyr on the battlefield of Coronate in memory of his victory.

There is a sequel to this history of the rebellion of Alahis as told by Paulus, but the reader will judge for himself what claim it has to be accepted as history. On a certain day after the rebellion was crushed, King Cunincpert was sitting in his palace at Pavia, taking counsel with his *Marpahis* (master of the horse) how he might make away with Aldo and Grauso, aforetime confederates with Alahis. Suddenly a large fly alighted near them, at which the king struck with a knife, but only succeeded in chopping off the insect's foot. At the same time Aldo and Grauso, ignorant of any design against them, were coming towards the palace; and when they had reached the neighboring basilica of St. Romanus the Martyr, they were suddenly met by a lame man with a wooden leg, who told them that Cunincpert would slay them if they entered his presence. On hearing this they were seized with fear, and took refuge at the altar of the church. When the king heard that they were thus seeking sanctuary, he at first charged his *Marpahis* with having betrayed his confidence, but he naturally answered that, having never gone out of the king's presence, nor spoken to any one, he could not have divulged his design. Then he sent to Aldo and Grauso to ask why they were in sanctuary. They told him what they had heard, and how a one-legged messenger had brought them the warning, on which the king perceived that the fly had been in truth a malignant spirit, who had betrayed his secret counsels. On receiving his kingly word pledged for their safety, the two refugees came forth from the basilica, and were ever after reckoned among his most devoted servants. The clemency and loyalty of the "beloved" Cunincpert need not perhaps be seriously impugned for the sake of a childish legend like this.

It was probably in the early years of Cunincpert's reign that a terrible pestilence broke out among the people, and for three months, from July to September, ravaged the greater part of Italy. Each of the two capitals, Rome and Pavia, suffered terribly from its devastation. In Rome, two were often laid in one grave, the son with his father, the brother with his sister. At Pavia the ravages of the pestilence were so fearful, that the panic-stricken citizens went forth and lived on the tops of the mountains, doubtless in order to avoid the malarious air of the Po valley. In the streets and squares of the city, grass began to grow: and the terrified remnant that dwelt there had their misery enhanced by ghostly fears. To their excited vision appeared two angels, one of light and one of darkness, walking through their streets. The evil angel carried a hunting-net in his hand: and ever and anon, with the consent of the good angel, he would stop before one of the houses, and strike it with the handle of his net. According to the number of the times that he struck it, was the number of the inmates of that house carried forth next morning to burial. At length it was revealed to one of the citizens that the plague would only be stayed by erecting an altar to the martyr St. Sebastian in the basilica of St. Peter ad Vincula. The relics of the martyr were sent for from Rome, the altar was erected, and the pestilence ceased.

Notwithstanding the interruptions of war and pestilence, the court life of Pavia during the reign of Cunincpert seems to have been, in comparison with that of most of his predecessors, a

life of refinement and culture. At that court there flourished a certain renowned grammarian, or as we should say, a classical scholar, named Felix, whose memory has been preserved, owing to the fact that his nephew Flavian was the preceptor of the Lombard historian. To him, besides many other gifts, the king gave a walking stick adorned with silver and gold, which was no doubt preserved as an heirloom in his family.

It is noteworthy, as showing the increasing civilization of the Lombards under this king, that he is the first of his race whose effigy appears on a national coinage. His gold coins, obviously imitated from those of Byzantium, bear on the obverse the effigy of "Dominus Noster Cunincpert", and on the reverse a quaint representation of the Archangel Michael, that favorite patron saint of the Lombards, whose image the panic-stricken Alahis saw among the royal standards at the great battle by the Adda.

It was in the second year of the reign of Cunincpert, and doubtless before the outbreak of the rebellion, that he received the visit of a king from our own land, who not of constraint, but of his own free will, had laid aside his crown. This was Ceadwalla, king of the West Saxons, a young man in the very prime of life, who had, only four years before, won from a rival family the throne of his ancestors. In his short reign he had shown great activity after the fashion of his anarchic time, had annexed Sussex, ravaged Kent, conquered and massacred the inhabitants of the Isle of Wight, and given to two young princes of that island the crown of martyrdom. But in the attack on Kent, his brother Mul, a pattern of the Saxon virtues, generosity, courtesy, and savage courage, had been burned in a plundered house by the enraged men of Kent. Either the loss of this brother, or the satiety born of success, determined Ceadwalla to lay aside the crown, to go on pilgrimage, if possible to die. He was received with marvelous honor by King Cunincpert, whose wife was in a certain sense his countrywoman. He passed on to Rome, and was baptized on Easter Day by Pope Sergius, changing his rough name Ceadwalla for the apostolic Peter. Either the climate of Rome, the exaltation of his spirit, or the austerities which were practiced by the penitent, proved fatal. He died on the 20th of April, 689, ten days after his baptism, and an epitaph in respectable elegiacs, composed by order of the Pope, preserved to after-generations the memory of his high birth, his warlike deeds, the zeal which had brought him from the uttermost ends of the earth to visit the City of Romulus, and the devotion to the Papal See which had caused him to visit the tomb and assume the name of Peter.

Near the end of his reign Cunincpert summoned that synod at Pavia which brought about the reconciliation between the Patriarch of Aquileia and the Roman Pontiff, and closed the dreary controversy on the Three Chapters, as has been already told in tracing the history of the Istrian schism.

Cunincpert was generally on the most friendly terms with his bishops and clergy, but once it happened that John, bishop of Bergamo, a man of eminent holiness, said something at a banquet which offended him, and the king, condescending to an ignoble revenge, ordered his attendants to bring for the bishop's use a high spirited and ill-broken steed, which with a loud and angry snort generally dismounted those who dared to cross his back. To the wonder of all beholders however, as soon as the bishop had mounted him, the horse became perfectly tractable, and with a gently ambling pace bore him to his home. The king was so astonished at the miracle that he gave the horse to the bishop for his own, and ever after held him in highest honor.

The last year of the seventh century saw the end of the reign of Cunincpert. He must have died in middle life, and possibly his death may have been hastened by those deep potations which seem to have been characteristic of his race. But whatever were his faults, he had his father's power of winning the hearts of his servants. He was "the prince most beloved by all and it was amid the genuine tears of the Lombards that he was laid to rest by his father's side, near his grandfather's church of Our Lord and Saviour".

LIUTPERT (700),

the son of Cunincpert, succeeded his father, but being still only a boy, he was under the guardianship of Ansprand, a wise and noble statesman, the father of a yet more illustrious son, who was one day to shed a sunset glory over the last age of the Lombard monarchy. At this time Ansprand had little opportunity of showing his capacity for rule, for after eight months Raginpert, duke of Turin, the son of Godepert, whom Grimwald slew forty years before, a man of the same generation and about the same age as the lately deceased king, rose in rebellion against his kinsman; and marching eastwards with a strong army, met Ansprand and his ally, Rotharit, duke of Bergamo, on the plains of Novara—a name of evil omen for Italy—defeated them and won the crown, which however he was not destined long to wear.

RAGINPERT (700). ARIPERT II (701-712).

The new king died very shortly after his accession, in the same year which witnessed the death of Cunincpert. The boy-king Liutpert and his guardian Ansprand had yet a party, Rotharit and three other dukes being still confederate together. Aripert II, son of Raginpert, marched against them, defeated them in the plains near Pavia, and took the boy-king prisoner. His guardian Ansprand fled, it need hardly be said to the Insula Comacina, where he fortified himself against the expected attack of the usurper.

Rotharit meanwhile returned to Bergamo, and discarding all pretence of championing the rights of Liutpert, styled himself king of the Lombards. Aripert marched against him with a large army, took the town of Lodi, which guarded the passage of the Adda, and then besieged Bergamo. The “battering rams and other machines”, which now formed part of the warlike apparatus of the Lombards, enabled him without difficulty to make himself master of the place. Rotharit the pretender was taken prisoner : his head and his chin were shaved, and he was sent into banishment into Aripert’s own city, Turin, where not long-after he was slain. The child Liutpert was also taken prisoner, and killed by drowning in a bath.

The boy-king being thus disposed of, the faithful guardian Ansprand remained to be dealt with. An army, doubtless accompanied by something in the nature of a flotilla, was sent to the Insula Comacina. Learning its approach, and knowing himself powerless to resist it, Ansprand fled up the Splügen Pass by way of Chiavenna and Coire to Theudebert, duke of the Bavarians, who, for the sake doubtless of his loyalty to the Bavarian line, gave him for nine years shelter in his court. The island on lake Como was at once occupied by Aripert’s troops, and the town erected on it destroyed. Unable to reach the brave and faithful Ansprand, Aripert, now established in his kingdom, wreaked cruel vengeance on his family. His wife Theodarada, who had with womanish vanity boasted that she would one day be queen, had her nose and ears cut off. The like hideous mutilation was practiced on his daughter Aurona, herself apparently already a wife and a mother. Sigiprand, the eldest son, was blinded, and all the near relations of the fugitive were in one way or other tormented. Only Liutprand, the young son of Ansprand, escaped the cruel hands of the tyrant, who despised his youth, and after keeping him for some time in imprisonment, allowed him to depart for the Bavarian land, where he was received with inexpressible joy by his father.

Of the twelve years’ reign of Aripert II we have but little information, except as to the civil wars caused by his usurpation of the crown. The inhabitants of Italy saw with surprise the increasing number of Rome. Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, noble and base-born, men and women, laymen and clergy, who, moved “by the instinct of a divine love”, and also deeming that they thus secured a safer and easier passage to Paradise, braved the hardships of a long and toilsome journey, and came on pilgrimage to Rome. It was thus, during the reign of Aripert, that Coinred, king of the Mercians, grandson of that fierce old heathen Penda, came with the young

and comely Offa, prince of the East Saxons, to Rome, and there, according to Paulus, speedily obtained that death which they desired. Thus also, sixteen years later, Ine, king of Wessex, lawgiver and warrior, after a long and generally prosperous reign of thirty-seven years, forcibly admonished by his wife as to the vanity of all earthly grandeur, followed the example of his kinsman Ceadwalla, and, resigning his crown to his brother-in-law, turned his pilgrim steps towards Rome, where he died, a humbly clad but not tonsured monk.

King Aripert, however, did not greatly encourage the visits of strangers to his land. When the ambassadors of foreign nations came to his court, he would don his cheapest garments of cloth or of leather, and would set before them no costly wines, nor any other dainties, in order that the strangers might be impressed by the poverty of Italy. One might say that he remembered the manner of the invitation which, according to the *Saga*, Narses had given to his people, and was determined that no second invitation of the same kind should travel northward across the Alps.

Like the Caliph of the next century, Haroun al Raschid, Aripert would roam about by night, disguised, through the streets of the cities of his kingdom, that he might learn what sort of opinion his subjects had of him, and what manner of justice his judges administered. For he was, says Paulus, "a pious man, given to alms, and a lover of justice, in whose days there was great abundance of the fruits of the earth, but the times were barbarous".

Certainly the times were barbarous, if Aripert II was a fair representative of them. There is a taint of Byzantine cruelty in his blindings and mutilations of the kindred of his foes, of more than Byzantine, of Tartar savagery in the wide sweep of his ruthless sword. He was devout, doubtless, a great friend of the Church, as were almost all of these kinsmen of Theudelinda. We are told that he restored to the Apostolic See a large territory in the province of the Cottian Alps, which had once belonged to the Papal Patrimony, and that the epistle announcing this great concession was written in letters of gold. Admirable as are, for the most part, the judgments of character, expressed by the Lombard deacon, it is difficult not to think that in this case a gift had blinded the eyes of the wise, and that Aripert's atrocious cruelties to the family of Ansprand are condoned for the sake of the generous gifts which he, like Henry of Lancaster, bestowed on the Church which sanctioned his usurpation.

At length the long-delayed day of vengeance dawned for Ansprand. His friend Theudebert, duke of Bavaria, gave him an array, with which he invaded Italy and joined battle with Aripert. There was great slaughter on both sides, but when night fell, "it is certain" says the patriotic Paulus, "that the Bavarians had turned their backs, and the army of Aripert returned victorious to its camp". However, the Lombard victory does not seem to have been so clear to Aripert, who left the camp, and sought shelter within the walls of Pavia. This timidity gave courage to his enemies, and utterly disgusted his own soldiers. Perceiving that he had lost the affections of the army, he accepted the advice which some of his friends proffered, that he should make his escape into France. Having taken away out of the palace vaults as much gold as he thought he could carry, he set forth on his journey. It was necessary for him to swim across the river Ticino, not a broad nor very rapid stream: but the weight of the gold (which he had perhaps enclosed in a belt worn about his person) dragged him down, and he perished in the waters. Next day his body was found, and buried close to the Church of the Saviour, doubtless near the bodies of his father and grandfather. His brother Gumpert fled to France, and died there, leaving three sons, one of whom, Raginpert, was, in the time of Paulus, governor of the important city of Orleans. But no more princes of the Bavarian line reigned in Italy, where, with one slight interruption, they had borne sway for a century.

CHAPTER VIII.

STORY OF THE DUCHIES, CONTINUED.

FOLLOWING the course of the chief highway of Lombard history, we have now emerged from the seventh century and have arrived at the threshold of the reign of the greatest, and nearly the last, of the Lombard kings. But before tracing the career of Liutprand, we must turn back to consider the changes which forty years had wrought in the rulers of the subordinate Lombard states, and also in the relations of the Empire and the Papacy.

I. Duchy of Trient.

Of one turbulent duke of Trient, namely Duke Alahis, we have already heard, and have marked his attempts, his almost successful attempts, to overthrow the sovereigns who ruled at Pavia by the combined exertions of all the cities of the Lombard Austria. Apparently the forces of the Tridentine duchy were exhausted by this effort, for we hear nothing concerning the successors of Alahis in the remaining pages of Paulus Diaconus.

II. Duchy of Friuli.

The story of the duchy of Friuli, perhaps on account of the historian's own connection with that region, is much more fully told.

The brave *Wechtari* from Vicenza was succeeded in the duchy by *Landari*, and he by *Rodwald*. These to us are names and nothing more, but Rodwald during his absence from Cividale was ousted from his duchy by a certain *Ansfrit*, an inhabitant (probably a count or *gastald*) of Reunia on the banks of the Taghamento (Ragogna, about thirty miles west of Cividale). Rodwald fled into Istria, and thence by way of Ravenna (evidently at this time there were friendly relations between king and exarch) he made his way to the court of Cunincpert. Ansfrit's invasion of the duchy of Friuli had taken place without the king's sanction, and now, not content with the duchy, he aspired to the crown, and marched westward as far as Verona. There, however, he was defeated, taken prisoner, and sent to the king. According to the barbarous Byzantine fashion of the times, his eyes were blinded and he was sent into exile. For some reason or other, probably on account of his proved incapacity, Rodwald was not restored, but the government of the duchy was vested in his brother *Ado*, who, however, ruled only with the title of Caretaker [*Loci Servator*]. After he had governed for nineteen months he died, and was succeeded by *Ferdulf*, who came from Liguria in the West, a stirring chief, but somewhat feather-headed and unstable in whose occupation of the duchy a notable event occurred

The Slavs neighbors of Friuli were much given to cattle-lifting excursions across the border, by which the Lombards of the plain suffered severely. Apparently Duke Ferdulf thought that one regular war would be more tolerable than these incessant predatory inroads: or else it was, as Paulus asserts, simply from a vainglorious desire to pose as conqueror of the Slavs that he actually invited these barbarians to cross over into his duchy, and bribed certain of their leaders to support the expedition in the councils of the nation. Never was a more insane scheme devised, and the danger of it was increased by Ferdulf's want of prudence and self-control. A certain *sculdahis* or high-bailiff of the king, named Argait, a man of noble birth and great courage and capacity, had pursued the Slav depredators after one of their incursions, and had failed to capture them. "No wonder", said the hot-tempered duke, "that you who are called Argait can do no brave deed, but have let those robbers escape you" (*Arga* being the Lombard word for a coward). Thereat the *sculdahis*, in a tremendous rage at this most unjust accusation, replied, "If it please God, Duke Ferdulf, thou and I shall not depart this life before it has been

seen which of us two is the greater *Arga!*” Soon after this interchange of vulgar abuse came the tidings that the mighty army of the Slavs, whose invasion Ferdulf had so foolishly courted, was even now at hand.

They came, probably pouring down through the Predil Pass, under the steep cliffs of the Mangert, and round the buttresses of the inaccessible Terglou. Ferdulf saw them encamped at the top of a mountain, steep and difficult of access, and began to lead his Lombards round its base, that he might turn the position, which he could not scale. But then outspoke Argait: “Remember, Duke Ferdulf, that you called me an idle and useless thing, in the speech of our countrymen an *Arga*. Now may the wrath of God light upon that one of us who shall be last up that mountain, and striking at the Slavs”. With that he turned his horse’s head, and charged up the steep mountain. Stung by his taunts, and determined not to be outdone, Ferdulf followed him all the way up the craggy and pathless places. The army, thinking it shame not to follow its leader, pressed on after them. Thus was the victory given over to the Slavs, who had only to roll down stones and tree-trunks on the ascending Lombards, and needed neither arms nor valor to rid them of their foes, nearly all of whom were knocked from their horses and perished miserably.

There fell Ferdulf himself, and Argait, and all the nobles of Friuli; such a mass of brave men as might with forethought and a common purpose have done great things for their country; all sacrificed to foolish pique and an idle quarrel.

There was indeed one noble Lombard who escaped, almost by a miracle. This was Munichis, whose two sons, Peter and Ursus, long after were dukes of Friuli and Ceneda respectively. He was thrown from his horse, and one of the Slavs came upon him and tied his hands; but he, though thus manacled, contrived to wrest the slav’s lance from his right hand, to pierce him with the same, and then, all bound as he was, to scramble down the steep side of the mountain and get away in safety.

In the room of the slain Ferdulf, a certain *Corvolus* obtained the ducal dignity. Not long, however, did he rule the city of Forum Julii, for, having fallen in some way under the displeasure of the king (apparently Aripert II), he was, according to that monarch’s usual custom, deprived of his eyes, and spent the rest of his life in ignominious seclusion. This and several other indications of the same kind clearly show that these northern dukes had not attained nearly the same semi-independent position which had been achieved by their brethren of Spoleto and Benevento.

To him succeeded *Pemmo*, and here we seem to reach firmer ground, for this is the father of two well-known kings of the Lombards, and we may yet read in a church of Cividale a contemporary inscription bearing his name. The father of Pemmo was a citizen of Belluno named Billo, who having been engaged in an unsuccessful conspiracy, probably against the duke of his native place, came as an exile to Forum Julii, and spent the remainder of his days as a peaceful inhabitant of that city.

Pemmo himself, who is highly praised by Paulus as a wise and ingenious man, and one who was useful to his fatherland, must have risen early to a high position by his ability, for ancestral influence must have been altogether wanting. He probably became duke of Friuli somewhere about 705 a few years before the death of Aripert II, and held the office for about six and twenty years. The history of his fall will have to be told in connection with the reign of Liutprand, but meanwhile we may hear the story of his family life, as quaintly told by Paulus.

Pedigree of Pemmo :

BILLO of Belluno.

PEMMO — RATPERGA.

Duke of Friuli.

therefore, the strife between the royal and the ducal line, which was begun by the usurpation of Grimwald, might now be considered as ended.

After Grimwald's short reign he was succeeded by a brother, *Gisulf I*, whose name recalled the ancestral connection of his family with Friuli, and their descent from the first Gisulf, the *marpahis* of Alboin.

Gisulf's son, *Romwald II*, reigned at the same time as King Liutprand, and his story, with that of his family, will have to be told in connection with that king, whose sister he married.

Though we hear but little of the course of affairs during these years in the Samnite duchy, it is evident that Lombard power was increasing and the power of the Emperors diminishing in Southern Italy. Romwald I collected a great army with which he marched against Tarentum and Brundisium, and took those cities. "The whole of the wide region round them was made subject to his sway". This probably means that the whole of the Terra di Otranto, the vulnerable heel of Italy, passed under Lombard rule. Certainly the ill-judged expedition of Constans was well avenged by the young Lombard chief whom he thought to crush.

Romwald's son, Gisulf, pushed the border of his duchy up to the river Liris, wresting from the *Ducatus Romae* the towns of Sora, Arpinum, and Arx. It is interesting to observe that in our own day the frontier line between the States of the Church (representing the *Ducatus Romae*) and the kingdom of Naples (representing the duchy of Benevento) was so drawn as just to exclude from the former Sora, Arpino, and Rocca d'Arce.

It was during the pontificate of John VI (701-705), and possibly at the same time that these conquests were made, that Gisulf invaded Campania with a large force, burning and plundering; and arriving at the great granary of Puteoli pitched his camp there, no man resisting him. By this time he had taken an enormous number of captives, but the Pope sending some priests to him "with apostolic gifts", ransomed the captives out of his hands, and persuaded Gisulf himself to return without further ravages to his own land.

IV. Duchy of Spoleto.

Here, too, we have little more than the materials for a pedigree, as the remarkable denudation of historical materials which was previously noticed still continues.

It will be remembered that Grimwald of Benevento, in his audacious and successful attempt on the Lombard crown (661), was powerfully aided by Transamund, Count of Capua, whom he ordered to march by way of Spoleto and Tuscany to collect adherents to his cause, and that soon after his acquisition of sovereign power, he rewarded this faithful ally by bestowing on him the duchy of Spoleto, and the hand of one of his daughters.

TRANSAMUND I,

WACHILAPUS.

previously Count of Capua,

663 (?) - 703 (?).

Married a daughter of King Grimwald.

FARWALD II,

703 (?) - 724.

TRANSAMUND II,

734-739, AND 740-743.

Transamund appears to have reigned for forty years (663-703). He was succeeded by his son *Farwald II*, evidently named after the famous Duke Farwald of an earlier day, the founder of the duchy, and the conqueror of Classis. Notwithstanding the long reign of Transamund, his

son appears to have been young at his accession, and his uncle *Wachilapus* was associated with him in the dukedom.

The story of Farwald II, and his turbulent son *Transamund II*, will be related when we come to deal with the reign of Liutprand.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PAPACY AND THE EMPIRE, 663-717.

FROM the day when Constans entered Rome on his mission of devout spoliation, the fortunes of the Papacy were so closely linked, at least for a couple of generations, with those of the Empire, that we may without inconvenience consider them together. That visit of the Emperor may be considered to have been the lowest point of the humiliation both of the Bishop and the City of Rome. Vigilius and Martin had been indeed dragged away from their episcopal palace and their loyal flock, and had suffered indignities and hardships in the city by the Bosphorus; but it was surely a lower depth of degradation to stand by, as Vitalian must needs do in trembling submission, with a smile of feigned welcome on his lips, while Constans the heretic, the author of the *Type* against which the Lateran Synod had indignantly protested, alternated his visits to the basilicas with his spoliation of the monuments of Rome. It may well have been at such a time as this that some Roman noble poured forth his feelings of indignation in a short poem which was found by the industrious Muratori in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Modena, and which may be thus translated :

Rome! thou wast reared by noble hands and brave,
 But downward now thou fall'st, of slaves the slave,
 No king within thee hath for long borne sway;
 Thy name, thy glory are the Grecians' prey.
 None of thy nobles in thy courts remains,
 Thy free-born offspring till the Argive plains.
 Drawn from the world's ends is thy vulgar crowd,
 To servants' servants now thy head is bowed.
 "The New Rome"—such Byzantium's name today,
 While thou, the old Rome, seest thy walls decay.
 Well said the seer, pondering his mystic lore,
Rome's love shall fail, she shall be Rome no more.
 But for the Great Apostles' guardian might.
 Thou long ago hadst sunk in endless night.

However, from this time forward there was a steady progress on the part of the people of old Rome towards independence of their Byzantine rulers, and in this successful Struggle for freedom the Popes were the more or less avowed and conscious protagonists. The day was passing away in which it was possible for the Eastern Caesar to send a policeman to arrest the Pope and drag him off to a Byzantine prison. We shall see one Exarch after another attempt this invidious duty in obedience to his master's mandate, and one after another will fall back disheartened before the manifestations of the popular will, which in the end will take the shape of an armed and organized National Guard.

This result is the more remarkable, as the Popes who presided over the Church during the period in question were for the most part undistinguished men, generally advanced in years—this must have been the cause of their very short average tenure of the see—and with so little that was striking in their characters that even the Papal chronicler can find scarcely anything to say of them except that they "loved the clergy and people", or "gave a large donation to the

ecclesiastics and to the poor". In order not to burden the text with a multitude of names which no memory will wisely retain, I refer the reader for the Popes of the seventh century to a list at the end of this chapter and will mention here only those who took a leading part in the development of doctrine and the struggle with the Emperors.

A Sicilian ecclesiastic named Agatho, who occupied the chair of St. Peter for two years and a half (678-681), had the glory of winning a great ecclesiastical victory, and of settling the Monotheletic controversy on the terms for which Martin and all the Popes since Honorius had strenuously contended.

The young Emperor Constantine IV (668-685), whom we last met with in Sicily avenging his father's murder and who received the surname Pogonatus (bearded) from the populace of Constantinople, astonished to see their young lord returning to his home with the bushy beard of manhood, was occupied in the early years of his reign by matters too weighty to allow of his spending his time in theological controversy. For five years, 673-677, as has been already said, the great Saracen Armada hovered round the coasts of the Sea of Marmora, and the turbans of the followers of the Prophet were descried on the Bithynian shore by the defenders of Constantinople. Delivered from that pressing danger, the Emperor had leisure to consider the unhappy condition of the Church, distracted by that verbal disputation concerning the will of the Saviour for which his grandfather had unhappily given the signal. Constantine Pogonatus appears to have taken personally no decided line in this controversy, but to have been honestly anxious that the Church should decide it for herself. Four successive Patriarchs of Constantinople, generally supported by the Patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, had upheld Monothelete doctrine, and struggled for the phrase "one theandric energy". But the ecclesiastics of Constantinople probably saw that the mind of the Emperor was wavering, and that the whole West was united under the generalship of the Pope in a solid phalanx against them. It was understood that George, the new Patriarch of Constantinople, was willing to recede from the Monothelete position, and the Emperor accordingly issued an invitation to the Pope to send deputies to take part in a Conference for the restoration of peace to the Church. Pope Agatho before replying (27th March, 680) summoned a synod of Western bishops in which Monotheletism was unhesitatingly condemned, the voice of the young Church of the Anglo-Saxons, as represented by Wilfrid of York and others, being one of the loudest in defence of the two wills of Christ. Agatho thereupon dispatched three legates of his own, and three bishops as representatives of that synod, to take part in the proceedings of the Conference, which gradually assumed a more august character, and became, not a mere Conference, but the Sixth Ecumenical Council, the third of its kind held at Constantinople.

At this Council, which was held in a domed chamber of the Imperial palace, and which was therefore sometimes called *In Trullo*, 289 bishops are said to have been present, and the sittings of the Council lasted from 7th November, 680, to 16th September, 681. On the left of the Emperor sat the bishops of the West, and on his right the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch and the bishops of the East. It was soon seen which way the decision of the Council would tend. Pope Agatho's legates complained of the novel teaching of the Monothelete Patriarchs of the East. Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch, the Abdiel of Monotheletism, upon whom fell the burden of the defence of the lately dominant doctrines, undertook to prove that the dogma of "one theandric energy" was in harmony with the decisions of the Fourth and Fifth Councils, and with the teaching of Popes Leo and Vigilius. The genuineness of some of his quotations was denied, the aptness of others was disputed. George, Patriarch of Constantinople, formally announced his adhesion to the cause advocated by the Roman Pontiff. An enthusiastic priest named Polychronius, who undertook to prove the truth of Monothelete doctrine by raising a dead man to life, whispered in the ear of the corpse in vain. At length all was ready for the definition of the faith as to the Two Wills of Christ; the ratification of the

decrees of Pope Agatho and the Western Synod; the deposition of Macarius, Patriarch of Antioch, from his high office, and the formal anathema on the dead and buried upholders or condoners of Monotheletic heresy.

Among these condemned ones were included four Patriarchs of Constantinople one Patriarch of Alexandria Theodore, bishop of Pharan, and—most memorable fact of all—a man too wise and tolerant for his age, Honorius, Pope of Rome.

At this crisis of the Church's deliberations, the *Liber Pontificalis* tells us that "so great a mass of black spiders' webs fell into the midst of the people that all men marveled, because at the same hour the filth of heresy had been expelled from the Church". To the minds of men of the present day the incident would seem not so much an emblem of the extirpation of heresy, as of the nature of the dusty subtleties which seventh-century ecclesiastics, both orthodox and heterodox, were occupied in weaving out of their own narrow intellects and presumptuous souls.

Though Pope Agatho probably heard enough concerning the opening deliberations of the Sixth Council to be assured of the final triumph of his cause, he died many months before the actual decision, and the news of the triumph itself must have reached Rome during the long interval which elapsed between his death and the consecration of his successor. The relations between Rome and Constantinople continued friendly during the rest of the lifetime of Pogonatus; and Pope Benedict II (684-685) received, so it is said, a letter from the Emperor dispensing for the future with the necessity of that Imperial confirmation for which the elected pontiff had hitherto been forced to wait before his consecration could be solemnized. If such a letter, however, were actually sent, the concession seems to have been silently revoked in the following reign.

Of Constantine Pogonatus, who died in 685, we may still behold the contemporary portrait in mosaic on the walls of the solitary church of S. Apollinare in Classe (Ravenna). There he stands, with his two young brethren Heraclius and Tiberius beside him, and hands to Reparatus, the venerable Archbishop of Ravenna, a document marked PRIVILEGIUM. This document was probably meant to confer on the prelates of Ravenna, not entire independence of the Roman See, but the same kind of independence and patriarchal jurisdiction which was enjoyed by the bishops of Milan and Aquileia. It was originally given by Constans near the close of his reign, and was possibly afterward confirmed by Pogonatus and his colleagues.

The figures of the two stripling colleagues of the Emperor, Heraclius and Tiberius, suggest some melancholy thoughts as to their fate, thoughts only too much in keeping with the mournful expression so common in these venerable mosaics. Shortly after the accession of Pogonatus, in the year 669, they were declared Augusti, in obedience to the clamors of the soldiers of the Eastern Theme, who flocked to Scutari shouting, "We believe in the Trinity. We will have three Emperors". A great noble was sent to appease the mutineers, and to profess compliance with their demands. Through him Constantine invited the leaders in the movement to a friendly conference with the Senate at Constantinople, and when he had these leaders in his power he transported them to Sycae (the modern Pera) and hung them there. The two unfortunate and perhaps unwilling claimants for the Imperial dignity had their noses slit by their jealous brother, and were immured within the palace walls for the remainder of their lives. Such was the manner of man by whose nod deep questions concerning the nature of the Godhead were then decided.

Pogonatus himself had two sons, Justinian and Heraclius; and it was a mark of his friendly feeling towards the Pope that in the last year of his reign he sent some locks of their hair as a present to Rome, and this valuable offering, accompanied by an Imperial letter, was received with all fitting reverence by the Pope, the clergy, and the "army" of Rome.

Of the younger of these two princes, Heraclius, we hear nothing : perhaps he, too, like his uncles, passed his life confined within the precincts of that palace which has witnessed so many tragedies. But Justinian II, who succeeded his father in 685 and in whom the dynasty of Heraclius expired, was a man who left a bloody and ineffaceable imprint on the pages of Byzantine history. He was in all things almost the exact opposite of the great legislator whose name he bore. Justinian I was timid, cautious, and calculating. The second of that name was personally brave, but rash, and a blunderer. The first had apparently no temptation to be cruel, and carried his clemency almost to excess. The second was, at any rate in later life, and after opposition had embittered him, as savage and as brutal as an Ashantee king or a bullying schoolboy, a tiger such as Nero without Nero's artistic refinement. Lastly, Justinian I was exceptionally fortunate or extraordinarily wise in his selection of generals and counselors. His namesake seems to have suffered, not only for his own sins, but for the grievous faults and errors committed by the ministers to whom he gave his confidence.

In the year of the young Emperor's accession Pope Benedict II died, and after the short pontificate of John V there was a contest as to the choice of his successor, the clergy desiring to elect the Archpresbyter Peter, and the army favoring the claims of a certain Theodore, who came next to him on the roll of presbyters. This statement, that the army took such a prominent part in the Papal election, strikes us as something new in Roman politics, and taken in conjunction with the events which will shortly be related, perhaps points to the formation of a local force for the defence of the City, something like what in after-ages would be called a body of militia.

In this case the clergy had to meet outside the gates of the great Lateran church as the army kept guard at the doors and would not suffer them to enter. The military leaders themselves were assembled in the quaint circular church of St. Stephen. Messengers passed backwards and forwards between the parties, but neither would give way to the other, and the election seemed to be in a state of hopeless deadlock. At length the chief of the clergy met, not in the Lateran church, but in the Lateran palace and unanimously elected an old and venerable Sicilian priest named Conon to the vacant office. When the old man with his white hairs and angelic aspect was brought forth to the people, the civil magnates of the City, many of whom probably knew the calm and unworldly life which the simple-hearted old man had led, gladly acclaimed him as Pope. So, too, did the leaders of the army, in whose eyes the fact that Conon was himself a soldier's son may possibly have been some recommendation of his merits. It took some time before the rank and file of the army would abandon the cause of their candidate Theodore, but at length they too came in, and submissively greeted the new Pope, whose unanimous election was, according to the custom of that time, announced by a special mission from all the three orders to the court of the Exarch Theodore

The election of Conon had been a politic expedient for allaying domestic strife, but he was so old and in such weak health that he could scarcely officiate at the necessary ordination of priests, and after only eleven months' pontificate he died.

Again there were rival candidates and a contested election, before the long and memorable pontificate of Sergius could be begun. The Archdeacon Paschal had already, during Conon's lifetime, been intriguing with the new Exarch John Platyn in order to obtain by bribery the succession to the Papal Chair. He had a large party favoring his claims, but Theodore, now Arch-presbyter, had also still his zealous supporters among the people. The army does not appear to have conspicuously favored one candidate more than another. The Lateran palace itself was divided into two hostile fortresses, the outer portion being garrisoned by the adherents of Paschal, the inner by those of Theodore. Neither party would yield to the other: clergy, soldiers, and a great multitude of the people flocked to the Lateran palace, and debated with loud and anxious voices what should be done. At length the expedient of a third

candidate was again proposed, and obtained the concurrence of the vast majority. The person proposed was Sergius, a man of Syrian descent, whose father Tiberius had apparently emigrated from his native Antioch in consequence of the Saracen conquest, and had settled at Palermo in Sicily. The young Sergius, who came to Rome about the year 672, was a clever and industrious musician, and sang his way up through the lower orders of the Church, till in 683 he was ordained presbyter of the *titulus* (parish church) of St. Susanna, where he distinguished himself by the diligence with which he celebrated mass at the graves of the various martyrs. He was now presented to the multitude, and greeted with hearty acclamations. His followers being much the stronger party, battered down the gates of the Lateran palace, and the two candidates stood in the presence of their successful rival. The Archpresbyter Theodore at once submitted, and gave the kiss of peace to the new Pope : but Paschal stood aloof, in sullen hardness, till at length constrained and confused, he entered the hall of audience, and with his will, or against his will, saluted his new lord.

Paschal, however, though outwardly submissive, in his heart rebelled against the Syrian Pope, and continuing his intrigues with Ravenna, sent to the Exarch, promising him 100 lbs. of gold if he would seat him in the Papal chair. On this John Platyn came to Home, accompanied by the officers of his court, but not apparently at the head of an army. He came so suddenly and so quietly, that the Roman soldiery could not go forth to meet him with flags and eagles according to the usual custom when the Emperor's representative visited Rome. Finding on his arrival that all orders of men concurred in the election of Sergius, he abandoned the cause of his client Paschal, but insisted that the promised 100 lbs. of gold should be paid him by the successful candidate. Sergius naturally answered that he had never promised any such sum, nor could he at the moment pay it: but he brought forth the sacred chalices and crowns which had hung for centuries before the tomb of St. Peter, and offered to deposit them as security for the ultimate payment of the required sum. The beholders were shocked at the duress thus laid upon the Church, but the stern Byzantine persisted in his demand: the 100 lbs. of gold were somehow gathered together, the Imperial sanction to the election was given by the Exarch, and Sergius became Pope.

As for his rival Paschal, he after some time was accused of practicing strange rites of divination, was found guilty deposed from his office of archdeacon, and thrust into a monastery, where, after five years of enforced seclusion, he died, still impenitent. The new Pope, who held his office for fourteen years Sergius, (687-701), was a younger man, and probably of stronger fiber than some of his recent predecessors; and well it was for the Roman See that a strong man filled the chair of St. Peter, for another conflict with the self-willed Caesars of Byzantium was now to take place.

In the year 691 Justinian II convened another Council, not this time for the definition of doctrine, but for the reformation of discipline. The reason for so much zeal on the Emperor's part for the purification of the Church morals is not very apparent : but it has been suggested that it was part of the younger Justinian's audacious attempt to rival the fame of his great namesake. On the part of the Eastern bishops who formed the overwhelming majority of the Council, there was perhaps a desire to retrieve in some measure the undoubted victory which the West had gained in the condemnation of Monotheletism, by showing that the East, unaided, could do something to reform the discipline of the Church. The assembly, which was meant as a sort of supplement to the two preceding Councils, received the grotesque name of the Quinisextan (fifth-sixth) Council, but is more often known as the Council of the Domed Hall (*in Trullo*), a name which was derived from its place of meeting, but which applied to its immediate predecessor as much as to itself.

The canons of this Council, 102 in number, touched, as has been said, on no point of doctrine, but were entirely concerned with matters of Church discipline, such as the

punishment of ecclesiastics who played at dice, took part in the dances of the theatre, kept houses of ill-fame, lent money on usury, or without sufficient cause were absent from church on three consecutive Sundays. They showed, however (as might perhaps have been expected from the almost exclusively Oriental character of the Council), a disregard of Western usage, and of the claims of the See of Rome, which almost amounted to intentional discourtesy. By inference, if not directly, they pronounced against the Papal decision with reference to the second baptism of those who had been baptized by heretics in the Triune Name. They expressly condemned the strict Roman usage as to married presbyters, and they denounced the custom of fasting on Saturday in Lent, which had long prevailed in the Roman Church. And in a very emphatic manner the thirty-sixth canon renewed the decrees of the Second and Fourth Councils declaring “that the patriarchal throne of Constantinople should enjoy the same privileges as that of Old Rome, should in all ecclesiastical matters be entitled to the same pre-eminence, and should count as second after it”. The third place was assigned to Alexandria, the fourth to Antioch, and the fifth to Jerusalem. The decrees of this Council received the signature of the Emperor, and of the great Patriarchs of the East, but the blank which was left after the Emperor’s name for the signature of the Roman pontiff was never filled up nor has the Council *in Trullo* ever been unreservedly accepted by the Latin Church. In fact, the leaning shown by it towards toleration of a married clergy is at this day one of the points in which the “Orthodox” (Greek) differs from the “Catholic” (Latin) Church.

When the six volumes containing the decrees of the Quinisextan Council reached Rome the Pope not only refused to sign them, but forbade their publication in the churches. Thereupon Justinian in his wrath sent a messenger with orders to punish the Pope’s councilors for disobedience to the Imperial edict. The holy man John, bishop of Portus, and Boniface, a *Consiliarius* of the Apostolic See, both of whom had probably made themselves conspicuous by their opposition to the Council, were carried off to Constantinople, where we lose sight of them.

It remained only to punish the chief offender, and to drag Sergius, as Martin had been dragged away, to buffetings and hardships in prisons by the Bosphorus. With this intent Justinian sent a huge life-guardsman named Zacharias to Rome. But as he passed through Ravenna, and there, no doubt, disclosed the purport of his mission, the inhabitants of that city (already perhaps inflamed with wrath against their tyrannical and high-handed sovereign) angrily discussed the meditated outrage on the head of the Roman Church. The “army of Ravenna”—evidently now a local force, and not a band of Byzantine mercenaries—caught the flame, and determined to march to Rome. The soldiers of the Pentapolis and the surrounding districts took part eagerly in the holy war : there was but one purpose in all hearts—“We will not suffer the Pontiff of the Apostolic See to be carried to Constantinople”. Thus, when the life-guardsman Zacharias, accompanied probably by a slender retinue, reached Rome, it was not to inspire fear, but to feel it. The throng of soldiers surged round the City walls. He ordered the gates to be closed, and trembling, sought the Pontiff’s bed-chamber, beseeching him with tears to shield him from harm. The closing of the City gates only increased the fury of the soldiery. They battered down the gate of St. Peter, and rushed tumultuously to the Lateran, demanding to see Pope Sergius, who, it was rumored, had been carried off like Martin by night, and hurried on board the Byzantine vessel. The upper and lower gates of the Pope’s palace were closed and the mob shouted that they should be leveled with the ground unless they were promptly opened. Nearly mad with terror, the unhappy life-guardsman hid his huge bulk under the Pope’s bed, but Sergius soothed his fears, declaring that no harm should happen to him. Then the Pope went forth, and taking his seat in a balcony outside the Lateran, he presented himself to the people. They received him with shouts of applause : he addressed them with wise and fitting words, and calmed their tumultuous rage. But though calm, they

were still resolute; and they persisted in keeping guard at the Lateran till the hated Zacharias, with every mark of ignominy and insult, had been expelled from the City. So the affair ended. Justinian II, as we shall soon see, was in no position to avenge his outraged authority. The Imperial majesty had received its heaviest blow, and the successor of St. Peter had made his longest stride towards independent sovereignty.

The only other notable event in the long pontificate of Sergius was a Council which towards its close, and doubtless by his authority, was held at Aquileia to terminate the controversy of the Three Chapters. This Council (of which we have very little further information) was thus the counterpart, in Eastern Italy, of that which has been already described as held at Pavia by order of King Cunincpert.

Meanwhile, the Emperor was wearing out the patience of his subjects by his exactions and his cruelties. Possibly (as has been already hinted) in the first part of his reign, the blame of his unpopularity should be assigned, not so much to himself as to his ministers. Of these there were two named Stephen and Theodotus, especially odious to the people. Stephen was a Persian eunuch, who was appointed Imperial Treasurer, and distinguished himself by his zeal in raising money for that extravagant palace building, which was the passion of the two Justinians, as it has been the passion of so many later lords of Constantinople. Either because she thwarted his financial schemes, or for some other reason, the Emperor's own mother, Anastasia, incurred the eunuch's displeasure, and he had the audacity to order her to be publicly chastised like a refractory schoolboy. Theodotus was a monk, who had previously led the life of a recluse in Thrace, but was now made a logothete, apparently chief of the logothetes, and gave full scope to his imagination, no longer in devising the self-tortures of a rigid anchorite, but in planning the torture of others. Men were hung up by their wrists to high-stretched ropes, and then straw was kindled under their feet; and other punishments, which are not particularly specified, but which we are told were intolerable, were inflicted on some of the most illustrious subjects of the Emperor.

At length, after ten years of this misgovernment, the day of vengeance dawned. A certain nobleman from the highlands of Isauria, named Leontius, who had long and successfully commanded the armies of the East, had been for some cause or other detained in prison for three years by the Emperor. Then, changing his mind, the capricious tyrant decided to make him governor of Greece but ordered him to depart for his new province on the morrow of his liberation from prison. That same night he was visited by two monks, Paul and Gregory, who had, it would seem, formerly prophesied to him that he should one day wear the diadem. "Vain were all your prognostications to me of future greatness", said the melancholy man, "for now I go forth from the city, and soon my life will have a bitter end". "Not so", replied the monks; "even now, if you have courage for the enterprise, you shall win the supreme power". He listened to their counsels, hastily armed some of his servants, and went to the palace. The plea being put forward of urgent business with the Emperor, the prefect of the palace opened the door, and at once found himself bound hand and foot. Leontius and his men swarmed through the palace, opening the prison doors to all the numerous victims of Imperial tyranny who were there confined, and some of whom had been in these dark dungeons for six, or even eight years, having furnished these willing allies with arms, they then scattered themselves through the various quarters of the city, calling on all Christians to repair to the church of St. Sophia. Soon a tumultuous crowd was gathered in the baptistery of the church, and there Callinicus the Patriarch, constrained by the two monks and the other partisans of Leontius, preached a sermon to the people on the words, "This is the day that the Lord hath made : let us rejoice and be glad in it". The long-repressed hatred of the people to Justinian now burst forth in all its fury : every tongue had a curse for the fallen Emperor, and when day dawned an excited crowd assembled in the Hippodrome, calling with hoarse voices for his death. Leontius, however, mindful of

past passages of friendship between himself and the Emperor's father, now spared the son, and after mutilating him in the cruel fashion of Byzantium, by slitting his nose and cutting out his tongue sent him away to banishment at Cherson, the scene of Pope Martin's exile. The two chief instruments of his tyranny, Stephen and Theodotus, were seized by the mob without the new Emperor's orders, dragged by the feet to the Forum of the Bull, and there burned alive.

The reign of Leontius was a short one (695-698), and he does not seem to have displayed as Emperor any of that ability or courage which he had shown as general of the Eastern army. The eyes of all loyal citizens of the "Roman Republic" were at this time turned towards the province of Africa, where the city of Carthage, recovered by the valor of Belisarius from the Vandal, had just been captured by the sons of Islam. A great naval armament was fitted out under the command of the patrician John. It sailed westward, it accomplished the deliverance of the city from the Saracen yoke, and for one winter John ruled in the city of Cyprian as Roman governor. The Saracen commander, however, was not disposed to acquiesce in his defeat. He returned with a larger army, expelled the Imperial garrison, and recovered Carthage for Islam and for desolation. The great armament returned, as that of Basiliscus had done more than two centuries before, shamefaced and sore at heart to Constantinople. At Crete, the troops broke out into open mutiny against both their general and the Emperor. John was apparently deposed from the command; a naval officer named Apsimar was proclaimed Emperor: the fleet sailed to Constantinople, which was at that time being wasted by a grievous pestilence: after a short siege, the sentinels on the walls of Blachernae, the northern quarter of the city, were bribed to open the gates to the besiegers: Leontius was dethroned, and Apsimar, who took the name of Tiberius, reigned in his stead.

During the seven years' reign (698-705) of this ineffective and colorless usurper the Papal chair—with whose occupants we are now primarily concerned—again became vacant. The comparatively long and successful pontificate of Sergius came to an end, and a Greek, who took the title of John VI, was raised to the papacy.

In his short pontificate the Exarch Theophylact came by way of Sicily to Rome. By this time the mere appearance of the Exarch in the City by the Tiber seems to have been felt almost as a declaration of war. The soldiers (again evidently a kind of local militia) from all parts of Italy mustered in Rome with tumultuous clamor, determined, we are told, "to tribulate the Exarch". The Pope, however, interposed in the interests of peace and good order. He closed the gates of the City, and sending a deputation of priests to the improvised camp in which the mutineers were assembled, with wise and soothing words quelled the sedition. There were, however, certain informers whose denunciations of the citizens of Rome had furnished the Exarch with a pretext for unjust confiscations, and these men apparently had to suffer the vengeance of the people before order could be restored.

It was during the pontificate of this Pope that the previously described expedition of Gisulf I of Benevento into Campania took place, and it was John VI who, out of the treasures of the Papal See, redeemed the captives of the Samnite duke.

Another short pontificate of another John followed. The new Pope, John VII, was, like his predecessor, of Greek extraction. His father, bearing the illustrious name of Plato, had held the high office of Cura Palatii, an office which in Constantinople itself was often held by the son-in-law of the Emperor. Plato had in that capacity presided over the restoration of the old Imperial palace at Rome, which was now the ordinary residence of the Exarch's lieutenant. The future Pope was, so late as 687, administrator (rector) of the Papal patrimony along the Appian Way. His portrait in mosaic, which was formerly in the Oratory of the Virgin at St. Peter's, is still visible in the crypts of the Vatican.

The election of Pope John VII nearly coincided in time with the return of the fierce tyrant Justinian II to his capital and his throne after ten years of exile. Of his wanderings during these

ten years we have a short and graphic account in the pages of Nicephorus and Theophanes. Cherson rejected him, fearing to be embroiled for his sake with the reigning Emperor. He roamed from thence into that region in the south of Russia which—it is interesting to observe—was still called the country of the Goths. Here he threw himself on the hospitality of the Chagan of the Khazars, a fierce tribe with Hunnish affinities, who had come from beyond the Caucasus, and were settled round the shores of the Sea of Azof. The Chagan gave him his sister in marriage, and she was probably baptized on that occasion, and received the name of Theodora. With this barbarian bride the banished Emperor seems to have lived in some degree of happiness at Phanagoria by the straits of Yenikale, just opposite Kertch in the Crimea. But Tiberius, who could not “let well alone”, sent messengers to the Khazar chief offering him great gifts if he would send him the head of Justinian; still greater if he would surrender him alive. The barbarian listened to the temptation, and under pretence of providing for his brother-in-law’s safety, surrounded him with a guard, who, when they received a signal from their master—that is probably when the promised gifts were safely deposited in the Chagan’s palace—were to fall upon the exile and kill him. A woman’s love, however, foiled the treacherous scheme. Theodora learned from one of her brother’s servants what was being plotted, and warned her husband, who, summoning the Chagan’s lieutenant into his presence, overpowered his resistance, fastened a cord round his neck, and strangled him with his own hands. In the same way he disposed of the Prefect of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, apparently an officer of the Empire through whom the negotiations with the Chagan had been carried on : and then, after sending his faithful wife back to her brother’s court, he escaped to the Straits of Yenikale, where he found a fishing smack, in which he sailed round the Crimea. At Cherson he had many enemies, but he had also powerful friends, and in order to summon these he lay to at a safe distance from the city. As soon as they were on board, he again set sail, passed the lighthouse of Cherson, and reached a place called the Gates of the Dead, between the mouths of the rivers Dnieper and Dniester. Here, or soon after they had passed it, a terrible storm arose, and all on board the little craft despaired of their deliverance. Said one of the ex-Emperor’s servants to his master, “See, my lord, we are all at the point of death : make a bargain with God for your safety. Promise that if he will give you back your Empire you will not take the life of any of your foes”. Thereupon Justinian answered in fury, “If I consent to spare any one of those men, may God this moment cause the deep to swallow me”. Contrary to all expectation they escaped from the storm unhurt, and before long made the mouth of the Danube. They sailed up the stream, and Justinian dispatched one of his followers to the rude court of Terbel, king of Bulgaria. Rich gifts and the hand of the Emperor’s daughter in marriage were the promised rewards if Terbel should succeed in replacing him on his throne. The Bulgarian eagerly accepted the offer : oaths were solemnly sworn between the high contracting parties, and after spending a winter in Bulgaria, Justinian with his barbarian ally marched next spring against Constantinople.

Again the attack was directed against Blachernae, the northern end of the land wall of Constantinople, and evidently the weakest part of the fortifications. For three days the Bulgarian army lay outside the walls, Justinian vainly offering to the citizens conditions of peace, and receiving only words of insult in return. Then, accompanied by only a few of his followers, he entered the city, as Belisarius had entered Naples, by an aqueduct, and almost without fighting made himself master of that part of it in which was situated the palace of Blachernae, where he took up his abode. The complete conquest of the city probably occupied some weeks : but it was at last effected. Tiberius III, now once again known by his old name of Apsimar, left the city, and sought to flee along the coast of the Euxine to Apollonia, but was brought back in chains to Constantinople. His brother and generalissimo Heraclius, who had fought bravely in the wars against the Saracens, and all his chief officers and bodyguards were

hung from high gallows erected on the walls. For Apsimar himself yet deeper degradation was in store. His old rival Leontius, whom he had dethroned seven years before, was brought forth from the monastery to which he had consigned him, and the two fallen Emperors, bound in chains, were paraded through the fourteen regions of the city, a mark for all the scoffs and taunts of a populace ever ready to triumph over the fallen. Then it was announced that great chariot races would be exhibited in the Hippodrome. The people flocked thither, and saw the restored Emperor sitting on his lofty throne. His two rivals, still loaded with chains, had been thrown down before his chair, and each one of his purple sandals rested on the neck of a man who had dared to call himself Augustus while he yet lived. The slavish mob, who deserved to be ruled over by even such a tyrant as Justinian II, saw an opening for pious flattery of the successful cause, and shouted out, in the words of the 91st Psalm, "Thou hast trodden on the Asp and the Basilisk : the Lion and the Dragon hast thou trodden under foot". The Asp was meant to drive home the sense of his humiliation to the heart of Apsimar: the Lion was an insult for the fallen Leontius. After some hours of this humiliation they were taken to the place of public execution, and there beheaded.

The vengeance which filled the soul of Justinian while he was tossing in his skiff off the coast of Scythia enemies, had now full play. The patriarch Callinicus, who had preached the sermon on his downfall, was blinded and sent in banishment to Rome—a wholesome warning to Pope and citizens of the fate which might befall those who resisted the might of the World-Emperor—and in his place a monk named Cyrus, who had predicted the restoration of Justinian, was made Patriarch of Constantinople. Citizens and soldiers past counting perished in the reign of terror which followed. Some were sewn up in sacks and thrown into the sea. Others were, with treacherous hospitality, invited to some great repast, and as they rose up to depart were sentenced either to the gallows, or to execution by the sword. The Emperor's fury raged most wildly of all against the citizens of Cherson, who had dared to cast him forth from their midst, and had, as he considered, treacherously intrigued against him with Tiberius III. But the story of this revenge belongs to the latest years of the Imperial fiend. Our immediate business is to describe his dealings with the Pope of Rome and the citizens of Ravenna.

After the returned exile had been for a little more than a year in the possession of his recovered dignity, mindful still of his coveted glory as an ecclesiastical legislator, he sent two bishops of metropolitan rank, bearing the same Tome which had been before addressed to Pope Sergius, but bearing also a 'sacred' letter (the letters of Emperors were always thus styled), in which Justinian exhorted the Pope to convene a synod, to which he should communicate the Acts of the Quinisextan Council, confirming all the canons that seemed to him worthy of approbation, and deleting those which he deemed inexpedient. The timid Pope, John VII, probably an elderly man, who had learned habits of obedience as a civil servant before he was an ecclesiastic, and who had no doubt looked upon the sightless eyeballs of the Patriarch of Constantinople, blinded by this terrible autocrat, shrank from the responsibility of convening a synod, shrank from suggesting what canons in the Imperial Tome were deserving of censure, and in fact, through "weakness of the flesh", returned the Tome by the hands of the metropolitans to the Emperor, saying that he had no fault to find with any part of it. Soon after this unworthy concession Pope John VII died, and was succeeded by a Syrian named Sisinnius, who was, we are told, so afflicted by gout—an especially Papal malady—that he was obliged to employ the hands of others to convey food to his mouth. His short pontificate—of only twenty days—is noteworthy only for the fact that he set the lime-kilns at work to make mortar for the repair of the walls of Rome. An evil precedent truly. How many of that silent population of statues which once made beautiful the terraces of Rome have perished in these same papal lime-kilns!

The short pontificate of Sisinnius was followed by the long one of Constantine (708-715), the last Roman pontiff, apparently, who visited Constantinople. In his pontificate the ecclesiastical feud with the Archbishop of Ravenna, which had slumbered for thirty years, broke out afresh. Archbishop Theodore (677-691), whose quarrels with his clergy about money matters are quaintly described by Agnellus, had apparently reconciled himself with Rome in order to protect himself against the hatred of Ravenna; and his successor Archbishop Damian (692-708) had accepted the peace thus made, and had consented to journey to Rome for his consecration. So, too, did his successor, Archbishop Felix (708-724), but when the consecration was accomplished, the old rupture between the sees was recommenced on the question of the bonds (*cautiones*) for future obedience which the Pope exacted from the Archbishop. The profession of faith according to the decrees of the six councils, and the promise to abide by the canon law, were perhaps given in the accustomed form by the new Archbishop, but the third document required of him, which was a promise to do nothing contrary to the unity of the Church and the safety of the Empire, he claimed to express in his own language, and not in that prescribed by the Pope, and he was apparently supported in this resistance by the civil rulers of Ravenna. Such as it was, the bond was deposited in St. Peter's tomb, and not many days afterwards, says the Papal biographer it was found all blackened and scorched as if by fire. For this resistance to the authority of the Roman See, the Papal biographer considered that the Archbishop and his flock were worthily punished by the calamities which now came upon them through the furious vengeance of Justinian.

What was the reason for the frenzied Emperor's wrath against Ravenna does not seem to be anywhere stated. We might conjecture that he remembered with anger the opposition which the citizens had offered some ten years before to his arrest of Pope Sergius, but in that case Pope Constantine would surely have shared in the punishment. It seems more likely that there is some truth in the obscure hints given us by Agnellus that certain citizens of Ravenna had taken part in that mutilation of the sacred person of the Emperor which accompanied his deposition. Probably also the city had too openly manifested its joy at Justinian's downfall, and had too cordially accepted the new order of things established by Leontius, and afterwards by Apsimar. Whatever the cause, the rage of the restored Emperor turned hotly against the devoted city. "At night", says Agnellus (who perhaps exaggerates the importance of his own native place), "amid the many meditations of his heart his thoughts turned constantly to Ravenna, and he said to himself perpetually, "Alas! what shall I do, and how shall I begin with my vengeance on Ravenna?"

The actual execution of his scheme of revenge, however, seems not to have been difficult. He summoned the general-in-chief, a Patrician named Theodore, and ordered him to collect a fleet and sail first to Sicily (possibly in order to repel some assault of the Saracens), and afterwards to Ravenna, there to execute certain orders, as to which he was to preserve impenetrable silence. When his duty in Sicily was done, the general sailed up the Adriatic, and when he beheld Ravenna afar off, burst forth, if we may believe our monkish chronicler, into a pathetic oration, in which, with Virgilian phrase, he lamented the future fate of that proud city: "the alone unhappy and alone cruel Ravenna, which then lifted her head to the clouds, but should soon be leveled with the ground". Having arrived at the city, and been greeted with the pomp due to the Emperor's representative, he pitched his tents, adorned with bright curtains, in a line of a furlong's length by the banks of the Po. Thither came all the chief men of the city, invited, as they supposed, to a banquet in the open air, for which the seats and couches were spread on the green grass. But as they were introduced, two and two, with solemn courtesy into the general's tent, at the moment of entrance they were gagged, and their hands bound behind their backs, and they were hurried off to the general's ship. When the nobles of the city and the Archbishop Felix had all been thus disposed of, the soldiers entered Ravenna, and amid the

loud lamentations, but apparently not the armed resistance, of the citizens, set some of the houses on fire.

When the captives from Ravenna were landed at Constantinople they were brought into the presence of Justinian, who was seated on a golden throne studded with emeralds, and wore on his head a turban interwoven with gold and pearls by the cunning hands of his Khazar Empress. All the senators of Ravenna were slain, and Justinian had decided to put the archbishop also to death. But in the visions of the night he saw a youth of glorious appearance standing by Felix, and heard him say, "Let thy sword spare this one man". He gave the required promise in his dream, and kept it waking by remitting the penalty of death on the archbishop; but according to the cruel Byzantine custom he ordered him to be blinded. A silver dish was brought and heated to incandescence in the furnace. Vinegar was then poured upon it : the archbishop was compelled to gaze at it long and closely, and the sight of both eyes was destroyed.

The reflection of the Papal biographer on these events is as follows :—"By the judgment of God, and the sentence of Peter, prince of the Apostles, those men who had been disobedient to the apostolic see perished by a bitter death, and the archbishop, deprived of sight, receiving punishment worthy of his deeds, was transmitted to the region of Pontus".

Of the events which followed at Ravenna it is impossible to extract any rational account from the turgid nonsense of Agnellus. We can just discern that Joannes Rizocopus, apparently the newly-appointed Exarch, after visiting Naples and Rome, reached Ravenna, and there for his wicked deeds, by the just judgment of God, perished by a most shameful death. This is generally supposed, but perhaps on insufficient evidence, to have happened in a popular insurrection. On his death apparently the citizens of Ravenna elected a certain George (son of a learned notary named Johanices, who had been carried captive to Constantinople and slain there) to be captain over them. He harangued them in stirring speeches (full of Virgil), and all the cities round Ravenna, Sarsina, Cervia, Forlimpopoli, Forli, placed themselves under his orders, garrisoned the capital, and defied the troops of the Emperor. Doubtless the Insurrection was quelled, but how and when, and whether after a long interval of civil war or no, the chronicler, who gives us a multitude of useless details about the equestrian performances and spirited harangues of the rebel captain, quite fails to inform us. We learn, however (and here the better authority of the Papal biographer coincides with that of Agnellus), that after the death of Justinian the poor blinded Archbishop Felix returned from exile, resumed possession of his see, gave all the required assurances to the Pope, and died (725) at peace with the See of Rome.

Meanwhile Pope Constantine was visiting Constantinople, by the Emperor's command, in very different guise from that in which his predecessor Martin had visited it half a century before. He set sail from the harbour of Rome on the 5th of October, 710, accompanied by two bishops and a long train of ecclesiastics, among whom the future Pope Gregory II is the most interesting figured. When he arrived at Naples, he found the Exarch Joannes Rizocopus, come, if our former conjecture be correct, to take possession of his new government. Their paths crossed : Joannes went northwards to Rome, where he put to death four ministers of the Papal court—a mysterious act of severity which, unexplained, seems to contrast strangely with the diplomatic courtesies then being interchanged between Rome and Constantinople,—and then he proceeded on his way to Ravenna, where, as has been already said, a shameful death awaited him.

As for the Pope, he proceeded on his way to Sicily, where Theodore, patrician and general, the executor of Justinian's vengeance on Ravenna, met him with deep reverence, and was healed by him of a sickness which had detained him in the island. The Papal galleys then coasted round the southern cape of Italy, touching at Reggio, Cotrone, Gallipoli (where Bishop Nicetas died), and at last arrived at Otranto, where they wintered. Here they were met by the

regionarius Theophanius, who, we are told, brought a document under the Imperial seal, ordering all Imperial governors of cities to receive the Pope with as much reverence as they would show to the Emperor's own person. Crossing over at length into Greek waters, and arriving at the island of Ceos, the Pope was there met with the prescribed reverence by Theophilus, patrician and admiral. From thence he proceeded to Constantinople. The Emperor himself was not there, having perhaps purposely withdrawn to Nicaea, but his little son and child-colleague Tiberius, offspring of the Khazar bride, came out to the seventh milestone, escorted by Cyrus the Patriarch of Constantinople, the Senate, and a long train of nobles and clergy, to meet the pontiff of Old Rome. All the city made holiday, and shouts of gratulation rent the air when the Pope, clad in full pontificals such as he wore in the great processions at Rome, entered the city mounted on one of the Imperial palfreys, with gilded saddle and gilded reins, which the servants of Justinian had brought to meet him.

The Emperor, on hearing of the Pope's arrival, was, we are told, filled with joy, and sent a 'sacred' letter to express his thanks, and to ask Constantine to meet him at Nicomedia in Bithynia, to which city he himself journeyed from Nicaea. When they met, the Papal biographer assures us that "the most Christian Augustus, with his crown on his head, prostrated himself and kissed the feet of the pontiff. Then the two rushed into one another's arms, and there was great joy among the people, when all of them beheld the good prince setting such an example of humility". From all the other information which we possess as to the character of Justinian II, grave doubts arise whether that "good prince" really humbled himself so far as to kiss the feet of his guest: but we can well believe that he received the Communion at the pontiff's hands, and besought his prayers that he might obtain much needed pardon for his sins. Some sort of discussion took place, for the deacon Gregory, the future Pope, "when interrogated by the Emperor Justinian concerning certain chapters, gave an excellent answer, and solved every question". We are told also that Justinian "renewed all the privileges of the Church", which suggests that something had taken place which might seem to infringe them. On the whole we are compelled to believe that there is here a dishonest suppression of facts on the part of the biographer, that the canons of the Quinisextan Synod were again laid by the Emperor before the Pope, and were (possibly with some modifications, for which deacon Gregory successfully contended) accepted by him.

On his departure from Nicomedia, the Pope was enfeebled by frequent attacks of sickness, but he was at length enabled to accomplish his return journey, and landing at Gaeta, arrived on the 24th of October, 711, at Rome, where, after his year's absence, he was received with loud shouts of joy by the people.

Probably even if the Pope did yield in the matter of the Quinisextan Council, that concession was worth making for the sake of the increase of dignity which such a journey and such a reception in the Eastern capital brought to his office. After all deductions have been made for the exaggerations of the Papal biographer, there can be no doubt that the reception was a splendid one, and that the remembrance of the contumely heaped on Pope Martin might well be effaced by the sight of the reverence paid to Pope Constantine.

Scarcely had the Pope completed his return voyage, when the Emperor who had received him with such signal honor was slain. The chroniclers give us a very detailed, but also a singularly obscure history of the events which led to his downfall, but one thing is clear through all the confusion, that in his really insane fury of revenge against the inhabitants of Cherson, Justinian overreached himself, and almost compelled his most loyal servants to conspire against his throne.

Three expeditions were successively sent against Cherson, with orders to accomplish the utter destruction of the city. The first was fairly successful: the leading citizens were sent to Justinian for him to wreak his vengeance upon them; some of the nobles were tied to stakes

and roasted before a slow fire; others were tied into a barge filled with heavy stones, and so sunk in the sea. But Justinian was not satisfied : he accused his generals of slackness in executing his orders, superseded them, and sent out others, who in their turn—partly owing to the energy with which despair had filled the Chersonites, partly owing to the interference of the Chagan of the Khazars, who came to defend the threatened city against a Roman Emperor more barbarous than himself—gave up their bloody commission in despair, and then for mere self-protection joined the party of revolt.

This party of revolt clustered round a certain Bardanes, an Armenian, to whom a Monothelete monk had long before prophesied that he would one day be Emperor of Rome. At each successive revolution, when Leontius and when Apsimar were raised to the throne, Bardanes had sought his monkish friend, who said each time, “Be patient; the day is not come yet; but when it does come, be sure that you restore Monotheletism, and undo the work of the Sixth Council”. Bardanes talked imprudently of these prophesying to his comrades, and rumors of them reached the ears of Apsimar, who banished him to the island of Cephalonia. Justinian, to whom Apsimar’s enemy probably seemed a friend, permitted Bardanes to return from banishment; and now, for some reason which is not clear to us, permitted him to accompany the first expedition to Cherson. Helias, whom Justinian appointed governor of Cherson, when he found that he had incurred his master’s displeasure, proclaimed Bardanes Emperor under the less barbarous name of Philippicus, and the cause of this rival claimant to the throne was eagerly embraced by the despairing citizens of Cherson, and by one after another of the generals whom Justinian sent against them, and who feared to return to their master with his vengeance unsated. When Justinian heard of the elevation of Philippicus, his fury became more terrible than ever. Every one of the children of Helias was massacred in its mother’s arms, and she herself was handed over to the dishonoring embraces of an Indian cook of the Emperor, a man of hideous ugliness.

The upshot of the whole matter was that the remnants of all three expeditions returned to Constantinople bent on dethroning Justinian, and placing the diadem on the head of Bardanes-Philippicus. Justinian again sought the help of Terbel, king of the Bulgarians (with whom he had had many quarrels since he was restored to the throne by his aid), but obtained from him only three thousand men. He fixed his camp at Damatrys, and himself proceeded to Sinope, the nearest point to the Crimea on the coast of Asia Minor. Here he perhaps expected the hostile fleet to land, but he saw instead the sails of the mighty armament which he had himself fitted out, bearing off westward to Constantinople to accomplish his doom. He returned, “roaring like a lion”, on the road to the capital, but his enemy had arrived there before him. Philippicus reigned in Constantinople : every avenue to the city was carefully guarded by his troops. Back fled Justinian to his camp at Damatrys, but there too his enemies were beforehand with him. The man whom he had so cruelly wronged, Helias, the life-guardsman and governor of Cherson, had marched with a strong body of troops to Damatrys, and opened negotiations with the soldiers of Justinian. On receiving solemn assurances of their personal safety, they abandoned their cruel master’s cause and consented to shout for Philippicus Augustus. Helias, filled with rage at the remembrance of his wrongs, hunted down the fallen Emperor, made bare his throat, and with one blow from the short sword which hung by his side severed his head from his body. The ghastly trophy was, carried by a guardsman named Ptomanus to Philippicus, who forwarded it by the same messenger to Rome.

And how was the messenger there received? The Papal biographer says, “After three months the melancholy tidings resounded through the City that Justinian, the most Christian and orthodox Emperor, was murdered, and the heretic Philippicus had reached the summit of Imperial power”. Into what strange world of Manichean confusion have we strayed, a world in which good and evil have no meaning in themselves, but stand merely as the watchwords of

two parties of equally balanced power; a world in which it is possible for a monster like Justinian Rhinotraetus to be mourned as “a most Christian Emperor”?

To finish the story of Justinian’s downfall, the pathetic end of his little son Tiberius must also be recorded. The little child, still only six years old, had been taken for refuge to the church of the Virgin, in the quarter of Blachernae. There he sat, with one hand holding a pillar of the holy table, and with the other clasping some fragments of the true cross, which his great ancestor had recovered from the Persians. Other sacred relics were hung round the child’s neck, and Anastasia his grandmother sat near him. Maurus, the leader of the third expedition against Cherson, and now a partisan of Philippicus, strode up to the altar. The aged Empress threw herself at his feet, and implored him not to lay hands on the child, who at any rate was unsoiled by his father’s crimes. But while Maurus was thus detained by Anastasia, his comrade and fellow-patrician, Joannes Struthus, forcibly wrenched away the little Tiberius from the altar steps, took the fragments of the cross from his hand and laid them upon the altar, hung the other relics round his own neck, and then, carrying the child out to the porch of another church, stripped him of his clothes, laid him on the threshold, and “cut his throat”, says the chronicler, “as if he had been a sheep”. With the death of that innocent child at the church-porch ended the dynasty of the great Heraclius. They had borne rule (610-711), in the Roman world, with two slight interruptions, for one year more than a century.

The fall of the Heraclian dynasty was followed by a period of unsettlement and revolution which lasted for six years. Philippicus (or Bardanes), who reigned from the autumn of 711 to the spring of 713; Anastasius, the chief secretary, who reigned from that date till the autumn of 715; Theodosius, whose reign ended in March, 717, are little more than shadow-Emperors, with whose troubled careers the historian of Italy need not concern himself. Only it is to be noted that under Philippicus there was a temporary recrudescence of that which had seemed safely dead and buried, the theory of the nature of Christ. True to the promise which he is represented as having given to the monk who had prophesied his accession to the throne, Philippicus convened a council of Monothelete bishops and abbots, who declared the decision of the Sixth Council to be null and void. The ‘sacred’ letter which he at the same time addressed to the Pope showed too plainly his heretical opinions. The Roman mob, who seem by this time to have acquired considerable skill in theological controversy at once took the alarm, and under the Pope’s guidance assumed an attitude of something more than passive opposition. An “image” (perhaps something like a mediaeval reredos), containing a representation of the six Ecumenical Councils, was set up in St. Peter’s by way of reply to the defiance hurled at the Sixth of those Councils by Philippicus. On the other hand, no picture of the heretical Emperor was allowed to be erected in any of the churches; his name was omitted from the Mass; his decrees were treated as waste paper, and golden *solidi* bearing his effigy obtained no currency. At length there was actual civil war in the streets of Rome. A certain nobleman named Peter came from Ravenna, armed with a commission to assume the office of Duke of Rome, deposing Christopher, who then held it. As Peter’s commission ran in the name of the hated Philippicus, the people rallied to the side of his rival. Blows were struck, and more than thirty men were killed in the Via Sacra, within sight of the official residence on the Palatine; but the Pope sent some priests bearing the gospels and the cross down into the fray, and these succeeded in allaying the tumult, by persuading “the Christian party” to retire. Things, however, looked gloomy for orthodoxy and the defenders of the Sixth Council, when, about the middle of 713, tidings came by way of Sicily that Philippicus—had been deposed. He was seized by conspirators while taking his siesta in the palace, and like most deposed sovereigns of Constantinople, deprived of sight, and the orthodox Anastasius reigned in his stead.

This was the last flicker of the Monotheletic controversy, which had disquieted the Empire for just three-quarters of a century (638-713).

CHAPTER X.

THE LAWS OF LIUTPRAND.

FROM the story of the subordinate duchies, and the disputes of Popes and Emperors, we return to the main stream of Lombard history.

The wise and loyal Ansprand survived his return from exile and his elevation to the throne only three months. When he was upon his deathbed, the people of the Lombards raised his son LIUTPRAND to the throne as his partner while life still remained to him, his successor when death supervened; and the tidings of this event, which apparently was the result rather of popular enthusiasm than of any deep-laid political scheme, brought great joy to the heart of the dying king. For we must always remember that Liutprand, though the greatest and most powerful of Lombard sovereigns, and though no other king so nearly succeeded in welding the state into one homogeneous monarchy, had only the slenderest of hereditary claims to occupy the palace of Pavia. To talk of usurpation would be altogether out of place, since the element of popular election common to most of the Teutonic royalties was still strong in the Lombard kingship; but for more than a century all the wearers of the Iron Crown, with one exception had been connected by blood or by marriage with the family of the revered, almost sainted Queen Theudelinda, and to the glory of this descent the son of the Milanese noble Ansprand could lay no claim.

Of the year of Liutprand's birth we have no precise information, but as in 701 he was still a very young man, contemptuously allowed to live by the jealous tyrant Aripert II, when he mutilated or put to death all the rest of Ansprand's family, we can hardly suppose him to have been more than twenty-eight years old when, eleven years afterwards, he mounted the throne. He was a man of great personal strength and courage, and in his reign of thirty-one years he had the opportunity of displaying on a wide, one might almost say on a European theatre, the large gifts of statesmanship with which nature had endowed him. In these early centuries, after the disruption of the Roman Empire, no other ruler save Theodoric the Ostrogoth came so near to founding a real kingdom of Italy: but like Theodoric, his work perished because he had no son to succeed him.

At the very outset of his reign he narrowly escaped death by domestic treason. For some reason or other, his cousin Rothari conspired against his life, and invited him to a feast, at which he was to have been slain by armed men concealed in the banqueting-hall. Being warned of the plot, Liutprand summoned his cousin to the palace. He came, wearing a coat of mail under his mantle, which the king's hand discovered in the act of exchanging salutations. The tragedy of Grimwald and Godipert was again performed, with slightly different circumstances. When Rothari saw that he was discovered, he drew his sword and rushed at the king. Liutprand drew his too, but before either could strike, one of the king's lifeguards, named Subo, attacked Rothari from behind. He turned round and wounded his assailant in the forehead, but the interruption probably saved the king's life. The other bystanders fell at once upon Rothari, and slew him. His four sons, whose disappearance from the capital caused them to be suspected of complicity in their father's designs, when discovered were put to death.

As an illustration of the personal courage of the new king, Paulus tells us another story, which probably belongs to a later period of his reign. Being told that two squires had plotted

his death, he ordered their attendance upon him, and rode with them and with no other escort into the densest part of the forest. Then drawing his sword and pointing it towards them, he upbraided them with their murderous designs, and called upon them, if they were men, to come on and slay him then and there. Stricken by “the divinity which doth hedge a king”, the caitiffs fell at his feet and implored his pardon, which was granted to them as to many others who at different times conspired against him, for great was this king’s clemency.

The reign of Liutprand naturally divides itself into two parts. The first fourteen years of that reign the reign (712-726) are almost bare of events. Doubtless he was during all that time, consolidating the forces of his kingdom; and the numerous laws which, during this period, were passed at the yearly assemblies of his armed fellow-countrymen, show his anxious care for the good government of his people. In 726, with the outbreak of the great Iconoclastic controversy, the scene changes, and an almost bewildering succession of wars, alliances, conquests, restorations of territory, interviews with Popes, and negotiations with Exarchs, fills up the remaining seventeen years of his reign.

Reserving for the next chapter the intricate, but momentous history of those eventful years, I propose now to summarize those additions to the Statute Book which attest Liutprand’s activity as a legislator, and which were made in great measure, though not entirely, before the Iconoclastic controversy set Italy in a flame.

On the 1st of March for fifteen out of the thirty-one years of his reign, Liutprand, “the Christian and Catholic” King, by the advice and with the consent of the “Judges” of his realm and of the rest of his faithful Lombards, put forth his little volume of laws “for the settlement of any points of controversy which had arisen between his subjects, and which seemed to be insufficiently provided for by his most robust and most eminent predecessor Rothari”, or by the “most glorious Grimwald”.

At the very outset of his reign the young king claims high authority for his utterances as a legislator. He has conceived the idea of framing these laws, not by his own foresight, but by the will and inspiration of God : because the king’s heart is in the hand of God, as is witnessed by the wisdom of Solomon, who said, “As the rush of water, so is the heart of the king in God’s hand: if He shall keep it back, everything will be dried up, but if He in His mercy gives it free course, everything is watered, and filled with health-fullness”. So too the Apostle James in his Epistle says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights”.

This highly theological statement of the king’s functions is no doubt due to the ecclesiastic employed by him to express his thoughts in that which was supposed to be the Latin language, and it is probably to the same official that we owe the following strong statement of the supremacy of the Roman Church, which is contained in the law against marriage with a first cousin’s widow.

After enacting that any man offending against this law shall forfeit all his property, and his children shall be treated as illegitimate, the royal legislator adds, “This ordinance have we made because, as God is our witness, the Pope of the City of Rome, *who is the head of the Churches of God and of the priests in the whole world*, has exhorted us by his epistles in no wise to allow such marriage to take placed”. But notwithstanding these expressions, and though the prologues to the laws lay a strong emphasis on the now Catholic character of the Lombard nation, it cannot be said that they exhibit any trace of that obsequious servility towards the Church which is characteristic of the laws of the Visigothic kings a little before this date, nor is there any vestige in them of that furious persecution of the Jews which was the especial disgrace of Spanish Christianity, and which paved the way for the Moorish conquest of Spain.

It must be noticed in passing that the Latin in which King Liutprand's statutes are clothed is barbarous, often to the verge of incomprehensibility, more barbarous than that of Gregory of Tours, more barbarous even (and this is worth noticing) than the laws of Rothari. Evidently during the seventy or eighty years that had elapsed since that king's accession, the light shed by the torch of learning had been growing dimmer and dimmer, and the Church had been losing even the feeble hold which she once had upon the wisdom and the culture of buried Paganism.

Taking a general survey of the laws of Liutprand and comparing them with those of Rothari, we see at laws once that the Lombards have entered upon a new phase of social life. The laws of the later legislator breathe far less than those of his predecessor the atmosphere of the forest and the moorland. The laws about falcons, and stags, and swarms of bees, have disappeared from the statute book, or at least require no fresh additions to be made to them, but instead thereof we have elaborate provisions for the enforcement of contracts and the foreclosure of mortgages.

One great and striking change made by King Liutprand shows the increasing value set upon human life, as the Lombards were putting off their barbarous customs and settling down into a well-ordered commonwealth. This was the virtual abolition of the *guidrigild*, and the substitution of absolute confiscation of the offender's property, in cases of murder. It will be remembered that, under the earlier legislation, the shedder of blood, according to a common custom among the Teutonic nations, had to pay to the representatives of the murdered man a compensation, which varied according to his rank of life, and which (though our information on the subject is not so precise as we could desire) was probably small, when the victim was a man of low social position. Now, however, the king ordained that in all cases where one free man killed another, not in self-defense, but of malice aforethought, he should lose his whole property. The heirs of the murdered man took only his old *guidrigild*, and the balance left over went to "the King's Court", the residuary legatee of all fines and compositions. If, on the other hand, the murderer's property was insufficient to pay even the old *guidrigild*, he was handed over to the heirs of the murdered man, apparently not to be put to death by them, but worked as a slave.

Of course, even this punishment falls far short of those which our modern civilization assigns to the crime of murder. Still we can see that, especially in the case of the rich and powerful, the effect of the new punishment would be far more deterrent than the old. Probably under the code of Rothari a Lombard noble might have killed a dozen free men of inferior position without seriously impairing his fortune, whereas now, after the first deed of violence of such a kind, he found himself stripped of everything. And thus the change introduced by Liutprand tended towards the equality of all men before the law, and was in the best sense of the word democratic. At the same time, while the *guidrigild* lost some of its significance on one hand, gained it on the other. If it was less important as protection against violence, it became more important as a penalty for crime. In the case of a nun's guardian who consented to her marriage; of men who aided and abetted in an insurrection; of forgery of a document; of the preparation of a legal instrument by a scribe ignorant of the law; of breaking troth-plight, and giving to one man the affianced bride of another, the offender was bound to pay his *guidrigild*, which went in some cases to the King's Court, in others to the person injured by his offence. So, too, the officer of the crown who molested men in the enjoyment of their just right the master of a fugitive slave who presumed to drag him away from the altar of a church the man who committed an indecent assault upon a woman or who stole her clothes while she was bathing, the man who dared to marry the wife of another still living husband each had to pay the full *guidrigild* which, under the old law, would have been payable by his murderer. There seems to be a certain sense of justice, rough perhaps, but still justice, in this provision of the

Lombard legislator, who says in effect to the wealthy and noble members of the community, “We will protect your persons by inflicting a heavier fine on him who assaults or molests you than on the assailant of a person of lesser rank : but on the other hand, if you transgress our laws, the penalty which you must pay shall be in the same proportion heavier”.

In the laws of Rothari we had to regret the absence of any clear indication of the amount of *guidrigild* payable for the violent death of a member of each of the various classes of the community. King Liutprand gives us this missing detail, and as he does not profess to abrogate the law of his predecessor, he perhaps only re-states the previously existing custom. The law is so important that it will be well to quote it entire:

“We remember that we have already ordained that he who [of malice] kills a free man shall lose the whole of his property; and that he who kills in self-defense shall pay according to the rank of the person slain. We now wish to ordain how that rank is to be estimated.

“The custom is, that if the slain man is a person of the lowest rank, who is proved to be a member of the [Lombard] army, the manslayer shall pay 150 solidi : for an officer 300 solidi. As concerning our followers let him who is lowest in that rank be paid for, when slain, at the rate of 200 solidi, simply because he is our servant; and those of higher position, according to the dignity of their office, in an ascending scale up to 300 solidi”.

From this law we can at last form some idea of the estimation in which the lives of the different members of the Lombard community were held. We can hardly be wrong, however, in supposing that the “army man” of King Liutprand’s edict is necessarily a member of the conquering nation : and thus we get no nearer to the solution of the old question, “What *guidrigild*, if any, was paid by the murderer or the unintentional slayer of a free Roman?”

But though on this point the laws of Liutprand fail to give us the desired information, they do not so entirely ignore the existence of a non-Lombard population as was the case with those of Rothari. In the first place, it is noteworthy that nearly all the laws which relate to inheritance begin with the words *Si quis Langobardus*, evidently implying that there were other persons than Lombards in the country to whom these laws did not apply, and we naturally conjecture that these persons are the old Roman population, still working, as far as their own internal affairs are concerned, by the laws of Theodosius and Justinian.

This conjecture becomes almost certainty when we read in Liutprand’s law *De Scribis*, “We have ordained that they who write deeds, whether according to the law of the Lombards (since that is most open, and known by nearly all men), or according to the law of the Romans, shall not prepare them otherwise than according to the contents of those laws themselves. For let them not write contrary to the law of the Lombards or that of the Romans. If they do not know the provisions of those laws, let them ask others who do, and if they cannot fully learn the laws, let them not write the deeds. Let any one who presumes to act otherwise pay his own *guidrigild*, unless there is some express understanding [of an opposite kind] arrived at by the parties”.

It is quite in accordance with the indications thus furnished us, that we find it provided that if any of a Roman married a Lombard woman, and acquired the *mundium* over her, she thereby lost the status of a Lombard woman. The sons born of such a union were Romans like their father, and had to “live by his law”; and in case of her marrying a second husband without the consent of the heirs of the first husband, they had no right to claim damages (*anagriph*), nor to start a feud (*faida*) with the presuming consort.

We thus see that, under the Lombard kings, a beginning at any rate was made of the system of “personal law”, a system which attained its full development under the Carolingian kings, under whom the various members of the same community, Franks, Lombards, Romans, each had the right of living under their own ancestral code of laws. Signs of Lombard jurisprudence, though still crude, and in some respects barbarous, had evidently some germs of

progress and improvement. We can perceive on the part of Liutprand an anxious desire to govern his subjects justly, and to carry their reason along with him in his various decisions. We see with satisfaction that he is prepared to accept for himself the same measure which he metes out to others. Thus, having ordained that a lad under the age of eighteen cannot, except under certain special circumstances, make a valid alienation of his property to another man, he passes a special law enacting that not even to the king shall such a donation be valid.

As the power of the king had increased, that of his representatives had increased also, and with their power, the temptations to corruption, the vices of civilization beginning to take the place of the vices of barbarism. There are many laws against oppression and exaction by the king's stewards (*actores*); and the penalties on the judge who merely delays the administration of justice are exceedingly severe. Two classes of judges are here enumerated, the *sculdahis*, and above him the *judex*. If a *sculdahis* delayed for four days to administer justice when called upon to do so, he had to pay 6 solidi to the plaintiff, and 6 to the *judex* above him. If the cause was too high for the *sculdahis*, and was brought before the *judex*, he had six days' grace given him, and at the end of that time, if he had not pronounced judgment, he had to pay 15 solidi to the plaintiff. Or, if it was a case which ought to be transferred to the King's Court, and the *judex* delayed doing so for twelve days, he had to pay 12 solidi to the plaintiff, and 20 to the king. Even the vast fortune of Lord Chancellor Eldon would scarcely have been sufficient to meet the continual levy of fines like these.

The old barbarous wager of battle (*pugna per camfiones*) still existed, but was viewed with suspicion and dislike by Liutprand. He does not scruple to imagine and provide for a case in which a man accused of theft has been vanquished in single combat, but stricter enquiry afterwards made by the king's representative (*publicus*) has established his innocence. He declares that wicked persons would sometimes challenge a man to the combat in order to annoy and worry him, and therefore prescribes the form of oath which the challenger might be forced to take, and which was to the effect that he had reasonable grounds of suspicion, and did not give the challenge in malice, in order to weary him by the battle. And in a very curious law about accusations of poisoning he expresses himself even more strongly, saying in substance, "We have now ordained that the punishment for the murder of a free man shall be the loss of the whole of the murderer's property : but certain men, perhaps through hardness of heart, have accused the relations of a man who has died in his bed of having poisoned him, and have therefore, according to the old custom, challenged them to single combat. It seems to us a serious matter that the loss of a man's whole property should be caused by the weakness of a single shield: and we therefore ordain that in case any accusation of this kind should be brought in future, the accuser shall swear on the gospels that he does not bring it in malice, but has good grounds for his suspicion. Then he may proceed to battle according to the old custom, but if the accused person or his hired champion is defeated, let him pay, not his whole fortune, but a composition, as under the whole law, according to the rank of the murdered man :—For we are uncertain about the judgment of God, and we have heard of many persons unjustly losing their cause by wager of battle. But on account of the custom of our nation of the Lombards we cannot change the law itself".

In connection with these allusions by Liutprand to the decaying jurisprudence of his ancestors, it will well to notice one passage in which he quotes the ancient customs of his nation. Law 77 enacts, "If two brothers, or a father and son, have divided their estate by solemn *thinx*, and one of them shall die without sons or daughters, let the King's Court succeed to him. We have ordained this because, though it be not precisely so set down in the edict (of Rothari), nevertheless all our judges and faithful subjects have declared that so the ancient *cadarfida* has ever been, down to our own time". The passage is interesting, because we have here a glimpse of that unwritten common law of the Lombards, known by this strange and somewhat

mysterious name *cadarfida*, by which, according to the *Chronicon Gothanum*, legal disputes were generally decided until Rothari arose, the first codifier of Lombard law.

Space fails me to enumerate all the interesting particulars as to the social and domestic life of the Lombards, which may be gleaned from the laws of Liutprand. In particular, the numerous edicts relating to *women* would be well worthy of special study, showing as they do a decided upward tendency in the estimation in which they were held.

Another proof of increasing softness of manners is afforded by the laws about *slaves*. Of course, the unfree condition of the slave and the *Aldius* still continues, but a new and effectual form of manumission is introduced, according to which the owner gives the slave into the hands of the king. The slave by the intervention of the priest is then "led round the sacred altar", and after that dismissed free. This solemn act of manumission, in which king and priest were associated on behalf of freedom, was to have as great efficacy as if the slave had been declared "folk-free" by a regular *thingation*. The slave who, after he had in this or any other way received his "full freedom", continued to serve his old master (out of gratitude or for wages), was warned that he would do well to make frequent opportunities for showing forth his freedom to the judge and to his neighbors, lest in time to come the fact of his emancipation should be called in question. And if the owner of married slaves wronged the husband by committing adultery with the wife, he thereby emancipated both, as fully as if he had by solemn *thinx* given them their freedom. But in order that there might be no doubt of their emancipation, they were desired to come to the palace, prove their case, and receive their freedom at the hand of the king.

Though, as I have said, we have far fewer laws relating to the forest and the farmstead than in the code of Rothari, it is evident that *horses* were a valued possession, and their ownership, as in all civilized communities, was a frequent cause of litigation.

"If a man wishes to buy a horse, he ought to do it in the presence of two or three men, and not secretly. Then, if afterwards any one should claim that horse, he will have these witnesses to appeal to, and shall not be liable to a charge of horse-stealing. But if the claimant of the horse does not believe such witnesses, let the defendant confirm his case by putting them on their oath, unless they be that kind of men whom the king or the *judex* would believe even without an oath. But if he cannot produce any witnesses in whose presence the transaction took place, and can but repeat simply "I bought it", or if he says that he bought it from some Frank, or nobody knows whom, he will have to pay the fine for horse-stealing.

We find in the code of Liutprand one or two interesting indications of the *religious* condition of the Lombards. Especially we have some almost savage legislation against soothsayer's (*arioli*), whether male or female. Any one who himself consults such persons, or sends his slave to receive their answers, is to pay half of his own *guidrigild* to the king. The same heavy fine shall be paid by any *judex* or *sculdahis* or inferior functionary in whose district these soothsayers shall be lurking, if for three months he fail to discover and punish them. And if, when they have been detected and denounced, such functionary, either for a bribe, or out of pity, or for any other reason, lets them go, he shall pay not the half, but the whole of his *guidrigild* to the king. As a further incentive to diligence, the *judex* is ordered to sell the convicted soothsayer out of the province as a slave, and allowed to put the proceeds of the sale into his own pocket.

In the course of this legislation we are informed that (as at Benevento in the time of St. Barbatus) there were still some country folk who worshipped a tree or a fountain, calling it their *sacramentum*; and the punishment for these superstitious rites was the same as that for consulting soothsayers, the payment of half a man's *guidrigild* to "the sacred palace".

It is time to draw this slight and imperfect sketch of Liutprand's legislation to a close, but the reader may be interested by three or four of the most characteristic laws, which seem to

show us the great king sitting in council with his judges, and hearing and resolving the harder cases which were brought before him.

Law 138. Incitement to murder by a slave.— “We have been truly informed that a certain man, by the instigation of the devil, said to another man’s slave, ‘Come and kill thy lord, and I have it in my power to grant thee whatsoever favor thou shalt desire’. Persuaded by him, the lad entered into the evil design, and the tempter was wicked enough to say in the very presence of the victim, ‘Strike thy lord’. For his sins the slave struck the blow, and the other said, ‘Strike him again. If thou dost not, I will strike thee’. Then the lad turned round and struck another blow, whereupon the master died. In the requisition for blood, it was argued [on behalf of the tempter] that he ought to pay only the composition for conspiring against life [consilium mortis, the fine for which was 20 solidi], but we and our judges were not at all satisfied with this argument, reflecting that conspiracy is a hidden thing, which sometimes attains its end, and sometimes misses it. But this murder was instigated in the actual presence of the victim, and we do not call it consilium when a man points to another, present before him, and says in so many words, ‘Strike that man’. Therefore the instigator of the crime shall be punished, not for consilium mortis, but for murder itself; and, according to our recent edict, shall forfeit the whole of his property, of which half shall go to the heirs of the murdered man, and half to the King’s Court”.

Law 135. Insult to a woman.—“It has been reported to us that a certain perverse man, while a woman was bathing in a river, took away all the clothes which she had for the covering of her body; wherefore, as she could not remain in the river for ever, she was obliged to walk home naked. Therefore we decide that the hateful man who has been guilty of this presumptuous deed, shall pay his whole *guidrigild* to her whom he has offended. We do so for this reason, that if her father, or brother, or husband or other near male relative had found that man, there would undoubtedly have been a breach of the peace (*scandalum*), and the stronger of the two would probably have killed the other. Now it is better for the wrongdoer to live and pay his own *guidrigild*, than to die, and cause a *faida* to those who come after him, or to kill and lose the whole of his property”.

Law 113. Testamentary power.—“If any Lombard should wish to make any special provision for a son who has served him well, he may have power to do so to the following extent. If he has two sons, he may favor the one who has shown him godly obedience by an extra third of the property; if he has three sons, by a fourth; if four, by a fifth, and so on. And if they have all served him equally well, let them partake equally of their father’s substance. But if perchance the father have married a second or a third wife, and have issue both by the earlier and later marriages, he shall not have the power of thus preferring any one of the children of the later marriage during their mother’s lifetime, lest any should say that it is done at her instigation. But after her death he shall have power to prefer as aforesaid. For we think it is according to God’s will (and to right reason), that if, even between slaves, he who serves his master well is more rewarded than he who serves him badly, the father should have a similar power of distinguishing between his sons, and rewarding them according to their deserts”.

Law 141. Women incited to brawling by their husbands.—“*We have been informed that some faithless and crafty men, who do not dare themselves to enter a neighboring house or village and raise a disturbance there, for fear of the heavy composition to which they are liable for such an offence, have called together all the women over whom they had power, both free and bond, and have sent them against a weaker body of men. Then these women, attacking the men of such town or village, have inflicted blows upon them, and made greater disturbance, and done more mischief than even men would have done in their place. But when enquiry was made into the tumult, the men who were on the defensive, and could not help themselves, were called to account for their unwilling violence.*

“Therefore we decree that should the women dare to act in this manner in future: (1) Those who have defended themselves against them shall not be answerable for blows or wounds, or death itself, either to the husbands or the *mundwalds* of the women

“(2) Let the magistrate (*publicum*) in whose district the tumult has happened, catch those women, and shave their heads, and distribute them among the villages round about, that henceforward women may learn not to do such presumptuous deeds.

“(3) Should the women in such a brawl inflict blows or injuries on any one, their husbands must pay for them according to the tenor of [King Rothari’s] edict.

“Our reason for making this ordinance both as to the chastisement of the women and as to the payment of their compositions is, that we cannot liken such a [craftily planned] assemblage of women to a faction fight, or sedition of peasants, since in those outbursts men act, not women”

I will end this chapter with two little incidents of village life drawn from the laws of Liutprand.

Law 136. *Death by misadventure at a well*— “It has been told us that a certain man had a well in his courtyard; and above it (according to custom) a fork and a balance-weight for drawing water. Now while one man was standing under the balance-weight, another, who came to draw water, incautiously let the balance-weight go, and it came upon him who was standing there, and caused his death. When enquiry into the death took place, and a demand for the composition was made, it was held by us and our judges that the man who was killed, as he was not a mere animal, but had sense and reason, ought to have considered beforehand where he would take up his station, and what was the weight which he saw over his head. Therefore two-thirds must be deducted from his composition, and the third part of the sum at which he is valued, according to the tenor of the edict, shall be paid by him who drew the water carelessly, to the sons or nearest relations of the dead man : and so let the cause be finished without guile and without *faida*, since the deed was done unwittingly. Let there be no charge brought against the owner of the well, for if such a charge be admitted, no one hereafter will allow others to draw water from his well; in which case, since all cannot be the owners of a well, many poor persons will die, and wayfarers also will suffer great hardship”.

Law 137. *Death of a child from a horse’s kick*.— “*It has also been reported to us that a certain man lent his mare to another man to draw his wagon, but the mare had an unbroken colt which followed its mother along the road. While they were thus journeying, it chanced that some infants were standing in a certain village, and the colt struck one of them with his hoof, and killed it. Now when the parents brought the matter before us, and claimed compensation for the infant’s death, we decided, after deliberation with our judges, that two-thirds of the child’s guidrigild should be paid by the owner of the colt, and the remaining third by the borrower of the mare. True it is that, in a previous edict it was ordained that if a horse injures any one with his hoof, the owner shall pay the damage. But inasmuch as the horse was out on loan, and the borrower was a reasonable being, and might, if he had not been negligent, have called out to the infants to take care of themselves,—therefore, as we have said, for his negligence he shall pay the third part of the child’s price*”.

With this sensible decision we take leave of Liutprand the legislator and the judge, and turn to consider the events of the age in which he had to play his part as a warrior and a statesman.

CHAPTER XI.

ICONOCLASM

IN tracing the history of the Lombard kings and that of the contemporary Popes and Emperors we have now overstepped the threshold of the eighth century. I do not propose to give an outline of the European history of this century as I did of its predecessor: in fact, only half of it will be traversed before the end of this volume is reached : but something may be said here as to the four greatest events by which it was distinguished. These are the Mohammedan conquest of Spain, the assumption of the title of King of the Franks by an Austrasian Mayor of the Palace, the conversion of the Germans beyond the Rhine, and the Iconoclastic Controversy. On examination we discover that almost all of these events had a close connection with one another, and that they unconsciously conspired towards one great result, the exaltation of the power of the Roman pontiff. St. Boniface, Charles Martel, Muza, and Leo the Isaurian, each in his different sphere co-operated towards the creation of that new, mediaeval Europe at the head of which was the Pope of Rome, a very different person politically from his predecessors, all of whom, whether great or small, had been the submissive subjects of the Eastern Caesar.

In 711, a year before Ansprand returned from his long exile in Bavaria and wrested the kingdom from Aripert, Tarik with his host of Arabs and Moors crossed the Straits which have ever since borne his name, defeated Roderic king of the Visigoths in the battle of Xeres de la Frontera, and began that conquest of Spain which was completed by his superior the Arabian Emir of Cairwan, Muza. We cannot help feeling some surprise at the small apparent effect produced on the rest of Europe by the loss of so important a member of the great Christian commonwealth. Paulus Diaconus devotes but one short dry sentence to the conquest of Spain, and the *Liber Pontificalis* mentions it not at all. One would say that the heresy of the Emperor Philippicus and his disfigurement of the picture of the Sixth Council at Constantinople affected the minds of the people of Rome more profoundly than the conquest by Asiatics of one of the finest regions of Western Europe. And yet that slow and difficult reconquest of Spain by the refugees in the mountains of the Asturias, which, as we know, did eventually take place, can hardly have been foreseen by these writers, since it was more than three centuries before half of the peninsula was recovered, and nearly eight centuries before “the last sigh of the Moors” bewailed their expulsion from their lovely Granada.

In the first fervor of their conquering zeal the Saracen the Pyrenees and made the Gothic provinces of Septimania their own. Many students of history hardly realize the fact that for something like half a century parts of Languedoc and Provence were actually subject to the Moorish yoke, that Narbonne, Arles, and Avignon all heard the Muezzin’s cry, and called at the hour of prayer on Allah the Merciful and the Mighty.

It did not however need fifty years to reassure affrighted Europe by the conviction that Gaul would at any rate not fall as easy a prey as Spain to the turbaned hordes of the believers in the Prophet. Already in 721 the valiant Eudo of Aquitaine defeated them in a bloody battle under the walls of Toulouse, and eleven years later, after he himself had been vanquished, the remnant of his troops shared in the glorious victory which the stout Austrasians from beyond the Rhine achieved under the leadership of by Charles Martel on the plains of Poitiers, not far from the spot where, two hundred and twenty-five years before, the battle of the Campus Vogladensis gave to the Frank instead of the Visigoth the dominion over Southern Gaul.

This battle of Poitiers was, as every one knows, one of the decisive battles of the world, as important as Marathon or Salamis for the decision of the question whether Europe was to be the chosen home of empire in the centuries that were to follow. And for the victory thus won by Christendom over Islam, Europe was mainly indebted (and well did she know her obligation) to the bright and vigorous personality of Charles, surnamed the Hammer. When his father Pippin of Heristal died (714), the Frankish kingdom seemed to be falling asunder in ruin, a ruin even more hopeless, as springing from internal dissensions, than the collapse of Visigothic Spain. Aquitaine, Thuringia, Bavaria, all the great subordinate duchies were falling off from the central monarchy; Neustria and Austrasia were becoming two hostile kingdoms; and, to complete the confusion, the aged Pippin, passing by his son Charles who was in the vigor of youthful manhood, had bequeathed the Mayoralty of the Palace, as if it had been an estate, to his little grandson Theudwald, a child of six years old, under the regency of his mother Plectrude, by whose evil counsel this unwise disposition had been made. A Merovingian king incapable as all these later Merovingians were of doing a single stroke of business on his own account, a baby Prime Minister, with a greedy and unscrupulous woman as regent over him,—these were certainly poor materials out of which to form a strong and well-compacted state. But the young Charles, whom his stepmother had only dared to imprison, not to slay, first escaped from his confinement, then defeated the rival, Neustrian, Mayor of the Palace got hold of a Merovingian child and in his name ruled, like his father, as Mayor of the Palace over the three kingdoms, Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy. He subdued the savage Frisians, set up in Bavaria a duke who was willing to be his humble dependent, chastised Eudo of Aquitaine (who was aiming at independence and had well-nigh acquired it), and then having chastised, assisted him as we have seen, and protected his territory against the overflowing flood of Moorish invasion. Consolidator of France and saviour of Europe, Charles Martel was the real founder of the Arnulfing or Carolingian dynasty. But warned by the fate of his great-uncle Grimwald he did not himself stretch forth a hand to grasp the regal scepter. As long as his puppet lived, he left him the name and the trappings of royalty. When that puppet died, he did not indeed think it worth while to replace him by a successor, yet he did not change his own title. For the last four years of his life (737-741) there was literally “no king in the land”; a Mayor of the royal Palace, but no king inside it.

The reign, for such we may truly call it, of Charles Martel was nearly contemporaneous with that of Liutprand, with whom he had much intercourse, all of a friendly kind. The chain of events which enabled Pippin to assume the name as well as the reality of kingly power, and which brought him over the Alps to interfere in the affairs of Italy, will have to be related in a future volume. We only note them here as truly central events in that eighth century upon which we have now entered.

Politically the eighth century is one of the least interesting in English history. The great days of the Northumbrian kingdom are over, and the day of Wessex has not yet dawned. But from a literary or religious point of view the century is more attractive. During the first third of its course Baeda, decidedly the most learned man of his time, perhaps we might say the most learned man of all the early mediaeval period, was compiling his text-books, his commentaries, and his Ecclesiastical History of the English nation. And at the same time the English, who so lately had been receiving missionaries from Rome and from Iona, were sending out missionaries of their own, able, energetic and courageous men, to convert the still remaining idolaters of Germany. Chief among these missionaries were the Northumbrian Willibrord, who for forty years labored for the conversion of the Frisians, and the Devonshire-man Winfrith, who received from the Pope the name of Boniface, and who from 718 to 753 wrought at the organization of the half-formed Churches of Bavaria and Thuringia, preached to the heathen Hessians, hewing down an aged oak to which they paid idolatrous reverence, directed from his

Archiepiscopal see at Mainz the religious life of all central Germany, and finally in his old age received the martyr's crown from the hands of the still unconverted Frisians. This great work of the Christianization of Germany is alien to our present subject, and must not here be further enlarged upon, but it may be noticed how closely it was connected with the other leading events of the eighth century. It is not improbable that the zeal of these English missionaries was partly quickened by the tidings of the rapid advances of Mohammedanism. It is certain that the work of proselytism was aided by the arms of Pippin and Charles Martel. As their frontier advanced across the Rhine, Christianity went forward : where it fell back for a time, heathenism triumphed, and the missionaries became the martyrs. The close connection of the German mission with the exaltation of the Arnulfing house is symbolized by the fact that Boniface either actually took part in the coronation of Pippin, or at least used his powerful influence with the Pope to bring about that result. And lastly, it is obvious how greatly the addition of the wide regions between the Rhine and the Elbe to the area of Western Christendom must have strengthened the authority of the Pope. The Byzantine Emperor in his dwindling realm, hemmed in by Saracens and Bulgarians, might issue what decrees he would to his servile Greek diocesans. Here in Western Europe, in England and in Germany, were mighty nations, young and full of conscious strength and promise of the future, who had received their Christianity from the hands of devoted adherents of the Pope, and would recognize no authority but his.

This thought brings us to the last great event of the eighth century, the outbreak of the Iconoclastic Controversy. This will need a somewhat more detailed notice than the others.

To the shadow-Emperors whose reigns filled six anarchic years after the death of Justinian II succeeded, in March, 717, Leo III, commonly called Leo the Isaurian. Here was at last a man at the helm of the State, and one who, though his name is scarcely ever mentioned without a curse by the monkish chroniclers of the time, came at the fortunate—I would rather say at the Providential—moment to save Eastern Europe from the Saracen yoke, and to preserve for Christianity in any shape, whether enlightened or superstitious, some influence on the future destinies of Europe. Leo (whose original name is said to have been Conon) was borne in Asia Minor, either at Germanicia in Commagene, or, as is more probable, in those Isaurian highlands which in the fifth century sent adventurers to Constantinople to disturb and trouble the Empire but now sent a race of heroes to deliver it. The year of his birth is not apparently mentioned, but we may conjecture it to have been somewhere about 670. In his youth he and his parents were removed from their Asiatic home to Mesembria in Thrace, and here, when Justinian was marching with his Bulgarian allies to recover his throne, Leo met him with a present of 500 sheep. The grateful Emperor rewarded him by a place in his life-guards, and announced that he regarded him as one of his "true friends". Before long, however, jealousy and suspicion entered his soul, and he sent his "true friend" on a desperate mission to the Alans in the Caucasus, a mission which occupied several years, and from which only by the exercise of extraordinary ingenuity as well as courage did he at last return alive. When he returned to the abodes of civilized men he found Justinian deposed and Anastasius reigning, who appointed him general of the Anatolian theme. In this district, which comprehended the central portion of Asia Minor, Leo for some years, by guile rather than force, kept at bay the Saracen general Moslemah, brother of the Caliph, who was threatening the city of Amorium.

It was known that the Saracens were preparing for a grand assault on Constantinople, and it was generally felt that the so-called Theodosius III, a government clerk who had been forced against his will to assume the purple, was quite unable to cope with the emergency. In the autumn of 716 Leo proclaimed himself a candidate for the diadem and the avenger of his patron Anastasius, who had been deposed by the mutinous authors of the elevation of Theodosius. After defeating the Emperor's son at Nicomedia, and apparently spending the

winter in Bithynia, he moved on to Constantinople, where the Patriarch and the Senate welcomed him as Emperor. There was no further conflict: Theodosius recognized his unfitness for the diadem, and having with his son assumed the clerical garment, retired into safe obscurity.

The change of rulers had come only just in time to save the state. By the 1st of September, 717, the fleets and armies of the Saracen Caliph, constituting an armament apparently more formidable than that which Moawiyah had sent against the city forty years before, appeared in the Sea of Marmora. It is not necessary to give here the details of this memorable siege, in which, as in Napoleon's Russian campaign, fire and frost combined to defeat the forces of the invader. The besieged sent their ships laden with "Greek fire" into the fleet of the affrighted Saracens, burning many of their vessels and striking panic into the crews which escaped. The wind blew cold from Thrace; frost and snow covered the ground for a hundred days, and the camels and cattle of the besieging army perished by thousands. Famine followed as the natural consequence; the Saracens fed on disgusting preparations of human flesh, and pestilence of course followed famine. Upon the top of all their other calamities came an onslaught of the Bulgarians, who in this extremity of danger were willing to help their old foe, the Caesar of Constantinople. At length on the 15th of August, 718, the remnants of the once mighty armament melted away; the cavalry from the Bithynian plain, and the ships from the waters of the Bosphorus. Constantinople was saved, and the Paradise promised to the first army of the faithful that should take the city of Caesar was not yet won.

It was no marvel that such a great deliverance should be attributed to supernatural causes, and especially, by the monkish historians, to the prayers of the Mother of God. But it is certain that the statesmanlike foresight, the mingled astuteness and courage of the great Isaurian Emperor, had also much to do with the triumph of Christendom. As soon as the Saracen invader was repelled, he began that reorganization of the Empire to which adequate justice was not rendered till our own day, and one of the chief monuments of which is the *Ecloga*, a kind of handbook of Imperial law for the use of the people, which has lately attracted the careful and admiring study of European jurists

This early in his reign Leo was called upon to face the rebellion of a Western province, the result doubtless of the miserable anarchy into which the State had been plunged by his predecessors. The Duke of Sicily, who was an officer of high rank in the Imperial guard named Sergius, hearing of the siege of Constantinople by the Saracens, decided to create an Emperor of his own, and invested with the purple a certain Sicilian, sprung from Constantinople, named Basil, to whom he gave the Imperial name of Tiberius. For a short time the new Emperor played at promoting officers and appointing judges under the advice of his patron Sergius; and then Paulus, the *cartularius* of the Emperor Leo, arrived, apparently with a single ship and with a letter from his master, in the harbour of Syracuse. The mere news of his arrival was sufficient. The conscience-stricken Sergius escaped to the Lombards of Benevento. The Sicilian army was collected to hear the 'sacred' letter read, and when they received the tidings of the destruction of the mighty armaments of the Saracens they burst into loud applause and gladly surrendered Basil and his new-made courtiers into the hands of Paulus. The usurper and his general-in-chief were at once beheaded. Of his adherents, some were flogged, others were shaved as priests, others had their noses slit, others were fined and sent into banishment, and thus order reigned once more in Sicily.

The first eight years of the reign of Leo seem to have passed, with the exception of this trifling rebellion in Sicily, in internal peace and tranquility, though not undisturbed by wars with the Saracens, notwithstanding the repulse of their great Armada.

Thus far he had done nothing to tarnish his fair fame to which he was entitled from ecclesiastical historians as a zealous defender of the Christian world against the warriors of

Islam; nay, he had even given proof of his orthodoxy after the fashion of the age by vain attempts to compel Jews and heretics to enter the fold of the Church. The Jews outwardly conformed, but in secret washed off the water of baptism as an unholy thing. The Montanist heretics, in whom still lived the uncompromising spirit of their great predecessor Tertullian, solemnly assembled on an appointed day in their churches, and gave themselves over to the flames, rather than abandon the faith of their fathers.

At last in the ninth year of his reign Leo began that warfare against images by which, even more than by his gallant defence of Constantinople, his name is made memorable in history. Strangely enough this attempted revolution in ecclesiastical polity seems to have been connected with, perhaps derived from, a similar attempt on the part of a Saracen ruler. Yezid II, the Omniade Caliph of Damascus (720-724), had received, according to Theophanes, an assurance from a Jewish magician of Tiberias that his reign should be prolonged for thirty years if he would only compel his Christian subjects to obliterate the pictures in their churches. His brother and predecessor, Caliph Omar II, had already enforced on the Christians one precept of the Koran by forbidding them the use of wine, and now Yezid would enforce another of the Prophet's commands by taking away from them temptations to idolatry. His attempt failed, and as his promised thirty years ended in an early death after a reign of only four years, his son Welid II put the lying soothsayer to death. The story is probably more or less fabulous, but contains this kernel of truth—that it was the contact with Mohammedanism which opened the eyes of Leo and the men who stood round his throne, ecclesiastics as well as laymen, to the degrading and idolatrous superstitions that had crept into the Church and were overlaying the life of a religion which, at its proclamation the purest and most spiritual, was fast becoming one of the most superstitious and materialistic that the world had ever seen. Shrinking at first from any representation whatever of visible objects, then allowing herself the use of beautiful and pathetic emblems (such as the Good Shepherd), in the fourth century the Christian Church sought to instruct the converts whom her victory under Constantine was bringing to her in myriads, by representations on the walls of the churches of the chief event of Scripture history. From this the transition to specially revered pictures of Christ, the Virgin and the Saints, was natural and easy. The crowning absurdity and blasphemy, the representation of the Almighty Maker of the Universe as a bearded old man, floating in the sky, was not yet perpetrated, nor was to be dared till the human race had taken several steps downward into the darkness of the Middle Ages; but enough had been already done to show whither the Church was tending, and to give point to the sarcasm of the followers of the Prophet when they hurled the epithet “idolaters” at the craven and servile populations of Egypt and Syria .

It was in the year 725, according to Theophanes, that “the irreligious Emperor first began to stir the question of the destruction of the holy and venerable images”. In the following year, about harvest-time, volcano burst forth in the Archipelago close to the island of Thera. A heavy cloud of vapor hung over the Aegean, and pumice-stones were hurled over all the neighboring coasts of Asia Minor and Macedon. In this portent Leo saw the rebuke of Heaven for his slackness in dealing with the sin of idolatry, and the decree which had been before talked of was now formally issued. There can be little doubt that this decree was for the actual destruction of the idolatrous emblems. The statement which is generally made, that the Emperor's first decree only ordered that the pictures should be raised higher on the walls of the churches to remove the temptation to kiss and idolatrously adore them, is in itself improbable (for most of the pictures at this time were mosaics, which could not be so easily removed), and rests apparently on very doubtful authority. On the contrary, Leo seems to have set about his self-imposed task with an almost brutal disregard of the feelings of his subjects. Undoubtedly there are times in the history of the world when the holiest and most necessary work that can be

performed is that of the Iconoclast. The slow deposit of ages of superstition encrusts so thickly the souls of men that the letters originally traced thereon by the Divine Finger are not at all or but dimly legible. In such a case he who with wise and gentle hand applies the mordant acid and clears away the gathered fallacies of ages may do as useful a work, even as religious a work, as he who brings a fresh revelation from the Most High. But even in doing it he must remember and allow for the love and reverence which for generations have clustered round certain forms or words against which it may be his duty to wage war; and he will, if he is wise, gently loosen the grasp of faith, rather than with ruthless hand break both the worshipped image and the heart of the worshipper.

Such, unfortunately, was not the policy of the Isaurian Emperor, inheriting as he did the evil traditions of four centuries of Imperial legislators, whose fixed principle it had been that whithersoever the Emperor went in the regions of religious speculation or practice, thither all his subjects were bound to follow him. The destruction or obliteration of the sacred images and pictures was promptly begun, and all opposition was stamped out with relentless severity. One tragic event which occurred at Constantinople was probably the counterpart of many others of which no record has been preserved. Over the great gateway of the Imperial palace (which from the brazen tiles that formed its roof had received the name of Chalcé) had been placed a great effigy of Our Saviour, which, perhaps from the refulgent mosaics of which it was composed, had received the same name of Chalcé. The command went forth that this picture, probably one of the best known and most revered in all Constantinople, was to be destroyed; and hatchet in hand an Imperial life-guardsmen mounted a ladder and began the work of destruction. Some women who had clustered below called out to him to cease his unholy work. In vain: the hatchet fell again and again on the loved and worshipped countenance. Thereat the women (likened by later ecclesiastical writers to the devout women who carried spices to the tomb of the Saviour) shook the ladder and brought the life-guardsmen to the ground. He still breathed notwithstanding his fall, but "those holy women" (as the martyrologist calls them), with such rude weapons as they may have had at their disposal, stabbed him to death. Something like a popular insurrection followed, which was suppressed with a strong hand, and was followed by the deaths, banishments, and mutilations of the women and their sympathizers.

The news of this attempted religious revolution deeply stirred the minds of the subjects of the Empire. In Greece and the islands of the Archipelago there was an immediate outburst of insurrectionary fury. A great fleet was prepared, a certain Cosmas was named Emperor, and on the 18th of April, 727, the rebels arrived before Constantinople. But the "liquid fire" which had destroyed the Saracen Armada proved equally fatal to the Image-worshippers. Cosmas and one of his generals-in-chief were beheaded; the other escaped execution by leaping, clad in full armor, into the sea: the cause of Iconoclasm was for the time triumphant. In the year 729 Leo called what Western nations would have described as a Parliament, but what the loquacious Greeks quaintly named a *Silentium*, in order to confirm and regulate the suppression of image-worship. At this assembly, Germanus the Patriarch of Constantinople, with whom Leo had been for five years vainly pleading for assistance in his religious war, formally laid down his office. "I am Jonah", said the aged Patriarch; "cast me into the sea. But know, oh Emperor! that without a General Council thou canst not make any innovations in the faith". Germanus was deposed and allowed to spend the remainder of his already ninety years of age in peace. His private chaplain, Anastasius, whom the old man had long felt to be treading on his heels, but who seems to have been sincere in his professions of Iconoclasm, was made Patriarch in the room of Germanus, and for fifteen years governed the Church of Constantinople. During the remaining ten years of the reign of Leo III we do not hear much as to the details or the Iconoclastic Controversy. The Emperor's attention was probably occupied by the repeated

Saracen invasions of Asia Minor, but there is no reason to suppose that he abandoned the Iconoclastic position, though martyrdoms and mutilations of the Image-worshippers are little spoken of. Apparently the latter party had for the time accepted their defeat, and those who were most zealous on behalf of the forbidden worship emigrated in vast numbers to Southern Italy and Sicily. It is for us now to consider what effect the religious war thus kindled by the Isaurian Emperor had on the fortunes of Italy.

CHAPTER XII.
KING LUITPRAND

THE Iconoclastic decrees of the Emperor Leo probably reached Italy in the course of the year 726. Let us glance at the life and character of the man upon whom, as head of the Latin Church, the responsibility rested of accepting or rejecting them.

Gregory II, who succeeded to the chair of St. Peter on the death of Pope Constantine, was, like his great namesake, of Roman origin, and was the son of a man who bore the true Roman name of Marcellus. He had been brought up from a child in the Papal palace, was made subdeacon, treasurer and librarian, under the pontificate of Sergius, and had attained the position of deacon (687-701) when, as we have already seen he accompanied Pope Constantine to Constantinople, and bore the brunt of the discussion with Justinian the Noseless, as to the canons of the Quinisextan Council. His pure life, great knowledge of Scripture, ready eloquence, and firmness in defending the rights of the Church, all marked him out as a suitable successor to the Pope in whose train he had visited the New Rome. He continued the work of restoration of the walls of Rome, and set the destructive lime-kilns at work in order to aid in the process.

It was probably in the year after the consecration of Gregory that a Bavarian duke, "the first of his race" said the people of Rome, came to kneel at the shrine of St. Peter. This was the venerable Duke Theodo (probably a collateral descendant of Theudelinda), who had already divided his wide-spreading dominions among his three sons, and two of whose granddaughters about this time married the two chief rulers of the West, Liutprand and Charles Martel. Duke Theodo's visit was probably connected with a dark domestic tragedy which had ended in the mutilation and death of a Frankish bishop who had visited Bavaria, and it undoubtedly led to a closer dependence of the young and rough Church of the Bavarians on the See of Rome. This was yet more firmly knit when in the year 718 our countryman Boniface, as has been already said, offered himself to the Pope as the willing instrument of the spiritual conquest of Germany.

With Liutprand and the Lombards the relations of Gregory II seem in the early years of his pontificate to have been upon the whole friendly. We have seen how the Lombard king in the prologues to his yearly edicts delighted to dwell on the fact that his nation was "Catholic" and "beloved of God" : and we have heard the remarkable words in which he announced to his subjects that he drew tighter the restrictions on the marriage of distant relations, being moved thereto by the letters of the Pope of the City of Rome, "who is the head of all the churches and priests of God throughout the world". It is entirely in accordance with the relation thus signified between the two powers that we find Liutprand at an early period of his reign renewing and confirming the mysterious donation of King Aripert II, of "the patrimony in the Cottian Alps".

It was a sign of the increased gentleness of the times and of the more friendly feeling between the Church and the Lombards that, after 130 years of desolation, the hill of St. Benedict was once more trodden by his spiritual children. About the year 719, Petronax, a citizen of Brescia, came on pilgrimage to Rome, and by the advice of Pope Gregory journeyed onward to Monte Cassino. He found a few simple-hearted men already gathered there, he formed them into a regular community, and was elected by them as their abbots. The fame of the new community spread far and wide : many, both nobles and men of meaner birth, flocked

to the remembered spot, and by their help the monastery rose once more from its ruins, perhaps ampler and statelier than before. Years afterwards, under the pontificate of Zacharias, Petronax again visited Rome, and received from the Pope several MSS. of the Scriptures and other appliances of the monastic life, among them the precious copy of the great "Rule" which Father Benedict had written with his own hand two centuries before. These treasures, as we have seen, had been carried by the panic-stricken monks to Rome when Duke Zotto's ravages were impending over them.

But the Lombards, though now dutiful sons of the Church, had by no means ceased from their quarrel with the Empire. About the year 717 Romwald II, duke of Benevento, took by stratagem, as we are told, and in a time of professed peace, that stronghold of Cumae of which we last heard as taken by Narses from the Goths in 553. "All in Rome", says the Papal biographer, "were saddened by the news", and the Pope sent letters of strong protest to the Lombard duke, advising him, if he would escape Divine vengeance, to restore the fortress which he had taken by guile. He offered the Lombards large rewards if they would comply with his advice, but they "with turgid minds" refused to listen to either promises or threats. Thereupon the Pope turned to the Imperial Duke of Naples, stimulated his flagging zeal by the promise of the same large rewards, and by daily letters gave him the guidance which he seems to have needed. This duke, whose name was John, with Theodimus, a steward of the Papal patrimony and sub-deacon, for his second in command, entered the fortress by night. The Lombards were evidently taken by surprise, and there was little or no fighting. Three hundred Lombards with their *gastald* were slain : more than five hundred were taken as prisoners to Naples. The reward which the Pope had promised, and which was no less than 70 lbs. of gold, was paid to the victorious duke. Such events as this make us feel that we are on the threshold of the age in which Central Italy will own not the Emperor but the Pope for its lord, but we have not yet crossed it.

It was probably not long after this that Farwald II, duke of Spoleto, repeated the achievement of his great namesake and predecessor by moving an army northward and capturing Classis, the sea-port of Ravenna. But again, as before, the conquest which we might have expected almost to end Byzantine rule in Italy, produces results of no importance. Liutprand, whose aim at this time seems to be to keep his own house in order and to live at peace with the Empire, commands Farwald to restore his conquest to the Romans, and the command is obeyed. Whether these transactions have anything to do with the next event in the internal history of Spoleto we cannot tell, but we are informed that Transamund, son of Farwald, rose up against his father, and making him into a clergyman usurped his place. This revolution, which happened probably in 724, gave Liutprand, instead of an obedient vassal, a restless and turbulent neighbor, who was to be a very thorn in his side for nearly the whole remainder of his days.

It was perhaps the new duke of Spoleto who about this time obtained possession of the town of Narni, which place, important for its lofty bridge over the Nar, we have already learned to recognize as an important post on the Flaminian Way, and a frontier city between Romans and Lombards. The conjecture that it was Transamund of Spoleto who made this conquest is confirmed by the fact that we are expressly told in the next sentence of the Life of Gregory II that it was King Liutprand who put the host of the Lombards in motion and besieged Ravenna for many days. He does not appear however to have taken the city itself, but he repeated the operation of the capture of Classis, from whence he carried off many captives and countless wealth.

We are now approaching the time when the Isaurian Emperor's edicts against Image-worship may be supposed to have reached Italy. To those edicts alone has been generally attributed the storm of revolution which undoubtedly burst over Italy in the years between 727

and 730. But though a cause doubtless of that revolution, the Iconoclastic decrees were not the sole cause. Already, ere those decrees arrived, the relations between Byzantium, Rome, and Ravenna were becoming strained. The reader will have observed that for the last half century the popular party both in Ravenna and Rome had manifested an increasing contempt for the weakness of the Exarchs, hatred of their tyranny, and disposition to rally round the Roman pontiff as the standard-bearer not only of the Catholic Church against heresy, but also of Italy against the Greeks. Now, at some time in the third decade of the eighth century, there is reason to believe that financial exactions came to add bitterness to the strife.

The Emperor had been doubtless put to great expense by the military operations necessary to repel the great Saracen invasion, and he might think, not unreasonably, that Italy, and preeminently the Roman Church, the largest landowner in Italy, ought to bear its share of the cost. At any rate he seems to have ordered his Exarch to lay some fresh tax upon the provinces of Italy, and in some way or other to lay hold of the wealth of her churches. It would seem that some similar demand had been made in the East, and had been quietly complied with by the subservient Patriarch of Constantinople. The Pope however was determined to submit to no such infraction of the privileges of the Church. He probably ordered the *rectores patrimonii* throughout Italy and Sicily to oppose a passive resistance to the demands of the Imperial collectors, and this opposition stimulated the other inhabitants of Imperial Italy to a similar refusal.

This defiance of the Emperor's edict naturally provoked resentment at Constantinople and Ravenna. The Exarch probably received orders to depose Gregory, as Martin had been deposed, and carry him captive to Constantinople. It is not necessary to charge the Emperor (as the Papal biographer has done) with ordering the death of the resisting pontiff. Such a command would have been inconsistent with the character of Leo, who showed himself patient under the long resistance of the Patriarch Germanus to the Iconoclastic decrees, and it is generally disbelieved by those modern writers who are least favorable to the Isaurian Emperors. It is very likely however that the satellites of the Byzantine government, perceiving the opposition between Emperor and Pope, concluded, as did the murderers of Becket, that the surest way to win their sovereign's favor was "to rid him of one turbulent priest"; and thus it is that the pages of the biography at this point teem with attacks on the life of Gregory, all of which proved unsuccessful.

A certain Duke Basil, the *cartularius* Jordanes, and a subdeacon John surnamed Lurion (that is to say, two Imperial officers and one ecclesiastic, who was probably in the service of the Lateran) laid a plot for the murder of the Pope. Marinus, an officer of the life-guards, who had been sent from Constantinople to administer the *Ducatus Romae*, gave a tacit sanction to their design, for the execution of which however they failed to find a fitting opportunity. Marinus, stricken by paralysis had to relinquish the government of Rome and retire from the scene; but when Paulus the Patrician came out as full-blown Exarch to Italy the conspirators obtained, or thought they obtained, his consent also to their wicked schemes. The people of Rome however got wind of the design, and in a tumultuary outbreak slew the two inferior conspirators, Jordanes and Lurion. Basil was taken prisoner, compelled to change the gay attire of a duke for the coarse robes of a monk, and ended his days in a convent.

Again a guardsman was sent by the Exarch, this time only with orders to depose the pontiff: and as he apparently failed to execute his commission, Paulus raised such an army as he could in Ravenna and the neighboring towns, and sent it under the command of the count of Ravenna to enforce the previous order. But the Romans and—ominous conjunction—the Lombards also, flocked from all quarters to the defence of the pontiff. The soldiers of the duke of Spoleto blocked the bridge over the Anio by which the Exarch's troops, marching on the left bank of the Tiber along the Salarian Way, hoped to enter Rome. All round the confines of the

Ducatus Romae the Lombard troops were clustering, and the count was forced to return to Ravenna with his mission unfulfilled.

Thus then the political atmosphere of central Italy was full of electricity before the decrees against Image worship came to evoke the lightning flash of revolution. It will be well here to quote the exact words of the *Liber Pontificalis*, which is our only trustworthily authority for the actual reception of the decrees in Italy :

“By orders subsequently transmitted the Emperor had decreed that no image of any saint, martyr or angel should be retained in the churches; for he asserted that all these things were accursed. If the Pope would acquiesce in this change he should be taken into the Emperor’s good graces, but if he prevented this also from being done he should be deposed from his see. Therefore that pious man, despising the sovereign’s profane command, now armed himself against the Emperor as against a foe, renouncing his heresy and writing to Christians everywhere to be on their guard, because a new impiety had arisen. Therefore all the inhabitants of the Pentapolis and the armies of Venetia resisted the Emperors, declaring that they would never be art or part in the murder of the Pope, but would rather strive manfully for his defence, so that they visited with their anathema the Exarch Paulus as well as him who had given him his orders, and all who were like-minded with him. Scorning to yield obedience to his orders, they elected dukes for themselves in every part of Italy, and thus they all provided for their own safety and that of the pontiff. And when [the full extent of] the Emperor’s wickedness was known, all Italy joined in the design to elect for themselves an Emperor and lead him to Constantinople. But the Pope restrained them from this scheme, hoping for the conversion of the sovereign”.

From this narrative, which has all the internal marks of truthfulness, it will be seen that Gregory II, while utterly repudiating the Iconoclastic decrees and arming himself (perhaps rather with spiritual than carnal weapons) against the Emperor as against a foe, threw all his influence into the scale against violent revolution and disruption of the Empire. In fact, we may almost say that the Pope after the publication of the decrees was more loyal to the Emperor, and less disposed to push matters to extremity, than he had been before that change in his ecclesiastical policy. The reason for this, as we may infer from the events which immediately followed, was that he saw but too plainly that revolt from the Empire at this crisis would mean the universal dominion of the Lombards in Italy.

Having given this, which appears to be the true history of Gregory’s attitude during the eventful years from 725 to 731, we must now examine the account given by Theophanes, which, copied almost verbatim by subsequent Greek historians, has unfortunately succeeded in passing current as history. *Anno Mundi* 6217 [=A.D. 725]. “First year of Gregory, bishop of Rome. [Gregory’s accession really took place ten years earlier.] In this year the impious Emperor Leo began to stir the question of the destruction of the holy and venerable images; and learning this, Gregory the Pope of Rome stopped the payment of taxes in Italy and Rome, writing to Leo a doctrinal letter the effect that the Emperor ought not to meddle in questions of faith, nor seek to innovate on the ancient doctrines of the Church which had been settled by the holy fathers.

(A.M. 6221; = A.D. 729.) After describing the steadfast opposition of Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, to the wild beast Leo (fitly so named) and his underlings, Theophanes continues, “In the elder Rome also Gregory, that all-holy and apostolic man and worthy successor of Peter, chief of the Apostles, was refulgent in word and deed; who caused both Rome and Italy and all the Western regions to revolt from their civil and ecclesiastical obedience to Leo and the Empire under his rule”.

He then relates the deposition of Germanus and the elevation to the Patriarchate of Anastasius falsely so called : “But Gregory the holy president of Rome, as I before said,

disowned Anastasius by his circular letters refuting Leo by his epistles as a worker of impiety, and withdrew Rome with the whole of Italy from his Empire”.

The reader has now before him the passages in the history of Theophanes on the strength of which Gregory II is generally censured or praised (according to the point of view taken by the narrator) for having stimulated the revolt of Italy and stopped the payment of the Imperial taxes. They are quite irreconcilable with the story of the *Liber Pontificalis*, and every historian must choose between them. For my part, I have no hesitation in accepting the authority of the Papal biographer, and throwing overboard the Byzantine monk. The former was strictly contemporary, the latter was born seventeen years after Gregory was in his grave. Theophanes wrote his history at the beginning of the ninth century, when the separation of the Eastern and Western Empires through the agency of the Popes was an accomplished fact, and he not unnaturally attributed to Gregory the same line of policy which he knew to have been pursued by his successors Hadrian and Leo. He was moreover, as we have seen, outrageously ill-informed as to other Western affairs of the eighth century. It is easy to understand how the refusal of taxes, which was really an earlier and independent act in the drama, became mixed in his mind with the dispute about images, and how he was thus led to describe that as a counter-blow to the Iconoclastic decrees, which was really decided upon ere the question of Image-worship was mooted.

Theophanes is probably right in saying that the Pope sent letters to the Emperor warning him against interference in sacred things. Unfortunately these letters have perished, for the coarse and insolent productions which have for the last three centuries passed current under that name are now believed by many scholars to be forgeries of a later date. Much confusion is cleared away from the history, and the memory of a brave but loyal Pope is relieved from an unnecessary stain, by the rejection of these apocryphal letters.

Anarchy and the disruption of all civil and religious ties seemed to impend over Italy when the Emperor and the Pope stood thus in open opposition to one another. There was a certain Exhilaratus, duke of Campania, whose son Hadrian had some years before incurred the anathema of a Roman synod for having presumed to marry the deaconess Epiphania. Father and son now sought to revenge this old grudge on the Pontiff. They raised the banner of obedience to the Emperor and death to the Pope of Rome, and apparently drew away a considerable number of the Campanians after them. But the Romans (probably the civic guard which had been so conspicuous in some recent events) went forth and dispersed the Campanians, killing both Exhilaratus and his son. Another Imperial duke named Peter was arrested, accused of writing letters to the Emperor against the Pope, and, according to the cruel fashion which Italy borrowed from Byzantium, was deprived of sight.

At Ravenna itself something like civil war seems to have raged. There was both an Imperial and a Papal party in that city, but apparently the latter prevailed. The Exarch Paulus was killed (probably in 727 and it seems probable that for some time Ravenna preserved a kind of tumultuary independence, disavowing the rule of the Emperor, and proclaiming its fidelity to the Pope and the party of the Image-worshippers.

Meanwhile out of all this confusion and anarchy the statesmanlike Liutprand was drawing no small advantage. In the north-east he pushed his conquests into the valley of the Panaro, took Bologna and several small towns in its neighborhood, invaded, and perhaps conquered the whole of the Pentapolis and the territory of Osimo. It would seem from the expression used by the Papal biographer that with none of these towns was any great display of force needed, but that all, more or less willingly, gave themselves up to the Lombard king, whose rule probably offered a better chance of peace and something like prosperity than that either of the Exarch or the Exarch's foes.

At the same time Liutprand also took (by guile, we are told) the town of Sutrium, only thirty miles north of Rome, but this, after holding it for one hundred and forty days, on the earnest request of the Pope he gave back to the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, without however restoring the booty which had rewarded the capture.

On the death of Paulus, the Eunuch Euty chius was appointed Exarch. He was apparently the last man who held that office, and though there is a provoking silence on the part of all our authorities as to his character, we may perhaps infer that he was a somewhat stronger and more capable man than many of his predecessors. But that is very faint praise.

The new Exarch landed at Naples—perhaps on account of the disturbed state of Ravenna—and from that city began to spread his net for the feet of the Pontiff. If the biographer may be trusted (which is doubtful), he sent a private messenger to Rome instructing his partisans to murder both the Pope and the chief nobles of the City. The citizens got hold of the messenger and his letters, and when they perceived the cruel madness of the Exarch they would fain have put the messenger to death, but the Pontiff hindered them. However, all the citizens, great and small, assembled in some sort of rude and unconscious imitation of the old *comitia* (held probably in one of the great Roman basilicas), wherein they solemnly anathematized Euty chius and bound themselves by a great oath to live or die with the Pontiff, “the zealot of the Christian faith and defender of the Churches”. The Exarch sent messengers to both king and dukes of the Lombards, promising them great gifts if they would desist from helping Gregory II, but for a time all his blandishments were unavailing; Lombards and Romans vying with one another in declaring their earnest desire to suffer, if need were, a glorious death for the defence of the Pope and the true faith. Meanwhile the Pope, while giving himself up to fastings and daily litanies, bestowed alms on the poor with lavish hand, and in all his discourses to the people, delivered in gentle tones, thanked them for their fidelity to his person, and exhorted them to continue in the faith, but also warned them not to cease from their love and loyalty towards the Roman Empire. Thus did he soften the hearts of all and mitigate their continued sorrow.

But though the Exarch was at first unsuccessful both with the king and the dukes of the Lombards, there came a time (probably in the year 730) when Liutprand began to listen to his words and when a strange sympathy of opposites drew the Lombard King and the Greek Exarch into actual alliance with one another. If we attentively study Liutprand’s career we shall, I think, see that the one dominant feature in his policy was his determination to make himself really as well as theoretically supreme over all Lombard men. In his view, to extend his territories at the expense of the dying Empire was good, and he neglected no suitable opportunity of doing so. To pose as the friend and champion of the Pope was perhaps even better, and he would sometimes abandon hardly-won conquests in order to earn this character. But to gather together in one hand all the resources of the Lombard nationality, to teach the half-independent dukes of Benevento and Spoleto their places, to make Trent and Friuli obey the word of a king going forth from Pavia, this was best of all: this was the object which was dearest to his heart. Thus what Ecgberht did eighty years later for England, Liutprand strove to do, not altogether unsuccessfully, for Italy.

From this point of view the rally of Lombard enthusiasm round the threatened Pope was not altogether acceptable to Liutprand. It was a movement in which the central government at Pavia had had little share. Tuscia and Spoleto, preeminently Spoleto, had distinguished themselves by their enthusiasm at the Salarian Bridge in repelling the invading Greeks. We are not informed of the attitude of Benevento, but we can see that the whole tendency of the movement was to substitute an independent Central Italy, with Rome as its spiritual capital, for the confessedly subordinate duchies of Clusium, Lucca, Spoleto, and the like.

As for Spoleto, there can be little doubt that Transamund, the undutiful son who had turned his father into a priest, was already showing his sovereign that he would have a hard fight to keep him in the old theoretical state of subservience and subjection. At Benevento also the forces of disorder were at work and, as we shall see a little later, a usurper was probably ruling the duchy of the Samnites.

In order then to accomplish his main purpose, the consolidation of Lombard Italy, Liutprand formed a league with the Exarch Eutychius, and the two rulers agreed to join their forces, with the common object of subjecting the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento to the king, and of enabling the Exarch to work his will on the Pope and the City of Rome. In accordance with this plan, Liutprand, who was of course far the stronger member of the confederacy, marched to Spoleto, received from both the dukes hostages and oaths of fidelity, and then moving northward to Rome encamped with all his army in the Plain of Nero, between the Vatican and Monte Mario. The combination of the Imperial deputy and the Lombard king, the might of Right, and the right of Might, seemed to bode instant destruction to the Roman Pontiff; but he repeated, not in vain, the experiment which his great predecessor Leo, three centuries before, had tried on Attila. He went forth from the City, attended doubtless by a long train of ecclesiastics; he addressed one of his soothing and sweet-toned addresses to the Lombard, and soon had the joy of seeing him fall prostrate at his feet and vow that no harm should befall him through his means. In token of his penitence and submission Liutprand took off his mantle, his doublet his belt, his gilded sword and spear, his golden crown and silver cross, and laid them all down in the crypt before the altar of St. Peter. Solemn prayers were said; Liutprand besought the Pope to receive his ally the Exarch into favor, and thus a reconciliation, at least an apparent reconciliation, was effected, and the ominous alliance between King and Exarch was practically dissolved, never to be again renewed.

While the Exarch, now as it would seem an honored guest of the Pope, was tarrying at Rome, a wild and hopeless attempt to bring the opposition to Leo III to a head, by setting up a rival Emperor, was made and easily defeated. The pretender, whose real name was Petasius, assumed the name of Tiberius. This was, as we have seen, the appellation by which not only the Emperor Apsimar, but also Basil the pretender to the Empire who arose in Sicily, had elected to be called. We must suppose that some remembrance of the popular virtues of Tiberius II had obliterated the odium attaching to the name of Tiberius I. However, only a few towns in Tuscany swore allegiance to the usurper, and the Exarch, though troubled at the tidings of the insurrection, yet being comforted by the assurances of the Pope's fidelity, and receiving from him not only a deputation of bishops, but also the more effectual help of a troop of soldiers, went forth to meet the pretender, defeated him, and cut off his head, which he sent as a token of victory to Constantinople. "But not even so", says the Papal biographer, "did the Emperor receive the Romans back into full favor".

On February 2, 731, the aged Pope died. He was a man with much of the true Roman feeling which had animated his great namesake and predecessor, but with more sweetness of temper, and he had played his part in a difficult and dangerous time with dignity and prudence, upholding the rights of the Church and the claims of the Holy See as he understood them, but raising his powerful voice against the disruption of the Empire. By a hard fate his name has been in the minds of posterity connected with some of the coarsest and most violent letters that were ever believed to have issued from the Papal Chancery, letters more worthy of Boniface VIII than of the "sweet reasonableness" of Gregory II.

The new Pope, whose election was completed on March 18, 731, and who took the title of Gregory III, was of Syrian origin, descended doubtless from one of the multitude of emigrants who had been driven westwards and Romewards by the tide of Mohammedan invasion. He has not been so fortunate in his biographer as his predecessor, for the imbecile ecclesiastic who has

composed the notice of his life which appears in the *Liber Pontificalis* is more concerned with counting the crowns and the basins, the crosses and the candlesticks, which Gregory III presented to the several churches in Rome, than with chronicling the momentous events which occurred during the ten years of his Pontificate. It is clear however that the third Gregory pursued in the main the same policy as his predecessor, sternly refusing to yield a point to the Emperor on the question of Image-worship, but also refusing to be drawn into any movement for the dismemberment of the Empire. In his relations with Liutprand he was less fortunate. He intrigued, as it seems to me unfairly, with the turbulent dukes of Spoleto and Benevento : and he was the first Pope in this century to utter that cry for help from the other side of the Alps which was to prove so fatal to Italy.

Gregory III was evidently determined to try what ecclesiastical warnings and threats would effect in changing the purpose of Leo. He wrote a letter charged with all the vigor of the Apostolic See, and sent it to the Emperor by the hands of a presbyter named George. But George, moved by the fear natural to man, did not dare to present the letter and returned to Rome with his mission unaccomplished.

The Pope determined to degrade his craven messenger from the priestly office, but on the intercession of the bishops of the surrounding district assembled in council, he decided to give him one more chance to prove his obedience. This time George attempted in good faith to accomplish his mission, but was forcibly detained in Sicily by the officers of the Emperor, and sentenced to banishment for a year.

Council of Italian bishops

On November 1, 731, the Pope convened a Council, at which the Archbishops of Grado and Ravenna and ninety-three other Italian bishops were present, besides presbyters, deacons, consuls and members of the commonalty. By this Council it was decreed, "that if hereafter any one despising those who hold fast the ancient usage of the Apostolic Church should stand forth as a destroyer, profaner, and blasphemer against the veneration of the sacred images, to wit of Christ and his Immaculate Mother, of the blessed Apostles and the Saints, he should be excluded from the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and from all the unity and fabric of the Church".

With this decree of the Council was sent to the Emperor a *defensor* named Constantine, who, like his predecessor, was forcibly detained and sentenced to a year's exile. The messengers from various parts of Italy who were sent to pray for the restoration of the sacred images were all similarly detained for a space of eight months by Sergius, Prefect of Sicily. At last the *defensor* Peter reached the royal city of Constantinople and presented his letters of warning and rebuke to Leo, to his son Constantine (now the partner of his throne), and to the Iconoclastic Patriarch Anastasius.

Here the Papal biographer breaks off, and we have to turn to another source to learn what answer the Emperor made to the remonstrances which had been addressed to him with so much persistence.

Theophanes (who knows nothing of the accession of the third Gregory) gives us the following information under date of 732 :

"But the Emperor raged against the Pope and the revolt of Rome and Italy, and having equipped a great fleet, he sent it against them under the command of Manes, general of the Cibyrhaeots. But the vain man was put to shame, his fleet being shipwrecked in the Adriatic sea. Then the fighter against God being yet more enraged, and persisting in his Arabian [Mohammedan] design, laid a poll-tax on the third part of the people of Calabria and Sicily. He also ordered that the so-called *patrimonia* of the holy and eminent Apostles [Peter and Paul] revered in the elder Rome, which had from of old brought in a revenue to the churches of

three and a half talents of gold, should be confiscated to the State. He ordered moreover that all the male children who were born should be inspected and registered, as Pharaoh aforetime did with the children of the Hebrews, a measure which not even his teachers the Arabians had taken with the Eastern Christians who were their subjects”.

A few facts stand out clearly from this somewhat confused narrative. The maritime expedition which was frustrated by the storm in the Adriatic was no doubt intended to enforce the Iconoclastic decrees throughout Imperial Italy, perhaps to arrest the Pope. Apparently after the failure of this attempt it was never renewed. Financial grievances (probably the financial exigencies of the Imperial treasury) are again, as in our previous extracts from the same author, confusedly mixed up with religious innovations. But we may fairly infer that the sequestration of the Papal patrimonies, which would take effect chiefly in Sicily and Calabria, was meant as a punishment for the Pope's contumacy in respect of the decrees against image-worship : and if maintained, as it seems to have been, it must have seriously diminished the Papal splendor. The poll-tax and its necessary consequence the census of births, which is so absurdly compared to the infanticidal decree of Pharaoh, was doubtless a mere attempt—whether wise or unwise we cannot judge—to balance the Imperial budget. The fact that it was confined to Sicily and Calabria seems to show that all the territory in Northern and Central Italy which had lately belonged to the Empire was still seething with disaffection. Possibly even Ravenna itself was yet unsubdued, and in the possession of the insurgents.

At the same time, by an important ecclesiastical revolution, all the wide territories east of the Adriatic, which as part of the old Prefecture of Illyricum had hitherto obeyed the spiritual jurisdiction of Rome, were now rent away from the Latin Patriarchate: truly a tremendous loss, and one for which at the time it needed all the new conquests in England and Germany to make compensation.

With the facts thus gleaned from the pages of Theophanes our information as to the transactions between Emperor and Pope for the ten years of Gregory's pontificate comes to an end. Let us now turn to consider Liutprand's dealings with his subject dukes during the same period.

Affairs of Friuli

First we find our attention drawn to the region of the Julian Alps, where for some six and twenty years Pemmo, the skillful and ingenious, the tolerant husband of the ungainly Ratperga, the founder of one of the earliest schools of chivalry had been ruling the duchy of Friuli. It was somewhere about the point which we have now reached in the reign of Liutprand that this wary old ruler came into collision with that king's power, and lost both duchy and liberty. The cause of the trouble was ecclesiastical, and came, as almost all ecclesiastical troubles in that reign did come, directly or indirectly, from the controversy about the Three Chapters.

The synods which were held under Cunincpert at Pavia and Aquileia had reunited the Church of North Italy in the matter of doctrine, but the vested rights of the two Patriarchates which had been created in the course of the schism, remained, and were fixed in the established order of the Church, when, at the request of King Liutprand, Gregory II sent the *pallium* of a metropolitan to Serenus, Patriarch of Aquileia. Grado, which was within range of the fleets of Byzantium, had hitherto been the sole patriarchate in Venetia and Istria recognized by Rome. Now Aquileia, not ten miles distant from Grado (from whose desolate shore the campanile of the cathedral is plainly visible), Aquileia, which in all things was swayed by the nod of the Lombard king, was a recognized and orthodox Patriarchate also. A singular arrangement truly, and one which was made barely tolerable by the provision that, while maritime Venetia, including the islands in the lagunes, now fast rising into prosperity and importance, was to obey the Patriarch of Grado, continental Venetia, including Friuli and the bishoprics and

convents endowed by its Lombard dukes, was to be subject to the rule of the Patriarch of Aquileia.

Dissensions of course arose, or rather never ceased, between the two so nearly neighboring spiritual rulers. They are attested by two letters of Pope Gregory II, one to Serenus of Aquileia, whom he calls bishop of Forum Julii, warning him not to presume on his new *pallium* and on the favor of his king in order to pass beyond the bounds of the Lombard nation and trespass on the territory of his brother of Grado; the other to Donatus of Grado telling him of the warning which has been sent to Serenus.

It will be noticed that in the superscription of the letter to Serenus he is spoken of as bishop of Forum Julii. This can hardly have been his contemporary title, but it describes that which was to be his position in later times. As the Lombard duke was his patron, power naturally gravitated towards him, and Aquileia, always somber in its wide-reaching ruins, and now exposed to attack from the navies of hostile Byzantium ceased to be a pleasant residence for the Patriarch who took his title from its cathedral. At first he came only as far as Cormones, a little *castrum* half way on the road to Friuli. To the capital itself he could not yet penetrate, for, strangely enough, there was already one somewhat intrusive bishop there. From Julium Carnicum (Zuglio), high up in the defiles of the Predil pass, Bishop Fidentius had descended to Cividale in search of sunshine and princely favor, and receiving a welcome from some earlier duke had established himself there as its bishop. To him had succeeded Amator : but now Callistus, the new Patriarch of Aquileia, who was of noble birth and yearned after congenial society, taking it ill that these Alpine bishops should live in the capital and converse with Duke Pemmo and the young scions of the Lombard nobility, while he had to spend his life in the companionship of the boors of Cormones, took a bold step, forcibly expelled Bishop Amator. and went to live in his episcopal palace at Cividale. But Pemmo and the Lombard nobles had not invited Amator to their banquets to see their guest-friend thus flouted with impunity. Having arrested Callistus, they led him away to the castle of Potium overhanging the sea, into which they at first proposed to cast him headlong. "God, however", says Paulus, "prevented them from carrying on this design, but Pemmo thrust him into the dungeon and made him feed on the bread of tribulation".

The tidings of this high-handed proceeding greatly exasperated Liutprand, in whose political schemes the new orthodox Patriarch of Forum Julii was probably an important factor. He at once issued orders for the deposition of Pemmo and the elevation of his son Ratchis in his stead. No great display of force seems to have been needed for this change; probably there was already a large party in the duchy who disapproved of the arrest of Callistus. Pemmo and his friends meditated an escape into the land of the Slovenes on the other side of the mountains, but Ratchis persuaded them to come in and throw themselves on the mercy of the king. At Pavia King Liutprand sat upon the judgment-seat, and ordered all who had been concerned in the arrest of Callistus to be brought before him. The fallen Duke Pemmo and two of his sons, Ratchait and Aistulf, came first. Their life was yielded as a favor to the loyal Ratchis, but they were bidden—perhaps in contemptuous tones—to stand behind the royal chair. Then with a loud voice the king read out the list of all the adherents of Pemmo, and ordered that they should be taken into custody. The ignominy of the whole proceeding heated the mind of Aistulf to such rage that he half drew his sword out of the sheath, and was about to strike the king, but Ratchis stayed his arm, and the treasonable design perhaps escaped the notice of Liutprand. All Pemmo's followers were then arrested and condemned to long captivity in chains, except one brave man named Herfemar, who drew his sword, defended himself bravely against the king's officers, and escaped to the basilica of St. Michael, which he did not leave till he had received the king's (faithfully kept) promise of pardon.

Ratchis justified the choice made of him for his father's successor by an irruption into Carniola, in which he wrought much havoc among the Slovenic enemies of his people, delivering himself from great personal peril by a well-aimed blow with his club at the chief of his assailants.

Of the after-fate of Pemmo and whether he lingered long in imprisonment we hear unfortunately nothing. He was certainly not restored to his duchy. From the whole course of the narrative we can at once perceive that a much stronger hand than that of the Perctarits and the Cunincperis is at the helm of the state, and that Liutprand is fast converting the nominal subjection of the great dukes into a very real and practical one.

Affairs of Benevento

Of the yet more important affairs of the great southern duchy of Benevento we have unfortunately but slender information. We have seen that before the death of Gregory II (731) Liutprand formed an alliance with the Exarch, in order that he might repress the rebellious tendencies of the dukes of Benevento and Spoleto. The duke of Benevento against whom this alliance was pointed is generally supposed to have been Romwald II, who had married Gumperga, niece of Liutprand. That theory cannot be disproved, but as Romwald seems to have reigned in peace with his great kinsman for many years, and as his death possibly occurred in 750, I am disposed to conjecture that it was the troubles arising out of that event which necessitated the interference of Liutprand. Paulus tells us that "on the death of Romwald there remained his son Gisulf, who was still but a little boy. Against him certain persons rising up sought to destroy him, but the people of the Beneventans, who were always remarkable for their fidelity to their leaders, slew them and preserved the life of their [young] duke". This is all that the Lombard historian tells us, but from an early catalogue of Beneventan dukes preserved at Monte Cassino we learn that there was actually another duke, presumably an usurper, named *Audelais*, who ruled in Benevento for two years after the death of Romwald II. It is clear therefore that Liutprand's work at Benevento was a difficult one, probably not accomplished without bloodshed. Having doubtless fought and conquered Audelais, he installed in the Samnite duchy his own nephew Gregory (who had been before duke of Clusium) and carried off his little kinsman Gisulf to be educated at Pavia. Here in course of time he gave him a noble maiden named Scauniperga to wife, and trained him for the great office which he was one day to hold.

Gregory is a man of whom one would gladly hear something more, for it would seem that he must have been a strong and capable ruler, who in such a difficult position kept the Beneventan duchy so long quiet and apparently loyal: but all that we know is that after ruling for seven years he died, apparently a natural death, and that *Gottschalk* was raised to the dukedom, evidently as an act of rebellion against the over-lordship of Pavia. Of *Gottschalk* also we hear very little except that his wife was named Anna, and from the emphatic way in which this lady is mentioned one conjectures that it was feminine ambition which urged *Gottschalk* to grasp the dangerous coronet. Three years, 739-742, he reigned, and then at last Liutprand, having put in order the affairs of Spoleto and other matters which needed mending, drew near to Benevento. At the mere rumor of his approach *Gottschalk* began to prepare for flight to Greece. A ship was engaged, probably at Brindisi or Taranto, and laden with his treasures and his wife, but ere the trembling duke himself could start upon his hasty journey along the great Via Trajana, the Beneventans who were loyal to young Gisulf and the house of Romwald rushed into his palace and slew him. The lady Anna with her treasures arrived safely at Constantinople.

King Liutprand arriving at Benevento seems to have found all opposition vanished, and to have settled all things according to his will. He installed his great-nephew Gisulf as duke in his

rightful placed and returned victorious to Pavia. The reign of *Gisulf II* lasted for ten years, and overpassed the life of Liutprand and the limits of this volume.

In order to give a connected view of the changes which occurred at Benevento, it has been necessary to travel almost to the end of the reign of Liutprand. We must now return to the year 735, three years after he had suppressed the usurpation of Audelais of Benevento. It was apparently in May of this year that a strange event happened, and one which as it would seem somewhat overcast by its consequences the last nine years of the great king's reign. He was seized with a dangerous sickness, and seemed to be drawing near to death. Without waiting for that event, however, the precipitate Lombards, perhaps dreading the perils of a disputed succession, raised his nephew Hildeprand to the throne. The ceremony took place in that Church of the Virgin which the grateful Perctarit erected outside the walls in the place called *Ad Perticas*. When the scepter was placed in the hand of the new king men saw with a shudder that a cuckoo came and perched upon it. To our minds the incident would suggest some harsh thoughts of the nephew who was thus coming cuckoo-like to make use of his uncle's nest; but the wise men of the Lombards seem to have drawn from it an augury that "his reign would be a useless one". When Liutprand heard what was done he was much displeased, and indeed the incident was only too like that of the Visigothic king who in similar circumstances was made an involuntary monk, and so lost his throne. However, after what was perhaps a tedious convalescence Liutprand bowed to the inevitable and accepted Hildeprand as the partner of his throne. He must have been a man with some reputation for courage and capacity, or he would not have been chosen by the Lombards at such a crisis; but nothing that is recorded of him seems to justify that reputation. Both as partner of his uncle and as sole king of the Lombards, the word which best describes him seems to be that chosen by the historian, *inutilis*.

Of the years between 735 and 739 we can give no accurate account. They may have been occupied by operations against Ravenna. There are some slight indications that Transamund of Spoleto was making one of his usual rebellions. It was perhaps during this time that the strong position of Gallese on the Flaminian Way, which had somehow fallen into the hands of the Lombards and had been a perpetual bone of contention between Rome and Spoleto, was redeemed by the Pope for a large sum of money paid to Transamund a transaction which may have laid the foundation of the alliance between that prince and Gregory, and at the same time may easily have roused the displeasure of Liutprand. But the most important event in these years was probably Liutprand's expedition for the deliverance of Provence from the Saracens. His brother-in-law Charles Martel, with whom he seems to have been throughout his life on terms of cordial friendship, had sent him his young son Pippin that he might, according to Teutonic custom, cut off some of his youthful locks and adopt him as *filius per arma*. The ceremony was duly accomplished, and the young Arnulfing having received many gifts from his adoptive father returned to his own land. He was one day to recross the Alps, not as son of the Mayor of the Palace, but as king of the Franks, and to overthrow the kingdom of the Lombards. But now came a cry for help from the real to the adoptive father of the young warrior. The Saracens from their stronghold in Narbonne had pressed up the valley of the Rhone. Avignon had been surrendered to them; Arles had fallen; it seemed as if they would make Provence their own and would ravage all Aquitaine. At the earnest entreaty of Charles Martel, who sent ambassadors with costly presents to his brother-in-law, Liutprand led the whole army of the Lombards over the mountains, and at the tidings of his approach the Saracens left their work of devastation and fled terrified to their stronghold.

In 739 the storm which had long been brewing in Central Italy burst forth. Transamund of Spoleto went into open rebellion against his sovereign. Gottschalk, as we have seen, in this year usurped the ducal throne of Benevento, and Pope Gregory III having formed a league with the two rebel dukes defied the power of Liutprand. The king at this time dealt only with

Spoleto. He marched thither with his army; Transamund fled at his approach, taking refuge in Rome. In June, 739, Liutprand was signing charters in the palace of Spoleto and appointed one of his adherents named *Hilderic*, duke in the room of Transamund. He then marched on Rome, and as Gregory refused to give up his mutinous ally he took four frontier towns (Ameria, Horta, Polimartium, and Blera) away from the *Ducatus Romae* and joined them to the territory of the Lombards, whose border was now indeed brought perilously near to Rome. Having accomplished these changes Liutprand returned to Pavia.

The policy, perhaps we ought to say the intrigues, of Gregory III had so far been a failure. By his alliance with the rebellious dukes he had only made the most powerful man in Italy his enemy, and had lost four frontier cities to the Lombards. Help from distant and unfriendly Byzantium, help from the Exarch who was himself trembling for the safety of Ravenna, if not actually an exile from its walls, were equally unattainable. In these circumstances Gregory III entered again upon the policy which Pelagius II had pursued a century and a half before, and called on the Frank for aid. Writing to "his most excellent son, the *sub-regulus* lord Charles", he confided to him his intolerable woes from the persecution and oppression of the Lombards. The revenues appropriated to the maintenance of the lights on St. Peter's tomb had been intercepted, and the offerings of Charles himself and his ancestors had been carried off. The Church of St. Peter was naked and desolate; if the Frankish "under-king" cared for the favor of the Prince of the Apostles and the hope of eternal life, he would hasten to her aid.

As this letter was ineffectual, another was dispatched in more urgent terms. "Tears", said Gregory, "were his portion night and day when he saw the Church of God deserted by the sons who ought to have avenged her. The little that was left of the papal patrimony in the regions of Ravenna, and whose revenues ought to have gone to the support of the poor and the kindling of the lights at the Apostolic tomb, was being wasted with fire and sword by Liutprand and Hildeprand the Lombard kings, who had already sent several armies to do similar damage to the district round Rome, destroying St. Peter's farm-houses and carrying off the remnant of his cattle. Doubtless the Prince of the Apostles could if he pleased defend his own, but he would try the hearts of those who called themselves his friends and ought to be his champions. "Do not believe", urges the Pope, "the false suggestions of those two kings against the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento, as if they had committed any fault. All these stories are lies. Their only crime is that last year they refused to make an inroad upon us from their duchies and carry off the goods of the Holy Apostles, saying that they had made a covenant with us which they would keep. It is for this cause that the sword rages against them, and that those most noble dukes are degraded, and the two kings are making their own wicked followers dukes in their room. Send we pray you some faithful messenger, inaccessible to bribes, who shall see with his own eyes our persecution, the humiliation of the Church of God, the desolation of His property, and the tears of the foreigners (who are dwelling in Rome). Before God and by the coming judgment we exhort you, most Christian son, to come to St. Peter's help, and with all speed to beat back those kings and order them to return to their own homes. I send you the keys of the chapel of the blessed Peter, and exhort you by them and by the living and true God not to prefer the friendship of the kings of the Lombards to that of the Prince of the Apostles, but to come speedily to our aid, that your faith and good report may be spread abroad throughout all the nations, and that we may be able to say with the prophet, 'The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee'."

The passionate appeals of the Pope failed of their effect. Charles Martel, as we have seen, was not himself morbidly scrupulous in the respect which he paid to the property of the Church. He probably did not believe, as posterity has not believed, that the sole fault of the two dukes was their refusal to invade the Roman territory. He rather saw in them two rebellious servants who were trying to sanctify their own turbulent courses by a pretence of defending the

property of St. Peter. He himself was Liutprand's kinsman, his son had lately received a hospitable welcome at his court, his own cry for help against the Saracens had been generously responded to by the Lombard king. Decidedly he would not interfere against him, nor leave the plains of Provence a prey to the Saracens of Narbonne in order to win back for the angry Pope the towns which he had lost by his own rash meddling in the game of politics.

This being so, Transamund determined to try what he could effect by his own power, aided by the militia of the *Ducatus Romae*. He and his allies divided themselves into two bands, one of which invaded the southern part of the duchy, marching by the old Via Valeria, through the country of the Marsi and Peligni, passing the northern border of the Fucine lake, and receiving the submission, but not the willing submission, of the chief towns in this part of the duchy. The other troop, which was probably led by Transamund himself, marched along the Salarian Way, received the submission of Reate, and made all the old territory of the Sabines subject to the rebel duke. By December Transamund was again in his old palace of Spoleto, had slain his rival Hilderic, and resumed all his former audacity of rebellion against his king.

Affairs of Spoleto

The open alliance of the Pope and the rebel dukes, the easy reconquest of Spoleto, the always disloyal attitude of Gottschalk at Benevento caused Liutprand the Pope, and his Lombard counselors great anxiety. As the Papal biographer says, "There was great disturbance of spirits between the Romans and the Lombards, because the Beneventans and Spoletans held with the Romans". The unnatural alliance however was of short duration. Solemnly as Transamund had promised that if he recovered his duchy he would restore the four lost cities to the *Ducatus Romae*, when he was once securely seated in the palace of Spoleto he broke all his promises, and the towns which had been lost for his sake by the Romans continued Lombard still. On this the Pope withdrew the aid, whatever it was worth, which he had afforded to Transamund, and left Liutprand to deal with the two rebel dukes alone.

For some reason, however, possibly on account of the events hereafter to be related in connection with the capture and reconquest of Ravenna, something like two years elapsed after Transamund's expedition before Liutprand set forth to recover Spoleto. During this Gregory III died (December 10, 741), and was succeeded after an unusually short interval by Zacharias, a Pope of Greek origin, whose memorable pontificate lasted ten years. Liutprand marched through the Pentapolis, and on the road between Fano and Fossombrone in the valley of the Metaurus sore peril overtook him. The two brave brothers of Friuli, Ratchis and Aistulf, both now loyally serving the Lombard king, commanded the van of the army, and when they reached a certain forest between those two towns they found the Flaminian Way blocked, and a strong force of Spoletans and Romans posted to dispute the passage. Great loss was inflicted on the advancing army, but the prowess of Ratchis, his brother, and a few of their bravest henchmen, on whom all the weight of battle fell, redeemed the desperate day. A certain Spoletan champion named Berto called on Ratchis by name, and rushed upon him with lance in rest, but Ratchis unhorsed him with his spear. The followers of Ratchis would have slain him outright, but he, pitiful by nature, said "Let him live", and so the humbled champion crawled away on hands and knees to the shelter of the forest. On Aistulf, as he stood upon the bridge over the Metaurus, two strong Spoletans came rushing from behind, but he suddenly with the butt end of his spear swept one of them from the bridge, then turned swiftly to the other, slew him, and sent him after his comrade.

Meanwhile the new Pope Zacharias had contrived to have an interview with the Lombard king, and had received his promise to surrender the four towns. Upon this the Roman army followed Liutprand's standards, and Transamund (according to the Papal biographer), seeing

this conjunction of forces against him, recognized the hopelessness of the game, and surrendered himself and his city to Liutprand, who set up his nephew Agiprand as duke in his place. Like Gregory of Benevento, Agiprand had been duke of Clusium before he was thus promoted to the rule of a great semi-independent duchy. As for Transamund, his turbulent career ended in the cloister. He was made a cleric, that is probably monk as well as priest, and exchanging the adventurous and luxurious life of a Lombard duke for the seclusion of the convent had abundant leisure to meditate on his conduct towards his father, upon whom eighteen years before he had forced the same life of undesired religiousness. From Spoleto Liutprand proceeded to Benevento, and, as we have seen, expelled the rebellious occupant from that duchy also.

And here we must interrupt our survey of the changes which occurred in Central and Southern Italy, in order to notice an event of the greatest importance, the to which unfortunately we are unable to assign a precise date. I allude to the conquest of Ravenna by the Lombards and its recovery by the Venetian subjects of the Empire. Thrice during the two centuries of Lombard domination had the neighboring port of Classis been captured by the armies of Spoleto or of Pavia; but Ravenna herself, the city of the swamps and the pine-forest, had retained that proud attribute of impregnability which had made her ever since the days of Honorius the key-city of Northern Italy. Now she lost that great preeminence, but how we know not. When one thinks how even Procopius or Zosimus, to say nothing of Thucydides or Xenophon, would have painted for us that fateful siege, it is difficult not to murmur at the utter silence of the Grecian Muse of History at this crisis. Even a legend of the capture from the pen of the foolish Agnellus might have shed forth a few rays upon the darkness, but Agnellus seems never to have heard of this disaster to his native city. All that we have certainly to rely on is contained in the following sentences from Paulus[^] which come immediately after his account of Liutprand's expedition against the Saracens of Provence :

“Many wars, in truth, did the same King Liutprand wage against the Romans, in which he ever stood forth victorious, except that once in his absence his army was cut to pieces at Ariminum, and at another time when the king was abiding at Pilleus in the Pentapolis, a great multitude of those who were bringing him gifts and offerings and presents from various Churches were either slain or made captive by the onrush of the Romans. *Again, when Hildeprand the king's nephew and Peredeo duke of Vicenza were holding Ravenna, by a sudden onset of the Venetians Hildeprand was made prisoner, and Peredeo fell fighting bravely.* In the following time also, the Romans, as usual swollen with pride, came together from all quarters under the command of Agatho duke of Perugia, hoping to take Bologna, where Walcari, Peredeo and Rotcari were abiding in camp. But these men rushing upon them, made a terrible slaughter of their troops, and compelled the others to take flight”. Paulus then goes on to describe the revolt of Transamund, which happened “in these days”.

This paragraph of Paulus is dateless, unchronological, and confused beyond even his usual manner. It will be seen that he makes Peredeo come to life again, and work havoc among the Romans after he has fallen fighting bravely with them. But with all its blemishes the paragraph is a most important addition to our knowledge. It shows us that Ravenna was actually captured by the Lombards in the reign of Liutprand, for if it had not been captured it could not have been “held by his nephew and Peredeo”. And further we learn that the city thus lost to the Empire was really and truly recovered for it *by the Venetians*. As Paulus wrote in the latter part of the eighth century, when the Venetians were still but a feeble folk, clustering together at the mouths of the Adige and the Piave, we may receive his testimony as to this brilliant exploit on their part without any of that suspicion which must attach to the vaunts of the chroniclers of a later day, the patriotic sons of the glorious Queen of the Adriatic.

Venetia in the eight century

In speaking of the Venetians as performing this feat, we must remember that though the race might last on unchanged into the Middle Ages, their home did not so continue. The network of islands bordering the Grand Canal, on which now rise the Doge's Palace, the Church of S. Maria della Salute, and all the other buildings which make up the Venice of today, may have been but a cluster of desolate mud-banks when Liutprand reigned in Pavia. The chief seats of the Venetian people at the time with which we are dealing were to be found at Heraclea, Equilium, and Methamaucus. The first of these cities, which according to some authors was named after the Emperor Heraclius, was probably situated five miles from the sea, between the mouths of the Livenza and the Piave, but even its site is doubtful, for the waters of the marsh now flow over it.

Equilium, which was for centuries the rival of Heraclea, and was partly peopled by fugitives from Opitergium when Grimwald executed vengeance on that city, was about seven miles south of Heraclea and not far from Torcello. It too is now covered by the waters, partly the fresh water of the river Sile, partly the salt water of the Adriatic. All the long-lasting hatreds of these two neighbor towns sleep at last beneath the silent lagune.

As for Methamaucus, which was in the eighth century a considerable city, it is now represented only by the few houses erected on the long island of Malamocco. The Venice of the Middle Ages built on the various islets which bore the name of Rivus Altus (Rialto) was not founded till nearly seventy years after the death of Liutprand.

Somewhere about the year 700 the inhabitants of the various islands which formed Venetia Maritima seem to have tightened the bonds of the loose confederacy which had hitherto bound them, and for the "tribunes" who had hitherto ruled, each one his own town or island, substituted a "duke", whose sway extended over the whole region of the lagunes, and who was the first of the long line of the Doges of Venice. We say that the Venetians did this, and reading the events of 700 by the light of eleven centuries of later history we involuntarily think of the Venetian people as the prime movers in this peaceful revolution, and we invest the first duke, *Paulitio Anafestus* with the bonnet and mantle of his well-known successors, the Dandolos and Foscaris of the Middle Ages. Yet we may be sure that the ruler of the *Ducatus Venetiae* was at this time a much more insignificant person than his successors of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; and we might perhaps admit into our minds a doubt whether he was anything else than an official selected for his post by the Emperor or the Exarch, and whether popular election had anything whatever to do with his appointment in those early days.

However this may be, the new office seems at first to have successfully accomplished the purpose for which it was created. Paulitio of Heraclea, the first duke, reigned for twenty years in peace. His fellow-townsmen and successor, Marcellus (who seems to have held under him the important office of Master of the Soldiery), had also a peaceful reign of about nine years. But Ursus, also a citizen of Heraclea, who according to the accepted chronology ruled the Venetian state from 726 to 737, met with a violent death, the cause of which we can only conjecture, but which may possibly have been connected with the bitter disputes that seem to have been constantly occurring between the two neighbor cities of Heraclea and Equilium. It is clear, however, that there was something like a revolution in Venetia Maritima.

"The Venetians", says the chronicler, "who, moved by bitter envy, had slain Ursus, for the space of five years determined to remain subject only to Masters of the Soldiery. The revolt evidently was against the authority of one man raised for life above the level of his fellow-citizens; and the revolution had for its object the substitution of yearly magistrates, whom, now at any rate, after the partial disruption of the bonds which united Italy to the Empire, we may speak of as elected by the people. For five years (737-741 according to Dandolo) the Masters of the Soldiery performed their brief functions : their names being Leo, Felix surnamed

Cornicula, Deusdedit (son of the murdered Ursus), Jubianus (or Jovianus) surnamed Hypatus (the Consul), and Joannes Fabriacus. At the end of the year's Mastership of the last named (742 ?), his eyes were torn out, and "the Venetians, abominating the office of Master of the Soldiery, again as before created for themselves a duke in the island of Malamocco, namely Deusdedit, the son of the aforesaid Ursus Hypatus, and his reign lasted for thirteen years".

It has been necessary to give this glance at the obscure and intricate subject of primitive Venetian history in order to introduce the only other early authority besides Paulus who mentions the capture and recovery of Ravenna. This is Joannes Diaconus (formerly called Sagorninus), who wrote near the end of the tenth century, that is to say 250 years after the events of which we are now speaking, but whose testimony is for many reasons worthy of consideration. After describing the election of the fourth Master of the Soldiery, Jovianus Hypatus, he says :

"In his days the Exarch, the foremost man of Ravenna, came to Venetia and earnestly entreated the Venetians to give him their help to enable him to guard and defend his own city, which Hildebrand, nephew of King Liutprand, and Peredeo, duke of Vicenza, had captured. The Venetians, favoring his petition, hastened with a naval armament to the aforesaid city of Ravenna; whereupon one of them [the Lombard invaders], namely Hildebrand, was taken alive by them, but the other, named Peredeo, fell fighting bravely, and the city was thus handed over in good order to the aforesaid Exarch, its chief governor; on account of which thing Gregory also, the Apostolicus of the City of Rome, desiring with all his heart the succor of the said city, had written with his own hand a letter to Antoninus, Patriarch of Grado, telling him that he ought with loving entreaty to induce the Venetians to go to the defence of the same city :

"Gregory to his most beloved brother Antoninus :

"Since, as a punishment for our sins, the city of Ravenna, which was the head of all things, has been taken by the unspeakable nation of the Lombards, and our son the excellent Lord Exarch tarries, as we have heard, in Venetia, your brotherly Holiness ought to cleave unto him, and in our stead strive alongside of him, in order that the said city of Ravenna may be restored to its former *status* in the holy Republic and to the Imperial service of our lords and sons the great Emperors Leo and Constantine, that with zealous love to our holy faith we may by the Lord's help be enabled firmly to persevere in the *status* of the Republic and in the Imperial service.

"May God keep you in safety, most beloved brother".

So far Joannes Diaconus, whose narrative, as I have already said, is really the only information that we have, except the few meager sentences in Paulus, as to an immensely important event, the capture of Ravenna by the Lombards and its recovery by the Venetians. It is true that we have in the history of Andrea Dandolo a repetition of the same story, with slightly different circumstances. In that version the event takes place some ten years earlier, and the chief actors are not Gregory III and the Master of the Soldiery, Jovianus, but Gregory II and the Duke, Ursus. But Dandolo published his *Chronicon* in 1346, and though it is a noble work, invaluable for the history of Venice in her most glorious days, it must remain a matter of doubt whether for this earliest period he had any other trustworthy materials before him than those which three centuries and a half earlier were at the disposal of Joannes Diaconus. Referring the reader to a Note at the end of this chapter for a fuller discussion of this question, I will briefly summarize the results at which we have arrived with reference to the sieges of Ravenna by the Lombards in the eighth century.

Summary

Somewhere about the year 725, or perhaps earlier, Farwald II, duke of Spoleto, took the port of Classis, but at the command of Liutprand restored it to the Empire.

A little later Liutprand again took Classis and besieged Ravenna, but apparently failed to take it.

Towards the end of the fourth decade of the century, probably after 737, Liutprand's nephew and colleague, Hildeprand, with the assistance of Peredeo the brave duke of Vicenza, besieged Ravenna, and this time succeeded in taking it. The Exarch (who was probably Euty chius, but this is not expressly mentioned) took refuge in the Venetian islands, and sought the help of the dwellers by the lagunes to recover the lost city. Pope Gregory III added his exhortations, which he addressed to the Patriarch of Grado, the spiritual head of the Venetian state. A naval expedition was fitted out: Hildeprand was taken prisoner, his comrade Peredeo slain, and the city restored to the Holy Roman Republic. This recapture took place, if we may depend on the somewhat doubtful Venetian chronology, in the year 740.

We now return to the main stream of Lombard history as disclosed to us by the Life of Pope Zacharias in the *Liber Pontificalis*.

In the year 742 Liutprand was at the zenith of his power, unquestioned lord of Spoleto and Benevento and on friendly terms with the Pope. He, however, or seemed to linger, over the fulfillment of his promise to restore the four frontier towns which he had taken, three years before, from the *Ducatus Romae*. Zacharias therefore determined to try the expedient of a personal interview, and set forth, attended by a large train of ecclesiastics, for the city of Interamna (Terni), where the king was then residing. It was necessary for the party to pass through Orte, one of the four cities for whose restoration he was clamoring, and there they were met by a Lombard courtier named Grimwald, whom Liutprand had courteously sent to act as the Pope's escort. Under Grimwald's guidance they reached the city of Narni, with its high Augustan bridge; and here they were met by a brilliant train of nobles and soldiers, who accompanied them along the eight miles of road up the valley of the Nar to where Terni stands in the fertile plain and listens to the roar of her waterfalls. It was on a Friday that they thus in solemn procession entered the city where Liutprand held his court, and were met by the king himself and the rest of his courtiers at the church of the martyred bishop Valentinus. Mutual salutations passed, prayers were offered, the two potentates came forth from the church together, and then the King walked in lowly reverence beside the Pope for half a mile, till they reached the place outside the city where the tents were pitched for both host and guest. And there they abode for the rest of the day.

On Saturday there was again a solemn interview. Zacharias delivered a long address to the Lombard king, exhorting him to abstain from the shedding of blood and to follow those things which make for peace. Touched, as the ecclesiastics believed, by the eloquence of their chief, Liutprand granted all and even more than all that was asked for. The four cities and their inhabitants were given back, but not, if we may believe the biographer, to Leo and Constantine the Emperors, but to the holy man, Zacharias, himself. Large slices of the Papal patrimony which had been lost in the earlier and troublous times were now restored. One such slice, in the Sabine territory, had been withheld from the Papacy for near thirty years. The others were at Narni and Osimo, at Ancona and the neighboring Humana, and the valley which was called Magna, in the territory of Sutrium. All these possessions were solemnly made over by Liutprand to "Peter prince of the Apostles", and a peace for twenty years was concluded with the *Ducatus Romae*. There were many captives whom Liutprand had taken from divers provinces of the Romans and who were now detained in the fortresses of Tuscany or the region beyond the Po. Letters were sent by the king ordering that all these should be set free. Among these liberated captives were certain magnates of Ravenna, Leo, Sergius, Victor, and Agnellus. All apparently bore the title of Consul, and Sergius was possibly the same who was afterwards Archbishop of Ravenna.

This last statement certainly seems to confirm the theory that the capture of Ravenna by the Lombards had taken place not many years before the treaty of Terni. Is it not probable that the illustrious prisoner on the other side who had been captured at the reconquest of the city, Hildeprand the king's nephew and colleague, was restored at the same time, and that the possession by the enemy of so important a hostage had something to do with the wonderfully yielding-temper of Liutprand? Such is the very reasonable suggestion made by an eminent Italian scholar, but it should not be regarded as anything more than a conjecture.

On Sunday there was a great ecclesiastical function in the church of St. Valentinus. At the request of the King, the Pope ordained a bishop for a town in the Lombard territory. The King with all his dukes and *gastalds* witnessed the rite of consecration, and were so much moved by the sweetness of the Pope's sermon and the earnestness of his prayers that most of them were melted into tears. Then when mass was ended the Pope invited the King to dinner. The meats were so good, the mirth of the company so genuine and unforced, that, as the King said, he did not remember that he had ever eaten so much and so pleasantly.

On Monday the two great personages took leave of one another, and the King chose out four of his nobles to accompany the Pope on his return journey and hand over to him the keys of the surrendered towns. They were his nephew Agiprand duke of Clusium, a *gastald* in immediate attendance on his person, named Tacipert, Ranning, *gastald* of Toscanella, a frontier town of the Lombards, and Grimwald, who had been the first to meet the Pope by the bridge of Narni. All was done as had been arranged. Amelia, Orte, Bomarzo, with their citizens, were handed over to the Pope's jurisdiction. In order to avoid the long and circuitous route by Sutri, the combined party struck across the Lombard territory by way of Viterbo (here the presence of the *gastald* of Toscanella was important for their protection), and so they reached the little town of Bieda thirty miles from Rome, which Grimwald and Banning formally transferred to the keeping of Zacharias.

The Pope returned to Rome as a conqueror, and the people at his suggestion marched from the Pantheon to St Peter's singing the Litany. This expression of gratitude to Almighty God took the place of the old triumphal march of Consul or Imperator along the Sacred Way and up the Clivus Capitolinus.

In what capacity were these cities given to the Pope? Was he recognized as their sovereign, or as their proprietor? Were they still as absolutely part of the Empire as they were before Alboin entered Italy, although belonging to the Patrimony of St. Peter? or were they the germ of that new Papal kingdom which certainly was on the point of coming into existence? It is easy to suggest these questions, hard to answer them, especially for such a troublous time as that of the Iconoclastic controversy, when *de jure* and *de facto* were everywhere coming into collision. One can only say that the words of the Papal biographer, if he may be depended upon, seem to imply sovereignty as well as ownership.

The events just related seem to have filled the page of Lombard history for 742. In the following year Liutprand resumed his preparations for the conquest of Ravenna and the region round it. Terribly indeed had this little fragment of the Roman Empire in the north of Italy now shrunk and dwindled. Cesena, only twenty-five miles south of Ravenna, had become by the loss of the Pentapolis a frontier city, and even Cesena now fell into the hands of the Lombards. Euty chius the Exarch, John the Archbishop, and all the people of Ravenna, with the refugees from the Pentapolis and from the province of Aemilia, sent letters to the Pope imploring his assistance. Thereupon Zacharias by the hands of Benedict bishop of Nomentum and Ambrose chief of the notaries, sent gifts and letters to Liutprand, entreating him to abandon his preparations for the siege and to restore Cesena to the men of Ravenna. The embassy however returned, having accomplished nothing, and thereupon Zacharias determined once more to try the effect of a personal interview.

Handing over the government of Rome to Stephen, duke and patrician, he set forth along the great Flaminian Way to visit the theatre of war. At the church of St. Christopher, in a place called Aquila, the Exarch met him. All the inhabitants of Ravenna, men and women, old and young, poured forth to greet the revered pontiff, crying out with tears, "Welcome to our Shepherd who has left his own sheep and has come to rescue us who were ready to perish".

Zacharias sent his messengers (again the chief notary Ambrose, who was accompanied by the presbyter Stephen) to announce his approach to the king. When they crossed the Lombard frontier at Imola they learned that some forcible resistance would be attempted to the Pontiff's journey. He received a letter from them to this effect, conveyed by a trusty messenger under cover of the night, but undismayed he determined to press on after his messengers, whom, as he rightly conjectured, Liutprand would refuse to receive. On the 28th of June he came to the place near Piacenza where the Via Aemilia crosses the Po. Here the nobles as before met him and conducted him to Pavia. Outside the walls was a church of St. Peter named the Golden-ceilinged (*ad coelum aureum*), and here Zacharias celebrated Mass at 3 P.M. before he entered the city.

The following day, the 29th of June, was that on which the Church had long celebrated the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, and Zacharias had no doubt had this in view when he so timed his journey that his interview with the king should take place on that day. Again a Mass was celebrated with great magnificence in St. Peter's basilica in the presence of the King. Then mutual salutations were exchanged; and they entered the city together. Next day there was a formal invitation to the Pope brought by the chief nobles of the kingdom, and then a solemn meeting in the royal palace. The Pope earnestly entreated the King to desist from his further enterprises against the city of Ravenna and to restore the conquests already made. For some time Liutprand showed himself obdurate, but at length he consented to restore the country districts round Ravenna of which he had made himself master, and along with them two-thirds of the territory of Cesena. The remaining third, and perhaps the city of Cesena itself, were to remain in Liutprand's hands as a pledge till the 1st of June in the following year, by which time it was hoped that an embassy which he had dispatched to Constantinople would have returned with a favorable answer.

On the Pope's departure, Liutprand accompanied him as far as the Po, and sent with him certain dukes and other nobles, some of whom were charged to superintend the surrender of the territories of Cesena and Ravenna. "Thus", says the biographer, "by the help of God the people of Ravenna and the Pentapolis were delivered from the calamities and oppressions which had befallen them, and they were satisfied with corn and wine".

The interview with the Pope at Pavia was one of the last public acts of the great Lombard king. In January, 744, after a reign of thirty-one years and seven months, Liutprand died, and was buried by the side of his father in the church of St. Adrian. He was elderly, probably more than sixty years old, but not stricken in years. Had his wise and statesmanlike reign been prolonged for ten years more, Italy had perhaps been spared some disasters.

We read with regret the song of triumph which the Papal biographer raises over the death of "the intriguer and persecutor Liutprand". His own recital shows how utterly inapplicable are these words to the son of Ansprand. He had in fact carried compliance with the Papal admonitions to the very verge of weakness and disloyalty to his people. There was evidently in him a vein of genuine piety of sympathy with men of holy life, illustrated by the fact that when the Saracens invaded Sardinia and profaned the resting place of St. Augustine, Liutprand sent messengers who at a great price redeemed the body of the saint and transported it to Pavia, where it still reposes.

In some respects the statesmanship of Liutprand seems to me to have been too highly praised. I do not find in the meager and disjointed annals of his reign which I have with great

difficulty tried to weave into a continuous narrative, the evidence of any such carefully thought-out plan with reference to the Iconoclastic controversy as is often attributed to him. To say that he presented himself as the champion of the Image-worshippers, and in some sort, of the independence of Italy, as against the tyranny of the Iconoclastic Emperors, seems to me to be making an assertion which we cannot prove. The one aim, as I have before said, which he seems to have consistently and successfully pursued was the consolidation of the Lombard monarchy and the reduction of the great dukes into a condition of real subjection to his crown. He availed himself (and what Lombard king would not have done so?) of any opportunity which offered itself for cutting yet shorter the reduced and fragmentary territories which still called themselves parts of "the Roman Republic". But both from policy and from his own devout temperament he was disinclined to do anything which might cause a rupture with the See of Rome, and the Popes perceiving this, often induced him to abandon hardly-earned conquests by appealing to "his devotion to St. Peter".

I cannot better close this chapter than by quoting the character of Liutprand given us by the loving yet faithful hand of Paulus Diaconus in the concluding words of that history which has been our chief guide through two dark and troubled centuries :— "He was a man of great wisdom, prudent in counsel and a lover of peace, mighty in war, clement towards offenders, chaste, modest, one who prayed through the night-watches, generous in his almsgiving, ignorant it is true of literature, but a man who might be compared to the philosophers, a fosterer of his people, an augments of their laws.

"In the beginning of his reign he took many places from the Bavarians, ever trusting to his prayers rather than to his arms, and with the most jealous care maintaining peaceful relations with the Franks and the Avars".

CHAPTER XIII.

POLITICAL STATE OF IMPERIAL ITALY.

Now that we have reached the end of the dominion of the Eastern Caesars over all but a few detached fragments of Italy, and that we are also close upon the end of the dominion of the Lombard kings in the same country, it will be well for us to gather up such fragments of information as the scanty records of the time supply to us concerning the political institutions and social condition of the peninsula during the two centuries of their blended and conflicting rule.

The records, as I have said, are scanty, and the indications which they furnish are faint and difficult to decipher; but they have been scanned with eager scrutiny by great jurists and eminent historians, because in them lies, in part at least, the answer to one of the most interesting questions which were ever presented for solution to a political philosopher. That question is as to the origin and parentage of the great Italian Republics of the Middle Ages.

When we think of the rich and varied life displayed by the commonwealths of Italy from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, of the foreign conquests of one, the worldwide commerce of another, the noble architecture of a third, the wealth of artistic and poetic genius which seemed to be the common heritage of them all, and when we remember that in the earlier period of their history these great gifts of the intellect were allied to not less noble qualities of the soul, fortitude, self-devotion, faith, we are ready to say, perhaps with truth, that never has the human race worked out the problem of self-government in nobler forms than in these glorious republics, greater than the Athens of Pericles by reason of their spiritual capacities, greater than the Rome of the Scipios by reason of their artistic culture. We know, indeed, how soon that splendid dawn was overcast, how rapidly and how fatally the Italy of the *Communi* degenerated into the Italy of the Tyrants. Still the enquiry must ever be one of deepest interest to every student not merely of Italian, but of European history—Whence did the cities of Italy derive those thoughts of freedom which made them for a time the torch-bearers of human progress in the midst of the anarchy and darkness of feudalism?

One school of learned and able enquirers says that this torch was kindled from Rome, not the Rome of the Emperors, but the far-away, yet unforgotten, Rome of the Republic. Another school, equally learned and equally able, denies that there was any possibility of continuous historic development from Rome to Florence and Siena, and maintains that the republican institutions of Italy in the twelfth century were either absolutely self-originated or were the result of contact with Teutonic freedom. I cannot promise the reader that we shall be able to come to any definite solution of this great controversy, much of which of course lies centuries beyond our horizon; but he will at least understand how great the controversy is, and how it lends importance to questions at first sight paltry and pedantic, as to the names and functions of the governing authorities of Italy during these centuries of transition.

Though profoundly unfortunate for the country itself both then and in many after-ages, the division of Italy into two sections, one of which still formed part of the Roman Empire, while the other, under the sway of Lombard kings or dukes, was generally hostile to the Empire, and always independent of it, aids the scientific discussion of the problem before us. The actual course of events enables us to eliminate in great measure the barbarian factor from the former section, and to trace the history of Roman institutions by themselves, where no

Teutonic element enters into the equation. In this chapter, therefore, we will deal with the questions of government, law, and social relations as affecting Imperial Italy alone.

Let us briefly recapitulate the facts as to the geographical boundaries of the Imperial territory, which it will be remembered was almost exclusively a sea-coast dominion. Starting from the north-east, we find the Istrian peninsula undoubtedly Imperial. But when we reach the head of the Adriatic Gulf, the ancient capital of Aquileia with its Patriarch is under Lombard rule, while the little island city of Grado, in which the rival Patriarch has set up his throne, still clings to the Empire. From the mouth of the Tagliamento to that of the Adige a long strip of the coast is for some time retained by the Emperors, and probably bears the name of *Ducatus Venetiae*. But in the earliest years of the seventh century Patavium and Mons Silicis (Padua and Monselice) were won for the Lombards by King Agilulf: soon afterwards Concordia fell into their power, and when in 640 Opitergium and Altinum were taken by King Rothari, the Eastern Caesar can have had few subjects left in this part of the country, except the indomitable islanders, who between sea and sky were founding upon the lagunes that cluster of settlements which was known by the name of Venetia Maritima.

The mouths of the Po, the city of Ravenna, and a great stretch of the Via Aemilia, with "hinterland" reaching up to the skirts of the Apennines, formed the large and important district known as the *Exarchatus Ravennae*. Further inland, Mantua, Cremona, Piacenza, and a few cities on the southern bank of the Po remained for a generation subject to the Empire, but were detached from it in the earliest years of the seventh century by King Agilulf, rightly incensed by the Exarch's kidnapping of his daughter. We travel down the shore of the Adriatic and come to the Duchy of the *Pentapolis*, consisting of the five flourishing maritime cities of Ariminum, Pisaurum, Fanum, Senegallia, and Ancona. Another inland Pentapolis, called *Annonaria* or *Provincia Castellorum*, included the cities of Aesis, Forum Sempronii, Urbinum, Callis, and Eugubium (Jesi, Fossombrone, Urbino, Cagli, and Gubbio). These two provinces together sometimes went by the conjoint name of Decapolis. A long stretch of coast, ill-supplied with harbors and therefore not belonging to the Empire, marked the spacious territory abandoned to the Lombards, and ruled by the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento. Then rounding the promontory of Mount Garganus, we come to the town of Sipontum, which was Imperial till near the middle of the seventh century and then to the heel of Italy, from the river Aufidus to the Bradanus, comprising the seaport towns of Barium, Brundisium, Hydruntum, and Tarentum (Bari, Brindisi, Otranto, and Taranto). All of this region was Imperial land till Romwald of Benevento (between 665 and 675) rent the greater part of it from the Empire, leaving to the Caesar little besides the city of Otranto, which, though once for a moment captured by the Lombards, remained permanently Imperial, and was at a later period the base of important operations by the Greeks for the reconquest of Southern Italy. As the "heel", so also the "toe" of Italy, from the river Crathis to the Straits of Messina, remained during the whole of our period in the possession of the Empire. So, too, did the important island of Sicily, full of Papal "patrimones", and forming a stronghold of Imperial power. Though harassed more than once by the invasions of the Saracens, it was not till the ninth century that they seriously set about the subjugation of the island: and in fact for half a century after the fall of Ravenna, the "Patrician of Sicily" was the highest representative of the Emperor in the western lands, the duke of Naples himself being subject to his orders.

Proceeding northwards along the shore of the Tyrrhenian Sea, we find in the ancient province of Lucania only Acropolis, and perhaps its near neighbor Paestum, left to the Empire. Entering Campania, we discover that the *duke of Naples* ruled over a small though wealthy territory, reaching from Salernum at one end to a point due west of Capua (itself a Lombard city) on the other. But the duchy reached very little way inland, and we might probably say

with safety that from every part of the region which he ruled, the duke of Naples could behold the crater of Vesuvius.

Of much wider extent was the *Ducatus Romae*, which reached from Gaeta on the south-east to Civita Vecchia on the north-west, including practically the whole of the ancient province of Latium, a corner of the Sabine territory, and the southern end of Etruria. The changes of fortune that befell the Tuscan and Umbrian cities, by which Rome and Ravenna sought to keep up their communications with one another along the Flaminian Way, the cities of Todi, Perugia and Tadino, have been sufficiently described in earlier chapters.

Lastly, the beautiful Riviera (*di Ponente* as well as *di Levante*), from the river Magra to Mentone, remained a province of the Empire until about 640, when King Rothari the legislator took Genoa and all her sister cities, razed their walls (like Gaiseric the Vandal), and turned the region into the Lombard duchy of Liguria.

Of the islands of Sardinia and Corsica little is known during this period save that their fortunes were not closely interwoven with those of Italy. As they had once been subject to the Vandal kings of Carthage, so now, though restored to the Empire, they were still ruled by the Exarch of Africa. The invasions of these islands by the Lombards, of which we heard in the letters of Pope Gregory the Great, do not seem to have resulted in any abiding settlement. When the Emperor Constans was ruling or misruling Sicily, Sardinia was one of the districts which felt the heavy hand of his tax-gatherers and soldiers coming from Sardinia as well as from Africa and Imperial Italy deprived his successor, the usurper Mizizius, of his throne and life. In the eighth century Sardinia as well as Corsica suffered grievously from the incursions of the Saracens, though it does not appear that these invaders succeeded in formally detaching those islands from the Empire.

From these outlying dependencies we return to the contemplation of Imperial Italy, that we may enquire into the nature of the political organization by which the Emperors dwelling in distant Constantinople maintained their hold upon the maritime regions of the peninsula. To begin at the very beginning of our present period, let us listen to the words in which the Emperor Justinian reasserts his dominion over the recovered land. In August, 554, the year after the death of Teias, the year of the final defeat of the Alamannic brethren, Justinian issued a solemn *Pragmatic Sanction* for the government of Italy. This decree, singularly enough, purports to be issued in reply to the petition of Pope Vigilius “the venerable bishop of the elder Rome”, though that much-harassed pontiff had certainly left Constantinople, and most probably had died before its promulgation. The Emperor first solemnly confirms all dispositions which have been made by Athalaric, or his royal mother Amalasantha, or even Theodahad, as well as all his own acts, and those of his spouse Theodora of pious memory. Everything, on the other hand, done by “the most wicked tyrant Totila” is to be considered absolutely null and void, “for we will not allow these law-abiding days of ours to take any account of what was done by him in the time of his tyranny”.

Many laws follow (which seem to be well and wisely framed) as to the length of prescription requisite to establish a claim after “the years of warlike confusion which followed the accession of the tyrants”. There is also an evident attempt made to lighten the burden of taxation, and so to guard against any future oppressions by men like Alexander the Scissors, which might goad the provincials to madness. Especially it is ordained that the tribute due from each province shall be exacted by the governors of that province only, and that the great Imperial ministers at headquarters shall not assist in the process. Some precautions are taken for lightening the burden of *coemptio*. Each province is only to be called upon to furnish tribute in kind out of that sort of produce which naturally grows there, and such tribute when rendered is to be taken at the current market price of the day. Moreover, the landowners of Calabria and Apulia, who have already commuted their *coemptio* into a money payment [*superindictitius*

tituliis), are not to be called on to pay that *titulus* and provide *coemptio* as well. And any senator or large tax-payer is to have free leave and license to visit the court at Constantinople in order to lay his grievances before the Emperor, as well as to return to Italy and tarry there as long as he will for the improvement of his estate, since it is difficult for absent owners to keep their property in good condition, or to bestow upon it the cultivation which it requires.

The two most important sections of the decree, however, in reference to our present subject are the 33rd and the 12th.

The 33rd runs as follows : “We order that all law-suits between two Romans, or in which one Roman person is concerned, shall be tried by *civil* judges, since good order does not permit that military judges shall mix themselves up in such matters or causes”.

A “Roman person” is evidently a native of Italy in contradistinction to the horde of foreigners who served in the armies of the Empire. The intention of the legislator is that wheresoever the rights of such a Roman person are concerned, whether as plaintiff or defendant, his cause shall be heard before a civil judge, probably the *praeses* of the province, and not before the harsh and unsympathetic officer of the army, who, however, is recognized as the right person to try matters in dispute between one “military person” and another.

Sect. 12 relates to the mode of appointing these civil governors or *judices provinciarum* : “More over we order that fit and proper persons, able to administer the local government, be chosen as governors (*judices*) of the provinces by the *bishops and chief persons of each province from the inhabitants of the province itself*”. This appointment is to be made without any payment for votes; and the letters patent of the office (*codicilli*) are to be handed to the new governor by the minister whose business it is [*per competentem judicem*] [free of charge]. On these conditions, however, that if they (the *judices provinciarum*) shall be found to have inflicted any injury on the tax-payers, or to have exacted anything in excess of the stipulated tribute, or in the *coemption* to have used too large measures, or unjust weights for the *solidi*, or in any other way to have unrighteously damnified the cultivators, they shall make good the injury out of their own property.

We see here an earnest endeavor to remedy the abuses of provincial administration. The governor of the province is to be a resident therein. This makes it less likely that he will incur the odium of oppressive acts, committed in a district of which he is a native, and where he will spend the remainder of his days. He is to be appointed without *suffragium*, the technical term for the payments, often of enormous amount, which had been hitherto made to the members of the Imperial household and the great functionaries of Constantinople, in order to secure their influence on behalf of the aspirant to office. Of course, where this *suffragium* had been paid, the new governor’s first care was to recoup himself by wringing it out of the miserable provincials. But further, the governor is to be elected by the principal inhabitants of the province, instead of being merely nominated by the autocratic Emperor. We have here an important recognition of the principle of popular election, a great stride towards what we should call constitutional government. And a part, apparently a leading part in this election, is given to the bishop of the province. Here we have both a proof of the increased power of the higher ecclesiastics (since even the devout Theodosius would never have dreamed of admitting his bishops to a direct share in the government of the Empire), and we have also a pathetic confession of the Emperor’s own inability to cope with the corruption and venality of his civil servants. He seems to have perceived that in the great quaking bog of servility and dishonesty by which he felt himself to be surrounded, his only sure standing-ground was to be found in the spiritual Estate, the order of men who wielded a power not of this world, and who, if true to their sacred mission, had nothing to fear and little to hope from the corrupt minions of the court.

The experiment of popular election of the provincial governors answered so well in Italy, that it was extended by Justinian's successor in 569 to the Eastern portion of the Empire. But as we shall soon see, it was but short-lived in either the East or the West.

Before we part from Justinian's Pragmatic Sanction we must notice one more section, the 19th, which deals with the subject of Weights and Measures : "In order", says the legislator, "that no occasion for fraud or injury to the provinces [of Italy] may arise, we decree that produce be furnished and money received according to those weights and measures which our Piety hath by these presents entrusted to the keeping of the most blessed Pope and the most ample Senate". Another indication this, of the purely secular business which, by reason of the general respect for his character and confidence in his uprightness, was being pushed off upon the Head of the Church by the Head of the State; and at the same time an interesting evidence that after all its sufferings at the hands of Totila and Teias, the Senate of Rome still lived on, if it were only to act as custodian of the standard yard and the standard pound.

The edict, which is addressed to the Illustrious Grand Chamberlain Narses, and to the Magnificent Antiochus, Prefect of Italy, ends thus : "All things therefore which our Eternity hath ordained by this divine Pragmatic Sanction, let your Greatness by all means carry into effect and cause to be observed, a penalty of 10 lbs of gold impending over all violators of these our commands". On the whole, the Pragmatic Sanction, notwithstanding its tone of ill-tempered railing at the defeated heroes of the Gothic nation, was a wise and statesmanlike measure; and I, who have in an earlier volume been compelled to say many hard things concerning the character and administration of Justinian, gladly recognize that here, in the evening of his days, he makes a generous effort to lighten the burdens of his Italian subjects, and to admit them to a share in his power. But "in the clash of arms laws are silent". Even as Pitt's well-meant scheme for Parliamentary Reform foundered in the stormy waters of the great French Revolutionary War, so the perils with which the Empire was soon surrounded, from Lombards in the West, from Avars, Persians, Saracens in the East, destroyed the faint hopes of freedom in the Roman Empire of the sixth and seventh centuries. It is at all times difficult for even the most enlightened despot to unclasp himself of the power with which in the course of generations the holders of his office have come to be invested, and in the face of menacing foreign foes that which was before difficult becomes impossible. We who have lived through the middle of the nineteenth century know what those ominous words "The city is proclaimed in a state of siege" betoken, how when they are uttered popular liberties are suppressed and all classes lie prostrate under the heel of a military despotism. We remember how even in the greatest democratic republic that the world has ever seen, "the War-Power" enabled President Lincoln practically to assume the position of an autocrat, wise and patriotic doubtless, but still an autocrat. And so, in the Empire, the tremendous dangers to which it was exposed, from the time of Justin II to the time of the Iconoclastic Emperors, led to the concentration of all power, civil and military, in the hands of one class of men who were virtually the military lieutenants of the Emperor. In the East, this tendency found its fullest expression in the change of the provinces into *themes*, which was begun by Heraclius and completed by Leo III. The word *theme* meant a regiment of soldiers, and thenceforward the military district or theme became the chief administrative unit of the Empire.

In Italy there was perhaps no such sudden and definite change, but all writers are agreed that there was a change, the result of which was to annul the division between civil and military functions which had been created by Diocletian and Constantine and to make the commandant of the garrison in each city which remained faithful to the Empire the one great centre of power, judicial and administrative, as well as military, for that city and for the district of which it was the capital.

This change however, as I have said, was probably a gradual one, and with the poverty of the materials before us we cannot precisely say when it began or when it ended. To make the further discussion of the subject clearer, it will be well to subjoin a table of the military and civil officers, as far as they can be ascertained, before this change had taken place which led to the practical absorption of the latter by the former.

MILITARY.	CIVIL.
EXARCH (Patricius Italiae).	Praefectus Italiae . . . Praefectus Urbi (or Praepositus Italiae).
Magister Militum or Dux.	Vicarius Italiae . . . Vicarius Urbis.
Tribunus or Comes.	Praeses Provinciae.

The hierarchy of civil offices, it will be seen, was still cast in the mould which was made at the beginning of the fourth century. So long as they retained any official vitality at all we must suppose the holders of them to have been concerned with the trying of causes in which private citizens of Italian birth (as opposed to military men and foreign followers of the camp) were concerned; with the collection of revenue; with commissariat business; and perhaps with the maintenance of roads and aqueducts. But already, in the time of Gregory the Great, the position of these civil rulers was declining in power and luster, so that we find the benevolent Pope compassionately relieving the necessities of an ex-governor of Samnium by a yearly pension of four *solidi*, and a gift of twenty *decimati* of wine. The slenderness of our information does not enable us to say definitely when this civil hierarchy finally vanished from the scene, but, to use the simile of a “dissolving view”, we may conjecture that all through the seventh century their names were growing fainter and fainter, and those of the military rulers were growing stronger and stronger on the screen of Italian politics

The Exarch.

I turn then from these shadowy survivals of a great organization to direct the reader's attention to the other half of the table of dignities, the military rulers who were more and more assuming all the functions of government to themselves, as the delegated servants of the Emperor.

High over all, and practically supreme over Imperial Italy was “the Most Excellent EXARCH”. We shall probably get a good idea of his position by comparing him to the Governor-General of India, only that we must add to the civil functions of that high officer the military functions involved in the absolute personal command of the army. He seems to have uniformly borne the title of *Patricius* added to that of *Exarchus*, and he not unfrequently held high rank in the Imperial household, as *Cubicularius* (Grand Chamberlain) or *Cartularius* (Keeper of the Records). He was supreme judge in Italy; he made peace and war on his own responsibility, apparently without the necessity of consulting the Emperor; he nominated all the military officers below him, the dukes and tribunes and the like; perhaps also the civil governors, the prefects and the vicars, though of this there does not appear to be any direct proof. After the middle of the seventh century he was, what the Prefect had been till then, the supreme head of the financial department of the state. This ruler, whose exalted power gave effect to the will of the Pious Emperor was approached with servile prostrations by the subjects of his delegated reign. At Ravenna he dwelt doubtless in the palace of the great Theodoric.

When he visited Rome, clergy, magistrates, soldiers, all the civic militia of Rome poured forth to meet him with their crosses and their standards, and led him with jubilation up to the Palatine Hill, where still in faded magnificence rose the cluster of buildings which has given its name to every other palace in the world.

Not the least important, assuredly, of the prerogatives of the Exarch, was the right transferred to him by his Imperial master of confirming the election of the Pope by the clergy and people of Rome. But notwithstanding this prerogative, and although in a certain sense the Bishop of Rome, as the Emperor's subject, might be held to be under the rule of the Imperial vicegerent, there can be little doubt that, at least from the time of Gregory the Great, the Pope, if he were a man of at all commanding personality, was, and was felt to be, a greater man in Italy than the Exarch. The Exarch was a foreigner, the minion of a court, sometimes holding office for no very long period, recalled and reappointed at the Emperor's pleasure. The Pope was an Italian, often a Roman citizen, speaking the noble old language of statesmanship and war: he alone could awe turbulent Lombard kings and dukes into reverent submission; round him gathered with increasing fervor, as the seventh and eighth centuries rolled on their course, not only the religious reverence, but the national spirit, the patriotic pride of the Roman people.

I shall briefly discuss the difficult subject of the origin of the Exarch's title, and then review the history of the men who bore it.

The Greek word *Exarchus* seems to have come into use in the days of Justinian, if not before, to denote a military officer of a very high rank and it may perhaps be looked upon as corresponding to our word "marshal". It is apparently in this sense only that the term is applied by Theophanes to Narses, whom he calls "Exarch of the Romans". For the persistent non-user of the term Exarch in connection with Narses by all contemporary writers seems clearly to show that he was not in his lifetime called the Exarch of Italy.

Neither, as far as we can discover, did *Longinus*, who ruled Imperial Italy from 567 to 585 and whose feebleness seems to have had much to do with facilitating the conquest of the Lombards, ever bear the title of Exarch. In fact, he is expressly called *Prefect of Ravenna* by Paulus, for which we may doubtless substitute *Prefect of Italy* as his true title. He was therefore, strictly speaking, only a great civil functionary, with no military command, and this may have been one reason for his failure to cope with the dire necessities of his position.

His successor *Smaragdus* twice held supreme power at Ravenna, his first tenure of office being probably from 585 to 589. And here we do at last get a contemporary use of the title Exarch. In a letter of Pope Pelagius II to his *apocrisiarius* Gregory at Constantinople, bearing date October 4, 584, we have a sentence saying that "*the Exarch* writes he can give us no help, for he is hardly able even to guard his own district". Here then we have the great military governors, who bore the title of Exarch for 170 years, fairly installed in the palace of Ravenna. It may be a question indeed whether *Smaragdus* was the first who bore that title. JM. Diehl suggests that *Baduarius*, the son-in-law of the Emperor Justin II, who came in 575 with a great army to Italy, and was defeated by the Lombards, may have been the first of the Exarchs, but we have no contemporary evidence of the fact, and the theory is at best but a plausible hypothesis.

Smaragdus, as the reader may remember, after his highhanded proceedings towards the Istrian schismatics, became insane, and was recalled by his Imperial master, who appointed Romanus Exarch in his stead.

Romanus, who ruled probably from 589 to 597, was a perpetual thorn in the side of Pope Gregory; unable, according to that Pope's representations, to defend him from the Lombards, and unwilling to make with the invaders a fair and honorable peace. Probably the fact was that now for the first time, with such a Pontiff as Gregory sitting in St. Peter's chair, the Exarch began to feel how completely he was overshadowed by the Bishop of Rome, and showed too

manifestly to all men his ill-temper and his discontent at the anomalous situation in which he found himself placed.

On the death of Romanus (596 or 597) *Callinicus* (or, as Paulus calls him, *Gallicinus*) was appointed to the vacant post, which he held till about the year 602. Though he was more acceptable to the Pope than his predecessor, his dastardly abduction of the daughter of Agilulf, the signal punishment which the injured father inflicted on him, and the damage thereby done to the Imperial cause in Italy, marked his tenure of the high office of the Exarchate with dishonor.

Smaragdus (602-611), a second time Exarch of Italy, seems to have risen with the rise of the usurper Phocas, and fallen with his fall. It was evidently an especial delight to him to grovel before that base and truculent usurper; since besides the well-known statue and column in the Roman forum, he erected another statue to Phocas at Carthage.

Joannes (611-616), after an uneventful rule of five or six years, perished, apparently in a popular tumult.

Eleutherius, an eunuch (616-620), punished the murderers of his predecessor, suppressed the rebellion of Joannes Compsinus at Naples, visited Rome, himself tried to grasp the Imperial diadem, and was slain by his own mutinous soldiers at Luceoli.

Into one of these periods we possibly ought to interpolate the Exarchate of *Gregory*, "patricius Romanorum", who, as we learn from Paulus foully murdered the two sons of Gisulf, duke of Friuli, after luring them into the city of Opitergium by a promise to adopt the elder of them, Taso, as his "son in arms".

We have also to speak with great uncertainty of the tenure of office of *Eusebius*, who may not have been an Exarch at all, but an ambassador of the Emperor, but who in some strange way fascinated the young Lombard king Adalwald to his ruin. After this interval of uncertainty we come to *Isaac*, "the great ornament of Armenia", and the husband of "that chaste turtle-dove Susanna". His rule, which lasted probably from 625 to 644, was chiefly marked by the loss of the Riviera to the Lombards under Rothari.

Of the Exarchs who immediately followed Isaac, as before remarked we know extremely little. *Theodore Calliopas* may have ruled for the first time from 644 to 646.

Plato (646-649), a Monothelete, induced the Patriarch Pyrrhus to break with the Pope and return to Monotheletism.

Olympius (649-652), Grand Chamberlain, was employed by the Emperor Constans II in his first abortive attempt to arrest Pope Martin, desisted therefrom, was reconciled to the Pope, led his army to fight against the Saracens in Sicily, and died there, probably of camp fever.

Theodore Calliopas, sent a second time as Exarch to Ravenna (653-664), signalized his rule by the forcible arrest of Pope Martin.

Gregory, whose tenure of office perhaps extended from 664 to 677 is apparently only known by the occurrence of his name in the "Privilegium" of Constans II, given in 666 to Maurus, archbishop of Ravenna, confirming his independence of the See of Rome. In this Privilegium *Gregorius Exarchus noster* is mentioned as suggesting the issue of such a document, and is ordered to assist in giving effect to its provisions.

Another *Theodore* (probably different from Theodore Calliopas) dwelt in the palace at Ravenna from about 677 to 687. The monastery which he built near his palace, his receipt of the news of the election of Pope Conon, the three golden cups which he presented to the church of Ravenna, and the part which he took in the quarrel between his namesake Archbishop Theodore and his clergy, are all recorded in the pages of Agnellus.

Joannes, surnamed *Platyn* (687-702), contemporary with Pope Sergius (687-701), being appealed to in connection with the disputed Papal election of 687, appeared suddenly in Rome

with his soldiers. He acquiesced in the election of Sergius, but insisted on taking toll of the Church to the amount of 100 lbs. of gold.

Theophylact (702-709), contemporary with Pope John VI (701-705), returning from Sicily to Rome, was assailed by the mutinous “soldiers of Italy”, and hardly escaped through the Pope’s intervention. I am not sure that we ought not to recognize in *Theodore*, “the patrician” and “primicerius” of the army of Sicily, an Exarch of Ravenna. To him was entrusted the command of the expedition of vengeance directed by Justinian II against the city of Ravenna in 709.

Joannes, surnamed *Rizocopus*, about 710 met Pope Constantine at Naples, on his way to Constantinople; himself proceeded to Rome, put four eminent ecclesiastics to death, and, returning to Ravenna, died there shortly after “by a most disgraceful death, the just judgment of God on his wicked deeds”.

Scholasticus (713-726), Grand Chamberlain and Exarch, transmitted to Pope Constantine, probably in 713, the letters of the shadow-Emperor Anastasius, in which he assured the Pope of his perfect orthodoxy.

Paulus (726-727) was sent by Leo III to enforce the iconoclastic edicts in Italy, and to arrest Pope Gregory II. He was prevented by the joint efforts of Romans and Lombards from executing the second part of this order, and was killed in an insurrection by the citizens of Ravenna.

Euty chius (727-752), the last Exarch of whom we have any mention, has figured both as a confederate with Liutprand, and as his antagonist, in the preceding history. He may have been still ruling when Ravenna fell before the assault of Aistulf, but of this we have no certain knowledge.

This brief summary of the deeds of the Exarchs is derived, we must remember, chiefly from hostile sources. An Exarch who lived on good terms with his ecclesiastical neighbours left no mark in history, while one who quarreled with Pope or Archbishop was sure to have his name mentioned unfavorably by the Papal biographer or by Agnellus of Ravenna. Still, even on the one-sided evidence before us we may fairly pronounce the Exarchs to have been a poor and contemptible race of men. They evidently felt themselves to be strangers and foreigners in the land; and taking no interest in the welfare of Italy, their chief thought probably was how to accumulate sufficient treasure against the day of their return to Constantinople. Feebly oppressive, they were neither loved nor greatly feared by their subjects or their soldiers. Three of them were killed in insurrections or mutinies, and a fourth only just escaped the same fate through the intervention of the Pope. One tried to grasp the Imperial scepter, but failed, and perished in the attempt. There is no trace of any great work undertaken by them, or of any wise and statesmanlike scheme for lessening the unhappiness of Italy. Even for their own proper business as soldiers they showed no special aptitude. City after city was lost by them to the Lombards, and not regained; and the story of their incompetent rule is at last ended by the capture of the hitherto impregnable city of Ravenna.

Consiliarus

The most important person on the staff of the Exarch was his *Consiliarius*, who was addressed by the title of “Most Eloquent”, or “Magnificent”. This minister was still probably in theory what he was in the days when this office was held by the historian Procopius, whom I have ventured to call “Judge-Advocate” to Belisarius. A general like Belisarius, who as general had according to Roman usage the power of trying causes (even though not of a purely military kind) in which soldiers were concerned, required a trained lawyer as his assessor, and such an assessor Belisarius found in the young legist, educated at Berytus, who, fortunately for

posterity, was not a mere lawyer, but had also a true historical genius, and wrote for us the story of the wars of his chief.

But as the Exarch, though still in theory a military officer, gradually drew to himself more and more of the functions of a civil governor, of course the power and the responsibility of his legal assessor were proportionately increased, and it does not surprise us to find the *Consiliarius* (perhaps in the absence of his lord) himself sitting on the judgment-seat, and giving decisions on his own account

Next however to the Exarch in the great official hierarchy stood the *Magistri Militum*, or *Duces*. These titles had, by a complete deviation from the usage of the times of Constantine, become practically interchangeable. At that time the Magister Militum was a very important minister of State—notwithstanding the division between Masters of the Horse and Masters of the Foot, there were only eight Masters altogether throughout the whole width of the Empire—and the *Dux* was a comparatively obscure military officer, merely *Spectabilis*, and standing below the *Comes* on the official ladder.

Now, in accordance with the general tendency of affairs under the Eastern Empire, the title of *Magister Militum* has become cheapened so that there are very likely a dozen of them in Italy alone, but the title of *Dux* has been raised in dignity, so that he is now distinctly above the *Comes*. Referring to that which has been said in a previous chapter as to the reasons which may have induced the barbarian nations to place the *Heretoga* above the *Graf*, we may now perhaps not too rashly venture the suggestion that the usage of the barbarians caused a change in the usage of the Empire, and that the dukes of Campania and Sardinia shone in the reflected glories of the dukes of Benevento and Spoleto.

Cartularius.

In the same way as the Exarch was supreme throughout Imperial Italy, so the *Dux* was, or became, during the period which we are now considering, supreme in the province which was under his rule, commanding the troops, nominating all the civil functionaries, fixing the taxation of the province, and constituting in himself the highest court of judicial appeal both in civil and criminal causes, subject always doubtless to an appeal from his decision to that of the Exarch.

In close proximity to the *Dux* we find an officer of high rank called the *Cartularius*. In a letter of Pope Stephen III, written in 756, the *Cartularius* is mentioned between the *Dux* and the *Comes*. Gregory the Great desires a correspondent to bring the necessities of Rome before the “Magnificent Man, lord Maurentius the *Cartularius*”. And in the year 638 we find Maurice the *Cartularius*, apparently the chief Imperial officer in Rome. He incites the Roman soldiers to rebellion by pointing to the stored-up treasures of the Lateran, out of which their wages might well be paid: he enters the Lateran palace along with the civil rulers, seals up all the treasures of the sacristy, and sends word to the Exarch Isaac, inviting him to come and divide the spoil. Later on (*circa* 642) he foments a rebellion against Isaac himself, which is suppressed by Donus, *Magister Militum*; he flies to S. Maria ad Praesepe for shelter, is dragged thence, and sent to Ravenna for execution.

In all these transactions the *Dux Romae* is never mentioned. I am disposed to conjecture that what the *Consiliarius* was to the Exarch, the *Cartularius* was to the *Dux*; his assessor, and chief legal adviser, who in his absence acted as his representative, and who may perhaps during some casual vacancy of the office have pushed himself into a position of supremacy, and maintained it by the arts of the military demagogue, till it became necessary for the Exarch to remove him by force.

Dukes of Rome and Naples

Before we part from the *Dux* and his staff, we must take particular notice of two dukes, who from the scene of their administrative labors possess an especial interest for us. The *Dux Romae* is not mentioned by that name in the letters of Gregory, but it is probable that in the course of the seventh century the *Magister Militum* at Rome was addressed by that title. For an express mention of a Duke of Rome we must wait till the beginning of the eighth century (711-713), when a large part of the Roman populace refused to receive Peter as duke because he was the nominee of the heretical emperor Philippicus, and with arms in their hands vindicated the claim of his predecessor Christopher. Evidently by that time the *Ducatus Romae* had become a well-known office in the state. After the events of 726, and the uprising of the Roman population against the decrees of the Iconoclastic Emperor, the Duke of Rome, though still keeping his high office, seems to have more or less broken off his connection with Ravenna, and become for the remainder of the century the humble servant of the Pope.

So too the *Duke of Naples*, though ruling over a very limited territory, became at an early period, owing to the remote and detached position of his duchy, comparatively independent of the Exarch at Ravenna. This tendency is perhaps indicated by the insurrection of Joannes Compsinus (about 618), though we have no distinct authority for calling him duke, and though his rebellion was soon suppressed. But in the eighth century, though the dukes of Naples did not break off from the Eastern Empire, and in fact fought against the Roman insurgents on behalf of the Iconoclasts, there was an evident tendency on their part to become hereditary nobles instead of mere nominees of the Emperor, holding office at his pleasure. The Duke of Naples at this time seems to be generally called *Consul*, as well as *Magister Militum*. About 768 he joins the office of bishop to that of duke, and in the following century (but this is beyond our horizon), the descendants of this duke-bishop almost succeed in making both dignities, the spiritual and the temporal, hereditary in their family.

It should be noticed that from the early part of the eighth century onwards, probably because of the weakened hold of the central government upon them, there was a tendency in the duchies to split up into smaller districts, each of whose rulers assumed the coveted title of *Dux*. The Papal biographer as we have seen, describes the result of the iconoclastic decree to have been that "all men throughout Italy, spurning the Emperor's orders, chose dukes for themselves, and thus provided for the Pope's safety and their own". As a result, we find the number of dukes greatly increased. Perugia, Ferrara, Fermo, Osimo, Ancona, has each its duke, and probably fuller histories of the time would give us many more. How strongly this splitting-up of the duchies, coinciding with their liberation from Imperial control, would tend towards making the dignity of duke hereditary in certain families, and preparing the way for a feudal nobility in the Italy of the Romans, as well as in the Italy of the Lombards, will be at once perceived by a student of history.

Tribunes.

Of the *Tribuni*, the military officers with civil powers, who came next below the *Duces* in the Imperial hierarchy, we are not able to say much. The reader will not need to be reminded how completely in the Imperial age the word *Tribune* had lost that signification of a defender of popular rights which once belonged to it, and how it was ordinarily applied to a military officer ranking above the centurion, and corresponding pretty closely with our *Colonel*. No doubt, then, the Tribunes who commanded the detachments of troops in the various towns of the province of which the *dux* was governor, were essentially and in theory military officers; but we have abundant proof in the letters of Gregory I that already, by the end of the sixth century, they joined to their military functions all the ordinary civil duties of the governor of a town. The Tribunes, to whom Gregory writes (and who, though styled *magnifici* and *clarissimi*, are nevertheless addressed by him in a tone of patronizing condescension which he does not

employ to *Duces* and *Magistri Militum*), are desired to redress financial grievances, to restore runaway slaves, to assist a niece to recover her uncle's inheritance, and so forth; all of them affairs entirely foreign to a military officer's duties. Thus we see here in a very striking manner how "the toga" was giving way to "arms", the officer stepping into the place of the civil servant in all the cities of Italy. Perhaps we may even say that the substitution took place earlier in the lower ranks of the services than in the higher; that by the time of Gregory the *Tribunus* had generally ousted the *Judex*, though the *Dux* had not yet entirely replaced the *Praeses*.

The Same officer who bore the title of *Tribunus* was also sometimes addressed as *Comes*, and we are tempted to say that these two titles were interchangeable, like those of *Magister Militum* and *Dux*; but it is difficult to speak with any certainty on this subject. It is certain (I borrow here some sentences from the latest French expositor) that from the beginning of the eighth century the exact hierarchy of titles begins to get into strange confusion; the ambition to wear a more sonorous name, the desire to amass a larger fortune by the *prestige* of an important post in the administration lead the chiefs of the Italian aristocracy to beg for dignities and titles from Byzantium, or to assume them on their own authority. Governors of towns call themselves Dukes, great proprietors intrigue for the functions of the Tribune, which become a hereditary title of nobility in their families; and administrative dignities go on multiplying, without any longer necessarily corresponding to real offices in the State.

The result of this examination into the political organization of Imperial Italy from the sixth to the eighth century throws an important light on the dark and difficult subject of the early history of *Venice*. As has been already hinted, we have exceedingly slight authentic and contemporary materials and a too copious supply of imaginative fourteenth-century romance for the reconstruction of that history. But, to repeat what was said in the preceding chapter, the uniform tradition of all the native historians, coinciding as it does with the contemporary letters of Cassiodorus, seems to prove that for two hundred years, from the close of the fifth century to the close of the seventh, the inhabitants of the islands in the Venetian lagunes were under the sway of rulers called *Tribuni* (Cassiodorus calls them *Tribuni Maritimi*), one for each of the twelve islands. About the year 697 they came together and chose one supreme ruler for the whole territory, who was called *Dux*: these *Duces* ruled the islands for about forty years, each one holding his office for life. Then annual magistrates, called *Magistri Militiae*, were appointed in their stead. This experiment, however, was found not to answer, and in 742 a *Dux* was again appointed, thus reinstating a line of elective life-magistrates, who for 1054 years ruled the cities of the lagunes, and for nearly 1000 years the one central queenly city of the Rialto, and whom history knows as the *Doges of Venice*. So much our inquiries into the contemporary history of Imperial Italy enable us easily to understand. The *Tribuni*, each one ruling in his own little island-town, are the Imperial officers whom we should expect to find there. If the islanders were from any cause detached from the rule of the *Dux Histriae et Venetiae* towards the close of the seventh century, during the troublous reign of Justinian II, it was natural that the inhabitants should elect a *Dux* of their own, hereby illustrating both the tendency towards a splitting-up of the great duchies into little ones, and the tendency towards popular election which became manifest when events weakened the hold of the Empire on the loyalty of the Italians. And what we have learned as to the almost equivalent value of the titles *Dux* and *Magister Militum* enables us readily to understand why, during the temporary obscuration of the life-ruling *Dux*, an annual *Magister Militiae* should be substituted in his place. The point on which we are not entitled to speak is as to the extent to which popular election may have entered into all these official appointments, especially into the appointment of the *Tribuni* who ruled in the several islands for two centuries. By analogy with the rest of Imperial Italy, we should expect these Tribunes to be nominated by a Duke or an Exarch, and so ultimately to receive their authority from Constantinople. It is possible that the peculiar

circumstances which led to the foundation of the cities of the lagunes and their strangely strong geographical position may have rendered them more independent of the officers of the Empire than the other cities which still owned its sway. But, on the other hand, all our information about them comes to us colored by the fancies of men who lived long after Venice had thrown off the yoke of the Empire; nay, some generations after she herself had borne a share in the sack of Constantinople. Historians like Dandolo and Sabellico, with these thoughts in their minds, were sure to minimize the degree of their ancestor's dependence on the Empire, and to exaggerate the amount of independence possessed by their forefathers. Perhaps, too, even their knowledge of Roman history, imperfect as it may have been, led them to think of a Tribune as a sturdy champion of popular rights, like Tiberius or Caius Gracchus, rather than as the sleek, obsequious servant of an absolute master, who was really denoted by the term *Tribunus* in the sixth century after Christ.

We have now gone through all the higher members of the political organization of Imperial Italy during the Lombard dominion, and have certainly so far seen no germs of freedom which could account for the phenomena afterwards presented by the great Italian Republics. This is fully admitted by Savigny himself, who holds that all the higher ranks of the civil magistracy of the Empire disappeared under the waves of change, but thinks the minor municipal magistracies survived, partly by reason of their very obscurity. The question which thus presents itself for solution is whether the local senates or *Curiae* of the cities of Italy did or did not survive through those centuries of darkness, to the dawn of republican freedom in the twelfth century.

To prevent needless repetition I refer my readers an easier section of this history for a sketch of the rise and fall of the municipal system of the Empire. The reader, if he turns back to that section, will see how the once flourishing and prosperous town-councils of Italy and the provinces became transformed into life-long prisons, in which the unhappy members of a once powerful middle-class were penned like sheep, awaiting the "loud-clashing shears" of the Imperial tax-gatherer. At the time of Justinian the condition of these Senators (as they were called with cruel courtesy) was still unaltered. In a law passed in the year 536 the Emperor laments in his stately language that the Senates which were established in every city of the Empire, in imitation of the Senate in the capital, are falling into decay, that there is no longer the same eagerness which there was in old time to perform public services to one's native city, but that men are willfully denuding themselves of their property, and making fictitious presents of it during their lifetime, in order to evade the statutory obligation to leave at least one-fourth of that property to members of the Senate. The Imperial legislator accordingly raises the proportion which must be thus left, to three-fourths. If a man leave legitimate children, they become perforce senators, and take the whole property with the burden. If he leaves only illegitimate offspring, they are to be enrolled in the Senate if they receive a bequest of this three-fourth fraction, otherwise it all goes straight to the *Curia*. If he leave only daughters, they must either marry husbands who are senators, or relinquish all claim to anything but one-fourth of their father's estate. All these provisions show that we are still face to face with that condition of affairs in connection with the *Curia*—nominal dignity, but real slavery—which we met with a century and a half before in the legislation of Theodosius and his sons. We see from the letters of Pope Gregory that the same state of things continued half a century after the legislation of Justinian, for he forbids the ordination not only of bigamists, of men who have married widows, of men ignorant of letters, but also of those "under liability to the *Curia*", lest, after having received the sacred anointing, they should be compelled to return to business.

In the East, however, it is clear that, for some reason or other, not even as convenient taxing-machines could the *Curiae* be kept permanently in existence. It was perhaps the institution of a new order of tax-gatherers called *Vindices*, and the assignment to them of the

functions formerly discharged, much against their will, by the Decurions, which brought about this change. Certain it is that about the year 890, the Emperor Leo VI, in an edict which I have already quoted abolished the last vestiges of the *Curiae*, which he described as imposing intolerable burdens, conferring imaginary rights, and “wandering in a vain and objectless manner round the soil of legality”.

This having been the course of affairs in the Eastern Did Empire, we should certainly expect to find that the *Curiae* had not a longer life in the West. With war and barbaric invasion raging round them, with the tendency which we have observed in Imperial institutions to imitate those of the Germanic peoples, especially the tendency of offices to become hereditary and thus to prepare the way for a feudal nobility, we certainly should not expect these *Curiae*, the pale specters of long-dead republics, to maintain themselves in being for six centuries. The negative conclusion on this subject to which *a priori* probability leads us is that at which the majority of scholars have arrived as the result of *a posteriori* reasoning. But one great name, that of Carl Friedrich von Savigny, is inscribed on the other side of the question, and in deference to that opinion (from which no historical student differs without reluctance) we must look a little more closely at the constitution of the *Curiae*, such as they undoubtedly still subsisted on the soil of Italy at the end of the sixth century.

In the old and flourishing days of the Italian municipalities, as we have seen, the *Decurions* had been an aristocracy ruling their native city, and proudly holding themselves aloof from the *Plebeii* around them. It had been an honor eagerly sought after to have one's name inscribed in the *Album Curiae*. Here were to be found first of all the names of the *Patroni*, or, as we should call them, honorary members; either home-born sons of the *Curia*, who had passed through all the grades of office up to the highest; or eminent Italians outside the *Curia*, on whom it had bestowed, as we should say, “the freedom of the city”. Here, too, were those who were serving, or had served, the office of *Duumviri* the office which imitated in each provincial town the position of the Roman Consulate, and which shared some of its reflected splendor. Here were other lower functionaries, who, as at Rome, bore the titles of *Aedile* and *Quaestor*, and here also was an officer called the *Quinquennalis*, appointed only once in five years, and whose dignity, corresponding to that of the Roman Censor, seems at one time to have overshadowed even that of the *Duumviri* themselves.

The Curator.

In the sixth century, the names, and hardly more than the names, of these municipal magnates still survived. The *Duumviri* appear to be alluded to under the more general term *Magistratus*. The continued existence of the *Quinquennales* depends on the rendering of a doubtful contraction in the papyrus documents of Marini. By a series of changes which even the patient labor of German scholars has hardly succeeded in fully developing, the power, such as it was, of the Italian *Curia* seems to have been concentrated in two officers, unknown in the third century, the *Curator* and the *Defensor*.

I. The *Curator* seems to have exercised those administrative and financial powers which we in England associate with the title of Mayor—perhaps adding thereto that of Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Corporation. The *Curator* of a large city like Ravenna was still an important person in the year 600. Gregory the Great addresses him as *gloria vestra*, consults him about important affairs of state such as peace with the Lombard king, asks him to obtain for certain soldiers their arrears of pay, recommends to his good offices the wife of the Prefect of Rome, who is visiting Ravenna. If we may identify him, as seems probable, with the *Major Populi* whom we meet with at Naples, he had charge of the gates of that city, and vehemently resented the pretensions of a meddling and arrogant bishop to interfere with him in his work of guarding the city, and to raise up a party antagonistic to his government.

These last letters of Pope Gregory probably indicate to us one reason for the disappearance of the *Curator* from all our later historical documents. The bishop was rapidly becoming the most important person in all that related to the peaceful administration of the city. Between him and the military governor, the *Tribunus*, there was left but little room for the popularly-elected *Curator* or *Major Populi*, and so in the course of the seventh and eighth centuries he vanishes from the scene.

2. Similar, probably, was the fate of the *Defensor*, who at the beginning of our period stood at the head of all the local functionaries, taking precedence both of *Curator* and *Duumviri*. His office, however, was chiefly a judicial one, and we may therefore, recurring to our English analogy, call him the Recorder, as the *Curator* is the Mayor of the town. The *Defensor Civitatis*, that officer whom the Empire had called into existence in order to protect the humbler classes against the rapacity of its own instruments, had gradually grown into an important magistrate, with a court and official retinue of his own. He himself had become too often arrogant and oppressive, a wolf instead of a sheep-dog to the flock. Then, again, he too, though not one of the downtrodden *Curiales*, had declined in power and reputation, so that, as Justinian himself says in his 15th Novel, "The office of *Defensor* is so trampled upon in parts of our dominions, that it is considered a disgrace rather than an honor to possess it. For it is now sought after by obscure persons in need of food and clothing, and given to them as a matter of charity rather than of proved fitness. Then the governors remove them at their pleasure for the most trifling fault, or for no fault at all, and put other persons in their room whom they call *place-keepers*, and this they do many times a year; so that the men of their staff and the rulers and inhabitants of the city hold the *Defensor* in utter contempt. Moreover, their judicial acts might as well never take place at all. For if the governors of the provinces order them to do anything in their official capacity, they generally do not presume to keep any record of their acts, looking upon themselves as the humble servants of the governor, whose nod they obey. Or, if they do make a record, in the first place they sell it [to one of the litigants], or secondly, as they have no place for storing their archives, the record is practically lost, and those who may desire to refer to it at a later day have to hunt it up from their heirs, or other successors, and generally find it worthless when they have obtained it".

In order to remedy all these abuses, Justinian ordained that the office of *Defensor* should be a biennial one, that he should be chosen by the bishop, clergy, and respectable citizens from among the more influential inhabitants of the city; that each one in his turn should be obliged to accept this public charge and that none, even of *Illustrious* rank, should be allowed to decline it. If any one after this enactment presumed to refuse to undertake the office, he was to be fined five pounds of gold, and was still to be compelled to act as *Defensor*. The *Defensores* were not to be removed from office, nor to have *place-keepers* appointed in their stead, by the ordinary provincial governors. If there were any complaint against their administration, the Praetorian Prefect alone was empowered to remove them. There were assigned to each *Defensor* from the staff of provincial servants, one reporter (*Exceptor*) to take minutes of his decisions, and two *Officiales* to carry them into effect.

To remedy the inconvenience which had arisen from the loss of documents in the *Defensor's* office, Justinian further ordered that a public building should be set apart in each city, in which he should store his records, under the care of an officer appointed for that purpose. It was hoped that thus the archives might be kept uninjured, and might be accessible to all men.

Under this law, *the Defensor* received, perhaps for the first time, the power of deciding civil cases up to the above-mentioned limit of 300 solidi. He had also summary criminal jurisdiction in all cases of slight importance, and the power of detaining graver offenders in prison, and sending them to the Praetor for trial. In short, his functions greatly resembled those

of an English magistrate, with some of those which belong to a County Court Judge added thereto. Wills also, and voluntary donations, were registered in his court, and the provincial governor was not to seek to deprive him of this voluntary jurisdiction.

The Novel in question was evidently a serious and well-considered attempt to make this popularly chosen judge, who was to be elected from among the local magnates, a great and important part of the machinery of government. As far as it went, it was an attempt to decentralize administration, and to invite the wealthier provincials to take their share in the life of the state.

This attempt however, like those previously noticed in the same direction, probably failed under the pressure of the times. We cannot speak with any certainty on the subject, owing to the paucity of our materials, but the letters of Pope Gregory lead us to infer that in his day the office of *Defensor Civitatis* was not one of any political importance. He too, there is reason to think, found himself squeezed out between the Bishop and the *tribunus*. The Church and the Army so occupied the ground that there was no room for the delicate plant of local self-government to flourish between them.

If this is the general conclusion to which our historical materials, slender as they are, seem to lead us, what, it may well be asked, is the evidence by which Savigny could possibly be led to imagine a continuous life of municipal institutions, lasting on till the twelfth century? The answer is contained in the very interesting documents edited by Marini, which do certainly show that there was more tenacity of life in the old Curial organization than we should have supposed from the evidence mentioned above. We have here a nearly continuous chain of documents, reaching from the days of Odovacar (*circa* 480) down to 625, all showing the *Curia* as still existing as a *Court of registry for legal instruments*. We have here the records of sales, donations, the appointment of a guardian, wills, the discharge of claims under a will, and so on. The documents have almost all come from the archives of the Church at Ravenna, and relate chiefly to that city and its neighborhood, but there is no reason to doubt that every other city in Italy could show many others like them, had they been preserved with equal care. In these documents in Marini's collection, we meet with nearly all the names of magistrates that have been described above. The *Defensor*, the *Quinquennalis*, the *Magistratus* (who is no doubt equivalent to *Duumvir*), all figure in these papyri as witnesses to the various transactions recorded: and it is often expressly said that the persons concerned in them have asked that they may be inscribed on the proceedings of the *Curia*. The *Curator*, however, does not appear, an absence which is by some attributed to his being veiled under the title *Quinquennalis*, while another suggestion is that as an administrative officer he had no concern in these quasi-judicial proceedings of the *Curia*.

It is then on the strength of these most interesting documents that Savigny grounds his theory of the survival of the *Curiae* through the darkest part of the Middle Ages. It is true that the documents do not bring us down below 625, but it is perhaps fair to argue that this is an accident due to some special circumstances in the history of the Church of Ravenna, and that a more careful storage of the archives would have shown us some of a later date.

But even so, and without insisting too much on the great gap which intervenes between the seventh century and the twelfth, may we not fairly ask, what do these documents prove as to the political state of Italy? We have in them traces of certain courts still lingering on as mere courts of registration. These subscribing and attesting witnesses do not, for anything that the documents show us, possess any power in the city. Their functions are only what we call notarial functions, and it is but in accordance with what we might have expected that we find the word *Curialis* used in the ninth century (as Savigny himself admits) as a title equivalent to that of *Exceptor*, or registrar of the Court.

To me the nearest analogy to these *Curiae* of the seventh century, which Savigny regards with such romantic interest, and in which he sees the germs of the glorious Italian *Comuni* of the thirteenth century, is the “courts baron” and “courts leet”, which still preserve a lingering existence in our own country. In the absence of a complete system of registration, these little Courts of ours have their value. The steward of the manor (generally a local attorney) and a few copyholders on the estate are aware of their existence, and can tell an intelligent inquirer when they will be held. But they are absolutely without influence on the political condition of the districts in which they meet, and the majority of the inhabitants would never notice their disappearance if they dropped absolutely out of existence. If we can imagine these faint survivals becoming once more great and powerful realities, or rather becoming greater and more powerful than they ever were in the noonday of the feudal system, if we can imagine them making and unmaking ministries, and determining the destiny of England, then, as it seems to me, we may also imagine the *Comuni* of Florence or of Siena descending from the *Curiae* of the Imperial age.

CHAPTER XIV.

POLITICAL STATE OF LOMBARD ITALY

We now turn to consider the political and social state of the much larger portion of Italy which was under the rule of the Lombard conquerors. Our enquiry into this part of the subject may be shorter than that which occupied us in the last chapter. Documentary evidence (except that furnished by the laws, which we have already examined) is scanty and obscure. The best evidence is that which is furnished by the actual history of the Lombard State as exhibited in the course of these two volumes, and from that evidence each individual reader can form his own conclusion.

Thus in the first place, as to him who stood at the head of the State, the king of the Lombards in his palace-hall at Pavia, we can feel instinctively what perhaps cannot be expressed scientifically, how the two elements of election and hereditary descent concurred, when the throne was vacant, towards the determination of its next occupant. The element of popular election, present in all these Teutonic monarchies, was there, but there was also a strong preference for the representatives of certain special lines of descent, especially during all the seventh century for the representatives of the sainted Theudelinda. Thus the succession to the throne, though much less strictly hereditary than that which obtained amongst the Franks, was much more so than that of the Visigoths. In Spain before the Moorish conquest and after the fall of the monarchy of Toulouse there was hardly a single royal family that succeeded in maintaining itself for more than two generations, whereas Aripert II, who got possession of the throne in 700, was descended in the fourth degree from the brother of Theudelinda.

The king of the Lombards, if he were a man of any force of character, was able to make his will felt very effectively, at any rate through all the north of Italy. He moved the national army whither he would: his favor could make or mar the fortunes of a subject: and the fabric of his wealth, the foundation of which was laid in the day when at the close of the interregnum the thirty-six dukes surrendered each one-half of his domains to the newly-elected Authari, was doubtless raised higher and higher by the confiscation of the property of rebellious nobles, and especially by the multitude of fines which, as we have seen in commenting on the laws of Rothari and Liutprand were payable to "the King's Court" or "the King's Palace"

"The king's rights" (I borrow here the language of a great German jurist) as limited by popular freedom were the following. The laws were devised by him in consultation with the great men and nobles of the land, then accepted by the collected army which formed the assembly of the people, and given forth in his name. He was the supreme judge, but, like other national judges, he was assisted by jurors in finding the verdict. From him went forth the summons to the host, but without doubt war, before being declared, was first talked over with the great men and approved in the assembly of the people, which was generally held on the 1st of March. The public domain, that is all the land that was not divided among private persons, was his, and was administered by officers specially named by him, the *gastalds*. It was he who safeguarded the peace of the community: therefore the highest criminal jurisdiction was in his hands, and was partly exercised by him directly, partly handed over to his own officers or to the heads of the people. The former mode was generally adopted when the disturbers of the peace were great and powerful persons. All crimes against the commonwealth, such as treason, disturbance of the national assembly, and the like, were punished by the king, either with death or with the maximum fine (900 solidi), and an equally heavy penalty avenged any breach of the peace which occurred in the king's palace. Even of the fines which were inflicted for injuries

on private persons, one half [as a general rule] went to the king to atone for the breach of the public peace, while the other half went as solace and compensation to the injured party. Moreover the king exercised the highest police-jurisdiction, and took the necessary precautions for the safety of persons and property throughout the land. Without his permission, no free man accompanied by his clan (*fara*) might change his residence even within the kingdom [still less leave the country] : no one might exercise the craft of a goldsmith or coin money. Under his especial protection were all churches and convents with their appurtenances, as well as foreigners settling in the realm (*wargangi*). He also represented the woman as against her guardian (*mundwald*), the retainer as against his lord, and afforded a last refuge to men otherwise unarmed and unprotected. Out of these rights as universal patron or supreme guardian there arose for him various claims of inheritance which he exercised on behalf of the community when private heirs failed.

So far Hegel. But great as were the powers of the Lombard king when wielded by a strong and vigorous arm, it must not be forgotten that, as Hegel and other enquirers have pointed out, one influence which in other States did much to consolidate and strengthen royal power was wanting here. The Church, which undoubtedly did so much to establish the Frankish and the Saxon monarchies, seems to have been always cold towards that of the Lombards, nor could all the lavish gifts of kings and dukes to basilica and monastery do more than win a kind of grudging assent to the proposition that the *nefandus Langobardus* was somewhat less intolerable than aforesaid.

Before we leave the subject of the Lombard kings, something must be said as to the chief emblem of their dignity, the far-famed Iron Crown. In the Church of St. John the Baptist at Monza is still to be seen that little golden circlet (15 centimeters in diameter, 5-3 centimeters high) which was guarded there among the most precious treasures of the Church for more than twelve centuries. It is made in six separate pieces, and it has in it twenty-two jewels of various kinds (chiefly pearls and emeralds), twenty-six golden roses, and twenty-four finely wrought enamels. But that which has given the crown its name and its special historic interest is not its precious gems, but the thin circlet of iron (only 3 oz. in weight and a centimeter high) which runs round the inside of the diadem. This iron rim is now said to be composed of a nail which was used in the crucifixion of Christ, and was brought from Jerusalem by Helena, mother of Constantine. With this precious ring of iron the crown of Constantine may have been adorned: it may have travelled from Constantinople to Rome : it may have been sent by Pope Gregory the Great to Theudelinda, though it is not probable that he would dare to give to a Lombard queen the emblems of Imperial sovereignty. But for all these conjectures, whether probable or improbable, there does not exist any shadow of proof: and, in fact, the theory of the connection of the Iron Crown with the sacred nail cannot be certainly traced back for more than three or four centuries, and is generally considered to have received its death-blow at the hands of Muratori. To one who, like the present writer, views with the utmost suspicion all the supposed discoveries at Jerusalem of the enthusiastic and credulous Helena, the question of one fiction less or more in connection with the sacred nails is not extremely interesting, and does not seem worth the tons of printed paper which have already been devoted to it. But the story of the Crown for its own sake, and as a great historic emblem, is undoubtedly interesting.

Till the twelfth century it appears to have been always called the *Corona Aurea*; after that, the name of *Corona Ferrea* gradually became more usual; and in the fourteenth century the Emperors Henry VII and Lewis the Bavarian being for some reason unable to obtain the precious so-called Iron Crown itself, are said to have been crowned with one made entirely of iron. This baser rival however soon vanishes from the scene, and the true Iron-Golden Crown reappears, and is used for the coronation of Charles IV, the author of the Golden Bull, and

Charles V, the worldwide Emperor. Strangest of all the scenes in the history of the venerable ornament was that when, in the hands of a French Master of the Ceremonies, accompanied by the Archpriest and twelve citizens of Monza (dressed by their own especial desire in uniform), and escorted by fifty-six cavalry soldiers, it was transferred on the 18th of May, 1805, to the Cathedral of Milan, where eight days after, the son of a Corsican attorney placed it on his imperial brow, uttering the well-known words, "Dio me l'ha data, guai a chi la toccherà".

But though the Iron Crown still survives at Monza, a scarcely less interesting relic of Lombard domination has disappeared almost in our own days. Side by side with the Iron Crown were to be seen at Monza in the time of Muratori two other crowns, one of Agilulf and one of Theudelinda. The former, in some respects the most interesting of the three, was adorned with figures of Our Saviour, two Angels, and the Twelve Apostles, each standing in an alcove of laurel boughs. It had 65 carbuncles and emeralds and 158 pearls, and round the bottom of it ran an inscription recording that "Agilulf the glorious man, by Divine grace king of the whole of Italy, offered this crown to St. John the Baptist in the church of Monza". Unfortunately this most interesting historical relic must now be spoken of in the past tense. Having been carried off by Napoleon to Paris, it was kept there among the treasures of the Bibliothèque Nationale, but in January, 1804, it was stolen by one of the custodians named Charlier, and carried off by him to Amsterdam, the gold melted, and the jewels sold. The thief was captured and died in prison, but the crown of the noble Agilulf was irrecoverably lost.

As for the Iron Crown itself, after figuring in the coronation of two Austrian Emperors at Milan, it was after the battle of Solferino carried eastward to Venice, the last stronghold of Austrian power in Italy, and only after the war of 1866 was it brought back to its old home in Monza, where it may be hoped that it will now rest, to be used hereafter only for the coronation of the sovereigns of an united Italy.

The Duke

Passing now from the Royal to the Ducal office, we observe first a curious fact. The history of the interregnum and the high position attained by the rulers of Spoleto and Benevento, together with many other indications of the same kind, clearly show that the Duke was a most important person in the Lombard State, no foreign importation, but a homegrowth of the Teutonic genius, and yet we are entirely unacquainted with his true national name. *Dux* is of course Latin, taken over as we have seen from the Imperial hierarchy of office. Neither Paulus nor the laws of Rothari nor those of Liutprand give us the slightest indication how the office of Gisulf or Farwald was spoken of by himself and by his countrymen when no ecclesiastic was at hand to translate their language into the barbarous Latin of a legal document. We may conjecture that the Lombard name was some compound of *Ari*, the equivalent of army, and thus that it may have resembled the Anglo-Saxon *Heretoga* (Army-leader), but this can be only a conjecture, and raises the further question, Had the Lombards any word like *Ealdorman* to express the civil as distinct from the military duties of this great functionary, to describe the duke when sitting on the judgment-seat rather than when leading his warriors to battle?

The power and the possibilities of power residing in the office of the Lombard duke have been perhaps sufficiently indicated in the course of the preceding history. We have seen how an office which was at first delegated only for life, became in some cases virtually hereditary; how the perpetual rebellions of the Lombard dukes against their sovereign divided and enfeebled the State; how these rebellions were suppressed, and the dukes of Northern Italy were brought into comparative subjection and subordination before the end of the seventh century but how far harder even the great Liutprand found it to deal with the semi-independent dukes of Spoleto and Benevento. As to these latter princes and their relation to the central

authority, our information is extremely vague. We can see that there was no close cohesion, but we are perhaps hardly entitled to assert that there was during the greater part of Lombard history absolute alienation and hostility between them. Matrimonial alliances between the families of king and duke are not uncommon : the sons of the duke are friendly visitors at Pavia : when occasion arises they can work together against Emperor or Exarch. Thus, though it is undeniable that the tie which bound the dukes of Spoleto and Benevento to the Northern kingdom was a somewhat loose one, and though commentators are right in calling attention to the pointed omission of the names of these dukes in the prologues to the laws even of the great Liutprand, it is not quite certain that we are right in deducing from this latter circumstance that they were really disaffected to the Lombard king. With the Flaminian Way still more or less blocked by Imperial troops, it might be unsafe for a great personage like the duke of Spoleto or Benevento to travel to Pavia without an escort, which would have been in fact an army. And it is noteworthy in this connection, that at none of the later diets held by Liutprand (not even when Benevento at any rate was loyal, being under the rule of the king's nephew Gregory) have we any express mention of the presence at these assemblies of nobles from either of the southern duchies.

The gastald

In connection with the ducal office generally, (passing on from the question of the larger semi-independent duchies), it will be well to notice an institution, peculiar, or nearly so to the Lombard State, that of the *gastaldat*. The *gastald*, whose name was probably derived from the Gothic word *gastaldan*, to acquire or possess, seems to have been a royal officer whose special business it was to collect the fines due to the king, and to administer the royal domain, distributed as it was through the various districts of Italy. It is a not improbable conjecture of Hegel, that when, at the restoration of the kingship, the dukes surrendered half of their territories in order to constitute such royal domain, this was a division of land, not of the revenues accruing from land, and that this may have been the occasion on which *gastalds* were appointed in order to safeguard the king's rights in the surrendered districts; to collect his rents and taxes; to judge the causes which arose within their *gastaldat*; and to lead forth to war the free Lombards who dwelt therein. Whether he lived in the same city as the duke we cannot say: probably in most cases he would fix his abode in a town of secondary importance. But it is essential to observe that the *gastalds* thus holding the king's commission were, and were meant to be, a check upon the power of the dukes, who though in theory themselves also the nominated servants of the Crown, were fast becoming hereditary rulers. Thus the two principles, what may be called by an anachronism the feudal principle and that of the centralized monarchy, being represented respectively by the duke and the *gastald*, were set over against one another, and exercised upon one another a reciprocal control. As was said in the laws of Rothari, "If a duke shall unjustly harass one of his men-at-arms, let the *gastald* relieve him until he find out the truth, and bring him to justice, either in the presence of the king, or at least before his duke". "If any *gastald* shall unreasonably harass his man-at-arms, let the duke relieve him until he shall find out the truth of his case"

It is to be noted, as a sign of the semi-independent position of the two great Southern dukes, that no royal *gastalds* appear to have existed in their dominions, but they appointed *gastalds* of their own, who seem to have been of somewhat inferior position to their namesakes in the rest of Italy, holding a delegated authority from the duke, each one in the little *actus* or township which formed the administrative unit in the duchy of Benevento, perhaps also in that of Spoleto. Meanwhile the duke himself lived almost in royal splendor at Benevento or Spoleto. His court was the centre of all power and all brilliancy. He had his chancellor (*referendarius*), his high constable (*marpahis*), his grand chamberlain and master of the robes

(*cubicularius* and *vestararius*), and his grand treasurer (*stolesaz*). And, significant fact, in his charters and donations he always mentioned the year of his own reign, and forgot to mention that of his sovereign who was reigning at Pavia.

For Lombard Italy as a whole we find the number of *gastalds* apparently increasing, and that of the *duces* diminishing, as the seventh century wears on. In *civitates* such as those of Parma and Piacenza, which had been betrayed by their dukes to the Empire, it was natural that Agilulf, when he recovered them, should appoint not an aspiring duke but a subservient *gastald* to administer the affairs of the city, and that he should speak of these places as “cities of our royal house”. Rothari too when he won from the Greeks the fair cities on the coast of the Riviera, probably put them under the rule of his *gastalds*. And in some of those cases in which the rebellion of a turbulent duke was with difficulty suppressed (as for instance in the case of Treviso), it seems probable that the king, while confiscating the private property of the duke, added his territory to the royal domain, and divided it up into *gastaldats*.

The sculdahis

Besides the *gastald*, there were other officers of the royal domain called by the general name of *actores regis*, the gradation of whose rank and various duties it is not easy to discover. It is interesting however to observe the important, even judicial functions of the *The saltarius* or forester. The *sculdahis*, or *sculdhaizo*, of whom frequent mention is made in the laws, seems to have been not unlike one of our justices of the peace. His title (the enforcer of obligations) seems to show that it rested with him to enforce obedience to the decisions of the court above; and the words by which Paulus Diaconus translates it (*rector loci*) show us that practically the *sculdahis* was the chief man in the little town or village in which he dwelt.

The particular *sculdahis* of whom Paulus speaks in this passage was that Argait whose unfortunate name, coupled with his want of success in capturing the Slovene robbers from over the mountains, exposed him to the clumsy banter of Duke Ferdulf of Friuli, and led to the loss of hundreds of Lombard lives through Argait’s fool-hardy attempt to wipe off the stain upon his honor. But notwithstanding this error, Paulus tells us that he was “a noble man, powerful in courage and strength”; in fact, just like a stalwart, hot-tempered English squire, more terrible with that strong sword-arm of his, than successful in matching his wits against the shifty, nimble, petty thieves from over the border.

The organization of the Lombard State was undoubtedly crude and somewhat barbarous, though in the very quaintness of its barbarism there is a certain charm when we compare it with the pompous and effete hierarchy of Byzantine officialism. But the question which, as I have already often hinted, attracts while it continually eludes us is, What was the condition of the earlier population of Italy, of the men who though of various stocks all called themselves Roman, under these their Lombard conquerors? This question, as I have said, must attract us. After we have followed the history of the Imperial race from the hut of Faustulus to the glories of the Palatine and the Capitol, after gazing in many widely Sundered lands on the handiwork of the Roman legionary and thus learning afresh in manhood the marvel of the schoolboy’s commonplaces concerning “the lords of the world, the nation of the toga”, how can we turn away from them in the day of their calamity, or fail to enquire how the sons of Italy, when their turn came to be enslaved, bore themselves in their bondage?

But the question, though it must be asked, cannot be satisfactorily answered. The pit of ruin into which Rome fell was so deep that scarcely a voice reaches us from its dark recesses. The Greek in similar circumstances would surely have told us something of his reverses. He would have written histories or sung elegies, or in some way or other coined his sorrows into gold. The Roman, always naturally unexpressive, endured, was silent, and died. The actual evidence as to the condition of the Latin population under their Lombard lords is scanty, and

can soon be summarized for the reader. The conjectures with which we cannot help filling up the blank interstices of that evidence are endless, and a volume would be needed to discuss them thoroughly.

To begin with, there is the important statement by Paulus of the results of the Lombard conquest to which reference has already been made. In these Lombards, days [under the rule of the thirty dukes, just after the death of Alboin] many of the noble Romans were slain through avarice. But the rest being divided among their “guests” on condition of paying the third part of their produce to the Lombards, are made tributaries.

The general purport of this passage is clear enough. The largest land-owners among the Romans, the nobles who owned any *latifundia* which might still exist in Italy, were, as a rule, killed by the greedy Lombards, who probably portioned out their lands among them. The rest of the Roman inhabitants (for so surely we must understand the passage, not “the rest of the nobles”) found themselves assigned as “hosts” to the new-comers who were their “guests”, and bound to pay over to them one-third of the produce of their lands. The result of this revolution was of course in a certain sense to take away their freedom and make them tributaries (that is, not “tenants” but more nearly “serfs”) to the invading Lombards. We have here therefore again nearly the same process which we have already watched in the Italy of Odovacar and Theodoric. The word *hospes* (host or guest) is a technical one in this connection, and expresses with unintended irony the relation in which the poor dispossessed Roman stood to his most unwelcome guest. Only we have to notice this difference, that whereas in Odovacar’s and Theodoric’s land-settlements and in that of the Burgundians and Visigoths a third or other fraction of the land itself was taken by the invader, here it was a third of the *produce* of the land to which he helped himself. This is an important difference, and at once raises the question, Was it a third of the gross produce of the soil, or was the “host” allowed to take subsistence for himself and those who helped him in the cultivation first, and then to pay a third of the net produce to his “guest”? If the latter, the tribute was, as such things went, fair and moderate : if the former, it is considered that it was equivalent to taking two-thirds of the net produce, and that it probably left but a narrow margin for the cultivator and his family. We have no means of deciding the question, but it seems on the whole most likely that the harsher view is the true one, and that the Lombard took his third of everything grown on the land before the Roman was allowed any wages for his labor.

However this may be, the following consequences seem necessarily to flow from the fact that the Lombards took from the previous inhabitants of Italy, not quota of land, but a quota of produce. In the first place, they were themselves thus exempted from the necessity of agricultural labor. They could live like gentlemen on the tribute paid by their down-trodden “hosts”, could perhaps drift into the cities, or go hunting in the forests: in short, they missed that sobering, steadying influence which is given to the cultivator of the soil by his long annual struggle with Nature.

Secondly, the softening and harmonizing influence which is sometimes exercised by neighborhood and a common pursuit was necessarily here wanting. Cassiodorus says that Liberius, to whom was assigned the duty of marking out the Thirds in the Ostrogothic land settlement, so fulfilled his mission as actually to draw the men of the two nations closer together. “For whereas men are wont to come into collision on account of their being neighbours, with these men the common holding of their farms proved in practice a reason for concord”. Doubtless this statement is colored by the official optimism which is characteristic of its author, but in the Lombard land settlement such a result was impossible. The Lombard *hospes* was a landlord, often probably an absentee landlord, and was hated accordingly.

For, thirdly, the necessary result of taking not land but a portion of his yearly produce from the Roman cultivator, was to make of him, as Paulus says, a “tributaries”, and thus to

deprive him, more or less, of his freedom. When the Ostrogothic or Rugian “guest” had with the high hand taken the allotted portion away from his Roman neighbor, it was nothing to him what that neighbor did with the rest. He might starve or grow fat on his diminished holding; he might drift away to Rome or Constantinople; he might enter the service of the Church, or join the army of diggers who by Theodoric’s orders were draining the marshes of Terracina,—it was all one to the barbarian “guest” who had been quartered upon him. But the Lombard who had received not land but the arms of the subject-race for his portion, would undoubtedly insist that his “host” should remain upon the land and make it bring forth as plenteous crops as he could, and the whole force of the new rough barbarian kingdom would back his claim. Thus the Roman, lately perhaps a free cultivator, became not a tenant but a *tributarius*, and practically a “serf bound to the soil”.

Hospites

We next come to a mysterious and difficult sentence of Paulus, which has been more discussed than anything else written by its author, and has given rise to almost as much controversy as the celebrated sentences of Tacitus as to the land-system of the Germans. After describing the period of the interregnum and how it was ended by the elevation of Authari to the throne, his assumption of the title Flavius, and the surrender by the dukes of half their property “to royal uses in order that there might be a fund out of which the king himself, his adherents, and those who were bound to his service by their various offices might be supported”, Paulus says, *Populi tamen adgravati per Langobardos hospites partiuntur*. He then goes on to describe the happy estate of the kingdom of the Lombards under Authari, the absence of robbery and crime, the cessation of unjust exactions (*angaria*), and the fearless security with which every one went about his lawful business.

In the earlier pages of this history I have suggested as a translation of the above sentence, (in this division) the subject populations who had been assigned to their several Lombard guests were [also] included, that is to say, that along with the lands the tributary Roman populations settled upon them were handed over to the king. This seems to be the sense required by the general drift of the passage, but it must be confessed that it is difficult to get it out of the sentence as it stands. What seems an easier translation is offered by Marquis Capponi : “The tributary populations (*populi adgravati*) however are divided (that is remain divided) among their Lombard guests”. This translation gives a good meaning to the word *tamen* (however), but it is difficult to get “remain divided” out of *partiuntur*, and it is also in itself improbable. For what would be the object of handing over to the king broad lands denuded of the tributary Roman who cultivated them, and what would the surrendering dukes do with the great populations thus thrown on their hands and deprived of the land from which they derived their sustenance?

On the whole, without going minutely here into the various and sometimes desperate devices which have been resorted to in order to obtain a satisfactory meaning from the passage, the safest course seems to be to acquiesce in the decision of Capponi, that, whatever may be its construction, it is too obscure to make it safe to resort to it for any fresh information as to the condition of the vanquished Romans. The subject with which Paulus is mainly dealing is the financial arrangements made between the dukes and their new sovereign. These it is probably hopeless now to understand, but it seems clear that the system by which the Roman landowner was made tributary to a Lombard *hospes* still remained in force, whoever that *hospes* may have been.

The Roman Population became Aldii

Having gathered such scanty information as we could from the pages of Paulus, let us now turn to consider what light is thrown by the Lombard laws on the condition of the

vanquished Romans. The laws of Rothari, as we have seen, are eloquently silent as the Very name of Roman. Except for the one contemptuous allusion to the case of a Roman female slave (*ancilla Romana*) whose seduction was to be atoned for by a fine scarcely more than half that which was payable for the seduction of a Teutonic slave (*ancilla gentilis*), we might have supposed that Rothari and his counselors lived on a planet to which the fame of Rome had never reached. We find however in these very laws a large number of enactments. as to the rights and wrongs of the *Aldius*, a man who, as we discovered, occupied a position midway between the “folk-free” Lombard of the king’s army and the mere slave. Everything seemed to show that we were here dealing with a man not greatly or essentially different from the Roman *colonus*, who cultivated the ground for a master and who could not change his condition or his home, but who on the other hand could not have his rent (if we call it so) raised arbitrarily upon him, nor be sold like the mere slave into distant bondage. In alluding, as I then did to the suggestion that among the *Aldii* of the Lombard law-book we had to look for the vast mass of the so-called “Roman” inhabitants of Italy who occupied it before the Lombard conquest, I proposed that we should for the time neither accept this theory nor yet reject it, but keep it before our minds and see how far it explained the phenomena which came before us.

Now, at the close of this enquiry, I ask the reader if he does not consider that the probability of this theory amounts almost to certainty? It is true we have not—would that we had—any distinct statement by Paulus or any other contemporary authority, “The Romans were made *Aldii*”; but we are told that they were made *tributarii*, and finding in the Lombard law-book continual allusions to a class of men—manifestly a large class—who are evidently *tributani*, we say with some confidence : “Surely the staple of this class is the vanquished Roman population”. I may say that this theory is not the special discovery of any one student, though perhaps Troya has done more to establish its correctness than any other writer. It has by this time almost passed into one of the commonplaces of Lombard history; but it has seemed desirable to review the reasons by which it is supported and to show that they are likely to stand the test of further investigation.

If it be once admitted that the great mass of the Roman population are represented by the *Aldii* of the Lombard Codes, most of the desired information is ours. Almost all the events that could happen to them can be expressed (if we may speak mathematically) in terms of the *guidrigild*, which *guidrigild* however, we must always remember, was payable not to the *Aldius* himself but to his master. If a Roman cultivator was fatally injured by some truculent Lombard swashbuckler, it is not upon his injury or on his family’s claims to compensation that Rothari meditates, but he argues that if his master is not indemnified for the loss of so profitable a drudge, there will be a *faida* between him and the homicide, and he therefore fixes the tariff of *guidrigild* to be paid by the homicide to the master.

Thus then, speaking generally, we may say if any one would know how the countrymen of Virgil and Cicero were faring during the latter part of the sixth and the seventh centuries and what sort of lives they lived, let him study the Lombard Codes and see what they say as to the position of the *Aldius* and *Aldia* in Lombard Italy. But there are two classes of persons to whom we cannot feel sure that this information applies.

The first are the handicraftsmen and dwellers in towns. Is there anything in the above-quoted words of Paulus about “paying the third part of their crops” (*frugum*) to the *hospites* which entitles us to say that a worker in metal living within the walls of a town was made subject to this tribute? It is generally conjectured by historical enquirers that this artisan class shared the degradation and the liability to tribute of their rural fellow-countrymen; but we cannot be said to have any proof of this proposition, nor is it so easy to understand how the quartering of the Lombard guest upon the Roman could be accomplished in the town as in the country.

And, secondly, the wealthy and leisured class apart from the mere land-owners, if there were any such class left in Italy,—how did they fare under the new system? I say, “if there were any such left”, because the influences which had been at work in Italy to drain it of those whom we should call its gentlemen had been mighty and had been working for centuries. The impoverishment of the *Curiales*, the invasions of Alaric, of Attila, of Gaiseric, Odovacar and his Herulians, Theodoric and his Ostrogoths, preeminently the bloody revenges which marked the latter stages of the Ostrogothic war, the emigration to Constantinople, the tendency of all men of good birth and education to flock to the seat of officialism, whether at Ravenna or at Constantinople, in search of a career, the attractions of the Church for some, of the Convent for others,—all these causes had doubtless worked a terrible depletion of the rural aristocracy of Italy, even before the unspeakable Lombard came to hasten the process.

Still there may have been Roman gentlemen, as there may have been Roman artisans, who were no man’s *Aldii*, and therefore stood outside the pale of express Lombard law, and if there were such I think we can only conjecture what amount of protection they received for life and property. My own conjecture would be that in the first generation after the conquest they received none at all. The sentence of Paulus, “In these days many of the noble Romans were slain through avarice”, expresses, I suspect, the state of things not only under the lawless dukes, but even under Authari and Agilulf, at any rate in the earlier years of the reign of the latter monarch. Even under Rothari, if the son of a murdered Roman came to the King’s Court and claimed compensation for his father’s death, we can imagine the king’s reply, “When Lombard has killed Lombard, we have ordered that a certain *guidrigild* be paid, *ut cesset faida*, to prevent a blood-feud. But how can any blood-feud exist between the Lombard and the soft weaponless Roman? No more than between a Lombard man and a woman. I cannot decree the payment of any *guidrigild*, but you can if you like try your fortune as a *camfio* in the dread wager of battle”. And thereat, inextinguishable laughter would resound through the hall at the thought of the delicate Roman mounting horse and couching spear against the stalwart Lombard *exercitalis*.

Such would seem to have been the law, or rather the absence of law, in the earlier days of the Lombard state. But we saw in the laws of Liutprand that a stronger feeling against crimes of violence had then been growing up in the community. The conviction that murder was not merely a wrong to the relations of the murdered man, but a disgrace to the State, a breach, as our ancestors would say, of “the King’s Peace”, had evidently entered into the mind of the legislator. It was under the influence of this conviction that he ordained that the murderer of “any free man” should atone for his crime by the loss of the whole of his property, part of which was to go to the murdered man’s heirs and the rest to the King’s Court. Here at first we think we have got the desired answer to our question as to the protection afforded by the law to the unattached Roman, who is no man’s *Aldius*. As a free man he surely shares in the advantages of this law, and anyone who kills him *asto animo* (of malice prepense) will forfeit his whole property for his crime. But unfortunately, as has been already pointed out, a law which was passed four years later for the express purpose of explaining this law seems to limit those hopeful words, “any free man”. It is true that the legislator here deals only with manslaughter in self-defense and does not expressly repeal any part of the law against premeditated murder. But when we find that the lowest *guidrigild* known to the legislator is for “the humblest person *who shall he found to be a member of our army*”, we feel that these words are probably to be taken as limiting the application of the earlier law also, and we fear that we may not infer that the truculent Lombard who of malice aforethought killed a free man of Roman origin was punished for the crime by the forfeiture of all his estates. Thus then, in the silence of the Lombard legislator, we are left to mere conjecture as to the condition of the Roman population. Individually I am disposed to conjecture that the increasing civilization of

their conquerors had, at any rate by the time of Liutprand, perhaps long before, wrought great improvement in their condition, and that the murder or mutilation of a free Italian of non-Lombard descent was noticed and punished in some way by the Lombard magistrate, but how, to what extent, under the provision of what law, I do not think we have any evidence to show.

But while in criminal matters the man of Roman origin was thus at the mercy of the law, or rather the lawlessness, of his conquerors, in civil affairs we may reasonably suppose that he retained his own law, as far as he had knowledge and understanding enough to use it. Why, for instance, should the Lombard official trouble himself with the disposition of the Roman artisan's scanty savings among his descendants? Why should he care to impose upon him the Lombard principle of the exclusion of daughters in favor of sons, or the provision made by the laws of Rothari for illegitimate offspring? All these were surely matters far below the range of the Lombard duke or *sculdahis*; and so the men of Roman origin in their purchases and sales to one another, in making their wills, in dividing the property of an intestate, would go on, very likely clumsily and ignorantly enough, following, as far as they knew them, the provisions of the Digest and the Code. Thus we have at once a natural explanation of those passages already noticed in the laws of Liutprand where he uses emphatically the words "Si quis Langobardus" in treating of the laws of inheritance; of his refusal of the Lombard rights of *faida* and *anagriph* to the Lombard woman who has come under a Roman's *mundium*; and above all, of the important law *de scribis*, in which conveyancers are ordered, under very severe penalties for disobedience, to prepare their deeds either according to the law of the Lombards or according to the law of the Romans, and not to presume to alter either of these to suit their own convenience.

Thus we find that in the Lombard State, as in most of the other States founded by the barbarians on the ruins of the Empire, we have the germs of what is known as the system of Personal Law, as opposed to that of Territorial Law which is now universal in Christian Europe. Under this system, not only had the Barbarian one code of laws and the Roman another, but after the barbarian peoples had begun to get mixed with one another by wars and invasions, each separate barbarian nation kept its own laws, and thus, as Bishop Agobard said in the ninth century when writing to Louis the Pious, "you may see five men sitting or walking together, each of whom has his own law". We shall find this system in full operation under Charles the Great, and though undoubtedly it was less completely developed in Italy than in some of the other countries of Western Europe, owing to the attempt made by the Lombards to assimilate all other laws and customs to their own, Personal Law is there in the Laws of Liutprand, and it would probably have asserted itself more strongly had the life of the State been a longer one.

Here then for the present we leave the story of the Lombard settlers in Italy. They have succeeded in making good their position in the peninsula, notwithstanding all the efforts of Pope and Exarch, of Caesar and of Meroving to expel them. They have been steadily extending their frontier, and it seems clear that their final expulsion of "the Greeks" (as the Imperial forces are beginning to be called) is only a question of time, and not of any long time either. They have renounced their Arian Creed, have become great church-builders and convent-founders, and, as far as religious reasons go, there seems no cause why they should not live on terms of cordial friendship with the See of Rome. Lastly, they have been for more than thirty years under the sway of a hero-king—wise, courageous, merciful—who has done more than any of his predecessors towards welding their somewhat disorderly and discordant elements into one coherent and harmonious whole. "United Italy" appears full in view, and it seems as if by the arms of the rude Lombard this great victory will be won for humanity.

Why and how this fair promise failed, and how Europe organized herself at the expense of a hopelessly divided Italy, it will be my business to set forth in the concluding volume.

BOOK VIII
THE FRANKISH INVASIONS
A.D. 744-774

CHAPTER I.
INTRODUCTION. THE MEROVINGIAN KINGS.
EARLY FRANKISH HISTORY.

We have reached a decisive point in the history of Italy and its relations to the rest of Europe. The Visigoth dealt a mortal blow to the Roman State: the Hun and the Vandal mocked its dying agonies; the Ostrogoth tried, but tried in vain, to resuscitate its life, breathing his Teutonic energy into its outworn frame; then the Lombard came, at first a ruthless barbarian, pillaging and destroying, but gradually won over to Christianity and civilization by the unquenchable influence of the beautiful land. For nearly two centuries three powers were engaged in a struggle for supremacy in Italy: the Lombard king, the Byzantine Emperor, and the Pope of Rome. Between the last two, the relations were nominally relations of friendship and alliance, the Pope being in theory the submissive subject of the Emperor; but there had none the less been real opposition between them, sometimes breaking out into actual strife, and since the publication of the Iconoclastic decrees (726), there had been complete estrangement, though not as yet any formal renunciation of the Imperial sovereignty on the part of the Pope.

We are now about to see the balance of power which had been thus far maintained between these three opposing interests, roughly destroyed. Under the impact of the Lombard kings the Empire will lose Ravenna and all but disappear from the Peninsula. The Popes, thus left alone face to face with their hereditary enemies, the Lombards, will in their despair look beyond the Alps for help. The Frankish kings will answer to their call, and by blow upon blow, will lay the Lombard monarchy in the dust. Italy will thus be drawn into close political union with France and Germany, and those relations will be established with the latter country, which will subsist in one shape or another down to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Finally, after the conquest of Italy by the Franks, the Roman Empire will be revived in the person of the Frankish King, and Medieval Europe will come into being.

The struggles which I have thus briefly described, and which will form the subject of the present volume, must have contained many elements of the highest human interest. The fall of Ravenna, the last fight of the Lombard nation for dominion in Italy, might each have furnished material for a noble epic poem: but unfortunately not only the 'sacred poet', but even the humbler historian is almost entirely wanting. We hear absolutely nothing from the Byzantines as to the details of the capture of Ravenna. Owing to the silence of Paulus Diaconus—a silence which was no doubt politic, but which his readers must always regret—we hear nothing from Lombard sources as to any of the events after the death of Liutprand. The gallant Lombard nation 'dies and makes no sign'. We have to discover the course of events as best we can from the meagre notices of Frankish chroniclers, from the verbose and never graphic letters sent forth from the Papal Chancery, from the lives of the Popes included in the *Liber Pontificalis*. This last source does give us some interesting facts, and it is that from which we shall have mainly to draw; but it is very incomplete, leaving sometimes large spaces of time wholly without record, and its passionate unfairness to all who came into collision with the Papacy greatly lessens its historical value.

In accordance with the plan pursued in the previous volumes, a detailed history of the new Invaders, the Franks, should here precede the story of their conquest. So much, however, has already been said about them in several preceding volumes, that a slight retrospective sketch of their deeds will here be sufficient.

The fierce tribes of the lower Rhine and Meuse, Sicambri and Chatti, and probably some of their neighbours, Bructeri, Chamavi and Chasuarii, appear in the third century after Christ to have coalesced into one great confederacy, which took to itself the proud name of Franks or Free-men. This confederacy however became divided, how or why we know not, into two smaller federations, the Salians and the Ripuarians. The Salian Franks probably derived their name from the river Yssel, the most northerly of the branches by which the Rhine flows westward into the German Ocean. In the middle of the fifth century they held the districts which now bear the names of Belgium, Artois, and part of Picardy. The Ripuarian Franks settled on the left bank (*ripa*) of the Rhine, and occupied the pleasant vine-clad hills on the west of it between Mayence and Cologne, as well as the valley of the Moselle, from its confluence with the Rhine to its source in the mountains of the Vosges. The chief seat of their power seems to have been the Roman city, which under its modern name of Cologne still preserves the memory of Colonia Agrippina. There appears to have been a certain feeling of a common nationality, connecting, though loosely, these two great divisions of the Frankish nation; and each tribe, the Salians and the Ripuarians, was split up into many smaller fragments, obeying the sway of their own petty kings.

One of these petty kings, or rather chieftains, Hlodwig, Ludovicus, Louis, or Clovis, in 481 began to bear rule over the Salian Franks at Tournai. He was then fifteen years of age, and he succeeded his father Childeric, hero of some strange Frankish sagas, who twenty-four years previously had succeeded his father Merovech. Merovech, from whom the line of Clovis took its well-known name of Merovingians, was himself fabled to be the son of a Frankish queen, begotten by a sea-monster or demi-god. So near still to the age of mythology was the heathen nation of the Franks when the young Clovis, himself heathen, began to lead forth its armies to battle.

We may mark five stages in the career of this extraordinary man, who beginning life as *regulus* of a fragment of the Salian Franks, ended it as unquestioned lord of two-thirds of France and of no small part of Germany.

I. First came his victory over Syagrius, the Roman king (so called) of Soissons, the correspondent of Apollinaris Sidonius, the eager student of the language of his German neighbours; Syagrius, whom all his state-craft and all his linguistic accomplishments availed not to save from the conquering battle-axe of the young Merovingian. This conquest took place in 486 and gave to Clovis the remainder of Picardy, the greater part of the Isle of France including Paris itself, Champagne and a considerable portion of Lorraine. A glance at the map will show what a mighty stride towards dominion over Gaul was thus made by the son of Childeric, who was still only twenty years of age. After history proved that his people felt the immense importance of this conquest. In the division of his realm among his sons and grandsons the kingdom of Syagrius was evidently always regarded as the head of the Frankish dominion.



II. Secondly, came the great victories won by Clovis over the Thuringians and the Alamanni, victories which apparently were won in the years 491 and 496. The Thuringians, here mentioned, are probably a detachment of the nation settled on the left bank of the Rhine. The Alamanni occupied and gave their name to the region which is otherwise known as Swabia (Alsace, Baden, and Württemberg).

This victory over the Alamanni, however important in itself (since it opened up to Clovis the whole country of the Upper Rhine and carried him to the sources of the Danube), was yet more important for its indirect results. The Frankish king, who had long resisted the entreaties of his wife, the Burgundian princess Clotilda, that he would embrace Christianity, when he saw himself in danger of being overwhelmed by the dense masses of the Alamanni, lifted up to heaven his tear-streaming eyes and said, "O Jesus Christ, whom Clotilda affirms to be Son of the living God, and who are said to give victory to them that trust in You; if You will grant me the victory over these mine enemies, I will believe and be baptized in Your name. For I have called on my own gods and had no help from them, wherefore I believe that they have no power".

It was probably at the Christmas of 496 that Clovis stood in the white robes of a Catechumen in the Basilica of Rheims, and heard from bishop Remigius the often-quoted words, "Meekly bow thy neck, O Sicambrian, adore what thou hast heretofore burned, and burn what thou hast adored".

III. The baptism of Clovis by bishop Remigius proclaimed him a champion of the Catholic faith against the Arian form of Christianity, which was at this time dominant among the Teutonic invaders of the Roman Empire. The Vandal in Africa, the Ostrogoth in Italy, the

Burgundian in the valley of the Rhine, the Visigoth in Spain and Aquitaine were all upholders of that which the orthodox denounced as 'the Arian pravity'. Now that the fierce heathen, whose example was at once followed by three thousand of his followers, had become not merely Christian but a professed believer in the doctrine of the *Homoousion*, every Catholic priest, at any rate in Gaul, felt that here was one who by throwing his sword into the scale of orthodoxy might ensure its early triumph.

It seemed as though the Burgundian kingdom would be the first to fall under the blows of the Frankish convert. In 500, Gundobad, the Burgundian king who reigned at Lyons, fled before the army of Clovis which came to the assistance of his traitorous brother Godegisel of Geneva. But by a sudden change in the fortune of war, Godegisel was defeated and slain, and Gundobad regained his throne. The end of Burgundian independence was not yet.

Seven years later, however, came the most important conquest effected by Clovis in the name of Catholic orthodoxy. Having announced to his assembled warriors that "he took it ill that those Arians should hold so large a part of Gaul", he crossed the Loire, met the Visigoths in battle near Poitiers, defeated them and slew their king Alaric II, and after two years of warfare succeeded in adding to his dominions the whole of the fair region of Aquitaine, while Gallia Narbonensis and Provence remained under the rule of Alaric's Ostrogothic kinsman, Theodoric of Italy.

IV. The chieftain who had thus carried far and wide over Gaul the terror of the Frankish arms, was not likely to remain a mere member of a partnership of kings in his own nation. At some time or other in his career, probably towards the beginning of his reign, he succeeded in sweeping off the board the other petty kings of the Salian Franks. Ragnachar, who reigned at Cambrai, had helped Clovis in his war against Syagrius, but when the time came for removing him he was forced into war, conquered in fight and then killed for disgracing his royal house by permitting himself to be beaten. Chararic, another Salian king, was craftily captured, shorn of his long Merovingian locks and turned into a priest. His son, who was at the same time shorn of his hair and ordained deacon, was overheard comforting his weeping lather by the reflection that leaves might yet sprout forth from their lopped branches, and thereupon both father and son were put to death.

V. Lastly, Sigibert, king of the Ripuarians, who had been the ally of Clovis in his war against Alaric the Visigoth, had to be put out of the way. His son was incited to murder him and then was himself assassinated by one of the henchmen of Clovis. It is strange after reading the plain unsoftened story of the crimes by which this 'baptized Pagan' hewed his way to solitary dominion over all Frankish men, to read the following sentence in the pages of Gregory, bishop of Tours, "Thus did God daily humble his enemies under his hand and increase his kingdom, because he walked before Him with righteous heart and did those things which were pleasing in His sight". Fascinated, apparently, by the very wickedness of his hero, Gregory, after describing some more royal murders, goes on to say, "Having slain these and many other kings and their noble relations, of whom he was jealous, lest they should rob him of the kingdom, Clovis extended his sway over the whole of Gaul. However, having on a certain occasion collected his followers together, he spoke concerning his relations whom he had himself destroyed, "Woe is me, that I remain as a stranger in a strange land and have none of mine own kindred who could help me if adversity came upon me", But he said this not in real sorrow for their death, but in guile, and in order that, if he could by chance find any such surviving him, he might kill him".

Thus, then ere he had passed middle life, the petty chieftain of the Salian Franks whose principality had been once almost bounded by the horizon of Tournai, had become ruler of the

larger part of the lands between the Atlantic and the Rhine. In 508, after Clovis had overthrown the Visigothic kingdom in Gaul, he received from the Emperor Anastasius a letter conferring upon him the dignity of Consul; and donning in the basilica of St. Martin the purple tunic and the *chlamys* of a Roman senator, rode through the streets of Tours, scattering largesse among the crowd. This letter from Anastasius was the first of a series of courtesies—ending in something quite other than courtesies—which passed between the Roman Emperors and the orthodox kings of the Franks.

Clovis died at Paris in 511, having only attained the age of forty-five years. He was certainly a scoundrel, but he was a successful scoundrel and he had some of the qualities of a statesman. Moreover, he was the first of the long line of ‘the most Christian kings of *Francia*’.

The only conceivable palliation for any of the crimes which Clovis committed would have been the advantage of securing the unity of the Frankish state. Yet that unity was immediately impaired by the division of his dominions between his four sons. By one means or another, partly by events which happened in the course of nature and partly by fratricidal crimes, the monarchy thus divided became one again under Chlotchar I, the last survivor of the sons of Clovis; but it remained united for only three years, and was then again divided among his four sons, not to be reunited till the year 613, under Chlotchar II, great grandson of Clovis. Thus, throughout the whole of the sixth century we may think of ‘*Francia*’ as generally divided into four parts, which corresponded in the main with the four great natural divisions of the realm, Austrasia, Neustria, Aquitaine, and Burgundy.

Austrasia (otherwise called Auster, or Austria) seems to have included all the lands which had belonged to the Ripuarian Franks, together with those conquered from the Thuringians, and with those wherein the Bavarians and Alamanni had been made subject to Frankish rule. But it must also have included at least the Eastern half of the old ‘kingdom’ of Syagrius, since the countries which were afterwards called Champagne and Lorraine formed part of the Austrasian kingdom.



As Austrasia was the land of the Ripuarians, so *Neustria* seems to have been specially identified with the territory of the Salian Franks, and hence it had what appears on the map as a curious prolongation north-eastward to the river Scheldt, and in fact must have included at least half of the modern kingdom of Belgium. All western France, north of the Loire, belonged theoretically to the Neustrian kingdom, though the sovereignty which its rulers were able to assert over the restless Bretons of Armorica was a perpetually changing quantity.

Aquitaine was the former kingdom of the Visigoths in Gaul, and it had its well-marked boundaries in the great river Loire and the mountains of the Cevennes. The Roman influence, strong in Neustria, was yet stronger here, and it may be doubted how far it was ever bound except by bonds of fear and compulsion to the Frankish monarchy.

Burgundy, which included the valleys of the Rhine and the Saone, and which reached up to the western slopes of the Alps, was, as we have seen, still unconquered at the death of Clovis. Its annexation to the Frankish state was the work of his sons, one of whom fell in battle in the second campaign. The story of the conquest (523—534) has been told with some detail in a previous volume, on account of its connection with the family history of Theodoric whose daughter was married to Sigismund, king of Burgundy.

The connection of the Franks with the history of Italy, during the period of this first partition of the Frankish kingdom, brought little glory to the descendants of Clovis, but much disaster to the Italian peninsula. When Belisarius began his brilliant enterprise for the recovery of Italy, the Frankish kings seized the opportunity to threaten the Ostrogothic possessions in Gaul. They were quieted for the time by the surrender of those possessions (consisting of Provence and part of Dauphiné), which were ceded to them by Witigis in 536. But three years later, Theudebert, king of Austrasia, a grandson of Clovis, crossed the Alps, and his savage warriors poured like a torrent over Northern Italy. They made war alike upon the Goths and the soldiers of the Empire: they sacked cities and ravaged vineyards, till at last disease, the result of their own brutal excesses, and a threatening message from the indignant Belisarius, caused them to return to their own land.

When Totila raised again the standard of Gothic independence, the Franks, whose manifest policy it was to fish in troubled waters, again intervened in Italy; and owing to the reluctance of both parties to engage with another antagonist, succeeded in making the greater part of the three northern provinces (Liguria, Alpes Cottiae, and Venetia), subject to tribute. All Italy north of the Po, and both slopes of the Maritime Alps, except some seaport towns which were held by the Empire, and a few scattered fortresses still garrisoned by the Goths, were thus added to the Frankish dominion.

This state of things probably lasted for about ten years. When the powerful and aspiring Theudebert was succeeded by his son, the sickly Theudebald (A.D. 548), the reins of sovereignty were relaxed, and hence it came to pass that the Alamannic brethren, Leuthar and Butilin, were allowed to make their objectless and ill-managed raid into Italy. The utter failure of this expedition (554) doubtless weakened the hold of the Franks on the valley of the Po, and three years afterwards we learn that under the rule of Narses the Empire recovered all that portion of Italy which Theudebert had once held.

It was, however, probably in consequence of this temporary possession of Northern Italy, that the Franks held so much of the northern half of Raetia as we find them to have possessed a few years later on, when they came into collision with the Lombards.

In 558, a year after the Empire had reconquered the territory north of the Po, Chlotochar I (as has been already said) became, by the death of his last surviving brother, sole monarch of the Franks. Three years afterwards he died, and his kingdom was divided between his four sons, whose number was reduced to three in the year 567 by the death of Charibert, king of Paris. And now we are upon the threshold of the Lombard invasion of Italy which, as the

reader may remember, occurred in the year 568. Thenceforward, for nearly two hundred years, the Frankish kings had a Lombard state touching them as their south-eastern frontier, and the intervening Alps did not prevent the two powers from meeting, sometimes in friendship but more often with the clash of battle. In the first eight years of their sojourn in Italy (568-575), the Lombards made five invasions of Frankish territory. These invasions, which harried the districts of Dauphiné and Provence, were conducted without military skill or generalship, and were without much difficulty repelled by the soldiers of Guntram, the Frankish king of Burgundy. This senseless and wanton warfare had one permanent effect, which proved eventually disastrous for the Lombard state, since it left the valleys of Aosta and Susa, on the Italian side of the Alps, in the possession of the Franks.

The return visits of the Franks to Italy under Chramnichis, about 576, and under Childebert between 584 and 590, were like those of the Lombards, ravaging and plundering expeditions, effectual doubtless for the devastation of the country, but powerless for its conquest. A noticeable fact about the later invasions of Childebert is that they were undertaken at the suggestion of the Byzantine Court and to some extent in cooperation with the Byzantine armies, the lever which the Imperial Court used with the king of Austrasia being the presence at Constantinople of the unfortunate child Athanagild, the son of Childebert's sister, Ingunthis. This conjunction of Imperial and Frankish power might, had it been often repeated, have proved disastrous for the Lombard state : but, partly owing to ill-planned combinations, it effected nothing of importance in 590 (when Maurice was Emperor and Childebert Frankish king), nor was it repeated at any later time. At the close of the sixth century, Agilulf, king of the Lombards, concluded 'a perpetual peace' with the Franks, both Italy and Germany being then menaced by the invasions of the barbarous Avars; and this peace, probably owing to the increasing impotence of the Merovingian kings, actually endured for a century and a half. We must however except one trifling interruption soon after the accession of Grimwald (662), when a Frankish army (perhaps espousing the cause of the banished Perctarit) entered Italy from Provence, but was easily defeated by the Lombard king near Asti in Piedmont.

The peace thus long maintained between the once hostile nations was not only peace but sometimes alliance. Thus in the year 630, when Dagobert the Frank, through the insolence of his ambassadors, had become involved in a war with Samo, a Frankish merchant who had cunningly raised himself to the position of king of the Wends or Slaves on Dagobert's eastern frontier, the Lombards sent soldiers to the assistance of the Franks. These auxiliaries together with the Alamanni, were victorious, and carried off a multitude of captives, while Dagobert himself appears to have suffered a disastrous defeat.

And again, when Charles Martel (about 737) was somewhat hardly pressed by a Saracen invasion of Provence, he called on his brother-in-law, Liutprand, for help, and called not in vain. Liutprand led a great army across the Maritime Alps, and at his approach the Saracens fled in terror.

During this century and a half of peace between the Franks and Italy, Merovingian royalty had been sinking ever lower and lower into mere fatuity and impotence, while the power of one great Austrasian house, which furnished a succession of hereditary Prime Ministers to the State, had been almost as steadily rising.

As to the Merovingians, the lifelong duel between the two queens, Fredegundis and Brunichildis, the vices of Chilperic of Neustria, 'the Nero and Herod of his time' (the husband of Fredegundis), and the fierce energy of Theodoric II, king of Burgundy (grandson of Brunichildis), shed a sort of lurid light over the royalty of the descendants of Clovis at the close of the sixth century. Chlotchar II, king of Neustria, son of Fredegundis, succeeded in uniting all the Frankish kingdoms under his own sceptre (613), and annihilated the rival Austrasian line. He and his son, Dagobert I, showed some energy and power of rule, but after

Dagobert's death (638) the royal line became utterly effete, and for a hundred years, kings rightly named Do-nothings (*Fainéants*) nominally reigned over Gaul and Germany. The short lives of these kings sufficiently indicate the decay of their vital powers, caused by their vicious habits. The following are the ages at which the kings died who reigned between Dagobert I and the last of his line, Childeric III: twenty-six, twenty-four, twenty-seven, eighteen, twenty, thirty-eight, seventeen, fifty (but this king only reigned five years, and had the advantage of spending most of his life in exile), thirty-six, twenty-four, and twenty-one.

The manner of life of these hapless inheritors of dignity divorced from duty is described for us by Einhard, the biographer of Charlemagne, in a passage which has been often quoted, and which, though modern criticism finds in it somewhat to object to on the score of strict accuracy, may be quoted once again.

“The Merovingian race, from which the Franks were wont to choose their kings, is considered to have lasted down to king Childeric, who by order of Stephen the Roman pontiff was deposed and tonsured and thrust into a monastery. But though it may seem to have ended in him, it had for a long while possessed no real vigour, nor had had anything to show for itself except the empty title of king: for all the wealth and power of the kingdom were centred in the Prefects of the Palace, who were called *Majores Domus*, and to whom supremacy in the State belonged. For nothing else was left to the king except this, that satisfied with the mere royal name, with his long locks and flowing beard, he sat upon the throne and played at sovereignty, receiving the ambassadors who came to him from all quarters, and repeating to them on their departure the replies which he had been taught or ordered to deliver, as though they came from his own decision. Thus, except the useless name of king and a precarious allowance which the Prefect of the Palace afforded him as he thought fit, he possessed nothing else of his own, save one estate (*villa*) with a very poor revenue, on which he had his house, and out of which he kept the slender train of servants who performed the necessary services for him and gave him a show of obedience. When he must needs go on a journey, he went in a wagon, which was drawn by yoked oxen with a rustic cowherd driving them. Thus he went to his palace, thus to the public assembly of the people, which was held once a year to deliberate on the affairs of the realm, and thus was he wont to return to his home. As for the administration of the kingdom and all those things which had to be done or arranged for at home or abroad, they were all provided for by the Prefect of the Palace”.

This picture may be slightly over-coloured. It is possible that some of the details, such as the oxen drawing the rude royal chariot, may really be due only to the inherent conservatism of the Teutonic race, which preserved in the king's household at Soissons or Paris archaic usages derived from bygone centuries when the king dwelt in a rustic hut on a forest-clearing in the heart of Germany. But the broad outline of the picture is undoubtedly correct. The Merovingian kings in the fifth generation from Clovis had sunk into mere ciphers. Intent on drinking their cup of muddy pleasure to the dregs, they left all the hard work of life, and all the duties of royalty, in war, in judgment, in finance, to the servants who clustered about the Court; and of these servants one, foremost in rank and position, gathered up the reins of government as they fell from the nerveless hands of the Merovingians, and became king in fact, while they for a hundred years remained kings in name. This allpowerful servant was the Mayor of the Palace, and when his power was once firmly established, it was too late for the descendants of Clovis, even had a man of energy and virtue arisen among them, to recover the lost dominion.

The institution of Mayor of the Palace was not peculiar to the Frankish nation. Traces of it may be found among the Ostrogoths, Burgundians, Lombards, perhaps even among the Vandals but nowhere else had it the same great development which it attained in the Frankish people. That some such official should emerge out of chaos, that many of the powers of the State should crystallize round him, was however inherent in the nature of things. Clovis and his

sons, men of ruthless will and barbarous energy, had formed a State whose corner-stone was military conquest. Apparently the old liberties, the ancient germs of self-government, which had existed among the Franks as in nearly all the Teutonic peoples, had been crushed out under the centralizing sway of these barbarian kings, flattered and caressed as they had been by the Catholic ecclesiastics of Gaul. The old tribal nobility of the Salians and Ripuarians had probably also disappeared, and had been replaced by a new order of nobility who drew all their splendour from the royal majesty in whose rays they basked. The Palace had become the State, and he who was great in the king's household was great in the Frankish realm.

The inevitable limitation of autocracy comes from the love of ease. After all, government means work, and though for a few generations men may be found so lustful of power that they will 'spurn delights and live laborious days', in order to rule with power over a mighty empire, in the course of this tremendous energy wears itself out. Some member of the royal family comes to the throne who finds that 'slumber is more sweet than toil', and that power is not worth having at the price of an utter sacrifice of all the restful pleasures of life. He hands over the reins of government to some obsequious servant who is only too glad to take them from him and to govern in the king's name. The Merovingian has found his Mayor of the Palace, the Bourbon king his Richelieu or his Alberoni, the Mikado of Japan his Taicoon.

It is possible that at first the duties of the Mayor of the Palace were strictly those of a master of the household. Merovingian royalty owned vast domains, cultivated for the most part by slave labour. The king and his great train of courtiers went in progress from one villa, or big estate, to another, consuming the produce of each villa in succession, and then moving on to that which was nearest. The mere superintendence of the receipts and expenditure of one of these great domains was in itself a considerable business, and may at first have been the chief concernment of the Mayor of the Palace, for in his humbler days it is possible that there may have been one *Major Domus* to every residence of a Frankish king. In the course of time, however—and by this I mean within a century from the death of Clovis—the Mayor had become such an important person that there was only one of his class in each of the four kingdoms, into which the Frankish monarchy generally fell apart, one for Austrasia, one for Neustria, one for Burgundy, one (perhaps) for Aquitaine.

And what were the duties of the Mayor of the Palace when he had thus emerged from the condition of a head-servant into that of a great official of the State? Perhaps we may say that still his chief functions were financial. Like the *Comes Rerum Privatarum* of the later empire, it was his business to administer the revenues, not now of one villa or palace, but of all the royal domains within the limits of his master's kingdom. A most important part of his functions in this capacity was that of confirming alienations of the royal domain. Throughout the seventh century, as we have reason to believe, the new landed aristocracy which was forming itself was getting grants of *beneficia* either from the Church or the Crown; and a weak Merovingian king was under great temptation to strengthen his party by lavish grants of the Crown lands to importunate and blustering petitioners. Just at this point, therefore, the control exercised by the Mayor of the Palace would have an important effect on the fortunes of the aristocracy, since it was in his power to forbid all grants of *beneficia* to his foes and to encourage similar grants to his friends.

He had, moreover, such power over the collection of the taxes (however rude and undeveloped the Merovingian system of taxation may have been) as gave him great opportunities for enriching himself while professing to serve the royal exchequer. Thus it was matter of bitter complaint against Protadius, Mayor of the Palace of Burgundy under Theodoric (grandson of Brunichildis), that though a man of great ability and energy, he committed grievous injustice against individuals, straining the rights of the royal fisc, ingeniously striving to fill the royal treasury at the expense of private persons and at the same time to enrich

himself. The general attitude which the Mayor of the Palace at first assumed, especially in Neustria, was that of championship of the rights of the Crown against the aristocracy, though in the end he became strong enough to set Crown and aristocracy alike at defiance.

Lastly, in addition to the powers of administration and finance which the Mayor of the Palace exercised, he must have eventually gathered into his hands the supreme command of the nation-army of the Franks, though apparently we have but little information of the steps by which a Grand Chamberlain was thus transformed into a Commander-in-Chief.

After this brief sketch of the general character of the office of *Major Domus*, let us trace the fortunes of that Austrasian family which more than all others made it illustrious.

CHAPTER II.
THE EARLY ARNULFINGS.

The first appearance of the ancestors of Charles the Great on the stage of history is in the year 613, when the long duel between the houses of Sigibert and Chilperic, kings respectively of Austrasia and Neustria, and husbands of Brunichildis and Fredegundis, was brought to a close. As has been said, Chlotochar II, son of Chilperic and Fredegundis, invaded Austrasia, then under the nominal rule of the infant Sigibert, really governed by his great grandmother, the once beautiful, always ambitious, and now vindictive Brunichildis. We are told that it was at the instigation of Arnulf and Pippin and the other nobles of Austrasia that this invasion was made. Partly by the help of those men, and partly by the devices of the *Major domus* Warnachar (who discovered that Brunichildis was plotting against him and turned conspirator to save his life), Chlotochar's invasion was crowned with complete success. The whole Frankish realm was reunited under the sceptre of the Neustrian king, and the son of Fredegundis doomed his mother's rival to a cruel and shameful death.

Who, then, were these two men who at a critical moment led the Austrasian aristocracy to victory in their lifelong struggle against the domineering but statesmanlike Brunichildis?

Arnulf, Archbishop of Metz, was sprung from a noble family among the Ripuarian Franks. More than this cannot be stated concerning his ancestry, though the imaginative zeal of later genealogists invented for him a pedigree adorned with the names of kings, saints, and senators. He seems to have been born about 582, and to have come as a young and clever lad to the Austrasian Court when Theudebert was reigning there after the expulsion of his grandmother Brunichildis (599). He rose into high favour with Gundulf, the Austrasian Mayor of the Palace, showed himself an efficient servant of the Crown, both in peace and war, and was promoted, we are told, to the presidency over six 'provinces' which were usually assigned to as many governors. He married a noble lady, who bore him two sons, Anschisus and Chlodulf, and he formed what proved to be a lifelong friendship with another officer of the Court named Romaric. The talk of the two friends turned often on religious subjects, and they not unfrequently discussed a plan for renouncing the world, retiring to some convent, and there continuing their friendly dialogues till death should sever them.

It was during this period of immersion in worldly affairs, while his heart longed for the cloister, that the following incident is said to have happened. He was walking one day over the bridge at Metz, penitent for his sins and doubtful whether his repentance was accepted in the sight of God. Looking down into the deep currents of the Moselle, the bottom of which his eye failed to reach, he drew off the ring from his finger and cast it into the depths of the river. "Then", said he to himself, "when I shall receive again this ring which I now cast away, shall I feel sure that I am loosed from the bonds of mine iniquities". Years after, when he was sitting on the episcopal throne of Metz, a fish was brought to the palace and prepared for the evening meal. In the fish's intestines the cook found the well-known ring and brought it to his master, who received with joy this token of the Divine forgiveness, but felt himself bound thereby to a life of even greater austerity than aforesaid.

This anecdote was related by the great Emperor Charles, Arnulf's descendant in the fifth generation, to his friend and secretary Einhard. It of course recalls to our mind the well-known story of Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, but the moral of the two stories is quite dissimilar, and it may be doubted whether Einhard, and much more whether his master, had ever scanned the pages of Herodotus.

The holy conversations with Romaric continued, and the two friends were about to execute their purpose of retiring from the world. Arnulf's pious eagerness to divide his property among the poor was acquiesced in by his elder son Anschisus, but opposed by Chlodulf. Divine Providence, so it was held by later generations, rewarded each brother according to his works. Chlodulf, with his heart set on wealth, reached no higher dignity than that of Archbishop of Metz, and dying left no seed, while Anschisus became virtually chief ruler of Austrasia and was the progenitor of kings and emperors.

When the two friends were at last on the point of retiring into the wilderness, the Archbishop of Metz died, and the citizens with one voice demanded that Arnulf, 'domestic and counsellor of the king', should be ordained in his stead. There was the usual resistance on Arnulf's part, followed by his compulsory assumption of the dignity : and this elevation appears to have taken place about Christmas, 611, very shortly before the overthrow of Theudebert.

Though practising the usual austerities of a medieval saint, fasting for three days at a time, living on barley-bread and water, wearing a hair-shirt and working miracles, Arnulf did not lay down the office, whatever it was, which he held in the Austrasian Court. And in his guidance of the affairs of the kingdom he was powerfully aided by his friend Pippin, who is usually known as Pippin of Landen, and who was an Austrasian nobleman with large possessions between the Meuse and the Moselle.

Between them these two statesmen succeeded in foiling the designs of Brunichildis to become regent of Austrasia after the death of her two grandsons Theudebert and Theodoric, and as we have seen, by their timely defection, they won a bloodless victory for Chlotochar II, who thus became sole monarch of the Frankish kingdom (613).

But the Austrasian spirit of independence required a separate ruler, and accordingly in 622 Chlotochar delegated the sovereignty of Austrasia to his son Dagobert, a young man of about twenty years of age. Arnulf and Pippin were recognized as the chief advisers of the young king, and the latter nobleman probably held the office of Mayor of the Palace. On the testimony of historians who were their contemporaries, and who had therefore no especial reason for flattering the ancestors of Charlemagne, Dagobert's Austrasian sovereignty under the guidance of these two men was a time of wise and firm government. A certain Chrodoald, descended from the dukes of Bavaria, who like some turbulent baron of the Middle Ages was trampling on the rights of the lowly and setting himself against the administrators of the law, was by their advice condemned to death, and this sentence was carried into effect, notwithstanding the attempted mediation of Chlotochar on his behalf. This execution of Chrodoald perhaps brought to a head the discord between father and son. Dagobert had not received the kingdom of Austrasia in its fullness, but had been limited to the regions eastward of the Ardennes and the Vosges mountains. This limitation rankled in his mind and in that of his subjects and would perhaps have led to civil war, but the matter was referred to the arbitration of twelve Franks, Bishop Arnulf among them, by whom it was amicably arranged, Dagobert receiving all the Austrasian kingdom properly so-called, but renouncing all claim to the outlying portions in Aquitaine and Provence, which had been hitherto held by his predecessors at Metz.

After Dagobert had been five years on the Austrasian throne, he lost the more eminent of his two counsellors. Arnulf's desire for solitude and seclusion could be no longer repressed, and in the year 627 he announced to the king that he was about to lay down his episcopal dignity and depart to the wilderness. Enraged at this threatened desertion, Dagobert said, "Unless thou stayest with me, I cut off the heads of thy two sons". "My sons' lives", said the bishop, "are in the hands of God, nor will thy life be long if thou takest away the life of the innocent". Dagobert in his anger began to pluck at the dagger which hung from his belt; but the

saint, not heeding his wrath, said, "What are you doing, most miserable of men? Would you repay evil for good? If you will stain that dagger with my blood. I do not fear to die in obedience to the commands of Him who died for me". A courtier intervened : the queen came upon the scene, and soon the royal pair were kneeling at the bishop's feet, beseeching him with tears to go to the wilderness, to do what he would, if only he would grant them forgiveness for Dagobert's wicked words.

Emerging from the palace, Arnulf met a sight which doubtless shook his resolution more than all the threats of his master. The lame and blind, the widows and orphans, of the city, who had heard of his intended abdication of the see, crowded round the palace gates, crying with doleful voices, "O good shepherd! who will give us food and clothing when thou art gone? We pray thee, in Christ's name, do not leave us". Arnulf gently assured them that some good and merciful man would be found, to be his successor, and comforted them with the story of Lazarus, as miserable as any of them, yet carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. So he passed through the weeping throng, and gained the haven of his oratory.

A successor named Goeric or Abbo, a man somewhat of his own type of character, was found to fill his place. The faithful Romaric, who had long before retired from the world, came to escort his friend to the place which he had prepared for his reception in the wilderness. But a miracle was to be wrought ere the late bishop could leave his cathedral city. A fire broke out in Metz the night before the day fixed for his departure. The royal store-house was already consumed : the house in which Arnulf was dwelling was threatened. Romaric and his friends burst into the house, found the saint singing psalms, told him that the horses were at the door, and adjured him to fly.

"Not so", said Arnulf. "Take me hence, and set me where I can see this impious conflagration. If it be God's will that I be burned, I am in His hand". They went together to the burning house; they knelt in prayer: the saint raised the banner of the Cross against the raging flames, which at once began to die down. Arnulf and his friends having sung matins, returned to their beds and passed the rest of the night in sleep.

Having disposed of all his worldly goods—now it must be supposed, with the consent of both his sons—Arnulf retired into the wilderness, apparently somewhere among the solitudes of the Vosges mountains, and there with his friend Romaric passed the last fourteen years of his life. He had a few monks with him, as well as certain lepers, upon whom he waited, performing the most repulsive and menial offices for them with alacrity. He died in July or August, 641; and his body, at first buried by his friend Romaric at the place which, called after that friend, still bears the name Remiremont, was carried with great solemnity by his successor Goeric, to the city of Metz, where the great cathedral of St. Arnulf preserves his memory to this day.

The veneration for the canonized bishop of Metz soon spread over Gaul, and he was accounted in an especial manner the patron of the Frankish nation. We who read his life with colder sympathies, can yet see that here was a man who deserved to be held in reverence, a statesman and one acquainted with courts, who nevertheless held the joys and the rewards of the life eternal more precious than worldly rank and station. In reading his life, one cannot but feel that in some way the Frankish nation, or at least the Austrasian portion of it, has groped its way upwards since the fifth century. Bishop Arnulf's is an utterly different type of character from the greedy, turbulent, licentious prelates who deface the pages of Gregory of Tours. And when we study the deeds of the great race of statesmen and of kings who sprang from the loins of Arnulf, we shall be often reminded how different was their original from that of the Merovingian race. The half-heathen and wholly vicious Clovis, descendant of the sea-monster, was a fitting ancestor of the Chilperics and Childerics, who slew their kinsfolk when they were strong and their own manhood when they were weak. The saintly and yet wise-hearted Arnulf

was a worthy progenitor of the Pippins and Charleses, who were for two centuries among the foremost men in Europe, and whose lives, whatever might be their faults, were one long battle on behalf of Christianity and civilization.

Of the other great ancestor of Charlemagne, Pippin 'of Landen', there is less to tell than of Arnulf.

In the year 628, very shortly after Arnulf's retirement from the Court, Chlotchar II, king of Neustria and Burgundy, died, and his son Dagobert went from the Rhine-land to Paris to wield the sceptre over the whole Frankish realm. His advent was hailed with acclamation, for all Neustria had heard of the young king's wise and just rule over the Austrasian kingdom.

But it was soon and sadly seen how much of that reputation was really due to his counsellors Arnulf and Pippin. The air of Neustria, the influence of the corrupt Gallo-Roman civilization, awoke the slumbering vices of the Merovingian. Three queens at once, and more concubines than the chronicler cares to enumerate, flaunted it in the Court of Paris, and to supply their extravagances and his own craving for luxury, Dagobert laid greedy hands on the property both of his *leudes* and of the Church. This latter charge (as the story of his life is written by churchmen) perhaps requires us not to give too implicit faith to the harsh judgment which they have pronounced on his character.

The relation borne by Pippin of Landen to Dagobert after the death of his father is not very clear. He seems to have followed his young sovereign to Paris, and to have sought to continue to guide him in the administration of his kingdom. But doubtless there was jealousy in Neustria of the influence of the Austrasian counsellor, and strangely enough from Austrasia also came a growl of rage against the too powerful minister. Probably the turbulent nobles against whom he had asserted the royal prerogatives, now saw their opportunity of revenge. The chronicler tells us "The fury of the Austrasians against him grew so vehement that they even sought to render him odious to Dagobert in order that he might be slain". These evil designs were foiled, but Pippin seems to have lost all power at Court, and to have passed the next eight years (630-638) in retirement, possibly at Orleans, where he was perhaps charged with the education of Dagobert's young son, Sigibert.

It was during this time of obscurity, probably near its commencement, that the fortunes of the two retired ministers were linked together by the marriage of their children. Somewhere about the year 630, Ansegisel (or Anschisus), the younger son of St. Arnulf, married Becga, daughter of Pippin and sister of the sainted Gertrude, who was the first abbess of the convent of Nivelles in Brabant, founded by her mother.

On the death of Dagobert in 638, we are told that Pippin and the other leaders of the Austrasians, who up to the king's death had been kept in control, unanimously asked for Sigibert as their king. Pippin renewed his former strong friendship with Cunibert, bishop of Cologne, drew to his side all the Austrasian *leudes*, and by his prudent and gentle rule obtained their friendship, and kept it to the end. Apparently we have here the story of something like a counterrevolution after the death of Dagobert, by which Pippin, now a man of about fifty years of age, was recalled amid the acclamations of his countrymen to undertake the duties of *Major Domus* for the young king. In this capacity he accomplished the important task of dividing the treasures unjustly accumulated by Dagobert. Along with Bishop Cunibert and other Austrasian nobles, he met at the 'villa' of Compendium the widowed queen Nantildis and the magnates of Neustria. One-third of the treasure was assigned to Clovis, the boy-king of Neustria, one-third to the queen dowager, and the remaining third, allotted to Sigibert, was carried by Cunibert and Pippin to the palace at Metz. Shortly after this transaction, in the year 639 or 640, Pippin died, 'and by his death caused great sorrow to all the people of Auster (Austrasia), because he had been loved by them for his goodness and his zeal on behalf of justice'. His friend St. Arnulf,

who doubtless heard of his death in his wilderness abode, followed him to the tomb in little more than a year.

For sixteen years after the death of Pippin of Landen, the foremost figure in Austrasian history was his son Grimwald. His name and some points in his history remind us of his more famous contemporary, Grimwald the Lombard, duke of Benevento, and, by a successful stroke of treason, king of the Lombards. There was, as we have seen, some friendly intercourse between Franks and Lombards in the early part of the sixth century, but apparently there is nothing to justify us in considering the Austrasian duke as namesake of the Lombard king.

Not immediately on the death of the elder Pippin did Grimwald obtain the position of *Major Domus* in the Austrasian kingdom. That position seems to have been at first held by a certain Otto, who had been tutor to the new king Sigibert in his childhood, but after two or three years of struggle, Otto was slain by Leuthar, duke of the Alamanni, who was 'of the faction of Grimwald', and the son of Pippin was recognized by all as *Major Domus* in his father's place. As to Grimwald's government during the thirteen or fourteen years that followed (643 or 642 to 656), we know very little. We are told that he was loved like his father, and it is conjectured that he fostered the pious inclinations of his young king, and was, like him, a liberal friend to the Church : but it is by his premature attempt to turn Major-domat into sovereignty that he is alone famous in history. When Sigibert, king of Austrasia, died in 656, at the age (for a Merovingian king, the advanced age) of twenty-six, Grimwald had the long locks of his son Dagobert shorn off, and sent him to lead a holy life in an Irish monastery, proclaiming his own son, to whom he had given the Merovingian name Childebert, king of the Franks.

But the time was not yet ripe for such a revolution; neither had the family of Pippin, though wealthy, powerful, and perhaps popular, yet done any such deeds as justified them in claiming, as of hereditary right, the allegiance even of Austrasia, much less of all the Frankish kingdoms. "The Franks", we are told by a chronicler, "being moved with great indignation, laid snares for Grimwald, and taking him prisoner carried him to Clovis [the Second, brother of Sigibert] for condemnation. Being confined in prison in the city of Paris, and afflicted with the agony of chains, he, who was worthy of death for his practices against his lord, ended his life in mighty torments".

The result of this premature attempt at revolution was for a time to obscure the fortunes of the two great Austrasian houses. Anschisus, or Ansegisel, Grimwald's brother-in-law, who is the least noticeable figure among the Arnulfings, after holding the office of *Major Domus* for a few years (632-638), before the return of the elder Pippin, subsides into obscurity, and we hear no more concerning him save for a late and doubtful statement that he was treacherously slain in 685 by a certain Gunduin, and that his death was gloriously avenged by his son. To the deeds of that son, Pippin 'of Heristal,' grandson of St. Arnulf on his father's side, grandson of Pippin 'of Landen' on his mother's side, we now turn : for now, at last, the shadows are beginning to disperse, and we begin to see something of the well-known

'shapes that must undergo mortality.'

CHAPTER III.

PIPPIN OF HERISTAL AND CHARLES MARTEL.

In the year 656, the same year which saw the death of Sigibert of Austrasia and the premature attempt of Grimwald to fill the vacant throne, Clovis II of Neustria died also. His sons, (Chlotchar III, 656-670; Childeric II, 660-673; Theodoric III, 673-691 ; their cousin Dagobert II, son of Sigibert II, king of Austrasia, 674-678), Merovingians of the usual imbecile type, were for the next thirty years the nominal rulers of the three Frankish kingdoms, at first under the regency of their mother, the sainted Balthildis, an Anglo-Saxon, originally the slave of a Mayor of the Palace, afterwards wife of Clovis II. But the one figure which dominates the obscure and bloody history of the quarter of a century following the fall of Grimwald, is that of Ebroin, who was during the greater part of that time Mayor of the Palace in Neustria and Burgundy. He had more than one sharp struggle for power, especially with the turbulent Leodegarius, bishop of Autun, who figures in the ecclesiastical calendar as St. Leger; but from all these struggles, from the prison and the convent-cell, he emerged triumphant. A hard, cruel, and unscrupulous man he was, yet perhaps as good a ruler as the putrescent western Frankish kingdoms of that day deserved, and he did something to arrest the rapid process of disintegration which had set in.

Meanwhile in Austrasia a position somewhat similar to that of Ebroin had been held by a certain Mayor of the Palace named Wulfwald, who for eighteen years seems to have striven to uphold the royal power and the authority of the central government against the usurpations of the nobles. In 674, in order to avoid union with Neustria, the half-forgotten son of Sigibert was fetched from the Irish monastery to which, seventeen years before, Grimwald had banished him, and was raised to the Austrasian throne under the title of Dagobert II. In five years, however, his troubled reign was at an end, and then it seemed inevitable that the Neustrian king, whose rule, as all men knew, meant simply the rule of the terrible Ebroin, must reign in Austrasia. To avert this danger, the nobles put an army in the field (678), and the leaders of that army were Pippin of Heristal and a confederate, possibly a kinsman named Martin. Battle was joined, probably in the neighbourhood of Laon, and the Austrasians were routed with terrible slaughter. Pippin escaped: Martin shut himself up in Laon, and was besieged there by Ebroin. He was summoned to surrender, and the messengers of Ebroin swore to him on certain boxes, which were believed to contain very holy relics of saints, that his life should be spared. Unfortunately for Martin the boxes when opened were found to be empty, and the tremendous oath could therefore be violated with impunity. He and his comrades were put to death, and Austrasia, like her sister kingdoms, came under the harsh rule of Ebroin.

Three years after this defeat of the Austrasians, Ebroin perished, a victim to private revenge. He was assassinated by a certain Frankish nobleman named Hermenfrid, whose property he had confiscated, and who, waiting by the door of his house in the grey of the morning, slew him as he was setting out for mass. The thought that he had thus been sent out of life 'unhousel'd, unannealed', gave a keener edge to the joy of the avenger.

The murderer of Ebroin fled to Pippin for refuge, and the successor of Ebroin in the Mayoralty of the Palace, who was named Waratto, made a treaty of peace, exchanging hostages with the same Austrasian chief, whose fortunes were evidently now beginning to recover from the effects of the great disaster of Laon. Moreover, there were dissensions in the family of Waratto. These Neustrian mayors lacked that instinct of family cohesion which was

so strong in the early generations of the Arnulfings. Waratto's son Ghislemar, apparently an able but shifty person, intrigued against his father and thrust him out of the Major-domat (683). He carried on the perpetual feud of Neustria against Austrasia, fighting a hard battle against Pippin at Namur, and probably defeating him, for we are told that 'after swearing a false oath, he slew very many of the noble followers of Pippin'. Returning to his home, however, 'he was struck by the hand of God, and, as he deserved, yielded up his most wicked spirit' (684). Waratto hereupon recovered his dignity of Mayor of the Palace, which he held for two years, years of peace between him and the Austrasian chief.

On the death of Waratto in 686, he was succeeded in the office of Major Domus by his son-in-law Berchar, a man whose small stature and pitiable self-earned for him the contempt of the Neustrian nobles. In the war which almost as a matter of course was waged between Neustria and Austrasia, the disaffection of the Neustrian nobility led to a momentous result. The armies met at Textri in Picardy (687). The puppet king Theodoric III was there as well as his insignificant *Major Domus*, but the best men in Neustria seem to have been in the opposite camp, and Pippin won a decisive victory. Berchar escaped from the field of battle, but only to die at home by the weapon of an assassin, instigated, it was said, by his mother-in-law Ausfled. Pippin obtained possession of the person of the Merovingian king and of the royal hoard, arranged all things in the palace according to his good will and pleasure, and returned into Austrasia, now practically the unquestioned lord of all the three kingdoms.

The year 687, the date of the battle of Textri, is one of three, which are the most noteworthy steps in the ascent of the Arnulfing house to the headship of Western Europe. The dreary and chaotic period of miscellaneous mayoralties is over. From henceforward, with one very slight break, the supremacy of the great Austrasian family is unquestioned and incontestable.

Of the twenty-seven years (687-714) during which Pippin of Heristal was the virtual sovereign of France, we have very meagre accounts in the chronicles. *Fainéant* Merovingian kings, Theodoric III and his sons, come and go, but history refuses to take account of them save to notice that though they still receive the flattering titles 'renowned' and 'glorious', they are actually spoken of as subject to their nominal servant the Mayor of the Palace. The principal figure of this period, after Pippin's, seems to be that of Ratbod, chief or king of the Frisians, who remained obdurate in his Paganism, and with whom Pippin had more than one sharp encounter, and whom he at last decisively defeated at Durestede near Utrecht. We are somewhat surprised to find a daughter of this 'Gentile' chief given in marriage to Pippin's son Grimwald, but we may conjecture that she was received into the Christian Church before the espousals, and that the marriage was a pledge of the alliance and consequent peace which seems to have prevailed between Pippin and the Frisians for the last twenty years of his Major-domat.

We hear of Pippin also as invading the country of the Alamanni, that is to say, the region afterwards known as Swabia. From this and other slight indications, we may infer that while ruling Neustria and Burgundy by the means either of a faithful adherent or of a son holding the office of *Major Domus* in those kingdoms, his own work was chiefly Austrasian, and consisted in re-establishing the Frankish power in those lands east of the Rhine which, under the rule of the effete Merovingians, had been gradually dropping off from the monarchy.

The last years of Pippin of Heristal were clouded by family bereavement. By his wife Plectrude, who is spoken of as a 'noble and very prudent woman', but who seems to have been ambitious and perhaps somewhat intriguing, he had two sons, Drogo and Grimwald. In the year 708, Drogo died of fever and was laid in the basilica of his sainted ancestor Arnulf at Metz. In 714 the second son Grimwald, whom we have just met with as son-in-law of the Frisian chief, and who was already *Major Domus* of Neustria, was on his way to visit his father who was

lying sick at Jupille on the Meuse in the neighbourhood of Liège. Turning to pray at the basilica of St. Lambert in Liège, he was waylaid and slain by 'a certain most cruel man, a son of Belial, the heathen Rantgar'. The mention of the heathenism of Rantgar suggests the conjecture that he was a Frisian, and that the cause of quarrel may have been connected with Grimwald's marriage with the daughter of Ratbod.

Grimwald left one son, Theudwald, the offspring not of his marriage with the Frisian princess, but of a connection unblest by the Church. This boy appears to have been at once promoted to his father's Neustrian mayoralty, and on the death of his grand-father Pippin, which happened soon after (hastened very probably by the tragedy of Grimwald's murder), he was recognized as the heir to all his greatness. Of course the nominal rule of such a child implied a regency, and that regency was also of course wielded by the ambitious widow of Pippin. As the chronicler, who is somewhat of an admirer of the new regent, tells us, "Plectrude with her grandsons and the king governed all things with discreet rule". The use of the word 'grandsons' in the plural probably points to the association in the government of a son of the deceased Drogo, named Hugo, who was at this time about eighteen years of age, but who had already entered the Church, and afterwards rose to be abbot of St. Wandril and archbishop of Rouen.

The position of affairs, as indicated by the chronicler, was certainly a sufficiently absurd one. Here was this nominal king Dagobert III, now fifteen years of age. His Mayor of the Palace, that is, his confidential adviser and practical man of affairs, was a little child of perhaps six years old: but that child again was advised, and of course absolutely governed, by his grandmother, a 'very prudent' but not very popular person, and a young clerical cousin who was mounting the ladder of ecclesiastical preferment.

What made the situation more preposterous was that there was already in the Arnulfing house a man of full age, a son of the just deceased statesman, one in every way admirably qualified to hold the reins of power, and kept in the background only by a beldame's jealousy. This was Charles, ever after to be known as Charles Martel, son of Pippin of Heristal and Alpaïda. Whether Alpaïda were wife or concubine cannot be safely said, but as she was living at the same time as Plectrude, and as her son was younger than the sons of her rival, the legitimacy of Charles can only be maintained by resorting to an elaborate theory of divorces and remarriages for which there does not seem to be any warrant in the authorities. The Arnulfings, though not as outrageously profligate as the Merovingians, were notoriously lax in their marriage relations, which with them tended to assume the character of polygamy, and legitimacy or illegitimacy was not a matter of supreme importance.

The origin of the name Charles, which has since figured so prominently in the royal houses, not of France and Germany alone, but also of Spain, England, Sweden, and Naples, is thus told by an old Saga. At the time of his birth a messenger was sent to inform the child's father. Bursting into the presence of the great Austrasian, he found him sitting with Plectrude by his side; and, perhaps overawed by the presence of the rival princess, the messenger stammered out, "Long live the king! It is a Karl", using a colloquial term for a boy. "And a good name too", laughed the delighted if somewhat embarrassed father. "Let him be called Karl".

Fearing the obvious danger to her rule which existed in the person of this hated step-son, Plectrude immediately on her husband's death shut up Charles in prison. Then burst forth a storm which very nearly shattered the Frankish monarchy. The Neustrians, who had no mind to accept the rule of a baby Mayor of the Palace from the hated Austrasians, proclaimed one of their own countrymen, Raginfrid, Mayor, and declared war upon Plectrude and her grandson. In a battle which was fought in the Cotian forest (near Compiègne), the Austrasians were utterly defeated, the boy-mayor. Theudwald fled from the field, and apparently the

Merovingian king Dagobert III fell into the hands of Raginfrid (715). On Dagobert's death shortly after, a certain priest of Merovingian extraction named Daniel was fetched out of the church and proclaimed king under the title of Chilperic II. Here at last was a Merovingian king of full age, for this Daniel was a man of between forty and fifty; and when the long locks began to grow where the clerical tonsure had been, he was probably able to play the part with more dignity than the boy-kings his predecessors. He even seems to have entered with some energy into the struggle with the Austrasian house, but in that struggle, however necessary it may have seemed for the preservation of Merovingian kingship, the far more important interests of the great Frankish monarchy which Pippin of Heristal had so assiduously promoted were like to have been utterly ruined. The Neustrian king and his Mayor joined hands with the old heathen Ratbod king of the Frisians, pressed on to the Meuse, besieged Plectrude in Cologne, and at last having received from the dismayed dowager a large part of the treasure accumulated by her husband, marched back into their own land (716).

The one favourable symptom in this perilous conjuncture of affairs was, that in the confusion caused by the civil war, Charles Martel had escaped from his step-mother's keeping. Gradually the loyal followers, the *leudes* of his father, gathered round him. Defeated at first with great loss by Frisian Ratbod, and unsuccessful in his war against the Neustrians, he still held on his way, and now, falling on the triumphant invaders at a place called Amblaya, he inflicted upon them a severe defeat and carried back the paternal treasure to Cologne. A still more crushing defeat which Chilperic and Raginfrid sustained next year (717) at Vincy near Cambrai was the crisis of Charles's fortunes. He visited Paris as a conqueror, and when he returned to Cologne Plectrude handed over to him the remaining treasures of his father and retired into obscurity. His nephew Theudwald appears to have taken orders as an ecclesiastic and to have died not many years after. Charles was now the admitted head of the Arnulfing house, the acknowledged Mayor of the Palace for Austrasia : and though the civil war with Neustria still lingered, chiefly owing to the powerful aid which Raginfrid received from Eudo, the virtually independent duke of Aquitaine, it was ended in 720 by a convenient compromise. Along with the Neustrian treasure Chilperic II was handed over to Charles, whose own puppet-king had just died, and who could therefore easily admit him to the vacant dignity. Raginfrid, whose opposition was obstinate and protracted, does not seem to have been finally subdued till 725, when he was allowed to retain the position of Count of Angers.

Thus after our review of two centuries of Frankish history we have come down to the accession to power of the hero whose period of rule, as before stated, almost exactly coincided with that of the last great Lombard king, Liutprand.

The one event of world-historical importance in Charles Martel's leadership of the Franks was his victory over the Mussulman invaders of Gaul in the year 732. In 711 the Moors (as the Saracen conquerors were called owing to their having entered Europe from Mauretania) had crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and had in one battle overthrown the effete, priest-ridden monarchy of the Visigoths. Five years afterwards they entered Gaul : four years after that (720) they took Narbonne and made the old Gothic province of Septimania their own. Eudo of Aquitaine, who had just made his peace with Charles Martel, compelled them in that year to retreat from the unconquered city of Toulouse, and that ineffectual siege may be considered as the first sign of the reflux of the wave of Saracen invasion. But five years later (725) the Moors had actually penetrated as far as Autun in Burgundy. How little most students of modern history grasp the fact that the standard of the Crescent once floated within a hundred miles of the Lake of Geneva! During these years the opposition of Eudo to the Moorish advance was intermitted, and from the champion of Christianity he seemed in danger of becoming its betrayer. They were on his part years of revolt against Frankish supremacy, and of alliance, even matrimonial alliance, with the Mussulman, for Eudo's daughter Lampegia was given in

marriage to a Berber chief named Munuza. In 731 there was war in earnest between Charles Martel and Eudo of Aquitaine. The Austrasian twice crossed the Loire, defeated Eudo, and returned home each time with great booty.

But in 732 these relations were suddenly changed. Eudo's son-in-law the Berber chief had been put to death by the lawful Moorish governor of Spain, and now that governor, Abderrahman, crossed the Pyrenees with a mighty army, intent on punishing Eudo, but doubtless also intent on adding Gaul as well as Spain to the countries which professed the faith of Mohammed. Laying waste the land and burning the churches, the Saracens reached the Garonne and laid siege to Bordeaux. Eudo, striving to deliver the city, was defeated with terrible loss and fled to his late enemy Charles, imploring his succour. The invaders pressed on by the great Roman road which led northward from the Garonne to the Loire. They reached Poitiers, where they burned the church of St. Hilary: they were threatening the yet more venerated sanctuary of St. Martin at Tours. But Count Eudo had not reckoned in vain on the statesmanlike generosity of Charles Martel, who, forgetful of all the recent causes of quarrel between Austrasia and Aquitaine, determined at any cost to repel the onslaught of the Islamites. Having collected a large army, in which probably Frisians, Saxons and Alamanni served as well as Franks, he moved rapidly across the Loire and took up a strong position near the town of Old Poitiers between the rivers Elain and Vienne, barring the road to Tours.

A terrible battle followed. The fervour of the sons of desert, who perchance like the first warriors of Islam deemed that they already saw the flashing eyes of the houris waiting to receive them into Paradise, was met, was chilled, was broken by the stolid courage of the soldiers from Rhineland, who stood, says the historian, rigid and immovable as a wall of ice. Yet from that icy wall flashed forth countless swords wielded by strong arms and held as in the grasp of iron hands; and under their strokes Abderrahman himself and thousands of his bravest warriors fell prostrate. Grievous however were also the losses of the Frankish army, but with stout hearts they nerved themselves for the expected contest of the morrow. But when the morrow dawned the long rows of the tents of the Saracens were seen to be strangely solitary and unpeopled. The Franks feared a snare and an ambushade, but gradually their scouts venturing into the hostile lines brought back word that the camp was indeed deserted, that there was an abundance of spoil in the tents, that the enemy, disheartened by the terrible slaughter of the previous day, had fled under cover of the night. The scene which followed must have been like that described by the Jewish historian after the flight of the Syrian host. The Austrasian soldiers peaceably divided among themselves the immense spoil of the Saracens, and returned with joy to their own land, where doubtless many barbarian fingers handled and barbarian eyes appraised with wonder the tissues woven in the looms of Damascus and the cunning work of the goldsmiths of Seville.

Thus was the great blow struck, and Europe, at least Europe north of the Pyrenees, was freed from the nightmare of Mussulman invasion. Charles Martel was hailed as the great deliverer of Christendom, and popular report, which 'lied like a bulletin', so magnified his victory that barely half a century after the event an honest and sober historian like Paulus Diaconus could write, and could expect his readers to believe, that the Franks slew 375,000 Saracens, with a loss of only 1,500 of their own countrymen.

Three years after this great victory Count Eudo Later died (735), and a Frankish invasion of Aquitaine seems to have been necessary in order to reduce his son Hunold to the same degree of dependence on the central monarchy in which Eudo had acquiesced since the day of his great deliverance. Two years later (737) there was again war between the Saracens and Charles, but not apparently on the vast scale of the earlier campaign. The invaders were aided by disunion or treachery among the Christians. A certain duke Maurontus, in league with other rebel nobles of Provence who probably resented the pretensions of the Austrasian Mayor to

rule their southern land, conspired with the Saracens of Septimania and enabled them to possess themselves of the strong city of Avignon as well as of the more exposed city of Arles. Charles, who was now growing old, and who was besides always more or less engaged in hostile operations against the Frisians and Saxons on his northern border, sent his brother, or halfbrother, 'an industrious man, Childebrand', with a large army and many dukes and counts under him to recover the lost territory. Our interest in this industrious kinsman or offshoot of the great Austrasian house is increased when we find that it is to him and his son Nibelung that we owe the order for the composition of those chronicles (the Continuation of Fredegarius) from which almost all our slender knowledge of the history of this period is derived. Avignon was blockaded : Charles himself appeared upon the scene : there were the sounding of trumpets and the shouting of warriors 'as at Jericho', but there were also engines of war and ropes and cords before which ere long the defence fell powerless. The Franks streamed in at the breach, slaying and burning, and Avignon was recovered from the infidels.

From Avignon Charles pressed on across the Rhone, defeated the Saracens in a great battle near the sea-coast south of Narbonne, and slew their leader Omar, but failed to take Narbonne itself, though he took Nimes and Agde and demolished their walls. Through the meagre sentences of the chronicler we seem dimly to discern that, as already hinted, there was something more in this campaign than the opposition between Christian and Moslem, that the Romanised and meridional children of Provence resented the domination of the rough Teutonic warriors from Rhineland, and were even willing to join hands with the Saracens in order to break the Austrasian yoke from off their necks.

It was apparently at the time of this Saracen invasion that Charles Martel asked for and obtained that help from his brother-in-law Liutprand king of the Lombards which has been described in a previous volume.

Next year Charles again sent Childebrand to Provence to complete the work of subjugation, and again followed in his kinsman's footsteps. Though Narbonne was not taken and Septimania remained Saracen, all Provence was apparently won back and firmly united to the Frankish monarchy. The traitor Maurontus escaped 'by safest ways over inaccessible rocks', doubtless, that is to say, by the narrow gorges and snow-blocked passes of the Maritime Alps.

Charles Martel was now sole ruler of the great Frankish monarchy, for on the death of the *fainéant* king Theodoric IV in 737 he had not thought it necessary to put another puppet in his place. On his return from this last expedition to Provence (in 738) to his villa at Verimbria near Compiègne he began to sicken, and for the remaining three years of his life he was in feeble health. While he was in this condition came those two embassies which have been already described, from Pope Gregory III beseeching his assistance against the Lombard kings Liutprand and Hildeprand. They returned ineffectual, though they brought to the great Mayor, besides many other precious gifts, the chains of St. Peter, the keys of his sepulchre, and the honour (which it was not for the Pope to bestow) of a Roman consulship. But Charles, besides the natural dissuasions of enfeebled health and approaching old age, had no inclination to engage for the Pope's sake in a war with a kinsman, an ally, and the knightly godfather of his son Pippin. Any warlike deeds that had to be done in the few remaining years of his supremacy were done by his sons. He tarried peaceably at home, gave great gifts to the church of St. Denis at Paris in which his bones were to be laid, and then departing to his favourite villa of Cariciacum (now Quierzy-sur-Oise) he was there seized with a fever of which he died on the 22nd of October, 741.

In his reign (for such we may truly call his mayoralty) of nearly twenty-five years, Charles had accomplished great things. With many a warlike blow, corresponding to his surname the Hammer, he had welded the once-discordant kingdoms, Neustria, Austrasia, and

Burgundy, into unity. He had done something towards the more difficult work of forcing Aquitaine to renounce its semi-independence and become a loyal member of the Frankish monarchy. In the north and in the south he had shown himself a valorous champion of the Christian Church militant, since not only had he repelled the Mussulman invasions of Gaul, but by his perpetual and in the main successful wars with the Frisians he had made possible those missionary expeditions by which our countryman Wynfrith, better known as Boniface, chastised the heathen, destroyed their idols, and with energy of arm as well as of tongue made Christianity triumphant along the whole course of the Rhine.

But all these valiant deeds on behalf of the Church availed not to save the memory of Charles Martel from the ecclesiastical ban to which he alone of all the early descendants of St. Arnulf is obnoxious. The ancestors of Charles in their upward struggle towards the supreme power had uniformly leant upon the arm of the Church : but that Church in the disorganization of the later Merovingian monarchy had grown so rich and so headstrong that probably any wise and statesmanlike ruler was bound to come into collision with its hierarchs. That Charles's acts in derogation of its power were all wise and statesmanlike it would be rash to assert. He was a great military chieftain, with a number of hungry followers to provide for. Not only the consolidation of his own power in Neustria and Austrasia, but his border wars with Frisians and Saxons, his tremendous struggle with the Saracens, all had to be carried on by the help of generals and officers versed in the arts of war, who assuredly were not backward in urging their claims to tangible rewards. But the great Crown lands, out of which in earlier days a Merovingian king might have appeased his hungry followers, were, there is reason to think, in large measure by this time alienated to ecclesiastical purposes. It is probable that a large part of the land of Gaul was now held of the Church under the name of *beneficia* by tenants who were bound to make a certain yearly payment to their ecclesiastical lords. What Charles Martel appears to have done in the difficult circumstances in which he found himself, was not indeed to order a general confiscation of Church property—of that he seems to be unjustly accused—but in many cases to use the right of resumption of grants which at least theoretically resided in the Crown, in order to take away lands from a bishopric here or a monastery there, and bestow them on some stout warrior whom he was sending as Count to rule a distant province or to fight the Frisian or the Saracen. In many such cases the actual occupation of the soil would not be changed, but the holder of the *beneficium* would be ordered to pay his rent (as we should call it) not to the Churchman but to the Count.

Of course these acts of spoliation, however necessary they may have been for the salvation of the state, were resented by the ecclesiastics at whose expense they were performed. A proceeding which looked less violent but which was really far more perilous to the best life of the Church, was the bestowal on Charles's own henchmen—mere warriors without any pretence to the religious character—of the prelacies and abbacies which were endowed for a very different purpose. Nor did he confine himself to bestowing one only at a time upon his favourites. The pluralist abuse now also crept into the Church. His follower Milo ('who was a clergyman only by his tonsure') received the headship of the convents of Trier and Rheims; and his nephew Hugo was actually crowned with the three mitres of Paris, Rouen, and Bayeux, and was at the same time abbot of Fontenelle and Jumièges.

Such a high-handed policy towards the Church was certain to excite the anger of the ecclesiastics who had it in their power to bless or to curse, in this world at any rate, if not in the next. Possibly also Charles's refusal to aid the Pope against the Lombards may have added an article to the indictment against him. In the next century, Archbishop Hincmar, writing the life of St. Eucherius, bishop of Orleans, related that the saint, being one day engaged in prayer, was allowed to have a beatific vision of the other world, in the course of which by the gift of the Lord he was permitted to see Charles tormented in the lowest hell. Enquiring the cause of this

punishment, Eucherius was told by an angel that in Charles's case the judgment of the last day was anticipated, and that he had to suffer the punishment not only of his own sins but of the sins of all those who had devised lands and houses for the support of the servants of Christ and for lighting candles in the churches, but whose pious intentions had been frustrated by his confiscations. On recovering consciousness the saint called to him St. Boniface and Fulrad abbot of St. Denis and bade them go to the church and open Charles's tomb. If they found that empty they would surely then believe that he had seen a true vision. They went; they opened the vault; a dragon issued forth, and all the interior of the vault was black and charred with fire. "This is written", says the chronicler, "that all who read it may take note of the righteous damnation of him by whom the property of the Church has been unjustly taken away".

So wrote Hincmar about the middle of the ninth century. The story is hard to believe, since the bishop Eucherius died three years before Charles Martel.

CHAPTER IV.

DUKES OF BAVARIA.

There is a neighbour land of Italy to whose history we must give some little attention if we would understand the events which preceded and followed the downfall of the Lombard state.

We have seen how closely for more than a century the dynasty which reigned over the Lombards was connected with the rulers of Bavaria. The two countries touched most closely in that region which we now know as the Tyrol, where the valley of the Adige from a little above Trent downwards was ruled by a Lombard duke, while the upper waters of the Adige and the Eisach, with the Vintschgau, Meran, Botzen and Brixen were all as a rule subject to the Bavarians. With the addition of this Alpine territory and of Upper Austria and Salzburg and with the subtraction of a strip of land west of the river Lech, and of the valley of the Main in the north-west, the duchy of Bavaria corresponded pretty closely with the modern kingdom of that name. A large square block of fruitful land watered by the Danube and the Inn, this duchy, bordering on Alamannia on the west and Italy on the south, was sure to play an important part in the politics of central Europe. The Bavarians themselves appear to have been a Suevic tribe who wandered into the old Roman province of Vindelicia, then lying desolate and unoccupied, a sort of No-man's-land between the Danube and the Alps, and to have settled there in the early part of the sixth century. Almost from the very beginning of their Danubian settlement they seem to have been subject to the overlordship of the Frankish kings, but the yoke was lightly imposed, perhaps as the result of peaceful arrangement rather than of war, and does not appear to have involved, as in many other cases, the payment of a tribute.

Almost at the outset of their history as settlers in Vindelicia we find the Bavarians under the leadership of a great ducal house, the Agilolfings. Of the origin of this family we have no certain information, but there are many indications which point to the conclusion that they were themselves of Frankish descent, possibly allied to the Merovingian kings.

The first of these Agilolfing rulers of whom history makes mention is Garibald, husband of the Lombard princess Walderada, who was the divorced wife of the Frankish king Chlotchar. His daughter Theudelinda was the celebrated and saintly queen of the Lombards. The reader may remember the romantic stories of her wooing by the disguised Authari and of the cup of wine which she handed to the favoured Agilulf. From some cause which is unknown to us Garibald incurred the displeasure of his Frankish lords and probably had to submit to a Frankish invasion. There is no proof however that he lost his ducal crown, and about the year 596 he seems to have been succeeded by a son named Tassilo I (596-611). It is indeed nowhere distinctly stated that this was the relationship between the two princes, but the fact that Tassilo's son and successor was named Garibald II renders it probable.

Of the reigns of these early dukes of Bavaria we know very little, nor can we with any certainty fix the date of the second Garibald's possession of power. It seems clear, however, that through the greater part of the seventh century the bond of allegiance to the Frankish monarchy was growing looser and looser; *fainéant* Merovingian kings and warring Mayors of the Palace having little power to enforce its obligations. The duke seems to have surrounded himself with seneschal and marischal and all the other satellites of a sovereign prince, and his

capital, Ratisbon on the Danube, doubtless outshone Paris and Metz in the eyes of his Bavarian subjects.

With the accession to the ducal throne of Theodo I (660-722) we gain a clearer vision of Bavarian affairs from the lives of the saints, Rupert, Emmeran, and Corbinian, who came from Gaul and from Ireland to effect the conversion of the people. It is indeed surprising to us who have witnessed the earnest zeal of the Bavarian Theudelinda, not merely for Christianity but for orthodoxy among her Italian subjects, to find that, two generations later, her own Bavarian countrymen still needed conversion. But apparently the Christianity of Garibald's court was not much more than a court fashion (the result very possibly of his own Frankish origin), and had not deeply leavened the mass of his subjects. Probably we are in the habit of underestimating the stubbornness of the resistance of Teutonic heathenism to the new faith. When a tribe like the Franks or the Burgundians settled in the midst of a people already imbued with Christian ideas through their subjection to the Empire, it was comparatively easy to persuade them to renounce idolatry or to change the Arian form of Christianity for the Athanasian. But when the messengers of the Church had to deal with nations all Teutonic and all heathen, like the Frisians, the Saxons, or the Bavarians, the process of conversion (as we know from the history of our own forefathers) was much slower and more laborious. Thus it came to pass that in the middle of the seventh century the mass of the Bavarian folk were apparently still heathen, worshipping the mysterious goddess Nerthus, and venerating a statue of Irmin in the sacred wood, feasting on horse-flesh in the half-ruined temple which had perhaps once been dedicated to Jupiter or Isis, and offering, with drunken orgies, sacrifices of rams and goats beside the bier of their dead comrades, to commemorate their entrance into Walhalla.

Into this rude, more than half-Pagan world came towards the end of the seventh century bishop Rupert or Hroudbert of Worms. His ancestry and birthplace are doubtful. Some have described him as sprung from Ireland, while others make him a Frank, of kin to the royal house of the Merovingians. He came into Bavaria, we are told, at the invitation of the duke, but probably also with the full consent if not at the actual suggestion of the great Frankish Mayor, Pippin of Heristal, who at this time not only by warlike expeditions but also by wise and politic counsels was tightening once more the loosened bonds which bound the Bavarians as well as the other nations east of the Rhine to the Frankish kingdom.

At the outset of his operations Rupert baptized duke Theodo and then proceeded with the conversion of the heathen remnant of his people to Christianity, reconsecrating old temples which still bore the names we are told of Juno and Cybele, and dedicating them to the Virgin, and ever on the quest for some one place where he might find a monastery which he might make the centre of his missionary work. Not desirous apparently of too near neighbourhood to the ducal court at Ratisbon, he decided at last upon the little Waller See about seven miles from Salzburg, where he founded the monastery of the Church-by-the-Lake (See-Kirche). But not long had he dwelt here when the desolate ruins of the once stately Roman city of Juvavia attracted his notice. Still desolate, two centuries after that destruction which St. Severinus had foretold of them and the other cities of Noricum, they attracted and fascinated him by their mouldering greatness. He obtained from duke Theodo a grant of the old city and of the fort above, with twenty farms and twenty salt-pans at Reichenhall, eighty 'Romans' with their slaves, all the unoccupied lands in the district of Salzburg, and other rights and royalties. High up on that noble hill which still bears the name of the Monk's Mountain Rupert reared his church, which he dedicated to St. Peter, and founded there his monastery, which he put under the guidance of twelve young Franks, his disciples and fellow-countrymen. Such was the beginning of the great and rich bishopric of Salzburg.

It was probably about the time of Rupert's first missionary operations in Bavaria that duke Theodo, now past the middle of life, divided his duchy between himself and three of his

sons. Of these sons the only one of whom we hear anything important is Grimwald, whose capital was Freising, about twenty miles north-east of Munich, and who probably ruled over that part of Bavaria which lies between the Danube and the Alps.

Soon after this division of the duchy and about the time of the death of Pippin of Heristal, we may conjecturally place the appearance of the second great Frankish missionary in Bavaria, *Emmeran* of Poitiers: a meteoric appearance which heralded storm and was strangely quenched in darkness. Emmeran came, we are told, into Bavaria, intending only to traverse the country on his way to the barbarous Avars, of whom he desired to make proselytes. He came to the strongly fortified city of Ratisbon and stood before duke Theodo, but an interpreter was needed to mediate between the speech of Aquitaine and the speech of Bavaria. He explained to the duke the object of his mission, and Theodo replied, "That land to which thou wouldst fain go, on the banks of the Ens, is lying all waste and desolate, through the incursions of the Avars. Stay rather here, and I will make thee bishop in this province, or give thee the oversight of some abbey". And Emmeran, learning that the conversion of the Bavarians was yet but half-accomplished and that they still blended their heathen sacrifices with the Supper of the Lord, was persuaded to stay in that fruitful land, whose inhabitants pleased him well, and he preached there during three years.

Now Emmeran was a man of noble stature and comely face, generous both of speech and of money, and 'extraordinarily affable to women as well as to men': evidently a courtly bishop rather than an austere recluse. Unfortunately at the end of the three years the princess Ota, duke Theodo's daughter who had fallen into sin, accused the Frankish missionary as her seducer, and either through consciousness of guilt, or through unworldly carelessness as to his good name, he took no steps to clear himself of the charge. He left Bavaria indeed, but it was not to prosecute his journey to Avar-land, but to cross the Alps to Rome. A son of duke Theodo named Lantpert pursued after him, and having overtaken him ere he had reached the mountains, inflicted upon him the punishment of an incontinent slave, mutilation of the tongue, the hands and the feet. He died of his wounds, and the Church (which was persuaded of his innocence of the charge against him) revered him as a martyr.

In the year 716, soon probably after the death of Emmeran, Theodo with a long train of dependants visited Rome to pray at the tomb of St. Peter. As has been already suggested, the visit was probably connected in some way with the terrible event which had preceded it, and it is possible that the reconciliation of the ducal family to the Pope may have been accomplished at the price of some concessions which made the Bavarian Church more dependent on the see of Rome.

The third great Frankish missionary, *Corbinian*, was a man of hot and choleric temper, and he, like Emmeran, had his quarrels with the ducal house of Bavaria, though they did not for him end in such dire disaster. Born at a place called Castrus near Melun about the year 680, he was the son of a mother already widowed who probably fostered her child's domineering and impetuous disposition. He seems also to have been a man of wealth and some social importance, and accordingly, when his genius took the direction of miracle-working and monastic austerity, the fame of his young saintliness easily penetrated the court and reached the ears of the aged Pippin of Heristal, who probably encouraged him to turn his energies to the building up of a Frankish-Christian Church in barbarous Bavaria. After fourteen years of retirement in his cell, he journeyed to Rome, 'in order to ask of the Pope permission to spend his life in solitude,' says his admiring biographer Aribo. But the Pope, we are told, perceiving his fitness for active work in the Church, and determined that he should not hide his light under a bushel, utterly refused to grant him the required permission to lead an anchorite's life, pushed him rapidly through all the lower grades of the hierarchy and consecrated him bishop, without however assigning him any definite see, so that he must have been looked upon as a bishop *in*

partibus. After this consecration we are surprised to hear of his spending the next seven years in the cell of St. Germanus in his native place. This and some other suspicious circumstances of the story incline some scholars to believe that the whole tale of this earlier episcopate is a figment of the biographer.

After this interval of seven years Corbinian appears in Bavaria, intent, we are told, on undertaking a second journey to Rome. He chose, says Aribo, 'the more secret way through Alamannia, Germany, and Noricum' [Bavaria], instead of taking 'the public road' from the regions of Gaul. Arrived in Bavaria he found there the devout Theodo, who had lately accomplished the partition of his duchy with his sons. The eldest survivor of these sons, Grimwald, eagerly welcomed the saint, and offered if he would remain to make him co-heir with his own children, doubtless only of his personal property. Corbinian however rejected this offer, and insisted on continuing his journey to Rome. Finding it impossible to change his purpose, Grimwald dismissed him with large presents and gave him an honourable escort, but at the same time gave secret orders to the dwellers in the Vintschgau that on his return he should be arrested at the moment of his crossing the Bavarian frontier. We see at once that there is something more here than the biographer chooses to communicate. The Bavarian prince looks on the expected return of the great ecclesiastic from beyond the Alps with the same sort of feelings which induced Plantagenet princes to decree the penalties of *praemunire* against any one who should import into England bulls from Rome.

Corbinian accomplished his journey into Italy. He was ill-treated by Husingus, duke of Trent, who stole from him a beautiful stallion which he refused to sell, but was kindly received by king Liutprand at Pavia. He remained here seven days, chiefly occupied in preaching to the king, who listened with gladness to his copious eloquence. When he was leaving the capital he again had one of his horses stolen, by a Lombard courtier, whose dishonesty he detected and whose punishment he foretold. At last after divers adventures he reached Rome, and here, in spite of his entreaties and his tears, the Pope (probably Gregory II) ordered him once more to abjure a life of solitude and to undertake active ecclesiastical work. On his return he again visited Pavia, and on his arrival at that place the first object that met his gaze was the body of the Lombard nobleman who had stolen his horse laid upon a bier and carried forth to burial. The horse was restored, and the widow of the culprit, grovelling at the saint's feet, besought him to accept 200 solidi (£120), which her husband on his death-bed had ordered her to pay as the penalty of his crime

With a long train of horses and servants Corbinian now took his journey up the valley of the Adige in order to return into Bavaria by the pass of the Brenner. Scarcely, however, had he entered the Bavarian territory when by Grimwald's orders he was arrested at Castrum Magense.

And now we hear something more of the cause of Grimwald's fear of the holy man. The Bavarian duke had married a young Frankish lady of noble birth named Piltrudis, who was the widow of his brother Theudebald. Against this kind of union, as we know, Rome uttered strong though not always irrevocable protests, and it was possibly from fear of Corbinian's bringing across the Alps a bull of excommunication of the guilty pair that Grimwald had given orders for his arrest on entering the duchy. However, after a struggle, the details of which are very obscurely given, Corbinian obtained a temporary victory. Grimwald obeyed the order of the saint, backed as he probably was by the Frankish *Major-Domus*, and within the specified time of forty days put away Piltrudis.

It is needless to say that the divorced wife, who is looked upon by the ecclesiastical historians as another Herodias, was full of resentment against the author of her disgrace and vowed to compass his downfall. If we read the story rightly, the saint's own choleric temper—

even his biographer confesses that he was easily roused to anger by vice, though ready to forgive—aided her designs.

One day when Corbinian was reclining at the table with the duke he made the sign of the cross over the food set before him, at the same time giving praise to God. But the prince took a piece of bread and thoughtlessly threw it to a favourite hound. Thereat the man of God was so enraged that he kicked over the three-legged table on which the meal was spread and scattered all the silver dishes on the floor. Then starting up from his seat he said, “The man is unworthy of so great a blessing who is not ashamed to cast it to dogs”. Then he stalked out of the house, declaring that he would never again eat or drink with the prince nor visit his court.

Some time after this there was another and more violent outbreak of the saint’s ill-temper. Riding forth one day from the royal palace he met a woman who, as he was told, had effected the cure of one of the young princes by art-magic. At this he trembled with fury, and leaping from his horse he assaulted the woman with his fists, took from her the rich rewards for the cure which she was carrying away from the palace, and ordered them to be distributed among the poor. The beaten and plundered sorceress, who was perhaps only a skillful female physician, presented herself in Grimwald’s hall of audience with face still bleeding from the saintly fists, and clamoured for redress. Piltrudis, who seems to have returned to her old position, seconded her prayer, and Corbinian was banished from the ducal presence. He had already received from his patron a grant of the place upon which he had set his heart, Camina, about five miles north of Meran in the Tyrol, with its arable land, its vineyards, its meadows, and a large tract of the Rhaetian Alps behind it, and thither he retired to watch for the fulfillment of the prophecies which he had uttered against the new Ahab and Jezebel.

The longed-for vindication came partly from foreign arms, partly from domestic treachery. It is possible that Grimwald had to meet a combined invasion both from the north and from the south, for, as Paulus Diaconus informs us, Liutprand, king of the Lombards, ‘in the beginning of his reign took many places from the Bavarians’. This may be the record of some warlike operations undertaken in the troublous years which followed the death of old duke Theodo (722), and may point to some attempt on the part of the Lombard king, who had married the niece of Grimwald, to vindicate the claims of her brother Hucpert, whom Grimwald seems to have excluded from the inheritance of his father’s share in the duchy. This however is only conjecture, and as Liutprand came to the throne in 712 it is not perhaps a very probable one. But it is certain that in 725 the great Frankish Mayor, Charles Martel, entered the Bavarian duchy, possibly to support the claims of Hucpert, but doubtless also in order to rivet anew the chain of allegiance which bound Bavaria to the Frankish monarchy. In 728 he again invaded the country, and this invasion was speedily followed by the death of Grimwald (729). He was slain by conspirators says the biographer of Corbinian, who adds, with pious satisfaction, that all his sons, ‘deprived of the royal dignity, with much tribulation gave up the breath of life’, but it is probable that all these events were connected with the blow to Grimwald’s semi-regal state which had been dealt by Charles the Hammer.

After one of his invasions of Bavaria, perhaps the first of the two, Charles Martel carried back with him into Frankland two Bavarian princesses, Piltrudis, the ‘Herodias’ of Corbinian’s denunciations, and her niece Swanahild, sister of Hucpert. The latter lady became, after the fashion adopted by these lax moralists of the Carolingian line, first the mistress and afterwards the wife of her captor, and she with the son Grifo whom she bore to Charles caused in after years no small trouble to the Frankish state.

The result of this overthrow of Grimwald was the establishment on the Bavarian throne of his nephew Hucpert, son of Theudebert, brother-in-law of Liutprand the Lombard and Charles the Frank, who ruled for eight uneventful years, at peace apparently with his nominal overlord the Merovingian king and his mighty deputy. On his death in 737 the vacant dignity was

given to his cousin Otilo who ruled for eleven years (737-748), and to whom Charles Martel gave his daughter Hiltrudis in marriage.

The reign of Otilo (737-748) was chiefly memorable for the reorganisation of the Bavarian Church by the labours of an Anglo-Saxon missionary, the great archbishop Boniface. The offshoot of Roman Christianity planted in Britain by direction of Gregory the Great had now at last, after much battling with the opposition both of heathenism and of Celtic Christianity, taken deep root and was overspreading the land. It is not too much to say that in the eighth century the most learned and the most exemplary ecclesiastics in the whole of Western Christendom were to be found among those Anglian and Saxon islanders whose not remote ancestors had been the fiercest of Pagan idolaters. But precisely because they were such recent converts and because the question between the Celtic Christianity of Iona and the Roman Christianity of Canterbury had long hung doubtful in the scale, were these learned, well-trained ecclesiastics among the most enthusiastic champions of the supremacy of the Roman see. To us who know what changes the years have brought, it seems a strange inversion of their parts to find the Celtic populations of Ireland and the Hebrides long resisting, and at last only with sullenness accepting, the Papal mandates, while a sturdy Englishman such as Boniface almost anticipates Loyola in his devotion to the Pope, or Xavier in his eagerness to convert new nations to the Papal obedience.

Born at Crediton in Devonshire about 775, and the son of noble parents, the young Wynfrith (for that was his baptismal name), after spending some years in a Hampshire monastery and receiving priest's orders, determined to set forth as a missionary to the lands beyond the Rhine, in order to complete the work which had been began by his fellow-countryman Willibrord. With his work in Frisia and Thuringia we have here no concern. We hasten on to a visit, apparently a second visit, which he paid to Rome about the year 722 when he had already reached middle life. It was on this occasion probably that he assumed the name of Bonifatius; and at the same time he took an oath of unqualified obedience to the see of Rome, the same which was taken by the little suburbicarian bishops of the Campagna, save that they bound themselves to loyal obedience to 'the most pious Prince and the Republic', an obligation which Boniface in his contemplated wanderings over central Europe, free from all connection with Imperial Constantinople or with the civic community of Rome, refused to take upon himself. His eager obedience was rewarded by a circular letter from the Pope calling on all Christian men to aid the missionary efforts of 'our most reverend brother Boniface', now consecrated bishop *in partibus infidelium*, and setting forth to convert those nations in Germany and on the eastern bank of the Rhine who were still worshipping idols and living in the shadow of death. At the same time a letter of commendation addressed to the Pope's 'glorious son duke Charles' obtained from Charles Martel a letter under his hand and seal addressed to 'all bishops, dukes, counts, vicars, lesser officers, agents and friends' warning them that bishop Boniface was now under the *mundeburdium* of the great Mayor, and that if any had cause of complaint against him it must be argued before Charles in person.

As has been already observed, the protection thus granted by the mighty Austrasian to the Anglo-Saxon missionary powerfully aided his efforts for the Christianization of Germany. The terror of the Frankish arms, as well as a certain vague desire to watch the issue of the conflict between Christ and Odin, may have kept the Hessian idolaters tranquil while the elderly Boniface struck his strong and smashing blows at the holy oak of Geismar. At any rate, true-hearted and courageous preachers of the faith as were Boniface and the multitude of his fellow-countrymen and fellow-countrywomen who crossed the seas to aid his great campaign, it is clear that the fortunes of that spiritual campaign did in some measure ebb and flow with the varying fortunes of the Frankish arms east of the Rhine.

Some time after the death of Gregory II Boniface again visited Rome (about 737) and received, apparently at this time, from Gregory III the dignity of Archbishop and a commission to set in order the affairs of the Church in Bavaria. In fulfilling this commission he must have had the entire support of the then reigning duke Otilo; but it is not so certain that he was still acting in entire harmony with the Frankish Mayor. We have seen that after his death the memory of Charles Martel was subjected to a process the very opposite of canonization, and there are some indications that at this time the obedient Otilo of Bavaria was looked upon at Borne with more favour than the too independent Mayor of the Palace who refused to help the Pope against his brother-in-law the king of the Lombards. However this may be, it is clear that Boniface accomplished in Bavaria something not far short of a spiritual revolution. He had been instructed by the Pope to root out the erroneous teaching of false and heretical priests and of intruding Britons. The latter clause must be intended for the yet unreconciled missionaries of the Celtic Church. Is it possible that the Frankish emissaries were also looked upon with somewhat of suspicion, that the work of the Emmerans and Corbinians was only half approved at Rome, even as the life of Boniface certainly shines out in favourable contrast with the ill-regulated lives of those strange preachers of the Gospel?

“Therefore”, says the Pope to the Archbishop, “since you have informed us that you have gone to the Bavarian nation and have found them living outside the order of the Church, since they had no bishops in the Church save one named Vivilo [bishop of Passau], whom we ordained long ago, and since with the assent of Otilo, duke of the same Bavaria, and of the nobles of the province you have ordained three more bishops and have divided that province into four *parrochiae*, of which each bishop is to keep one, you have done well and wisely, my brother, since you have fulfilled the apostolic precept in our stead. Therefore cease not, most reverend brother, to teach them the holy Catholic and Apostolic tradition of the Roman see, that those rough men may be enlightened and may hold the way of salvation whereby they may arrive at eternal rewards”.

Here then at the end of the fourth decade of the eighth century we leave the great Anglo-Saxon archbishop uprooting the last remnants of heathenism which his predecessors had allowed to grow up alongside of the rites of Christianity ; forbidding the eating of horseflesh, the sacrifices for the dead, and the more ghastly sacrifices of the living for which even so-called Christian men had dared to sell their slaves; everywhere working for civilization and Christianity, but doubtless at the same time working to bring all things into more absolute dependence on the see of Rome. In him we see the founder, perhaps the unconscious founder, of that militant and lavishly endowed Churchmanship which found its expression later on in the great Elector-Bishoprics of the Rhine. We shall meet again in future chapters both with Boniface and with the Dukes of Bavaria.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION.

The five years from 740 to 744 may be said to mark the close of a generation, for during that short period the thrones of Constantinople and of Pavia, the Frankish mayoralty and the Roman papacy, were all vacated by death.

On the 18th of June, 740, died the great Iconoclast Emperor, Leo the Third, after a reign of twenty-four years, marked by many great calamities, by earthquake, pestilence and civil war, but also by legal reforms, by a fresh bracing up of the energies of the state both for administration and for war, by the repulse of a menacing attack of the Saracens on Constantinople, and by a great victory over their army gained by the Emperor in person in the uplands of Phrygia. Leo III was Emperor succeeded by his son Constantine V, to whom the ecclesiastical writers of the image-worshipping party have affixed a foul nickname, and whose memory they have assailed with even fiercer invective than that of his father. He was undoubtedly a harsh and overbearing man, who carried through his father's image-breaking policy with as little regard for the consciences of those who differed from him as was shown by a Theodosius or a Justinian, but he was also a brave soldier and an able ruler, one of the men who by their rough vigour restored the fainting energies of the Byzantine state. While he was absent in Asia Minor continuing his father's campaigns against the Saracens, his brother-in-law, the Armenian Artavasdus, grasped at the diadem, and by the help of the image-worshipping party succeeded in maintaining himself in power for nearly three years; but Constantine, who had been at first obliged to fly for his life, received steadfast and loyal support from the troops quartered in the Anatolic theme, and by their aid won two decisive victories over his rival. After a short siege of Constantinople he was again installed in the imperial palace, and celebrated his triumph by chariot races in the Hippodrome, at which Artavasdus and his two sons, bound with chains, were exposed to the derision of the populace. With this short interruption the reign of Constantine V lasted for thirty-five years (740-775), a period during which memorable events were taking place in Western Europe.

On the 10th of December, 741, Pope Gregory II died and was succeeded (as has been already stated) by Zacharias, whose pontificate lasted for more than ten years. The new Pope, like so many of his predecessors, was a Greek : in fact, for some reason which it is not easy to discern, it was a rare thing at this time for the bishop of Rome to be of Roman birth. Among the more important events of his pontificate were those interviews with Liutprand at Terni (742) and at Pavia (29 June, 743) which resulted in the surrender of the Lombard conquests in Etruria, the Sabine territory, and the district round Ravenna, and which have been fully described in an earlier volume. But far the most important act of the papacy of Zacharias was that consent which near the close of his life he gave to the change of the royal dynasty of the Franks, a transaction which will form the subject of the following chapter.

Two months before this change in the wearer of the papal tiara had come that vacancy in the office of the Frankish mayoralty which, as before stated was caused by the death of Charles Martel at Carisiacum (October 21, 741).

Two sons, Carloman and Pippin, the issue of his first marriage, inherited the greater part of the vast states which were now practically recognized as the dominions of the great *Major Domus*, who for the last four years had been ruling without even the pretence of a Merovingian shadow-king above him. Of these two young men, Carloman, the eldest, was probably about

thirty, Pippin about twenty-seven when they became possessed of supreme power by the death of their father. As far as we can discern anything of their respective characters from the scanty indications in the chronicles, Carloman seems to have been the more impulsive and passionate, but perhaps also the more generous, and, in the deeper sense of the word, the more religious of the two brothers. Pippin seems to have been of calmer mood, clement and placable, a good friend to the Church, but also a man who from beginning to end had a pretty keen sense of that which would make for his own advantage in this world or the next.

In the division of the inheritance, Carloman, as the elder son, received all the Austrasian lands, the stronghold of the Arnulfing family, together with Swabia and Thuringia. To Pippin fell as his share Neustria, Burgundy, and the reconquered land of Provence. That Bavaria in the east and Aquitaine in the west are omitted in the recital of this division is a striking proof of the still half-independent condition of those broad territories.

But besides several confessedly illegitimate sons of the late Major Domus, there was one who both by his mother's almost royal birth and by the fact of her marriage (possibly after his birth) to Charles Martel had some claim, not altogether shadowy, to share in the inheritance. This was Grifo, son of the Bavarian princess Swanahild, at the time of his father's death a lad of about fifteen. Already during Charles Martel's lifetime Swanahild appears to have played the part of a turbulent wife, and in league with Gairefrid, count of Paris, to have actually barred her husband out of his Neustrian capital and appropriated some part of the revenues of the great abbey of S. Denis. Either the turbulence of the rebellious or the blandishments of the reconciled wife appear to have so far prevailed with the dying Mayor of the Palace that he left to the young Grifo a principality in the centre of his dominions carved out of the three contiguous states, Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy. But almost immediately on Charles's death the discord between Swanahild's son and his brothers burst into a flame. Whether Grifo took the initiative, occupied Laon by a *coup de main*, and declared war on his brothers aiming at the exclusive possession of the whole realm, or whether the Franks, hating Swanahild and her son, rose in armed protest against this division of the realm and blockaded Grifo in his own city of Laon, we cannot determine. In either case the result was the same : Laon surrendered, Grifo was taken captive, and handed over to the custody of Carloman, who for six years kept him a close prisoner at 'the New Castle' near the Ardennes. Swanahild was sent to the convent of Chelles, where she probably ended her days.

A little more than two years after the death of Charles Martel, in January, 744, his brother-in-law Liutprand, king of the Lombards, also departed this life. The papal biographer who records the death of a wise and patriotic king with unholy joy attributes it to the prayers of Pope Zacharias, calumniating, as we may surely believe, that eminent pontiff, who had received many favours from Liutprand, and who seems also to have been a man of kindlier temper than many Popes, and still more than the Papal biographers.

On the death of Liutprand, his nephew and the partner of his throne, Hildeprand, succeeded of course to the undivided sovereignty. That unhelpful prince, however, whose whole career corresponded too closely with the ill omen which marked his accession, was after little more than half a year dethroned by his discontented subjects. In his stead Ratchis, the brave duke of Friuli, son of Pemmo victor of the Sclovenic invaders and hero of the fight at the bridge over the Metaurus, was chosen king of the Lombards. His accession appears to have taken place in the latter part of September, 744. What became of his dethroned rival we know not, but the silence of historians is ominous as to his fate.

Immediately on his accession Ratchis concluded a truce with Pope Zacharias, or rather perhaps with the civil governor of the *Ducatus Romae*, which was to last for twenty years : and in fact the relations between Roman and Lombard were peaceable ones during almost the whole of his short reign. But now that we have lost the guidance of Paulus Diaconus—an

irreparable loss for this period—it is practically impossible to continue the narrative in the court of the Lombard kings. History will insist in concerning herself chiefly with the actions of four men—Zacharias the Greek, Boniface the man of Devonshire, and the two Frankish Mayors of the Palace. When she is not listening to the discussions in the Lateran patriarchate, she overpasses the Alps and waits upon the march of the Frankish armies, or follows the archbishop of Germany in his holy war against paganism and heresy.

The troubles of Carloman and Pippin did not end with the suppression of Grifo's rebellion. All round the borders of the realm the clouds hung menacing. In Aquitaine, Hunold son of Eudo was again raising his head and endeavouring to assert his independence. Otilo of Bavaria had probably abetted the revolt of his nephew Grifo, and certainly chafed like Hunold under the Frankish yoke. The Alamanni in the south, the Saxons in the north, were all arming against the Franks. It was probably in part at least as the result of these troubles that the two brothers determined to 'regularise their position', if we may borrow a word from the dialect of modern diplomacy, by seating another shadow on the spectral throne of the Merovingians. Since the death of Theodoric IV in 737 there had been no *fainéant* king sitting in a royal villa or nominally presiding over the national assembly of the *Campus Martius*. A certain Childeric, third king of that name and last of all the Childerics and Chilperics and Theodorics who for the previous century had been playing at kingship, was drawn forth from the seclusion probably of some monastery, was set on the archaic chariot to which the white oxen were yoked, was drawn to the place of meeting, and solemnly saluted as king. This Childeric's very place in the royal pedigree is a matter of debate. In the documents which bear his name he meekly alludes to 'the famous man Carloman, Mayor of the Palace, who hath installed us in the throne of this realm'. That he was enthroned in 743 and dethroned in 751 is practically all that is known of this melancholy figure, *ignavissimus Hildericus*.

Having thus guarded themselves against the danger of an attack from behind in the name of Merovingian legitimacy, Carloman and Pippin, who always wrought with wonderful unanimity for the defence of their joint dominion, entered upon a campaign against Otilo, duke of Bavaria. Otilo, as has been said, had probably aided his young nephew Grifo in his attempt at revolution. He had also formed a league with Hunold, duke of Aquitaine, and with Theobald, duke of the Alamanni, and openly aimed at getting rid of the overlordship of the Frankish rulers. Further to embitter the relations between the two states, he had married Hiltrudis, daughter of Charles Martel, contrary to the wish of her two brothers. To avenge all these wrongs and to repress all these attempts at independence 'the glorious brothers' led their army into the Danubian plains and encamped on the left bank of the Lech, the river which flows past Augsburg and was then the western boundary of the Bavarian duchy. On the opposite bank was the Bavarian army, with a large number of Alamannic, Saxon, and Sclavic auxiliaries. So the two armies lay for fifteen days. The river was deemed unfordable, yet Otilo as a matter of extraordinary precaution had drawn a strong rampart round his camp.

The fortnight passed amid the jeers of the threatened Bavarians. Possibly too there may have been some heart-searching in the tent of the Frankish Mayors, for near the close of that period there appeared in the camp the presbyter Sergius, a messenger from Pope Zacharias, professing to bring the papal interdict on the war and a command to leave the land of the Bavarians uninvaded. However, at the end of the fifteen days the Franks, who had found out a ford by which waggons were wont to pass, crossed the Lech by night, and with forces divided into two bands fell upon the camp of the Bavarians. The unexpected attack was completely victorious; the rampart apparently was not defended; the Bavarian host was cut to pieces, and Otilo himself with a few followers escaped with difficulty from the field and placed the river Inn between himself and his triumphant foe. Theobald the Alamannic duke, who must have been also present in the Bavarian camp, saved himself by flight. But the priest Sergius was

taken, and with Gauzebald, bishop of Ratisbon, was brought into the presence of the two princes. Thereupon Pippin with calm soul addressed the trembling legate. "Now we know, master Sergius, that you are not the holy apostle Peter, nor do you truly bear a commission from him. For you said to us yesterday that the Apostolic Lord, by St. Peter's authority and his own, forbade our enterprise against the Bavarians. And we then said to you that neither St. Peter nor the Apostolic Lord had given you any such commission. Now then you may observe that if St. Peter had not been aware of the justice of our claim he would not this day have given us his help in this battle. And be very sure that it is by the intercession of the blessed Peter the Prince of Apostles and by the just judgment of God that it is decreed that Bavaria and the Bavarians shall form part of the Empire of the Franks".

The invading army remained for fifty-two days in the conquered province. Otilo seems to have visited the Frankish court as a suppliant, and obtained at length (perhaps not till after the lapse of a year) the restoration of his ducal dignity, but with his dependence on the Frankish overlords more stringently asserted than before, and with a considerably diminished territory, almost all the land north of the Danube being shorn away from Bavaria and annexed to Austrasia. Otilo appears to have lived about five years after his restoration to his duchy, and to have died in 748, leaving an infant son Tassilo III, of whose fortunes much will have to be said in the following pages.

For the time, however, we are more concerned with the relation of Carloman and Pippin to Pope Zacharias; and this indeed is that which has made it necessary to tell with some detail the story of the Bavarian campaign. Priest Sergius said that he brought a message from the Pope forbidding the Frankish princes to make war on Bavaria. Is it certain that he had not in truth such a commission? He is spoken of by the annalist as the envoy of the Pope, and though after the battle of the Lech it might be convenient for the Pope and all belonging to him to acquiesce in the decision of St. Peter as manifested by the disaster to the Bavarian arms, it is by no means clear that Zacharias, both as a lover of peace desirous to stay the effusion of Christian blood and also as a special ally and patron of the lately Christianized Bavarian state, did not endeavour by spiritual weapons to repel the entrance of the Franks into that land. Late and doubtful as is the source from which the story of the mission of Sergius is drawn, it has a certain value as coinciding with other indications to make us believe that the Papacy still looked coldly on the Frankish power, that the remembrance of Charles Martel and his high-handed dealings with Church property was still bitter, and that we are yet in 743 a long way from that entire accord between Pope and Frankish sovereign which is the characteristic feature of the second half of the eighth century.

To the influence of one man, a countryman of our own, more than to any other cause was this momentous change in the relation of the two powers to be attributed. The amalgam between these most dissimilar metals, the mediator between these two once discordant rulers, was Boniface of Crediton, the virtual Metropolitan of North Germany. We have already seen how he consolidated the ecclesiastical organization of Bavaria, reducing it, as an old Proconsul of the Republic might have done, into the form of a province abjectly submissive to Rome. Thuringia and Hesse felt his forming hand. From Carloman, who was becoming more and more fascinated by his religious fervour, he obtained a grant of sixteen square miles of sylvan solitude in the modern territory of Hesse Cassel, where he founded the renowned monastery of Fulda, which he destined for the retreat of his old age. But not yet did he dream of retiring from his church-moulding labours. His influence was felt even in Neustria, and he might almost have been called at this time the Metropolitan of the whole Frankish realm.

Devoted as Boniface was to the cause of the Papacy, he shrank not from speaking unpalatable truths even to the Pope when he deemed that the cause of the good government of the Church required him to do so. In the collection of his letters there are some which

remarkably illustrate this freedom of speech on the part of the English missionary. In one, Boniface calls upon Zacharias to put down the ‘auguries, phylacteries and incantations’ detestable to all Christians, which were practised on New Year’s Day by the citizens of Rome, probably in order to obtain a knowledge of the events which should happen in the newly-opened year. Then again, after Boniface had prayed the Pope to grant the archiepiscopal *pallium* to the bishops of Rouen, Rheims and Sens, and Zacharias had agreed to the proposal and sent the coveted garments, Boniface seems to have changed his mind and limited his request to one only, on discovering or suspecting that the Papal curia was asking an exorbitant sum for each of the *pallia*. Even the gentle Zacharias was roused to wrath by what seemed to him the inconstancy and suspiciousness of his correspondent. “We have fallen”, he said, “into a certain maze and wonderment on the receipt of your letters, so discordant from those which you addressed to us last August. For in those you informed us that by the help of God and with the consent and attestation of Carloman you had held a council, had suspended from their sacred office the false priests who were not worthy to minister about holy things, and had ordained three archbishops, giving to each his own metropolis, namely to Grimo the city which is called Rodoma (Rouen), to Abel the city which is called Remi (Rheims) , and to Hartbert the city which is called Sennis (Sens). All which was at the same time conveyed to us by the letters of Carloman and Pippin in which you [all three] suggested to us that we ought to send three *pallia* to the before-mentioned prelates, and these we granted to them accordingly for the sake of the unity and reformation of the Churches of Christ. But now on receiving this last letter of yours we are, as we have said, greatly surprised to hear that you in conjunction with the aforesaid princes of Gaul have suggested one *pallium* instead of three, and that for Grimo alone. Pray let your Brotherhood inform us why you first asked for three and then for one, that we may be sure that we understand your meaning and that there may be no ambiguity in this matter. We find also in this letter of yours what has greatly disturbed our mind, that you hint such things concerning us as if we were corrupters of the canons, abrogators of the traditions of the fathers, and thus—perish the thought—were falling along with our clergy into the sin of simony, by compelling those to whom we grant the pallium to pay us money for the same. Now, dearest brother, we exhort your Holiness that your Brotherhood do not write anything of this kind to us again; since we find it both annoying and insulting that you should attribute to us an action which we detest with all our heart. Be it far from us and from our clergy that we should sell for a price the gift which we have received from the favour of the Holy Ghost. For as regards those three *pallia* which as we have said we granted at your request, no one has sought for any advantage from them. Moreover, the charters of confirmation, which according to custom are issued from our chancery, were granted of our mere good will, without our taking anything from the receivers. Never let such a crime as simony be imputed to us by your Brotherhood, for we anathematize all who dare to sell for a price the gift of the Holy Spirit”.

It would be of course a hopeless attempt to endeavour to ascertain the cause of this strange misunderstanding between two men who seem to have been both in earnest in their desire for the good government of the Church. Certainly the impression which we derive from the correspondence is that the Papal Curia was charging a fee for the bestowal of the pallium, and such an exorbitant fee that Boniface felt that he must limit his application to one, when in the interests of the Gaulish Church he would have desired to appoint three archbishops. It may perhaps be conjectured that the officials of the Curia were in this matter obeying only their own rapacious instincts and were acting without the knowledge of their chief, whose character, if we read it aright, was too gentle and unworldly to make him a strenuous master of such subordinates. It speaks well for the earnestness and magnanimity of both Pope and Bishop that the friendly relations between them do not appear to have been permanently disturbed. Even the letter just quoted concludes with these words : “You have asked if you were to have the

same right of free preaching in the province of Bavaria which was granted you by our predecessor. Yes, God helping us, we do not diminish but increase whatever was bestowed upon you by him. And not only as to Bavaria, but as to the whole province of the Gauls, so long as the Divine Majesty ordains that you shall live, do you by that office of preaching which we have laid upon you study in our stead to reform whatsoever you shall find to be done contrary to the canons and to the Christian religion, and bring the people into conformity with the law of righteousness”.

It will be seen how wide was the commission thus given to Boniface, covering in fact the whole Frankish realm. In conformity therewith we find him holding synods, not only in Austrasia under the presidency of Carloman, but also in Neustria under that of his brother; the object of both synods and of others held at Boniface’s instigation being the reform of the morals of the clergy, the eradication of the last offshoots of idolatry, the tightening of the reins of Church discipline. Churchmen were forbidden to bear arms or to accompany the army except in the capacity of chaplains. They were not to keep hawks or falcons, to hunt, or to roam about in the forests with their dogs. Severe punishments were ordained for clerical incontinence, especially for the not uncommon case of the seduction of a nun. A list of survivals of heathenism, rich in interest for the antiquary and the philologist, was appended to the proceedings of one of the synods, as well as a short catechism in the German tongue, containing the catechumen’s promise to renounce the devil and all his works, with Thunar, Woden and Saxnote and all the fiends of their company.

By all this reforming zeal Boniface made himself many enemies. Nothing but the powerful support of the Pope and the two Frankish Mayors probably saved him and his Anglo-Saxon companions (‘the strangers’ as they were invidiously called) from being hustled out of the realm by the Gaulish bishops, who for centuries had scarcely seen a synod assembled. However, with that support and strong in the goodness of his cause Boniface triumphed. At the synod of 745 Cologne was fixed upon as the metropolitan see of ‘the Pagan border-lands and the regions inhabited by the German nations’, and over this great archbishopric Boniface was chosen to preside. Two years later the metropolitan dignity was transferred to the more central and safer position of Mainz, Boniface still holding the supreme ecclesiastical dignity. In frequent correspondence with Zacharias and steadily supported by him, he deposed a predecessor in the see of Mainz who had in true old German fashion obeyed the law of the blood-feud by slaying the slayer of his father. He procured the condemnation of two bishops whom he accused of wild, but doubtless much exaggerated heresies. We read with regret that Boniface was not content with deposing these men from their offices in the Church, but insisted on invoking the help of the secular arm to ensure their life-long imprisonment.

While these events were taking place in the Church, other events in camps and battlefields were preparing the way for a change in the occupants of the palace, which took all the world by surprise. The two brothers Carloman and Pippin fought as before against the Saxons (745) and against the duke of Aquitaine (746), punishing the latter for his confederacy with Otilo of Bavaria. But against the restless and faith-breaking Alamanni Carloman fought alone, and here his impulsive nature, lacking the counterpoise of Pippin’s calmer temperament, urged him into a dreadful deed, and one which darkened the rest of his days. Something, we are not precisely told what, but apparently some fresh instance of treachery and instability on the part of the Alamanni, aroused his resentment, and he entered the Swabian territory with an army. He summoned a *placitum*, a meeting of the nation under arms, at Cannstadt on the Neckar. It is suggested that the avowed object of the *placitum* was a joint campaign against the Saxons, but this is only a conjecture. Apparently however the Alamanni came, suspecting nothing, to the place of meeting appointed by the Frankish ruler. Carloman adroitly stationed his army (doubtless much the more numerous of the two) so as to surround the Alamannic host,

and the latter thus found themselves helpless when some sort of signal was given for their capture. Some were taken prisoners, but many thousands, it is said, were slain. Theobald their chief and the nobles who had joined with him in making a league with Otilo were taken, and 'compassionately dealt with according to their several deservings'. Probably this means that there was a kind of judicial enquiry into their cases, and some may have escaped from the general massacre.

When he came to himself and reflected on what he had done, when he saw, it may be, how this unknighly deed, more worthy of the chamberlain of a Byzantine emperor than of a brave duke of the Franks, struck the minds of his brother warriors, Carloman was filled with remorse. This then was the end of all those conversations with Boniface, of all those aspirations after a better and holier life, which had upward drawn his soul. He, the friend of saints, the reformer of Churches, had done a deed which his rude barbarian forefathers, the worshippers of Thunor and Woden, would have blushed to sanction. There was then no possibility of salvation for him in this world of strife and turmoil. If he would win a heavenly crown he must lay down the Frankish mayoralty. "In this year Carloman laid open to his brother Pippin a thing upon which he had long been meditating, namely his desire to relinquish his secular conversation and to serve God in the habit of a monk. Wherefore postponing any expedition for that year in order that he might accomplish Carloman's wishes and arrange for his intended journey to Rome, Pippin gave his whole attention to this, that his brother should arrive honourably and with befitting retinue at the goal of his pilgrimage".

It was near the end of the year 747 when Carloman, with a long train of noble followers, set out for Italy. He visited on his road the celebrated monastery of St. Gall, the friend of Columbanus, which he enriched with valuable gifts. Having therefore probably descended into Italy by the pass of the Splügen, he proceeded at once to Rome, where he worshipped at the tomb of St. Peter, and again gave innumerable gifts to the sacred shrine, among them a silver bow weighing seventy pounds. The fair locks of the Frankish duke were clipped away; he assumed the tonsure and received the monastic habit from the hands of Pope Zacharias. From Rome he withdrew to the solitude of Mount Soracte, and there founded a monastery in honour of Pope Silvester, who was fabled to have sought this refuge from the persecution of the Emperor Constantine.

What visitor to Rome has not looked forth towards the north-western horizon to behold the shape, if once seen never to be forgotten, of Soracte? In winter sometimes, as Horace saw it, 'white with deep snow', in summer purple against the sunset sky, but always, (according to the well-known words of Byron), Soracte

'from out the plain

Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break

And on the curl hangs pausing.'

But though most travellers are content to behold it from afar, he who would visit Soracte will find himself well rewarded for the few hours spent on his pilgrimage. Leaving Rome by the railway to Florence, the modern equivalent of the Via Flaminia, after a journey of about forty miles he reaches a station from which a drive of five miles up towards the hills and out of the valley of the Tiber brings him to Civita Castellana, the representative of that ancient Etruscan city of Falerii which according to Livy's story was voluntarily surrendered to Camillus by the grateful parents whose sons had flogged their treacherous schoolmaster back from the camp to the city.

Aptly is this place called 'the castle-city', for it looks indeed like a natural fortress, standing on a high hill with the land round it intersected by deep rocky gorges, and these gorges lined with caves, the tombs of the vanished Etruscans. Soracte soars above in the near foreground, and thither the traveller repairs, driving for some time through the ilex-woods

which border its base, and then mounting upwards to the little town of St. Oreste—a corruption probably of Soracte—which nestles on a shoulder of the mountain. Here the carriage-road ends, but a good bridle-path leads to the convent of S. Silvestro on the highest point of the mountain. Ever as the traveller works his way upwards through the grateful shade of the ilex-woods, he is reminded of Byron's beautiful simile, and feels that he is indeed walking along the crest of a mighty earth-wave, spell-bound in the act of breaking. Here on the rocky summit of the mountain, 2,270 feet above the sea-level, stands the desolate edifice which, though for the most part less than four centuries old, still contains some of the building reared by Carloman in honour of Pope Silvester. Unhappily all the local traditions are concerned with this utterly mythical figure of the papal hermit. The rock on which Silvester lay down every night to sleep, the altar at which he said mass, the little garden in which his turnips grew miraculously in one night from seed to full-fed root, all these are shown, but there is no tradition connecting the little oratory with the far more interesting and historical figure of the Carolingian prince. But the landscape at least, which we see from this mountain solitude, must be the same that he gazed upon : immediately below us Civita Castellana with its towers and its ravines; eastward, on the other side of the valley of the Tiber, the grand forms of the Sabine mountains; on the west the Ciminian forest, the Lago Bracciano, and the faintly discerned rim of the sea; southward the wide plains of the Campagna and the Hollow Mountain which broods over Alba Longa.

Here, for some years apparently, Carloman abode in the monastery which he had founded. But even lonely Soracte was too near to the clamour and the flatteries of the world. The Frankish pilgrims visiting Rome would doubtless often turn aside and climb the mountain on which dwelt the son of the warrior Charles, himself so lately their ruler. Longing to be undisturbed in his monastic seclusion and fearing to be enticed back again into the world of courtly men, Carloman withdrew to the less accessible sanctuary of Monte Cassino. Of his life there we have only one description, and it reaches us from a somewhat questionable source, the Chronicle of Regino, who lived a hundred years after the death of Carloman; but as the chronicler tells us that he made up his history partly from the narration of old men his contemporaries, we may suffer him to paint for us at least a not impossible picture of the Benedictine life of the Frankish prince. According to this writer, Carloman fled at night from Soracte with one faithful follower, taking with him only a few necessary provisions, and reaching the sacred mountain knocked at the door of the convent and asked for an interview with its head. As soon as the abbot appeared he fell on the ground before him and said, "Father abbot! a homicide, a man guilty of all manner of crimes, seeks your compassion and would fain find here a place of repentance". Perceiving that he was a foreigner, the abbot asked him of his nation and his fatherland, to which he replied, "I am a Frank, and I have quitted my country on account of my crimes, but I heed not exile if only I may not miss of the heavenly father-land". Thereupon the abbot granted his prayer and received him and his comrade as novices into the convent, but mindful of the precept, "Try the spirits whether they are of God", laid upon them a specially severe discipline, inasmuch as they came from far and belonged to a barbarous race. All this Carloman bore with patience, and at the end of a year he was allowed to profess the rule of St. Benedict and to receive the habit of the order. Though beginning to be renowned among the brethren for his practice of every monastic virtue, he was not of course exempted from the usual drudgery of the convent, and once a week it fell to his lot to serve in the kitchen. Here, notwithstanding his willingness to help, his ignorance caused him to commit many blunders, and one day the head-cook, who was heated with wine, gave him a slap in the face, saying, "Is that the way in which you serve the brethren?". To which with meek face he only answered, "God pardon thee, my brother"; adding half-audibly, "and Carloman also". Twice this thing happened, and each time the drunken cook's blows were met by the same

gentle answer. But the third time, the faithful henchman, indignant at seeing his master thus insulted, snatched up the pestle with which they pounded the bread that had to be mixed with vegetables for the convent dinner, and with it struck the cook with all his force, saying, "Neither may God spare thee, caitiff slave, nor may Carloman pardon thee".

At this act of violence on the part of a stranger received out of compassion into the convent, the brethren were at once up in arms. The henchman was placed in custody, and next day was brought up for severe punishment. When asked why he had dared to lift up his hand against a serving-brother he replied, "Because I saw that vile slave not only taunt but even strike a man who is the best and noblest of all that I have ever known in this world". Such an answer only increased the wrath of the monks. "Who is this unknown stranger, whom you place before all other men, not even excepting the father abbot himself? ". Then he, unable longer to keep the secret which God had determined to reveal, said, "That man is Carloman, formerly ruler of the Franks, who for the love of Christ has left the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, and who from such magnificence has stooped so low that he is now not only upbraided but beaten by the vilest of men". At these words the monks all arose in terror from their seats, threw themselves at Carloman's feet and implored his pardon, professing their ignorance of his rank. He, not to be outdone in humility, cast himself on the ground before them, declared with tears that he was not Carloman, but a miserable sinner and homicide, and insisted that his henchman's statement was an idle tale trumped up to save himself from punishment. But it was all in vain. The truth would make itself manifest. He was recognized as the Frankish nobleman, and for all the rest of his sojourn in the convent he was treated with the utmost deference by the brethren.

It was in 747 that Carloman entered the convent. Two years later his example was followed by the Lombard king, but there is reason to think that in his case the abdication was not so voluntary an act as it was with Carloman. King Ratchis, we are told, 'with vehement indignation' marched against Perugia and the cities of the Pentapolis. Apparently these cities were not included in the strictly local truce which he had concluded for twenty years with the rulers of the *Ducatus Romae*. But Pope Zacharias, mindful of his previous successes in dealing with these impetuous Lombards, went as speedily as possible northwards with some of the chief men of his clergy. He found Ratchis besieging Perugia, but exhorted him so earnestly to abandon the siege that Ratchis retired from the untaken city. Nay, more, says the papal biographer (for it is his narrative that we are here following), Zacharias awakened in the king's mind such earnest care about the state of his soul, that after some days he laid aside his royal dignity, came with his wife and daughters to kneel at the tombs of the Apostles, received the tonsure from the Pope, and retired to the monastery of Cassino, where he ended his days.

This is the papal story of king Ratchis' abdication, but a study of the laws of his successor seems to confirm the statement (made it is true on no very good authority) that it was really the result of a revolution. This authority, the *Chronicon Benedictanum*, tells us that the queen of Ratchis, Tassia, was a Roman lady, and that under her influence Ratchis had broken down the old Lombard customs of *morgincap* and *met-fiu* (the money payments made on the betrothal and marriage of a Lombard damsel), and had given grants of land to Romans according to Roman law. All this may have made him unpopular with the stern old-world patriots among his Lombard subjects. But it is conjectured with some improbability that it was their king's retreat from the walls of untaken Perugia and his too easy compliance with the entreaties of Zacharias which at last snapped the straining bond of his subjects' loyalty.

Whatever the cause may have been, the fact is certain. The Lombard throne was declared to be empty, and Aistulf, brother of the displaced king, was invited to ascend it (July, 7491). There may not have been bloodshed, but there was almost certainly resistance on the part of the dethroned monarch, for the first section of the new king's laws, published soon after his

accession, provides that, 'As for those grants which were made by king Ratchis and his wife Tassia, all of these which bear date after the accession of Aistulf shall be of no validity unless confirmed by Aistulf himself.'

Thus these two men, lately powerful sovereigns, Carloman and Ratchis, are meeting in church and refectory in the high-built sanctuary of St. Benedict on Monte Cassino. We shall hereafter have to note the emergence of both from that seclusion, on two different occasions and with widely different motives.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANOINTING OF PIPPIN.

On the abdication of Carloman the stream of events in the Frankish state flowed on for a few years with little change. If there was any thought of Carloman's sons succeeding to their father's inheritance, such thought was soon abandoned. Pippin is seen both in Austrasia and Neustria ruling with unquestioned power, nor do we hear any hint of his being a regent on behalf of his nephews. The first act of his sole mayoralty was to release his half-brother Grifo from the captivity in which Carloman had kept him for six years. It proved to be an ill-judged act of mercy, for Grifo, embittered no doubt by his long imprisonment, still refused to acquiesce in his exclusion from sovereign power. It was true that Pippin gave him an honourable seat in his palace, with countships and large revenues. These failed however to soothe his angry spirit. He gathered many of the nobles to his banner, but, unable apparently to conquer any strongholds within the Frankish realm, he fled from the land, and accompanied by a band of young noblemen bent on adventure, he sought the country of the Saxons and the tribe of the Nordo-Squavi. These men were possibly descendants of those Swabians whose settlement in the country of the Saxons and wars with their predecessors returning from the conquest of Italy have been described in a previous volume. Pippin with his army pursued his brother into the Saxon territory. The two hosts encamped not far from the river Ocher in the duchy of Brunswick, but parted without a battle, the Saxons having apparently feared to trust the fortune of war against an adversary of superior strength. Grifo fled to Bavaria, the country of his mother Swanahild, where the opportune death of his cousin and brother-in-law, duke Otilo, seemed to open a convenient field for his ambitious designs. He was at first successful. His sister Hiltrudis and her child, the little duke Tassilo, fell into his hands. For a short time Grifo, who received help both from Bavaria and from Alamannic rebels against the Frankish supremacy, succeeded in establishing himself at Ratisbon, but soon had to meet the irresistible Frankish army. The Bavarian rebels retreated to the further bank of the Inn; Pippin prepared to cross it with his ships, and the Bavarians, affrighted, renounced the combat. Grifo was taken prisoner and was carried back into Frank-land. His long-suffering brother gave him the lordship of twelve Neustrian counties, with Le Mans for his capital; but all was in vain to win back that rebellious soul. In Aquitaine, in Italy, wherever there was an enemy of Pippin, there was Grifo's friend. We will anticipate the course of events by five years in order to end the story of this often-pardoned Pretender. In 753, when a storm was already brewing between Pippin and the Lombard king, Grifo essayed to pass over Mont Cenis into Italy to join his brother's foes. He was stopped at S. Jean de Maurienne by two noblemen loyal to Pippin, Theudo, count of Vienne, and Frederic, count of Transjurane Burgundy. The skirmish which followed seems to have been a desperate one; for all three leaders, both Grifo and the Burgundian counts, were slain. 'Whose death, though he was a traitor to his country, was a cause of grief to Pippin'.

In these central years of the eighth century, where the annals give us such scanty historical details, our fullest source of information as to the thoughts which were passing through the minds of the leaders of the people is furnished by the copious correspondence of the Saxon apostle Boniface. His letters to Pope Zacharias and that Pope's answers are especially interesting, and give us on the whole a favourable impression of the character of both men. They are no doubt, as we have already seen in the case of Aldebert and Clemens, too anxious to use the power of the state for the suppression of what they deem to be heresy,

and they may have been too confident in the correctness of their own faculty of distinguishing between divinely inspired truth and dangerous error. For instance, the theory advanced by Virgil, bishop of Salzburg, that there is another world beneath our feet, with inhabitants of its own and lighted by its own sun and moon, does not appear to us such a wicked, atheistic and soul-destroying doctrine as it appeared to Zacharias and Boniface. But in the main, the energies of Pope and Archbishop were directed in the right channel. They laboured together for the eradication of the superstitious, sometimes impure or cruel practices of Teutonic heathendom, for the maintenance of the sanctity of the Christian family, for the restoration of discipline and the elevation of the standard of morals among the nominally Christian Franks of Western Gaul. Throughout this period we are impressed by the moral superiority of both the Saxons and the Germans to the Gallo-Roman inhabitants of Neustria and Burgundy. The ‘transmarine Saxons’ (as our countrymen are called) and the dwellers by the Rhine and in Thuringia remained much longer stiff and stubborn in their idolatry than the Burgundians or the Salian Franks, but when they did embrace Christianity they submitted to its moral restraints more loyally and aspired after holiness of life more ardently than the inhabitants of those western regions into whose life there had entered not only the softness but something also of the corruptness of the old Roman civilization. It is true that this very same quality of whole-heartedness, as has been already pointed out, made the newly-converted nations much more enthusiastic champions than their Neustrian neighbours of the spiritual autocracy of Rome. The Anglo-Saxon missionary and his German disciples are the Ultramontanes of the eighth century, while even in the indiscipline of the Neustrian ecclesiastics we seem to perceive the germ of the famous Gallican liberties of a later age.

One of the perplexities which pressed most heavily on the conscience of Boniface, and on which he sought the advice both of the Pope and of his brother bishops in England, was the doubt how far he could without sacrifice of his principles exchange the ordinary courtesies of social life with the demoralized and (as he deemed them) heretical prelates of the Frankish court. ‘I swore,’ he says, ‘on the body of St. Peter to the venerable Pope Gregory II, when he sent me forth to preach the word of faith to the German nations, that I would help all true and regularly ordained bishops and presbyters in word and deed, and would abstain from the communion of false priests, hypocrites, and seducers of the people if I could not bring them back into the way of salvation. Now such men as these last do I find, when on account of the Church’s necessities I visit the court of the prince of the Franks. I cannot avoid such visits, for without the patronage of that prince I can neither govern the Church itself, nor defend the presbyters and clergy, the monks and the handmaidens of God; nor can I without his mandate and the terror of his name prohibit the rites of the pagans and the sacrilegious worship of idols which prevail in Germany. This being so, though I do not join with these men in the Holy Communion, and though I feel that I have in spirit fulfilled my vow, since my soul has not entered into their counsel, yet I have not been able to abstain from bodily contact with them. Thus on the one side I am pressed by the obligations of my oath, and on the other by the thought of the loss which will be sustained by my people if I should not visit the prince of the Franks.’

In answer to this case of conscience the bishop of Winchester reminded Boniface of the words of St. Paul, ‘for then must we needs go out of the world’; and Zacharias assured him that for his conversations with these men, if he was not a sharer in their iniquity, he incurred no blame in the sight of God. If they hearkened to his voice and obeyed his preaching they would be saved, but if they continued in their sin they would perish, while he himself, according to the words of the prophet Ezekiel, would have delivered his own soul.

We obtain a glimpse of the kind of men, ecclesiastical courtiers of Pippin, with whom the zealous Boniface shrank from holding communion, when we read the story of Milo, archbishop

of Rheims and of Trier. Son and nephew of bishops, but of bishops who had held also the dignities of duke and of count, and himself brother of a count, this man was an eminent example of that tendency to make the high places of the Church hereditary and to bestow them on members of the nobility, which was also noticeable in the Gaul of Sidonius and of Gregory of Tours. As a soldier he had shared the campaigns of Charles Martel, who, in jovial mood probably, tossed to his battle-comrade the mitre of Rheims. 'An ecclesiastic only in the tonsure' as the scandalized chronicler described him, he soon laid violent hands on the adjacent diocese of Trier. Both provinces seem to have groaned under his yoke, but we are specially told of the diocese of Rheims that he left many of the suffragan bishoprics vacant, handed over the episcopal residences to laymen, and turned the regions under his sway into a sort of ecclesiastical No-man's-land into which flocked all the 'criminous clerks' who fled from the jurisdiction of their own bishops, and there with disorderly monks and nuns lived a life of licence and utter defiance of the Church's discipline. In order to remedy these disorders, Boniface procured the consecration of his countryman Abel as Archbishop of Rheims, and, as we have already seen, obtained for him from the Pope the grant of the coveted pallium. But Pope and apostle alike seem to have been powerless against the stout soldier and court-favourite Milo. The meek stranger Abel soon vanishes from the scene. Milo retains possession not only of one but of both metropolitan sees, and at last, 'after forty years' tyrannical invasion of the Church' (says the chronicler), he meets his death in the forest, not like his great namesake Milo of Crotona in a vain display of his mighty strength, but from the tusks of a wild boar which he has been chasing. The contrast of the lives of the two men, Milo and Boniface, brings forcibly before us the nature of the work which had to be done in demoralized Neustria, and which was at length accomplished by the united exertions of Austrasia and of Rome.

In one of Boniface's letters to the Pope he alludes to 'certain secrets of my own which I, the bearer of this letter' (the friend and eventually the successor of Boniface) 'will communicate *viva voce* to your Piety.' In this mysterious sentence some commentators have seen an allusion to the approaching revolution in the Frankish kingdom. The conjecture is plausible; the time fits, for the letter must have been written in the autumn of 751, but it is after all nothing but a conjecture. It is, however, probable enough that during the years 749 to 751, of which little is heard in the chronicles, Pippin was preparing the minds of his subjects, and especially of the great churchmen of his court, for the momentous change which was approaching.

That change will be best told in the simple words of the monkish chronicler who wrote the *Annales Laurissenses Minores*.

'In the year 750 of the Lord's incarnation Pippin sent ambassadors to Rome to Pope Zacharias, to ask concerning the kings of the Franks who were of the royal line and were called kings, but had no power in the kingdom, save only that charters and privileges were drawn up in their names, but they had absolutely no kingly power, but did whatever the *Major Domus* of the Franks desired. But on the [first] day of March in the Campus [Martius], according to ancient custom gifts were offered to these kings by the people, and the king himself sat in the royal seat with the army standing round him and the *Major Domus* in his presence, and he commanded on that day whatever was decreed by the Franks, but on all other days thenceforward he sat [quietly] at home. Pope Zacharias therefore in the exercise of his apostolical authority replied to their question that it seemed to him better and more expedient that the man who held power in the kingdom should be called king and be king, rather than he who falsely bore that name. Therefore the aforesaid Pope commanded the king and people of the Franks that Pippin who was using royal power should be called king, and should be settled in the royal seat. Which was therefore done by the anointing of the holy archbishop Boniface in

the city of Soissons : Pippin is proclaimed king, and Childeric, who was falsely called king, is tonsured and sent into a monastery’.

The kindred chronicle, which is called simply *Annales Laurissenses*, with fewer words gives us some more particulars :—

‘Burchard, bishop of Wurzburg, and Folrad the chaplain were sent to Pope Zacharias to ask concerning the kings in Frank-land who at that time had no royal power, whether this were good or no. And Pope Zacharias commanded Pippin that it would be better that he should be called king who had the power, rather than he who was remaining without any royal power. That order might not be disturbed, by his apostolic authority he ordered that Pippin should be made king.’

‘Pippin, according to the manner of the Franks, was elected king, and anointed by the hand of archbishop Boniface of holy memory, and he was raised to the kingdom by the Franks in the city of Soissons. But Hilderic, who was falsely called king, was tonsured and sent into a monastery.’

One more entry, this time from the Continuer of Fredegarius, completes the contemporary or nearly contemporary accounts of the great transaction :—

‘At which time, by the advice and with the consent of all the Franks, a report was sent to the Apostolic See, and on the receipt of authority [from thence] the lofty Pippin, by the election of the whole Frankish nation into the seat of royalty, with consecration of the bishops and submission of the nobles, together with his queen Bertrada (as the order from of old requires), is raised on high in the kingdom.’

Thus then was the revolution, towards which the whole course of Frankish history had been tending for more than a century, at last consummated. The phantasm disappeared and the reality was hailed by its true name. The unfortunate Childeric, upon whom came the punishment for all the wasted lives of so many licentious Merovingian ancestors, had to end his days in the dreary solitude of his cell. But yesterday the deeds and charters which counted the years from his accession styled him ‘*gloriosus dominus noster Hildericus*’; now he is simply known by some monastic name, brother Martin it may be or brother Felix, in the monastery of St. Medard at Soissons. His wife, according to some accounts, and in the following year his son, were each compelled into the same monastic seclusion. The race of Clovis and Meroveus, the descendants of the sea-monster, disappear from history. Yet who knows? The Merovingian blood may have filtered down into the lowest strata of society. Among the fishwives who dragged Louis XVI in triumph back to Paris from Versailles, among the unwashed rabble who haunted the galleries of the Convention and shouted for the death of that innocent victim, there may have been some men and women who, if they had known the names of their progenitors, might have claimed descent from Dagobert and Chlotchar.

Turning away then from the grave of the Merovingian monarchy, let us contemplate the new monarchy which is installed in the person of the descendant of the sainted Arnulf. We observe that Pippin is ‘exalted into the kingdom, according to the ancient manner of the Franks’. We also observe that there is a distinct statement that he was ‘elected’ to his new dignity. We may therefore assert that on this occasion, in the utter failure and decay of the hereditary principle, there was a reversion to the old Teutonic principle of elective royalty, and we may probably infer that, as the outward and visible sign of that election, Pippin was raised on a buckler amid the acclamations of the assembled warriors of his people, even as Alaric and Clovis had been raised in earlier centuries. It is to be noticed also that the ceremony took place at Soissons, a place which was not a royal residence, and which had not been frequently heard of in the later Merovingian time, but which, on account of its memories of Clovis and Syagrius, was evidently looked upon as one of the holy places of the Frankish monarchy.

Far more important, however, for practical purposes than these sentimental reversion to the old Teutonic usages and associations was the emphatic sanction given by the Roman Church to the new order of things. It may be that the thought of a mission to Rome to enquire of Pope Zacharias was in the first place only an expedient for the quieting of troubled consciences, whether of Pippin himself or of some of his subjects, as to this step, which looked like a breach of trust on the part of the legitimate king's Prime Minister. Thus looked at, the embassy of one Austrasian and one Neustrian ecclesiastic to Rome—Burchardt, bishop of Wurzburg, and Folrad, abbot of S. Denis and private chaplain to the king—may have been somewhat like those embassies which used to be sent to the oracle of Apollo at Delphi when one of the Grecian states was about to enter upon a course of action which strained the obligations of political morality. But with whatever notions undertaken, there can be no doubt that the appeal to Rome on such a subject and at such a crisis of the nation's history enormously increased the authority of St. Peter's representative with the Frankish nation. We have only to look at the language of the chroniclers to see for how much the papal sanction counted in the establishment of the new dynasty. 'The Pope commanded the king and people of the Franks that Pippin should be called king'; 'Pope Zacharias, . . . that order should not be disturbed by his apostolic authority, commanded that Pippin should become king'; 'According to the sanction of the Roman pontiff, Pippin was called king of the Franks'; and so on. The tone of the chroniclers seems to be that of men who are describing an event as to the moral colour of which they are not themselves fully satisfied, but they quiet their consciences with the reflection that it must after all have been right because it was sanctioned by the authority of the head of Western Christendom.

To emphasise this fact of the papal consent to the great revolution the chief actor in the religious part of the ceremony was Boniface, of whose untiring devotion to the Roman see so many examples have been given in the preceding pages. True, the other bishops were present, possibly some of them, especially some of the Neustrian bishops, scowling at this officious Saxon who dared to oust the successor of Remigius from his rights and to take the foremost place in their own historical sanctuary of Soissons. But of any such growlings of discontent we have no historic evidence. The fact emphasized by chroniclers and most needlessly questioned by some modern historical sceptics was that Boniface, archbishop and soon to be martyr, performed the solemn ceremony of anointing, probably also the ceremony of crowning, for the new king of the Franks.

By long habit we are so accustomed to the sound of the words 'an anointed king' that we hardly realize its full significance in the case before us. Speaking broadly, it may be said that to pour oil upon the head of the ruler and to anoint therewith his hands and his feet is not a Teutonic, nor even an Aryan, but essentially a Semitic rite. No German *thiudans*, no Greek or Roman *basileus* or *rex*, as far as we know, was ever anointed. The rite comes from the burning East, from that Hebrew people who named 'corn and wine and oil' as the three great voices with which the earth praised Jehovah. 'I have found David My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him,' was the verse of the Psalms which was doubtless present to the mind of Boniface when he poured the consecrated oil upon the bowed head of the Frankish king. The Eastern emperors, though Christian, had not taken over this ceremony from Judaism. Late in the day, probably about the middle of the seventh century, it had been adopted by the Visigothic kings of Spain. In our own country it seems probable that the petty kings of Wales were anointed, before their Saxon rivals submitted to the rite. However this may be, it is clear that in imitation of Samuel and Zadok the Christian ecclesiastics of the eighth century were now magnifying their office by pouring the oil of consecration on the head that was about to receive a kingly crown. Possibly, as a German scholar suggests, the religious sanction which the Christian Church thus gave to the new dynasty was meant to compensate for the lost

glamour of a descent from the gods of Walhalla to which the posterity of St. Arnulf could with no consistency lay claim.

Thus then the elevation of Pippin to the Frankish throne, dictated as it was by the inexorable logic of fact, and heartily acquiesced in by the nation, received the solemn sanction of the great Patriarch of Western Christendom. Such favours are not usually given by ecclesiastics gratuitously. The immediate result of the ceremony at Soissons was undoubtedly the consolidation of the power of Boniface as representing the Pope in Neustria and Burgundy. We may be sure that 'the Gallican liberties' (which in this century meant the Gallican anarchy) suffered a new constraint from the day when Pippin felt the anointing hand of the Apostle of Germany. But the king himself also, by invoking the aid of the bishop of Rome, had incurred an obligation which brought him, and that right speedily, into the troubled zone of Italian politics.

CHAPTER VII

THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE.

It is one of the commonplaces of history, that in considering the causes which have produced any given event, we have often to deal not only with that which is True and can be proved, but also with that which though False is yet believed. The undoubted fable of the descent of the founders of Rome from the defenders of Troy distinctly influenced the policy of the Republic both in Greece and Asia. Some effect on Jewish history was produced by the story of Judas Maccabeus' treaty with Rome engraved on a tablet of brass. The shadowy and almost fabulous claim of the Saxon kings to lordship over Scotland suggested the wars of Edward the First with the northern kingdom. The so-called 'Will of Peter the Great'—almost certainly spurious—has been a mighty rallying-cry both to friends and foes of the extension of the dominion of the Tsars in Europe and Asia. But there is no need to multiply instances, when the one eminent instance of the fable of the greased cartridges as a plot against the religion of the Sepoy, a fable which so nearly lost us India, is present to the memory of us all.

Just such a fable was working powerfully on the minds of men, at any rate of Roman citizens and ecclesiastics, in the middle of the eighth century; a fable which dealt with the acts and deeds of the great Emperor Constantine and of his contemporary Pope Silvester. Though the body of the Caesar had been for more than four centuries mouldering in its vault in the great church of the Holy Apostles at Constantinople, and though sixty pontiffs had sat in the patriarchal chair of the Lateran since Silvester was carried to his grave, it may be safely said that these two men, or rather not these two men but a mythical Constantine and a mythical Silvester, were then exerting as great an influence as any living Emperor or Pope on the politics of Europe.

In fewest possible words let us recall the events in the life of the historic Emperor *Constantine the Great*. Born about the year 274, the son of an emperor who though a heathen was conspicuously favourable to the Christians, he was acclaimed as Caesar by the soldiers of his deceased father at Eburacum in the year 306. For eighteen years he was engaged more or less continuously in struggles with other wearers of the Imperial diadem. Maximian, Maxentius, Licinius fell before him, until at last, in 324, he emerged from a series of deadly civil wars, sole ruler of the Roman world. At each step of his upward progress some burden was taken off the Christian Church, which from the beginning of his career recognized in him its patron and protector. In the year 313, in concert with his partner in the empire, Licinius, he issued the celebrated Edict of Milan which secured full toleration to the Christians. His own personal relation to the new faith, at least during the middle years of his life, is somewhat obscure. In spite of the story of the miraculous Labarum affixed to his standards in his campaign against Maxentius (312) he appears for some years to have professed, or at all events practised, a kind of eclectic theism, seeking to combine a reverence for Christ with some remains of the paganism which had been hitherto the official religion of the Roman state. But always even during this transition period he took a kindly and intelligent interest in the affairs of the Christian Church, labouring especially for the preservation of its internal harmony. Thus his famous presidency at the council of Nicaea (325) was entirely in keeping with his previous attitude towards the Church ever since he had assumed the diadem. Within three or four years after that celebrated event he wrought his other even more world-famous work, the foundation of the city of Constantinople. Still, though more and more showing himself as the patron of

Christianity and making it now not only a permitted but a dominant, almost a persecuting form of faith, he himself postponed for a long while his formal reception into the Christian Church. This took place at last at his villa of Ancyrona in Bithynia, where in the spring of 337 Eusebius the Arian bishop of Nicaea administered to him the rite of Christian baptism, which in a few days was followed by his death.

Contemporary with Constantine during the greater part of his reign was Silvester, who held the office of bishop of Rome from 314 to 335. He was a man apparently of no great force of character, who probably ruled his diocese well (since we hear of no complaints or disputes during his long episcopate), and who was excused on the score of age from attending at the council of Nicaea, at which he was represented by two presbyters. It seems probable that Silvester was the Pope who received from Constantine the gift of the Lateran Palace in the south-east of Rome, with a large and doubtless valuable plot of ground adjoining it, on which the Emperor may have built the great basilica which bears the proud title, 'Omnium ecclesiarum in orbe sedes et caput'. It is quite possible that other estates in the city and in the Italian provinces may have been bestowed upon the Roman see during the papacy of Silvester by the first Christian emperor, who was undoubtedly a generous giver to the Churches throughout his empire.

Such in outline are the figures of the historic Constantine and the historic Silvester. Now let us see how they are drawn and coloured by the legends of later and barbarous centuries.

The *Vita Silvestri*, a book written probably about the year 500, that is to say nearly two centuries after Silvester's pontificate, describes in the usual style of religious biography the youthful virtues of its hero, his hospitality, his courageously manifested sympathy with Timotheus, a martyr during the persecution of Diocletian, his ordination as deacon and as priest, and his involuntary elevation to the papacy on the death of Miltiades (314). It then goes on to relate some of the marvellous works performed by the new Pope, chief among them the chaining up of a certain noisome dragon which by its baleful breath poisoned the whole city, dwelling as it did in a subterranean cave under the Tarpeian rock, reached by a staircase of three hundred and sixty-five steps. After this event a cruel persecution of the Christians is said to have been set on foot by the Emperor Constantine. Silvester, bowing his head to the storm, departed from Rome and took refuge in a cave on Mount 'Syraption', which later transmitters of the story have identified with Soracte. While he was still in hiding, the Emperor Constantine, as a punishment for his cruelties towards the Christians, was afflicted with a grievous leprosy. The physicians were unable to cure him, and he sought the aid of the priest of the Capitol, who assured him that he could only be healed by bathing in a laver filled with the blood of newly-born infants. A multitude of sucklings from all parts of the empire were collected for the ghastly purification, but with the babes came of course then mothers, who rent the air with such piteous cries that Constantine, moved with pity, countermanded the massacre, declaring that he would rather continue to suffer from his disease than purchase health at the cost of so great sorrow. That night in a dream two venerable figures appeared to him, and as a reward for his forbearance told him that if he would send for Silvester he should by his means be healed of his malady. Messengers were accordingly sent to Soracte, who brought Silvester into the presence of the Emperor. Two pictures were exhibited by the Pope, and Constantine at once recognized in them the likenesses of the personages who appeared to him in his dream.

'What are the names of these gods,' says the Emperor, 'that I may worship them?'

'They are no gods,' replies the Pope, 'but the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, servants of the living God and of His Son Jesus Christ': and thereupon he expounds to him the rudiments of Christianity. Constantine expresses his willingness to receive baptism; they journey to Rome, and the rite is administered in a porphyry vase in the Lateran. At the moment of immersion a bright light dazzles his eyes and the eyes of the beholders. He rises from the

lustral waters cured of the plague of leprosy. Constantine then proceeds to issue various edicts on behalf of his new faith. Christ is to be adored throughout his Empire; the blasphemers of His name are to be severely punished; the churches are to be inviolable places of refuge; new churches are to be built out of the proceeds of tithes levied on the imperial domains; the bishops of the whole Empire are to be subject to the Pope, even as the civil magistrates are subject to the Emperor. Constantine himself repairs to the Vatican hill and begins to dig the foundations of the new church of St. Peter. Next day he commences a similar work at the Lateran. He convenes a great assembly of the senate and people of Rome in the *Basilica Ulpiana*, announces his own conversion in the presence of the senators (who for the most part adhere absolutely to their old idolatry), but declares that faith shall be free and that no one shall be forced to become Christian against his will. At this point, however, he receives a letter from his mother, the widowed Empress Helena, residing in Bithynia, who while congratulating him on having renounced the worship of idols, implores him to adopt, not Christianity, but the only true religion, Judaism. Hereupon a disputation is held as to the merits of the two religions, between the Pope on one side and twelve Rabbis on the other. After argument is exhausted, recourse is had to the test of miracles. A bull is brought in, and the Rabbi who champions the faith of Moses whispers in its ear the mysterious Name revealed on Sinai. The bull falls dead, and all the bystanders feel that the Jew has triumphed; but then Silvester draws near and whispers in the creature's ear the name of Christ, whereupon the bull comes to life again and stands upright on its feet. Then the Christian cause is admitted to have triumphed. Constantine sets off for the East to found Constantinople, and Helena repairs to Jerusalem where she discovers the Holy Cross.

Such is the *farrago* of nonsensical romance which, at the period that we have now reached, passed generally current as the true history of the baptism of the first Christian emperor. There is no need to point out how utterly at every turn the story contradicts the undoubted facts of history. The marvellous thing is that these facts had been fully and correctly stated by authors of high repute in the Church, such as Eusebius and Jerome, and the slightest acquaintance with their works must have shown any Roman ecclesiastic that it was impossible that the story told in the *Gesta Silvestri* could be true. When and where it originated can only be a matter of conjecture. Abbé Duchesne, the learned and impartial editor of the *Liber Pontificalis* (into which, strange as it may appear, this extravagant fiction has made its way), thinks that it probably had its origin in the Church of Armenia. Dollinger, without expressing a decided opinion on this point, agrees with Duchesne in the conclusion which has been already stated that the fable obtained credence in Rome about the end of the fifth century, at which time it is alluded to in some of the treatises called forth by the trial of Pope Symmachus. From the decision of such experts as these there can be no appeal; but it is certainly difficult to understand how such a wild travesty of the facts could have been believed little more than a century after the death of the son of Constantine; and it is also hard to reconcile the existence of the story in the year 500 with the entire silence respecting it which we find in all the writings of Gregory the Great, yet a hundred years later. Remembering how large a part of his papal life was occupied in controversy with the Patriarch of Constantinople or respectful opposition to his master the Emperor, we find it difficult to understand why there should never be an allusion to a story which, if it had been true, would have so greatly enhanced the glory of the see of Rome at the expense of the see of Constantinople. Possibly the difficulty may be explained by Abbé Duchesne's suggestion that the currency of the story and even the authority of the *Liber Pontificalis* were at this time confined to the less educated portion of the Roman clergy and laity, and that scholars and statesmen, such as Gregory I, did not confute, because they too utterly despised them.

However, preposterous as this story of the conversion of Constantine might be, by frequent repetition through barbarous and ignorant ages it succeeded in getting itself accepted as truth. Even at this day not only the unlettered peasant from the Campagna, but many of the better educated foreign visitors to Rome, who enter the interesting fortress-church of the *Quattro Incoronati*, between the Colosseum and the Lateran, little know what an audacious travesty of history is represented in the quaint frescoes on its walls. They see the unhappy Emperor covered with the spots of leprosy, the glad mothers with their babes restored, the two Apostles appearing to the dreaming sovereign, the gay horsemen seeking Pope Silvester in his cave, the recognition of St. Peter and St. Paul, Constantine standing in the regenerating waters, Constantine kneeling before the Pope and offering him a diadem, Constantine leading Silvester's horse into Rome and walking groomlike by his stirrup : they see all this, and imagine that they are looking on a representation, quaint indeed but not impossible, of events that actually occurred, nor do they grasp the fact that they are looking on a great pictured falsehood, the memory of which and the consequences of which, perturbing all the relations of the Christian Church and the civil ruler, dividing Guelf from Ghibelin and Swabian from Angevin, prolonged for centuries the agony of Italy.

A fiction like that of the Roman baptism of Constantine once taken home into the minds of the people soon gathers round it other fictions. Thus it came to pass that at some uncertain time in the eighth century there was brought to birth the yet more monstrous fiction of *The Donation of Constantine*. The document which purports to contain this donation is of portentous length, containing about five thousand words, and there are in it many repetitions which suggest the idea that its fabricator has added one or two codicils to his original draft, as points occurred to him on which a fuller explanation might be expedient. I extract a few of the more important sentences.

'In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Emperor Caesar Flavius Constantinus, . . . faithful, gentle, mightiest, beneficent, conqueror of the Goths, of the Sarmatians, of the Germans, of the Britons and of the Huns (!), pious, fortunate, conqueror and triumpher, ever Augustus, to the most holy and blessed Father of Fathers, Silvester, bishop of Rome and Pope, and to all his successors in the seat of St. Peter to the end of the world... and to all the most reverend.. .Catholic bishops in the whole world who are by this our imperial decree made subject to the same Holy Roman Church,... Grace, peace, charity, joy, long-suffering and compassion from God the Father Almighty, and from Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with all of you.'

After a long exposition of his new creed and a repetition of the story of the leprosy, the vision, the baptism and miraculous cure, the Emperor continues:—

'Therefore we, along with all our Satraps (!) and the whole Senate, Nobles and People subject to the Roman Church, have thought it desirable that even as St. Peter is on earth the appointed Vicar of God, so also the Pontiffs his vicegerents should receive from us and from our empire power and principality greater than belongs to our earthly empire. For we choose the same Prince of the Apostles and his vicars to be our patrons before God, and we decree that even like unto our own earthly imperial power so shall the sacro-sanct Church of Rome be honoured and venerated, and that higher than our terrestrial throne shall the most sacred seat of St. Peter be gloriously exalted.

'Let him who for the time presides over the holy Church of Rome have supremacy over the four sees of Alexandria, of Antioch, of Jerusalem, and of Constantinople, and let him be sovereign of all the priests in the whole world, and by his judgment let all things which pertain to the worship of God or the faith of Christians be regulated.

'We wish all nations in the whole world to be informed that we have within our Lateran palace reared from its foundations a church to our Saviour and Lord God, Jesus Christ; and

know ye that we have from the foundations thereof borne on our own shoulders twelve baskets-full of earth according to the number of the twelve Apostles. Which most holy church we decree shall be called the head and summit of all churches in the whole world, and shall be venerated and proclaimed as such, even as we have ordained in other our imperial decrees. We have also built churches for the blessed Peter and Paul, chiefs of the Apostles, enriching them with gold and silver, and have laid their most sacred bodies therein with great reverence, making for them coffins of amber (which is surpassed in strength by none of the elements), and on each of these coffins we have placed a cross of purest gold and most precious gems, fastening them thereto with golden nails.

‘On these churches, for the maintenance of the lights burned in them, we have bestowed sundry farm- properties, and have enriched them with divers estates both in the East and the West, in the North and the South, namely in Judaea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa and Italy, as well as in divers islands. All these are to be administered by the hands of our most blessed father Silvester, *Summus Pontifex*, and his successors. ----

‘We grant to the said Silvester and his successors the imperial palace of the Lateran, and also the diadem or crown, and the *Phrygium* : moreover the *superhumerales* or necklace which is wont to surround our imperial neck : the purple mantle also and scarlet tunic and all the imperial trappings, as well as the dignity of the imperial mounted guards. We bestow upon him also the imperial sceptre, with all standards and banners and similar imperial ornaments, and in short the whole array of our imperial dignity and the glory of our power.

‘To the men of a different rank, namely the most reverend clergy of the Roman Church, we grant the same height of dignity wherewith our most illustrious Senate is adorned, namely that they be made patricians and consuls, and we announce that they shall be adorned with other imperial dignities.

‘And as our own civil service hath its special decorations, so we decree that the clergy of the holy Roman Church shall be adorned: and that the said Church be ministered unto by janitors and chamberlains, such as those who wait upon us, the Emperor. And that the pontifical splendour may shine forth as brilliantly as possible, we decree that the clergy of the Roman Church ride on horses adorned with saddle-cloths and trappings of the purest white : and like our senators, let them wear udones or white shoes : and thus let the heavenly ranks, like the earthly ranks, be adorned for the greater glory of God.

‘The blessed Silvester and his successors shall have the power of enrolling whom they will in the number of the clergy, none presuming to say that they have acted arrogantly herein.

‘We have already decreed that he and his successors should wear a diadem such as ours of purest gold and precious stones. But the most blessed Pope would not consent to use a golden crown besides the crown of clerisy which he wears to the glory of the most blessed Peter. We have however with our own hands placed on his most holy head a tiara of dazzling whiteness, symbolizing the resurrection of our Lord; and holding the bridle of his horse we have performed for him the duties of a groom out of our reverence for the blessed Peter; ordaining that his successors shall use the same tiara in processions, in imitation of our imperial style.’

The reader who has had the patience to proceed thus far may very likely think that though the document is tedious, sometimes inconsistent with itself, and instinct with all an ecclesiastic’s love for goodly raiment, there is nothing which need have made the Donation of Constantine, whether true or false, a landmark in the history of Italy. The important paragraph is that which follows, and which, as every word is here of weight, shall be translated literally :—

‘Wherefore, that the pontifical crown may not grow too cheap, but may be adorned with glory and influence even beyond the dignity of the earthly empire, lo! we hand over and

relinquish our palace, the city of Rome, and all the provinces, places and cities of Italy and [or] the western regions, to the most blessed Pontiff and universal Pope, Silvester; and we ordain by our pragmatic constitution that they shall be governed by him and his successors, and we grant that they shall remain under the authority of the holy Roman Church.

‘Wherefore we have thought it fitting that our empire and our royal power be transferred to the Eastern regions, and that a city bearing our name be built in an excellent place in the province of Byzantia, and that there our empire be founded, since where the sovereign of priests and the head of the Christian religion has been placed by the Heavenly Emperor, it is not fitting that there the earthly emperor should also bear sway.’

The document ends with solemn injunctions to all future Emperors, to all nobles, ‘satraps’, and senators, to keep this grant for ever inviolate. Anathemas are uttered on any one who shall dare to infringe it; and hell-fire is invoked for his destruction. As the fabricator of the document must have known that he was, on the most favourable construction of his conduct, writing a mere ecclesiastical romance, these references to eternal punishment should not have been included. The document is laid on the body of the blessed Peter as a pledge to the Apostle that Constantine on his part will keep it ever inviolable.

It bears date on the third day before the Kalends of April (30th of March), Constantine being for the fourth time consul, with Gallicanus for his colleague. No such consulship exists in the *Fasti*. The Emperor was for the fourth time consul in 315, with his brother-in-law and co-Emperor Licinius for his colleague. The consulship of Gallicanus was in 330, five years after the council of Nicaea, and the Emperor Constantine was not his colleague.

A few words must be said as to the place and time wherein this extraordinary fiction had its birth. An attempt has been made to cast off upon some Greek ecclesiastic the responsibility for its authorship, but this attempt is now generally admitted to have failed. It undoubtedly springs from Rome, probably from the papal chancery in Rome. The earnestness with which the writer exerts himself to secure for the Roman clergy the use of *mappulae et linteamina* makes it probable that he was one of the favoured persons who had the right to perambulate the streets of ruined Rome on a steed covered with a horsecloth of dazzling whiteness. The general similarity of style to some of the eighth-century lives in the *Liber Pontificalis* suggests the thought that the author of the Donation may have been one of the scribes who in the pages of that compilation denounced the ‘most unutterable’ Aistulf or celebrated the mildness of the ‘quasi-angelic’ Stephen.

For, to come to the question of date, there is not its date, much doubt that this document belongs to the middle or possibly the later half of the eighth century. It is already included in the so-called Decretals of Isidore, published about 840, and in the collection of *Formulae* of S. Denis of about the same period. But we may probably trace it to an earlier date than this; for it is almost certain that Pope Hadrian alludes to this document in a letter which he wrote to Charles the Great in 772, and there is some force in Dollinger’s argument that a document of this kind would not have been fabricated after 774, when the Frankish king showed his determination to found a kingdom for himself on the ruins of the Lombard monarchy. There is therefore much to be said for the view that the Donation was fabricated shortly before the year 754. But on this subject there may probably for some time be considerable variation of opinion, as one theory after another is advanced by scholars to account for the original concoction of a document so wildly at variance with historical fact.

With any more detailed discussion on this point I do not think it necessary to trouble my readers. Nor do I feel myself bound even to speak of it as a forgery, much less to impute complicity with the forgery to any one of the Popes who cross the stage of my history. In an absolutely ignorant and uncritical age many a fiction passes for fact without deliberate and conscious imposture on the part of any single individual. There were doubtless romancers and

story-tellers after their dull fashion in that eighth century as in our own, for the human imagination has never been lulled into absolute torpor. What if some clerk in the papal chancery amused his leisure by composing, in a style not always unskilfully imitated from that of Justinian or Theodosius, an edict which the first Christian Emperor might have published on the morrow of that Roman baptism which, though itself imaginary, was then firmly believed to be real? What if this paper, recognized at the time by all who knew its author as a mere romance, was left in the papal archives and (it may be years after the death of its author) was found by some zealous *exceptor* eager for material wherewith to confute the Lombard or convince the Frank? In some such way as this it is surely possible that, without any deliberate act of fraud on any one's part, the lie may have got itself recognized as truth.

Into the after-history of this fabrication I must not now enter minutely, though there is something almost fascinating in the subject, and indeed the story of the Donation of Constantine fully told would almost be the history of the Middle Ages. It was hidden, as it were, for a time under a bushel, and was not made so much use of by the Popes of the ninth and tenth centuries as we should have expected. But towards the end of the eleventh century we find it put in the forefront of the battle by the advocates of Hildebrand's world-ruling papal theocracy. Under Innocent III, Gregory IX, Boniface VIII, it is constantly appealed to in support of their pretensions to rule as feudal suzerains over Italy, over the Holy Roman Empire, over the world. For three centuries after this, the canonists take the Donation as the basis of their airy edifices, some expanding, some restricting its purport, but none of them apparently entertaining any suspicion of the genuineness of the document itself.

So long-lived and so mighty is Falsehood. Like the Genie in the Arabian Nights, this story of an imperial abdication in favour of the Pope, which had crept out of that dark *scriptorium* in the Lateran palace grew and swelled and overshadowed all Europe. Then came a scholar of the Renaissance and uttered a few words of caustic doubt, and the Genie shrank back into the bottle and was hurled into the depths of the sea, whence it can no more emerge to trouble the nations.

The 'Declamatio' of Laurentius Valla, too declamatory as it is and not always attacking from the right quarter (for he seems to accept the Roman baptism of the Emperor as an undoubted fact), still had the effect of piercing the bubble which had so long befooled the world. Some feeble attempts were made to restore the credit of the Constantinian Donation, but they were judged hopeless by the rapidly growing scholarship of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and when at last even Cardinal Baronius, that staunch supporter of papal claims, who fought even for the baptism of the Emperor by Silvester, abandoned the edict which was said to have followed it, all Europe knew that this question at least was laid to rest, and that it would hear no more of any claims seriously urged in right of the Donation of Constantine.

We have glanced at the circumstances attending the death of the fable, but our business is with its birth. As I have said, I do not propose to discuss the question whether it first took shape on parchment in 750 or 770; whether the first scribe who wrote the Donation intended a harmless romance or planned a wicked forgery. All these discussions are beyond my present purpose, which is to deal with what the Donation tells us as to the state of men's minds in Rome about the middle of the eighth century. We are conscious at once of a great gulf separating the ideas of that age from those which were prevalent at the beginning of the seventh century. We then saw a Pope, perhaps the greatest of all the Popes, Gregory the Great, struggling for liberty, almost for life, 'between the swords of the Lombards'. The necessities of his position forced him sometimes to over-step the strict limits of his spiritual realm, to appoint a tribune of soldiers, to rebuke a careless general, to conclude a provisional treaty; and his contest with the Patriarch of Constantinople extorted from him sometimes bitter cries and complaints against the Emperor into whose ear the Patriarch was whispering. But through all I

think we may say that Gregory the First bore himself as the loyal, though often the deeply-dissatisfied subject of the Emperor, and there is never a hint of a disposition on his part to claim temporal dominion as against his Sovereign or to pose as the rightful civil ruler of Italy. Now we see that there is a change. In the middle of the eighth century it is evidently the feeling of the clerics of the Lateran, not only that they should ride on horses covered with white saddle-cloths—that they probably did in the days of Gregory;—not only that the Pope, since he waived the right of wearing the imperial diadem, ought to wear a tiara with a circlet of gold, the mark of his clerisy, and should be waited upon by janitors, chamberlains, guards, in imitation of imperial magnificence; but also that he ought to govern, as a king or an emperor, ‘the city of Rome, and all the provinces and cities of Italy and of the West’, whatever extension of his rule might be intended by these last words of awful and ambiguous import.

Henceforth when we hear, as we often shall do, of the rights and claims and privileges of Peter, we must remember that, at least in the thoughts or the aspirations of some Roman ecclesiastics, these words include a large measure of temporal sovereignty for their head, the Bishop of Rome. The claim to undisturbed possession of the property with which the Papal See has been endowed, the so-called ‘Patrimony of St. Peter’, is included in these words as it was included in them during the pontificate of the first Gregory, but there is also something more, further reaching, more world-historical in their purport. We are dealing now not merely with estates, but with kingdoms. And in this connection we have to remember the nature of the process by which the Pope became Pope. Zacharias or Stephen, Paul or Hadrian, is not a hereditary ruler, he is the elected head of a mighty corporation, wielding the strongest moral and intellectual forces at that time existing in the world. When he seeks to establish and to extend his temporal dominion he is not merely ‘fighting for his own hand’, he is not merely seeking to gratify his own arrogance and ambition—though these very human qualities undoubtedly played their part—but he is also striving for the honour and glory of the great college of ecclesiastics which has chosen him for its head, and by means of which he has risen from obscurity to greatness. If we may borrow an illustration from modern politics, the jealousy of a British First Lord of the Treasury for the dignity and honour of Parliament represents the jealousy of an eighth-century Pope for the glory and aggrandizement of the chair of St. Peter.

As I have said, however, we shall find that the claims of Peter as urged by Stephen II are an entirely different quantity from those same claims as urged by Gregory I. Whence comes the change which has been wrought in those hundred and fifty years? Partly no doubt from the dense ignorance which has overspread Rome and the west of Europe and which has made such a fable as that of Constantine’s Donation possible. We are moving now through a region of mist and twilight, and the few forms that we can discern loom larger through the darkness. The collapse of the Teutonic royalties in Gaul and Spain may have helped somewhat, leaving the Pope of Rome greater by comparison. The estrangement between Italy and Constantinople on the question of the worship of images undoubtedly was a factor in the problem, though its influence has been sometimes exaggerated. It seems possible that the uprise of the religion of Mohammed strengthened the position of the Papacy, exhibiting as it did great religious leaders such as the early Caliphs in command of mighty armies and lords of a worldwide empire. Moreover, the very danger at which Christian Europe shuddered when it saw Islam overspreading the world, may have suggested the necessity of discipline and the union of Christendom under one spiritual head.

But after all it was probably our own countrymen who bore the chief part in the exaltation of St. Peter’s chair. The Gallican Church had been lukewarm, the Celtic missionaries had been all but hostile, but the new Anglo-Saxon converts, the spiritual children of Augustine and Theodore, could scarcely find words to express their passionate loyalty and devotion to the

Bishop of Rome. We have seen a little of what Boniface and his companions were doing in Germany and Gaul. To these men whom I have already called, from this aspect of their work, the Jesuits of the eighth century, must in great measure be attributed the lordlier tone in which the Popes with whom we are now dealing utter their mandates to the nations.

One word in conclusion, not by way of polemic, but in order to make it possible to avoid polemic in the pages that are to follow. It will be seen that I treat the claims to temporal dominion urged in the name of St. Peter as absolutely fantastic and visionary. The Apostle himself, the rock-like stay and support of his brethren in the first age of Christianity, is of course no myth, but a historical personage as real as Xavier or Livingstone. The theory that he was bishop of Rome, and that, in fulfillment of words spoken to him by Jesus Christ, supernatural gifts for the teaching and guidance of the Church have been bestowed on all his successors, is a theory which, though it finds no foothold in the mind of the present writer, has been held by too many generations of devout and earnest Christians to be mentioned here with anything but respect and sympathy. But the notion common in the Middle Ages, that the holy man, from his resting-place in the Paradise of God, is acutely interested in the precise delimitation of the boundaries of his successors' kingdom, and by supernatural means seeks to retain for them Perugia or Comacchio—this notion, which is I believe no part of the essential teaching of the Roman Church and which has faded or is fading out of the minds of men, seems to me mere mythology, as much so as the story of the intervention of Juno and Venus in the wars of Troy. But even mythology has often influenced history. It was in the name of the Delphic Apollo and to avenge the encroachments of the Phocians on the territory of the god that those Sacred Wars were waged which brought Philip of Macedon into the heart of Greece and indirectly gave Alexander the supremacy of the world.

CHAPTER. VIII.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE EXARCHATE.

A few months after the elevation of Pippin to the royal dignity a new and a most important actor appeared upon the scene of European politics. Towards the end of March, 752, Pope Zacharias died. A presbyter named Stephen was elected in his place, but on the third morning after he had taken up his quarters in the Lateran palace, on arising from sleep he was struck down by an apoplectic seizure, of which he died on the following day. The people were assembled in the basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, and chose as Pope another Stephen, who was immediately installed in the vacant see.

This Pope (more correctly known as Stephen II than as Stephen III, for the short pontificate of his predecessor ought not to enter into the calculation) was of Roman origin, and having been early left an orphan had been brought up in the Lateran palace. He was thus emphatically the child and champion of the Papacy, apparently a man of more combative spirit and more ambitious temper than his predecessor, and was destined during the five short years of his pontificate to battle more valiantly than any who had gone before him for the ideas of temporal sovereignty and worldly dominion with which the Lateran palace was teeming.

But indeed if any such visions as those dreamed by the author of the Donation of Constantine were to become realities there was no time to lose. Already, a year before the death of Zacharias, an event had taken place which altered the whole balance of power in Italy. This was the capture of Ravenna (A.D. 751) by Aistulf, king of the Lombards. As to this event, one of such vast importance for Italy and for Europe, we are left by all the chroniclers and biographers of the time in exasperating ignorance. We know not whether the city fell by blockade or by sudden assault; nor how the marshes and canals which had protected her for so many centuries were overpassed; we do not even know the name of her last imperial governor, though as no Exarch is named after Eutychius it is conjectured that he may have been the man. All that we can say with certainty is that an apparently genuine charter among the archives of the monastery of Farfa is given forth by 'Haistulfus rex' and dated by him 'Ravennae in palatio' on the 4th of July in the year 751.

We note with some surprise the date of the downfall of Byzantine rule over Italy as exercised from Ravenna. Under many weak and inefficient emperors that rule had endured, and now under a sovereign of the strong and warlike Isaurian race, under the stern, self-sufficing and energetic Constantine Copronymus, it comes to an end. Probably the iconoclastic controversy was the chief cause of this strange result. The revolts which about 730 broke forth in Italy had indeed apparently been suppressed, but the chasm between the ruler and the ruled had probably never been closed, and Constantine V may have felt that it was better for him to devote all his energies to the defence of the East against the Saracens than to waste troops and treasure in warding off the assaults of the Lombards on a city the inhabitants of which would hail the first opportunity for escaping from under his rule.

In another aspect the date of the fall of Ravenna is a memorable one. It differs only by three years from the date before the birth of Christ which is generally assigned to the foundation of Rome. Romulus founding his little city in 754 B. C.; the Roman Empire practically extinguished in Italy in 751 A. D.; such are the two landmarks on either side of the central event in the history of the world; and the length of the long uphill road from Romulus

to Augustus makes us better appreciate the often foreshortened distance from Augustus to Aistulf.

It was assuredly a mistake in Aistulf's statesmanship, however tempting might be the looseness of the Byzantine hold upon Italy, to drive the Emperor's representative out of Ravenna. The balance of power was thus destroyed; a governor in whom Liutprand had found a useful ally was removed, the Pope was relieved from what had in past days been a galling dependence on the Exarch, and he and the Lombard were now left face to face to fight out their deadly duel.

What were the distinguishing characteristics of the two combatants who were thus entering the lists to strive for the sovereignty of Italy? On the one hand Aistulf, son of Duke Pemmo of Friuli and of that Griselda-like wife of his, Ratperga, who was so ashamed of her plain face and clownish figure that with exaggerated humility she begged, but vainly begged, her husband to divorce her. That Aistulf was a strong man and a brave soldier had been clearly shown on that great day of the battle of the Metaurus when he hurled the two Spoletan champions over the bridge. That he was a man of stormy and impetuous nature he manifested when, at Pavia, at the scene of his father's deposition, in his wrath at Liutprand's cold contempt he was on the point of murdering the Lombard king. But though he was such a sovereign as we might expect to find ruling over a still halfcivilized people, the historian discovers nothing in the recorded actions of Aistulf to justify the epithets 'cruellest,' 'wickedest,' 'malignant,' 'impious,' 'most atrocious,' which are hurled thick at his head by the passionate papal biographer. The student of these pontifical lives soon learns that adjectives like these only mean that the Pope and the man who is thus described were striving for mastery. The laws of this king seem to show a wise and statesmanlike care for the morals of his subjects; and his numerous grants to various religious houses in his dominions prove that we are not here dealing with a determined enemy of the Catholic Church such as the Gaiseric and Huneric of an earlier century. But that which was truly blameworthy in Aistulf was that, after he had provoked a struggle, he would not accept the consequences of defeat. He was willing to promise anything when the enemy's hand was upon his throat, but as soon as the pressure was relaxed and he was left to himself he at once began to cast about for excuses for delaying or altogether evading the fulfillment of his promise. Most of us have met such persons as this in actual life, and have generally found that all their shifts and evasions only make their final fall more calamitous.

On the other hand stands Stephen the Roman, Pope of Rome. If I read his character aright, he was less of an ecclesiastic and more of a politician than his predecessor. In the case of Zacharias the evangelization of Germany and the restoration of 'a godly discipline' in Gaul seem to have been the objects nearest to his heart; while to Stephen the establishment of his lordship over some of the fairest parts of Italy and the fulfillment in some degree at least of the splendid dreams of the Donation of Constantine seem to be the sole objects worth striving for. With this end in view, and knowing that he must thereby be brought sooner or later into collision with the Lombard ruler, he doubtless often meditated on the fact that his predecessor, even the unworldly and unambitious Zacharias, had provided him with a strong buckler of defence against his foes by the answer which he had given to the Frankish messengers; that Pippin, anointed king of the Franks in the name of St. Peter and by the hands of Boniface, was morally compelled to afford to the Papal See that protection which Charles Martel had refused to furnish.

The Lombard king on his side, as judged not by the passionate scribes of the Lateran but by the calm voice of History, may be held to have been pursuing not unworthy aims. The Byzantine Exarch and his train of Oriental foreigners once driven out of Italy, Ravenna and the Pentapolis firmly joined to the solid Lombard dominion north of the Po, the connection

between the north and centre of Italy would be assured, the great duchies of Spoleto and Benevento would be restrained from their disloyal, 'centrifugal' policy which could only end in disaster to the Lombard name, and the successors of Aistulf might one day rule over a harmonious and united Italy such as had once been so nearly formed by the wise policy of Theodoric.

We have also to observe that in all that part of Italy which had been subject to the Empire there was probably a party not unfavourable to the claims of the Lombard king. Of Rome itself it is asserted by a chronicler, who though late has some pieces of valuable information intermingled with his rubbish, that 'certain wicked men, Romans, arose and sent word to king Aistulf that he should come and take possession of the Tuscan frontier and usurp the Roman Empire'.

However slender may be the authority for this statement, it corresponds in some measure with the probable course of events. The disturbances which will have hereafter to be related, following on the death of Pope Paul, clearly reveal the existence of a Lombardising party in the City of Rome. The two nations, Roman and Lombard, had now been in close contact for nearly two centuries. Relations of commerce, probably of intermarriage, must have grown up between them during the long years of peace. And moreover, even the rule of the Lombard king, harsh and irregular as it may have been and often exercised through corrupt instruments, may have seemed preferable to that of a college of priests or the representative of an absentee and practically powerless Emperor.

As for the *Ducatus Romae*, it seems clear that the Lombard king was bent on extorting from it at least the acknowledgment of his supremacy and the payment of a poll-tax by its inhabitants. Whether he would have gone beyond this and insisted on interfering with its internal affairs may perhaps be doubted, for these semi-barbarian conquerors were not generally great organizers or remodellers of the administration. To the Pope especially and to the Papal Curia we may believe that they would have left a large measure of independence if only they had been willing to acquiesce in the extension of Lombard rule over all that had been imperial Italy. But no such life on sufferance would satisfy the present mood of the Roman pontiffs. They were determined to assert their claim to rule over all those portions of Italy which had remained imperial at the time of the Lombard invasion. So much at least should be theirs, the question as to the Lombard portions of Italy being reserved for future discussion. And these portions of Italy seem to have been claimed on some such theory as the following, and by arguments which were independent of the Donation of Constantine, though they may have usefully buttressed up the weak places in that wonderful document. 'The Pentapolis and Exarchate have hitherto belonged to the Roman Empire, though the man who now bears the title of Roman Emperor has proved himself unable to preserve them. But the Roman Empire means the Roman Republic, and the true representative of the City of Rome, if the Emperor abdicates his power, is the bishop of that City. And the bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter, and the Apostle from his high place in heaven watches over the interests of his successors. Therefore whosoever interferes with our claim to exercise temporal dominion over the fragments of Italy which of late were governed in the name of the Emperor at Constantinople, incurs the wrath of St. Peter, and will be shut out by the great Key-bearer from the kingdom of heaven.'

The question was further complicated and an element of less shadowy right was given to the papal claims by the existence of the vast estates, the so-called 'Patrimones of St. Peter,' which were scattered far and wide over Italy, and in which the Popes exercised undoubted rights, not as sovereigns, but as proprietors. Some account of these patrimonies has already been given in connection with the history of Gregory the Great, and we may well believe that as the same causes which had led to their creation continued to operate, the estates of the

Church of Rome would be not less but far more extensive in 750 than in 600. On these estates a Lombard king, moving his armies backwards and forwards over Italy, was almost compelled to trample. Even a modern strategist, with the scientific maps of a military staff at his disposal, would not always find it easy to avoid marching through these wide-stretching patrimonies; and an army's march in those days, far more than in ours, meant inevitably more or less of devastation. Thus it would be not entirely without justification from a strictly legal point of view that after such a campaign the Pope should utter his shrill cries to his Frankish ally, calling upon him to take vengeance on the Lombard for his violation of the 'justitiae' or rights of St. Peter.

But in all this contest which is now looming before us there is not really any religious interest at stake. We must not of course look forward to the great religious wars of the sixteenth century; nor must we look back to the strife between Arian and Catholic in the fifth century. The Lombards are now in doctrine absolutely, in accord with the Roman Church. In their public documents they insist on calling themselves the Catholic and God-beloved nation of the Lombards; and their kings (no doubt by the advice of their clerical counsellors) continually express sentiments of the most edifying piety in their charters and edicts. The opposition is not religious, but it is political and racial; the antagonism of two sovereigns, each of whom yearns to make himself lord of Italy; the loathing mingled with fear and contempt which the dainty Roman entertains for the strong, unkempt, and (as he avers) uncleanly Lombard.

It has been necessary to give this sketch of the aims and feelings of the two contending parties, because for the next twenty eventful years we shall be practically dependent on one litigant alone for the story of the great law-suit. The lives and letters of the Popes are really our sole source for the history of the Frankish conquest of Italy. Each reader will have to judge for himself what amount of correction the statements thus delivered to us require in order to make them correspond with the veritable facts of history.

According to the papal biographer, while the newly elected Pope was attending to the philanthropic duties of his calling, founding and restoring alms-houses, and providing for the maintenance of one hundred of 'Christ's poor,' a great persecution was commenced by Aistulf, king of the Lombards, in the city of Rome and the towns surrounding it. Hereupon the most blessed Pope, in the third month from his ordination, sent messengers to conclude a treaty of peace with the Lombard king. The messengers were the Pope's brother Paul (himself one day to wear the Papal tiara), and Ambrose, a tried and trusty servant of the Lateran, who had held for many years the high place—highest among lay officials—of *Primicerius Notariorum*. They took large presents in their hands, and succeeded in concluding a treaty of peace (A.D. 752) with Aistulf for forty years, similar probably to that which Zacharias had concluded for twenty years with his brother Ratchis.

'But nevertheless,' says the biographer, 'that impudent king of the Lombards, tempted by the cunning of the Old Enemy, barely four months afterwards committed perjury and broke the treaty, inflicting divers insults on the most holy man and the whole Roman people, directing various threats against him. For in his God-abandoned blindness he longed to invade the whole of this province [the Ducatus Romae] and to inflict a burdensome tribute on the inhabitants of this City, yearning to exact a poll-tax of one solidus annually from every citizen, and indignantly asserting that this Roman City and the towns surrounding it were all subject to his jurisdiction'.

The reader will observe that so far we have not come to actual bloodshed. Aistulf puts forward claims to jurisdiction and taxation, which he perhaps alleges to be justified by the forty years' treaty, but he does not yet enforce them by the sword. He only 'desires' and 'yearns' to do so, and with that old passionate temper of his 'indignantly' asserts what he deems to be his rights.

Seeing how the storm of the king's anger was brewing, the Pope sent again two messengers to appease his wrath. This time they were the abbots of the two most celebrated monasteries in Italy, that of St. Vincent on the Vulturno, and that of St. Benedict on Monte Cassino. The foundation of the latter monastery was described in a previous volume. The monastery of St. Vincent had been founded about half a century before the accession of Stephen II by three kinsmen, young noblemen of Benevento, named Paldo, Taso and Tato, whose adventures when they set forth from their father's houses secretly in search of holiness and solitude are told with charming naiveté by the monastic author of the *Chronicon Salemitanum*. Their monastery was erected in the wild Abruzzi mountains near the source of the Vulturno, and already as a home of austere saints it had acquired a renown only second to that of the great house of St. Benedict.

'When these two abbots,' says the biographer, 'bore to the most cruel king the Pope's request that the treaty might be observed and the people of God of both parties might be allowed to dwell in peace, he treated them with absolute contempt, spurning all their admonitions, and to the ruin of his own soul sent them back abashed and disappointed to their own monasteries, bidding them take notice that he would not bend in the least to the will of the aforesaid most holy Pope. Which when that eminent Father heard, he at once, according to his usual practice, commended to Almighty God his cause and the cause of the people committed to his care, suggesting his dolorous lamentation to the Divine.'

At this point, however, there appeared upon the scene the representative of one whom raging Lombard and weeping Pope were both in danger of forgetting, the *de jure* lord of Ravenna and all Italy, the Emperor Constantine V. 'While these things were being done there arrived at Rome John, imperial *silentarius*, bringing a message to the most holy Pope, and at the same time a letter of command to the aforesaid impious king that he should restore to their proper lord those territories of the Republic which he had usurped with devilish ingenuity. This imperial messenger the Pope sent, along with his brother the deacon Paul, to the most wicked Aistulf at Ravenna. When they had been received he dismissed them with an empty answer, assuring the Emperor's messenger that he would order some nefarious man of his own nation, steeped in the counsels of the devil, to hasten to the Royal City. They therefore returned to Rome, were presented to the Pope, and reported to him the ill success of their mission. Then the holy man, perceiving the intention of the malignant king, sent his own emissaries and apostolic rescripts to the Royal City, along with the Emperor's messenger, earnestly entreating the imperial clemency that (as he had often prayed him before) he would by all means come into these regions of Italy and set free the city of Rome and the whole province of Italy from the bitings of this son of iniquity.'

This passage is important as showing that now in the year 752, twenty-six years after Leo III issued his iconoclastic decrees, the Pope still considers himself an imperial subject, and has even yet no matured design of breaking with the Byzantine Emperor, if only that Emperor will play his part properly and will deliver him from the swords of the Lombards.

The biographer continues: 'Meanwhile, the most atrocious king of the Lombards, persisting in his pernicious design, flamed into vehement fury, and roaring like a lion uttered his pestiferous threats against the Romans, vowing that they should all be butchered with one sword unless they would submit themselves to his dominion on the aforesaid terms. Then again the most holy father, having collected the whole Roman assembly, thus addressed them with paternal love: "I pray you, dearest sons, let us implore the pardon of God for our heaped-up transgressions, and He will be our helper, and in His merciful providence will deliver us from the hands of our persecutors." Then the people, obeying his healthful counsel, assembled with one accord, and all with streams of tears besought the help of the Almighty. On one these days he made procession, singing the Litany with much humility, and bearing on his own shoulder

with the help of the other bishops the most holy likeness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ which is named "the made without hands," at the same time exhibiting other sacred mysteries, and so with naked feet walked, followed by the whole commonalty, to the church of the Holy Mother of God which is called Ad Praesepe. Ashes were sprinkled on the heads of all the people, and they walked along with mighty wailings, calling on the most merciful Lord God. But the Pope had tied to the adorable cross of our Lord that covenant which the wicked king of the Lombards had broken.'

The biographer then goes on to describe how the Pope ordained that these solemn processional litanies should be sung every sabbath day; the goal of the processions being by turns S. Maria Maggiore, St. Peter's, and St. Paul's. He also assembled all his bishops and clergy in the Lateran palace and exhorted them to be diligent in the study of the Scriptures and in other spiritual reading, that they might have a ready answer for the adversaries of the Church of God. Nor was conduct forgotten. 'With ceaseless and strengthening admonitions he warned the people of God to live soberly and piously and to keep themselves from all wickedness.'

But while thus sharpening afresh all the weapons of his spiritual warfare, Stephen was preparing that appeal to the great power beyond the Alps for which both the Gregories and Zacharias had opened the way. By a returning pilgrim, whose name has not reached us, he sent a letter to the newly-crowned Pippin, begging him to despatch messengers bringing an invitation or a summons to the Frankish court. The king took the hint, and (probably in the spring of 753) Droctigang, abbot of Jumieges, appeared at the Lateran with a request for the Pope's presence in Frank-land. Another Frankish courtier arrived soon after to repeat the same invitation.

At this point of the negotiations we find two Papal important letters from the Pope in that great collection the *Codex Carolinus*, which will henceforward be one of our main authorities. They were written with the intent that they should be taken back to Frank-land by the messengers whom Pippin had sent. In them the Pope expresses his high satisfaction with both of the envoys, and begs that one of them, 'Johannes vir religiosus' (who is perhaps the second unnamed messenger alluded to in the *Liber Pontificalis*), may accompany any future embassy that the king may send him. In the first letter, addressed to Pippin himself, Stephen assures him of the special protection of Peter, and exhorts him to persevere in the good course upon which he has entered. 'Because he that endureth to the end the same shall be saved. And for this thou shalt receive an hundred-fold in this life and shall inherit the life eternal.'

The other letter is addressed 'To the glorious men our sons, all the dukes of the Frankish nation'. The motive of this letter is revealed to us by some words of Einhard, the biographer of Charles the Great, in which he describes the intense dislike of many of the Frankish nobles to the proposal of a war with the Lombards. There were probably many reasons for this dislike. The relations of the two peoples had been for many generations friendly; the trouble and hardships of a Transalpine campaign were more obvious than the profit likely to result from it to anyone but the Pope; even the great ecclesiastics, still but half reconciled to the strict discipline which Zacharias and Boniface had imposed upon them, may have given but cold assent to the proposal to make their papal master yet more masterful.

To the Frankish nobles accordingly Stephen addressed himself, nominally asking for their advocacy of his cause with the king, really no doubt seeking to smooth away their opposition. 'We are confident that you fear God and love your protector the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, since you may be certain that for every struggle which you undertake on behalf of your spiritual mother the Church, you shall receive an hundred-fold from the hand of God, and from the Prince of the Apostles himself the forgiveness of your sins. Therefore let nothing hinder you from aiding our petition to our son the God-preserved and most excellent Pippin,

that so your sins may be blotted out, and the Key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven may open to you the door and introduce you into eternal life.’

The Frankish messengers probably returned from Rome with these letters about the beginning of July. Before the answer could be sent, Aistulf had taken a step further towards the attainment of his end by occupying Ceccano, a village on the Via Latina, southeast of Rome, and just inside the frontier of the Ducatus Romae. The learned and impartial editor of the *Liber Pontificalis*, Abbé Duchesne, aptly calls our attention to the fact that this occupation of Ceccano ‘is the first act of hostility on the part of the Lombards. Till now the biographer has said a good deal about persecutions, menaces, broken treaties, citations, but he has not related any act of war’. However, it was undoubtedly a menacing deed. The old northward road by Perugia to the Exarchate, the Via Flaminia, was already of course closed, and now some stages on the southward road were to be occupied by the Lombards ; the Ducatus Romae was to be more effectually barred from all possible communication with the imperial governor at Naples; the Pope might expect before long to see the Lombard standards on the south-eastern horizon moving towards the Lateran itself. Add to this the fact that Ceccano was cultivated by coloni of the Roman Church, and was therefore probably one of the ‘patrimones’ of St. Peter, and we have reason enough for the Pope’s resentment being fiercely kindled by such an invasion, though it was not, as far as we know, accompanied by bloodshed or any especial deed of violence

However, the Lombard king does not appear at from the this time to have pushed his inroad further into the Ducatus Romae. The next event was the return of the imperial *silentarius* John, accompanied by the papal messengers from Constantinople. Still the Byzantine Emperor clung with extraordinary tenacity to his belief in embassies as a means of inducing the hot-tempered Lombard to disgorge his conquests; and with equally strange ignorance of the schemes which were being revolved in the papal breast, he chose the Pope as the most fitting advocate of the desired restitution. Assuredly, one thinks, Constantine V cannot have read the alleged Donation of his great namesake. However, the Pope was still the Emperor’s subject: he must go to the Lombard Court and demand restitution to the empire of Ravenna and the cities pertaining thereto : but as a preliminary he sent a messenger to Aistulf requesting a safe-conduct for himself and all his companions.

The return of that messenger with the safe-conduct coincided most fortunately with the long-desired arrival in Rome of the Frankish envoys who were to act as escort to the Pope. They were two of the most eminent men in the Frankish kingdom, ‘the most glorious duke’ Autchar, and—a yet more important personage—Chrodegang, bishop of Metz. This last-named ecclesiastic was sprung from a noble family in Brabant, and is even said, by one doubtful authority, to have been a cousin of the king. He was now a middle-aged man; he had been for many years referendarius (practically equivalent to chancellor) to the Frankish sovereign, and for the last eleven years (since 742) he had been bishop of Metz, the capital of the Austrasian kingdom. Liberal, learned (according to the estimation of the age), and fervent in piety, he was after Boniface the most noteworthy churchman of his generation. Like Boniface, he was intent upon the greatly needed work of reforming the morals of the Gaulish clergy, and with this end in view he drew up, probably soon after his return from his mission to Rome, a Rule for the collegiate life of the clergy of his cathedral church. To Chrodegang more than to any other person may be attributed the institution of secular canons, the foundation of cathedral chapters, and not a few of the disciplinary rules which still survive in our English colleges. Chrodegang’s main purpose was to introduce into the lives of the officiating clergy something of the same regularity and strictness which the wise moderation of the rule of Benedict had given to the lives of the monks. But several expressions in his Rule show that he was also impressed by the splendour and dignity of the ceremonial in the churches at Rome, and in

ritual, and especially in music, he was a zealous advocate of the usages which he had observed during his Roman embassy.

On the 13th of October, 753, Pope Stephen II rode out of the Flaminian Gate on his fateful northward journey. Many of his own immediate flock, many too of the inhabitants of other cities, followed him for some miles along the road, beseeching him with tears to renounce his perilous enterprise. Doubtless the true goal of his journeyings was already an open secret in Rome. It was not merely the Roman bishop who as a dutiful subject of the empire was going to the palace at Pavia to plead the cause of Constantine Copronymus and to obtain the restitution of the Exarchate. It was the Patriarch of Western Christendom who, though in delicate health, was going to cross the Alps, to appear in Gaul, the first of the long line of Popes to tread the soil of that country, to invoke in person the help of the newly anointed king of the Franks, and bring that powerful piece upon the board to cry ‘check’ to the Lombard king. Notwithstanding the lamentations of the people, Stephen II held on his way, accompanied by a number of bishops and priests and by some of the chief officers in the little army of the Ducatus Romae. At the fortieth milestone, after night had closed in, just as they were entering the Lombard territory, they saw a great sign in heaven—even a globe of fire falling towards the south from the region of Gaul and of the Lombards; evidently a token of great changes coming from the northern lands upon Italy.

The Frankish duke Autchar went forward and heralded at the Lombard Court the approach of the sage from venerable ambassador. No sooner, however, had the Pope set foot in the city of Pavia than he was met by a messenger from Aistulf—whom we are inclined to call, not as the biographer does, ‘most wicked,’ but ‘most foolish’—ordering him on no account to say one word by way of petition on behalf of Ravenna, the Exarchate, or any of the cities which recent Lombard kings had wrested from the empire. The Pope returned the sensible and manly answer that no such attempts at intimidation would avail to silence his remonstrances on behalf of those cities.

‘When the Pope had arrived at Pavia and was presented to the wicked king he offered him many gifts, and besought him with copious tears that he would restore the Lord’s sheep which he had taken away and would give back to every one his own’—a gentle hint as to the duty of recognizing the imperial claim. Then the imperial envoys unfolded their commission, and doubtless with true Byzantine pomp of words pressed for the same surrender. All was in vain : nor does the recital of the biographer convey the impression that the Pope himself expected or desired it to be otherwise. But then began the real battle of the day. The Frankish envoys, Chrodegang and Autchar, ‘pressed heavily on Aistulf with the demand that he should relax his rules and allow the most holy Pope to travel to Frank-land’. At which he called the blessed man before him and asked him if he had any desire to hasten into Frank-land; whereupon the Pope by no means held his peace, but showed plainly his inclination to make the journey. Thereat Aistulf gnashed his teeth like a lion, and several times sent his creatures to him privately to try and divert him from his purpose. But when next day in the presence of Chrodegang the king again asked him if he wished to travel into Frank-land, the Pope answered, “If your will is to give me leave, mine is altogether to make the journey.”’

The Pope had played a bold but skillful game. The request for his presence, coming from so powerful a neighbour as the king of the Franks, urged by his own ambassadors and heartily seconded by the himself, was one which Aistulf durst not refuse; and so the important journey was commenced. On the 15th of November Stephen set forth from Pavia accompanied by two bishops, four presbyters, an archdeacon, two deacons—Ambrose the *primicerius* and Boniface the *secundicerius* of the papal curia—two *regionarii*, and other attendants. They made the first stages of the journey as rapidly as possible, fearing (as proved to be the case) that Aistulf would repent of his granted leave and seek to hinder them on their way. They arrived, however,

ere any messenger could stop them at the Italian end of the pass of the Great St. Bernard, no doubt the Val d'Aosta, which owing to the early and unsuccessful Lombard invasions of Gaul had remained for a hundred and eighty years in Frankish hands and was now called one of the Frankish passes. Arrived there, the Pope and his companions sang a psalm of praise to God who had so far prospered their journey. But to the dangers from men succeeded the dangers of Nature, the perils and the toils necessarily in that day accompanying the passage of a ridge more than 8,000 feet high in the month of November. That which is now the pass of the Great St. Bernard, but was then the Mons Jovis, rose before them, doubtless thickly covered with snow, and not crowned with that hospitable dwelling which for more than a thousand years has offered shelter to pilgrims, but perhaps still showing the dismantled and shelterless ruins of the temple of Jupiter. The biographer, who evidently was not one of the party, tells us nothing of the hardships of the ascent and descent, but they left their indelible impression on the mind of the chief pilgrim. Two years later, writing to Pippin, Stephen says, 'By St. Peter's orders my Unhappiness was directed to come to you. We surrendered ourselves body and soul to the mighty labours attending a journey into so vast and distant a province. Trusting utterly to your fidelity, by God's will we arrived in your presence, worn out by the frost and the snow, by the heat and the swelling of waters, by mighty rivers, and most atrocious mountains and divers kinds of danger'.

However, all these perils overpassed, the Roman ecclesiastics descended safely into the valley of the Rhone, and rested from their labours in the renowned monastery of St. Maurice at Agaunum, the scene of Burgundian Sigismund's devotion and despair. This religious house was under the government of the abbot Wilichar, formerly Archbishop of Vienne, who on the surrender of his see had gone on pilgrimage to Rome and there made the acquaintance of Pope Stephen. They were here therefore in the presence of old friends, and doubtless greatly enjoyed the calm and the shelter of the renowned convent. During the Pope's sojourn at St. Maurice, which probably lasted several weeks, Ambrose the *primicerius* sickened with fever and died. He was sixty years of age, and had probably never recovered from the fatigues of the mountain journey. Six years later his body was carried back across the Alps and buried in St. Peter's basilica.

The Pope had hoped to find the Frankish king waiting for him at St. Maurice, but the necessity of repelling a Saxon inroad had apparently deranged the royal plans. However, Pippin's confidential adviser, Fulrad, abbot of S. Denis, soon appeared at the convent, together with a duke named Roland, charged with a renewal of the invitation and with the duty of escorting the ecclesiastics to the palace.

King Pippin, who had been keeping his Christmas at the Villa Theudonis on the Moselle, received we are told with immense joy the tidings of the Pope's arrival in his kingdom, and journeyed, with his wife, his sons, and his nobles, to another 'villa publica,' or royal demesne, that of Pons Hugonis, to meet him. This place, from which apparently all traces of a royal palace have now vanished, is the little village of Ponthion in Champagne, not far from those Catalaunian plains on which Attila and Aetius fought their mighty battle. Looking at the map, we are somewhat surprised to find the place of meeting between the Pope, coming from Switzerland, and the king who had kept Christmas on the Moselle, fixed so far to the west, but evidently both potentates had in their mind an approaching solemnity in the neighbourhood of Paris, and shaped the course of their journeys accordingly.

From Ponthion Pippin sent his son Charles a hundred miles forward on the road to meet the pontiff. A meeting full of interest for after generations; for this Charles, a lad of fourteen years, is none other than the future Charlemagne, and this Pope Stephen is the first of a long line of pontiffs who were to crown kings while themselves exercising something like kingly rule. When news came that the Pope was approaching Pons Hugonis, the king rode forth to

meet him at the third milestone from the palace, and dismounting from his horse prostrated himself before his papal guest, and then walked like a groom beside his palfrey. Forty-two years before, a predecessor of Stephen had entered in like triumphal guise the city of Constantinople; but only the Emperor's representatives, not the Emperor himself, then graced his triumph. This may therefore be considered the first of those exhibitions of ostentatious humility on the part of the Crown towards the pontifical Tiara which were to be so numerous throughout the Middle Ages. Thus in solemn procession, with the usual ecclesiastical accompaniment of loudly chanted hymns and spiritual songs, Pope and King moved onward to the gates of the palace of Ponthion.

The day of this fateful meeting was the sixth of January, 754, the feast of the Epiphany. The Christmas festivities at Thionville had probably therefore been summarily cut short by the tidings of the Pope's approach. When host and guest had entered the palace they proceeded to the royal chapel, and there, girded with sackcloth and with ashes on his head, the Pope fell prostrate before the King, and with the ever-ready accompaniment of tears besought him—to do what? Every word here is important, and the biographer shall therefore tell us the story himself.

'The blessed Pope with tears besought the most Christian King that by treaties of peace he would arrange the cause of St. Peter and the republic of the Romans. Who by an oath *de praesenti* assured the most blessed Pope that he would with his utmost energy obey all his commands and admonitions, and as soon as he should have convened a diet(?) by all means to restore to him the Exarchate of Ravenna and the rights and territories of the [Roman] republic'.

Winter was now making felt its full severity, and accordingly the King commended the Pope and his train of followers to the comfortable shelter of the abbey of S. Denis presided over by their friend Abbot Fulrad. There after the lapse of some time Pippin also appeared, and there the solemn ceremony of his second coronation was performed by the head of Western Christendom. In that ceremony queen Bertrada, dressed in magnificent royal robes, and her two Charles and Carloman, the latter a little child of three years old, bore their part, and were all crowned together with the chief of their house. An important part of the ceremony was the anathema pronounced by the papal lips on any who should in after-ages presume to treat the race of Pippin as Pippin himself had treated the race of Clovis. 'At the same time,' says an unknown but well-informed writer, the Pope confirmed the chiefs of the Franks with his blessing and the grace of the Holy Spirit, and bound them all by such an interdict and threatened penalty of excommunication that they should never, for all time to come, presume to elect a king sprung from the loins of any other but of these persons whom the Divine Mercy had deigned to exalt, and in accordance with the intercessions of the holy Apostles to confirm and consecrate by the hands of their vicar the most blessed Pope.'

Vain was this attempt to establish a new doctrine of Divine Right on behalf of the posterity of Pippin. In a century and a half Henry the Saxon in Germany, in a little more than two centuries Hugh Capet in France, were to push the last Arnulfings from their thrones. Did St. Louis or any of the later Bourbon or Habsburg rulers who in their turn claimed Divine Right and papal sanction for their demand on the inalienable allegiance of their subjects ever remember that, according to the words pronounced by Pope Stephen in the chapel of S. Denis, they and all their house were under excommunication and interdict for presuming to violate the divine, apostolic, papal decree which settled the crown of the Franks on Pippin and his seed for ever?

It is to be observed that, according to the document from which I have just quoted, Stephen anointed Pippin not only to be King, but also Patrician. This was of course in no sense a Frankish but a purely Roman dignity, and pointed to the closer connection which was henceforth to subsist between Pippin and the City of Rome. Referring to previous pages of this

work for the history of the title of Patrician, I may remind the reader that it had been of late years generally borne by the Exarch, and thus denoted authority over that part of Italy which was still imperial, an authority delegated from Constantinople. But when Pope Zacharias in the year 743 set forth on his journey of intercession to Ravenna, he, as we are told, 'left the government of the City to Stephen Patrician and Duke.' It would appear therefore that already ten years before the events which we are now considering, the Pope considered the *Dux Romae* as his subordinate, and that the *Dux Romae* bore the title of Patrician. It was probably in some such sense as this, and with the intention of conferring upon the Frankish king both a dignity, the first among Roman laymen, and a duty, that of guarding the territory of Rome from hostile invasion, that the Pope hailed his powerful friend in the chapel of S. Denis as not only King but Patrician. The title was bestowed upon the royal children as well as on Pippin himself, and is from this time forward sedulously used by the Pope in writing to his protectors, though Pippin himself does not seem to care about its adoption. From a strictly legal point of view probably no one but the Emperor at Constantinople had any right to confer the title, but neither Pope nor Frankish king seems to have troubled himself to enquire what were the strict legal rights of Constantine Copronymus.

At some time during this year 754 the Pope was seized with a serious illness, the result of the fatigues of the journey and of the rigour of a northern winter. His life was for a time despaired of, but he suddenly recovered, and was found by his attendants one morning convalescent when they had feared to find him dead.

And now all eyes were directed to the great *placitum* which was to be held at the royal villa of Carisiacum near to Soissons in the heart of the old kingdom of the Salian Franks. As has been already said, we know that there was a certain unwillingness on the part of some of the great Frankish nobles to fight the Pope's battles with the Lombard beyond the Alps. The strength of this opposition appears from the following words of Charles's biographer Einhard: 'The war against the Lombards was with great difficulty undertaken by Charles's father on the earnest entreaty of Pope Stephen, because certain of the chief men of the Franks with whom he was wont to take counsel so stoutly resisted his will that they proclaimed with free voices that they would desert the king and return to their own homes. Pippin, who was no Oriental despot, but the chosen leader of a free people, had to persuade and entice his subjects into granting the consent which was necessary for the fulfillment of his promises to the Pope. Stephen himself was apparently not present at this assembly. He was perhaps not yet fully recovered from his sickness, and he knew that he could trust his royal friend to plead his cause effectually. But when Pippin repaired to the place of meeting, where he was about to 'imbue the nobles with the admonitions of the Holy Father he was met by a powerful, perhaps an unexpected opponent. His brother Carloman, whom he had last seen in the barbaric splendour of a Frankish chief, and who had then been his equal, nay his superior in power, now appeared before him, barefooted, with shaven head, in the coarse robe of a Benedictine monk, to plead humbly—for what? That he would give prompt and effectual aid to the menaced head of the Western Church? No : but that he would live in peace with Aistulf, and not move one of his soldiers into Italy. The Papal biographer shall tell the story of this marvellous intervention in his own words :—

'Meanwhile the most unspeakable Aistulf by his devilish persuasions so wrought upon Carloman the brother of the most pious king Pippin, that he drew him forth from the monastery of St. Benedict in which he had dwelt devoutly as a monk for a certain space of time, and directed his course to the province of Frank-land, in order to raise objections and oppose the cause of the redemption of the Holy Church of God and the Republic of the Romans. And when he had arrived there he strove with all his power and vehemence to subvert the cause of the Church, according to the directions which he had received from the aforesaid unspeakable

tyrant Aistulf. But by the grace of God he availed not to move the most firm soul of his brother the most Christian king Pippin: on the contrary, that excellent king, when he perceived the craftiness of the most wicked Aistulf, renewed his declaration that he would fight for the cause of God's holy Church as he had before promised the most blessed Pontiff. Then Pope and King with one accord taking counsel together, and remembering the aforesaid Carloman's own promise to God that he would lead a monastic life, placed him in a monastery there in Frank-land, where after certain days at the call of God he migrated from the light of day.'

This is all the information that we possess as to this startling reappearance of the princely monk on the political arena, save that the official annals inform us that Carloman undertook this journey unwillingly, being bound by his vow to obey the orders of the abbot of Monte Cassino, who again was under constraint, laid upon him by the stern orders of the Lombard king. This explanation, though accepted by many writers, does not seem to me sufficient to account for the facts. The abbot of Monte Cassino had not in past times shown himself thus subservient to the will of Aistulf, and a man occupying a position so venerated throughout Italy could not have been thus easily coerced into a course of which his conscience disapproved. Nor does the Papal biographer's own account of the vehemence with which the impulsive Carloman fulfilled his mission correspond with the chronicler's statement of the reluctance with which it was undertaken. To conjecture the motives even of our best-known contemporaries is often an unprofitable task, but if I may conjecture the motives of Carloman I would suggest that he had now seen enough of the Papal Curia of Italy and of the Lombards to know that the best thing for the country of his adoption, and even for 'the Holy Church of God' for which he had made such vast sacrifices, would be the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between the Bishop of Rome and the Lombard king, and that he may even have had some prophetic vision of the long centuries of sorrow which the Pope's appeal for aid from beyond the Alps would bring upon Italy.

The death of Carloman followed at no great interval his unsuccessful intervention in the cause of peace. It has never been suggested that this event was not due to natural causes, but among these, disappointment and chagrin at the discovery that he who could once have ordered peace or war with the certainty of obedience, must now plead and plead in vain for the cause of peace, may very probably have contributed to the fatal result. The continuer of the chronicle of 'Fredegarius' tells us that he remained at Vienne with his sister-in-law queen Bertrada, languished for many days, and died in peace in the year 755.

The mission of Carloman having proved fruitless, and the nobles assembled at Carisiacum having sufficiently signified their concurrence in the royal policy, Pippin proceeded to his work of obtaining, by negotiation if possible, if not by the sword, a promise from the Lombard king to respect 'the rights of St. Peter'. In order to state clearly what those rights were, a document appears to have been drawn up, in which Pippin set forth the territories which if he were victorious he was prepared to guarantee to the Pope. This is the far-famed Donation of Pippin, a document certainly less mythical than the Donation of Constantine, but one which has been the cause of almost as loud and angry a controversy, chiefly because, the document itself having disappeared, its contents have to be supplied by conjecture; and in this conjectural reproduction scarce two of the guessers altogether agree.

Twenty years later, when Charles the Great visited Rome in the midst of his victorious campaign against the Lombards, the then Pope Hadrian, as we are told, 'constantly prayed and besought him, and with paternal affection admonished him to fulfill in all things that promise which his father the late king Pippin of blessed memory, and himself the most excellent Charles with his brother Carloman and all the chiefs [lit. judges] of the Franks, had made to St. Peter and his vicar Pope Stephen II of blessed memory, when he journeyed to Frank-land : his promise namely to bestow divers cities and territories of that province of Italy and confirm

them to St. Peter and all his vicars for a perpetual possession. And when he [Charles] had caused that promise which was made in Frank-land in a place which is called Carisiacum to be read over to him, he and all his nobles approved of all the things which were there recorded.'

The authenticity of the passage here quoted has been itself gravely questioned, and great difficulties, as we shall hereafter see, encompass the question of the donation by Charles (in 774) founded upon this alleged donation by his father twenty years earlier. But upon a review of the whole evidence it seems to me clear that a donation of some kind was made by Pippin to the Pope at Carisiacum in 754. We call it a donation, but it was in strictness not a donation, but a promise to distribute in a certain manner the spoils to be taken from the Lombard king. And if we take into consideration the thoughts and desires of the Frankish king as far as these are disclosed to us by his words reported by the chroniclers, we may be able to make a probable conjecture as to the nature of the gift which he promised to make to the Pope in the event of victory. He was informed that the Lombard king—generally described to him as 'most wicked' and 'quite unspeakable'—had lately reft from 'the Roman Republic' certain territories between the Adriatic and the Apennines, that he was trying to subject the citizens of Rome to the payment of a poll-tax, and that in his marchings hither and thither through Italy he was trampling upon the Papal patrimonies and oppressing the coloni by whom they were cultivated. All this King Pippin has determined must come to an end. The *justitiae* or rightful claims of St. Peter must be vindicated; the patrimonies must be safe from molestation; the independence of the citizens of Rome must be maintained; the territories lately wrested from 'the Roman Republic' must be restored—not to the Byzantine Emperor, a personage about whom the Frankish king knew and cared but little, but to 'the Roman Republic,' that is to St. Peter, first bishop of Rom and keeper of the doors of the kingdom of heaven, that is to St. Peter's vicar, Pope Stephen II, now sheltering under the Frankish wing in the abbey of S. Denis, to whom moreover he, Pippin, owed a debt of gratitude for the confirmation of him and his sons in the kingdom of the Franks.

Further than this it is not likely that the Pope's demands or the king's promises extended. The settlement of the Lombards in Italy was now near two centuries old, and might be considered as ancient history. The dukes of Spoleto and Benevento had not, as far as we know, assisted the designs of Aistulf, and had often of recent years been leagued with the Pope against the Lombard king. There was therefore no reason why they should be attacked in the impending Holy War. Restitution of the *status quo ante* Aistulfum, a return to the state of affairs which existed in Italy in the time of Liutprand, was the object which Pippin set before his eyes; only with this exception, that the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis, the territories which had been tom from 'the Roman Republic' by Aistulf, were to be handed back, not to the lieutenant of Constantine Copronymus, but to Stephen II, bishop of Rome.

It is probable enough that the 'Donation' may have been expressed in vague and large terms into which a later Pope might read more than was in the mind of either contracting party at the time of its first inception. In this connection it is important to remember—a fact of which the modern reader is too apt to lose sight—that the geographical information at the command of a statesman of the eighth century was enormously inferior to that which would be available for the humblest mechanic at the present day. Every man of moderate education now knows the configuration of Italy on the map, and can at once approximately estimate the probable effect of this or that cession of territory on the balance of power in the peninsula. If the Frankish king and his counsellors had access to any map either of Gaul or Italy, which may be gravely doubted, it would not be a better one than that which, under the name of the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, is preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna, and which, however interesting to the historical student, so grotesquely distorts the shapes and alters the sizes of the countries

composing the Roman Empire that any judgment formed on its evidence would be sure to be mistaken.

In fine, Pippin's interest in the affairs of Italy was only of a secondary kind. The scheme, which eventually ripened in his son's mind, of crushing the Lombard monarchy and annexing Italy to his dominions, never, we may safely say, suggested itself to this king of the Franks. All that he was concerned with was the consolidation of his dynasty and the salvation of his soul. To secure these ends he was willing to march into Italy, to defeat the Lombard king, and to assert the claims of St. Peter; but these ends accomplished, the sooner he returned to his own villa by the Marne or the Moselle the better. As we shall see, though he twice appeared and fought in Italy, he did not once visit Rome.

At first Pippin tried the path of negotiation with the Lombard king. Three successive embassies crossed the Alps charged to obtain from Aistulf by the promise of large gifts a recognition of 'the claims of St. Peter.' All being in vain, Pippin summoned the Frankish host to meet him at the royal villa of Brennacum, on the 1st of March, 755. The army moved southward; the 'wedges,' as we are told of the Frankish host, had accomplished nearly half their journey, when Pippin, at the instance of the Pope—sincerely anxious doubtless to prevent the effusion of Christian blood—sent yet one more embassy to Aistulf. It is probably to this embassy that the words of a slightly later chronicler refer, to whom we are indebted for something more definite than the sonorous platitudes of the Papal biographer:—

'Pippin therefore [being about to] cross the Alps, sending his ambassadors to Aistulf, demanded that he would not afflict the Holy Roman Church, whose defender he had become by the divine ordinance, but would render full justice for the property which he had wrested from it. But Aistulf, puffed up with pride, and even with foolish words heaping reproaches on the aforesaid pontiff, would not promise him anything except liberty to return through his dominions to his own proper place. The ambassadors, however, protested that on no other conditions would the lord Pippin depart from the borders of Lombardy unless Aistulf would do justice to St. Peter. "What is that justice of which you speak?" asked Aistulf, to the ambassadors made answer, "That you should restore to him Pentapolis, Narni, and Ceccano, and all the places where the Roman people complain of your injustice. And Pippin sends you this message, that if you are willing to render justice to St. Peter he will give you 12,000 solidi" (£7,200). But Aistulf, spurning all these offers, dismissed the ambassadors without any words of peace.'

On learning the rejection of the proposals for peace the Frankish host, which had marched by way of Lyons, Vienne and Grenoble, ascended successively the valleys of the Isère and Arc, and reached S. Jean de Maurienne, whence they would behold the snowy peaks of the mountains round Mont Cenis rising before them. Here the main body of the host seems to have halted, collecting its strength for the tremendous enterprise of crossing the Mont Cenis in the face of the opposition of a watchful foe. Suddenly and unexpectedly came the tidings that no such enterprise lay before them, that the peril, though not the labour, of the passage of the Alps was vanished. The Lombard king had collected his army and pitched his camp in the valley of Susa, 'with the weapons and engines of war,' says the chronicler, 'and the manifold apparatus which he had wickedly collected against the Republic and the Apostolic See of Rome, wherewith he now strove to defend his nefarious designs'. As the reader has been already reminded, the valley of Susa as well as that of Aosta had been included in the Burgundian-Frankish dominions ever since the early and unsuccessful inroads of the Lombards into Frankish territory. This fact and the consequent necessity of violating Frankish territory before he could even occupy Susa may explain the backward state of Aistulf's preparations for defence. Assuredly, however, he should not have contented himself with merely pitching his camp at the mouth of the pass, but should have occupied some of the heights, so as to harass

the march of the invading Aistulf army. The result of this improvidence was too plainly seen. A small body of Frankish soldiers, sent probably with no other object than that of effecting a reconnaissance, were seen emerging from the pass. Aistulf moved at early morning with the whole Lombard army against them, but the Franks, confiding in the help of God and St. Peter, possibly also still enjoying the advantage of the higher ground and fighting with great valour, inflicted serious loss on the Lombard host. The proportion of deaths among the Lombard officers was especially severe, a feature of mountaineering warfare which is often observed at the present day. Almost all the dukes and counts and other nobles were slain in this engagement, and Aistulf himself narrowly escaped death by the fall of a rock. Casting away his armour he fled with the remnant of his host down the valley to Pavia, and shut himself up in that city. Rapidly did Pippin and his men now accomplish the dreaded passage of the Alps. They were in time to capture the deserted camp, to plunder it of its treasures of gold and silver and all the abandoned ornaments of regal magnificence, and to make its tents their own. Pippin then sat down with his army before the city of Pavia, laying waste with fire all the surrounding country, and carrying havoc far down the fertile valley of the Po.

Aistulf soon perceived that he was unable to cope with the might of the king of the Franks, and through the nobles and clergy in the besieging army began to make overtures for peace. They appear to have been seconded by him whom the biographer calls 'the most blessed and as it were angelic pope,' who was in the camp of the invaders, and who desired to stay the ravages of war and the further effusion of Christian blood. A treaty of peace was drawn up between the Romans, the Franks and the Lombards, in which Aistulf with all his nobles bound himself by a mighty and terrible oath to immediately restore Ravenna and divers other cities to the Roman Republic. Hostages were given to ensure the observance of the treaty and of Aistulf's promise that he would entertain no further hostile designs against the republic or the see of Rome; and the costly presents wherewith he had obtained their advocacy of his cause were handed over to the Frankish nobles. After these matters had been settled Stephen returned to Rome with the dignified ecclesiastics who formed his train, enriched with large presents by the generous Frankish king, and Pippin returned to his own land, carrying with him apparently no small part of the great Lombard hoard.

He had not, however, really settled the dispute by his intervention. Unfortunately, as already hinted, Aistulf seems to have been one of those irritating personages, like our Ethelred the Unready, who can make neither war nor peace, neither fight a good stand-up fight successfully, nor accept the consequences of defeat when beaten. Pippin had probably not long returned to his northern home when he received a letter in which Pope Stephen bitterly complained of the many tribulations inflicted upon him by the unjust king of the Lombards. 'That old enemy of the human race, the Devil, has invaded his perfidious heart, and he seems to make of no account the promises which he gave under the sanction of an oath, nor has he consented to restore one hand's breadth of land to the blessed Peter and the holy Church of God, the Republic of the Romans. In truth ever since that day when we [you and I] parted from one another he has striven to put upon us such afflictions, and on the Holy Church of God such insults, as the tongue of man cannot declare : nay, rather the stones themselves, if one may say so, would with mighty howlings weep for our tribulation. . . . I especially grieve, my most excellent sons' (the young kings, Charles and Carloman, are addressed along with their father), 'that you would not hear the words uttered by our Unhappiness, and chose to listen to lies rather than to the truth, deceiving your own souls and making yourselves a laughing-stock. Wherefore without any effectual redress of the wrongs of St. Peter we had to return to our own fold and to the people committed to our charge'.

This is the theme to which Stephen II returns in this and many following letters. 'You have made peace too easily : you have taken no sufficient security for the fulfillment of the

promises which you made to St. Peter, and which you yourselves guaranteed by writing under your hands and seals.’ Remembering the eagerness for a peaceable settlement without further effusion of Christian blood, which his biographer attributes to the Pope, we are somewhat surprised to find him adopting this tone of remonstrance. It is of course possible that Stephen may have advised the Frankish king to insist on some surer guarantee than oaths and hostages for the fulfillment of Aistulf’s promises; but on the other hand it may be suggested that the Churchman, unused to the sights and sounds of war and anxious for peace, urged on his royal friend terms of accommodation which he himself when he had returned to Rome found to be quite insufficient for his purpose.

‘Better is it not to have vowed at all,’ urges the Pope, ‘than to vow and fail to perform the vow. The promised donation written by your own hand is firmly held by the Prince of the Apostles himself. Consider what a stalwart exacter of his dues is the blessed Peter, who through my intervention has anointed you and your sons to be kings; and fear lest when the just Judge appears to judge the quick and the dead and to consume the world by fire, that same Prince of the Apostles shall prove that your written promise failed to bind you. A severe account will you then have to settle with him. All the nations round believed that you who had received from Providence this shining gift, granted to none of your ancestors, of protecting the rights of the Prince of the Apostles, were going to obtain justice for him by your most mighty arm. But in this you seem to be failing, and great stupefaction has seized all hearts by reason thereof. “Faith without works is dead”: therefore listen to our cry, and speedily and without delay obtain the restitution to St. Peter of all the cities and towns contained in your donation, as well as of the hostages and captives who are still detained’.

These piteous cries for help do not seem to have been immediately answered. It was probably too late in the year for the Frankish king to think of undertaking another Transalpine expedition. But meanwhile Aistulf, with incredible folly as it seems to us, as well as with scandalous disregard of his plighted word, took the field, and endeavoured to capture Rome in the winter months of the year 756, before Pippin could come to its rescue. On the 1st of January an army under the command of the Duke of Tuscany came down, like Porsena’s Etruscans of old, clustering round the Janiculan Mount and blocked up the three gates of the City, on the right bank of the Tiber—Portuensis, S. Pancratii, and S. Petri. The Lombards of Benevento, who had made a levy *en masse*, marched from the South, and beset the gates of St. Paul and St. John, and the three gates between them. King Aistulf himself pitched his tents, like another Alaric, outside the Salarian Gate, and said (or was reported by the trembling citizens to have said), ‘Open to me this Salarian gate, and let me enter the City. Hand over to me your Pope, and I will deal gently with you. Otherwise I will demolish your walls and slay you all with one sword. Then let me see who will deliver you out of my hands.’

The Lombard blockade of Rome lasted for three months. Of the events which marked its course we have no other information than that which is conveyed to us by the indignant Papal biographer and by the loud shrieks of Pope Stephen himself, who in two letters written to Pippin about the 24th of February describes, and perhaps exaggerates, the actions of the Lombard king. The farms of the Campagna are said to have been laid waste with fire and sword. The Lombards are accused of burning the churches, of throwing the images of the saints into the fire, of stuffing their pouches with the consecrated elements and devouring them at their gluttonous repasts, of stripping the altars of their altar-cloths and other adornments, of carrying off and violating the nuns, some of whom died of the ill-treatment which they received, of belabouring the monks, some of whom they lacerated with stripes. The farm-houses on St. Peter’s property were destroyed by fire: so too were the suburban houses of all the Romans of every class. The cattle were driven off, the vines cut down to the roots, the harvests ‘trampled down and devoured.’

All this catalogue of crimes is derived from the Pope's letters addressed to Pippin, passionately crying for help. The Papal biographer, while confirming in general terms the charge of wasting the Campagna with fire and sword, adds a more specific accusation, that of digging up the bodies of the saints and carrying them away. This lawless quest for sacred relics shows the strange mixture of savagery and devotion in the minds of the Christianized but only half-civilized Lombards.

The military operations of the Lombard army seem to have been confined to the recapture of Narni (which had been previously handed over by Aistulf to the emissary of Pippin), and to frequent but unsuccessful assaults on the walls of Rome. In repelling these attacks the Pope saw with pleasure, conspicuous on the walls, the mail-clad figure of Abbot Warnehar, who had come to Rome as Pippin's envoy, and who now, says the Pope, 'watched day and night for the defence of the afflicted City of Rome, and like a good athlete of Christ strove with all his might for the defence and liberation of all of us Romans.'

Late in the second month of the siege the valiant Wamehar, along with two other of Pippin's envoys, returned from Rome, accompanied by George, bishop of Ostia. They travelled by sea, and they bore two letters from Stephen to the king, from which the foregoing particulars as to Aistulf's invasion have been quoted. These letters repeated in yet shriller key than their predecessors the entreaties, nay the commands, of the Pope to Pippin, if he valued his eternal salvation, to come speedily to the rescue of Rome. 'The Lombards taunt us in their rage and fury, saying, "Now we have surrounded you. Let the Franks come if they can and deliver you from our hands". On you, after God and St. Peter, depend the lives of all the Romans. If we perish all the nations of the earth will say, "Where is the confidence of the Romans which they placed in the kings and the nation of the Franks?". More than that, the sin of our ruin will lie on your soul; and in the last great day of judgment, when the Lord shall sit surrounded by the blessed Peter and the other Apostles to judge as it were by fire every class, each sex, and every one of this world's potentates, He will harden His heart against you, who now harden your heart against our prayers, and will say to you (O God forbid that it should be so), "I know you not, because you did not help the Church of God, and because you took no care to deliver His own peculiar people when they were in peril."'

To add emphasis to these two letters a third brought containing and enforcing the same arguments, and putting them in the mouth of the awful holder of the keys of heaven, St. Peter himself. The letter is addressed to the three kings, Pippin, Charles, and Carloman; to the most holy bishops, abbots, presbyters; and to all religious monks; also to the dukes, counts, armies and people dwelling in Frank-land. In it the Apostle assures his correspondents that he has chosen them as his adopted sons for the deliverance from the hands of their enemies of the City of Rome in which his bones repose, and the people of Rome committed to his care by Christ. 'As if I, God's apostle Peter, were now standing in my bodily presence before you, even so do you firmly believe that you hear the words of my exhortation, because, though I be absent in the flesh, in the spirit I am not far from you. For it is written, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward." Moreover our Lady, the Mother of God, Mary ever a virgin, doth with us most solemnly adjure, warn, and order you : and the like do the thrones and dominations and the host of the heavenly army, the martyrs and confessors of Christ, and all who are in any way well-pleasing to God.

'Run! run! by the living and true God I exhort and summon you: run and help, ere the living fountain which has satisfied your thirst be dried up, ere the last spark of the flame which gave you light be quenched, ere your spiritual mother, the Holy Church of God, through whom you hope to receive eternal life, be attacked and foully ravished by impious men. ... I speak on behalf of that City of Rome in which the Lord ordained that my body should rest, that City which He commended to my care and made the foundation of the faith. Liberate that City and

its people, your brethren, and do not suffer it to be invaded by the nation of the Lombards : so may your provinces and your possessions not be invaded by nations that ye know not of. Let not me be separated from my Roman people: so may you not be separated from the kingdom of God and the life eternal. I conjure, I conjure you, O my best beloved ones, by the living God, suffer not this my City of Rome and the people that dwelleth therein to be any longer tortured by the nation of the Lombards : so may your bodies and souls not be tortured in the eternal and unquenchable fire of Tartarus with the devil and his pestilential angels. And let not the sheep of the Lord's flock committed to my care by God, namely the Roman people, be any longer scattered abroad, so may the Lord not scatter you and cast you forth as He did unto the people of Israel.'

To address such a letter to the Frankish king in the name of the Apostle himself was certainly a daring stroke of rhetoric. It jars upon modern taste and feeling, it may perhaps have jarred upon the spiritual sensibilities of some men even in that day, to have the Prince of the Apostles introduced thus audaciously as an actor on the scene where Stephen, Aistulf, and Pippin were playing their respective parts. But if it was an offence against reverence and good taste, there is no reason to think that it was anything more. It would be perfectly understood by those to whom the letter was addressed that the words were the words of Stephen, though the superscription of the letter assigned them to Peter. It is surely through a deficiency of imagination and of insight into the feelings of a past age and its modes of expressing them, that some modern authors have seen in this document an attempt to impose on the credulity of Pippin by presenting him with a forged letter from the world of spirits.

These urgent entreaties, these promises of spiritual reward and menaces of spiritual perdition, produced the desired effect. It was probably as early in 756 as warlike operations could be undertaken that Pippin again marched by way of Châlons-sur-Saone and Geneva to S. Jean de Maurienne, and crossed the Mont Cenis, routing the Lombards, who seem to have been again stationed at the mouth of the pass, and upon whom Pippin's soldiers burst with Frankish fury, slaying many and driving the rest in flight before them down the valley. But on his march towards Pavia, he met, not Aistulf, but two unlooked-for visitors from Constantinople. George the first secretary and John life-guardsman (the same officer doubtless who had come on a similar mission two years before) had arrived in Rome charged with a commission to the Frankish king. Stephen had informed them of Pippin's intended movements, and had probably showed by his manner that he was no longer the subservient courtier of Byzantium, but that the 'Donation of Constantine' was about to take effect through the intervention of his powerful friend beyond the Alps. The Imperial envoys disbelieved the tale, but took ship for Marseilles, accompanied by an emissary from the Pope. On their arrival at Marseilles they found that the Pope's information had been too true, that Pippin was indeed already on his march for Italy; and probably the gossip of the seaport told that the expedition was all for the 'justice of St. Peter', with not a word about the 'justice of the Emperor'. Saddened by this discovery they strove to the utmost of their power to detain the Papal envoy at Marseilles, to prevent him from reaching the presence of the king. But 'though', we are told, 'they afflicted him grievously, by the intervention of St. Peter their crafty cleverness was brought to nought'. However, the Imperial ambassadors getting the start of the Papal envoy, travelled with rapidity to the camp of the Frankish king, whom they overtook not far from Pavia. With earnest entreaties and the promise of many presents George besought Pippin to restore Ravenna and the cities and villages of the Exarchate to the Empire.

'But in no wise,' says the biographer, 'did he avail to incline the firm heart of that most Christian and benignant king to any such surrender. Mild as he was, that worshipper of God declared [with emphasis] that on no account whatever should those cities be alienated from the power of the blessed Peter and the jurisdiction of the Roman Church and the Apostolic See,

affirming with an oath that for no [living] man's favour had he given himself once and again to the conflict, but solely for love of St. Peter and for the pardon of his sins: asserting too that no abundance of treasure would bribe him to take away what he had once offered for St. Peter's acceptance. Having given this answer to the Imperial ambassador, he at once gave him leave to return to his own place by another way, and thus did the Silentarius arrive at Rome, having accomplished nothing of his purpose.

As to the details of Pippin's second campaign in Italy we know scarcely anything. Aistulf probably abandoned the siege of Rome by the end of March, and returned to Pavia to defend himself against the threatened invasion. Pippin with his nephew Tassilo, the young duke of Bavaria, again ravaged the plains of Lombardy, and again pitched his tents under the walls of Pavia. Once more Aistulf saw himself compelled to beg humbly for peace, to renew his promise to surrender to the Pope the cities of the Exarchate and Pentapolis, and to add thereto the town of Comiaculum which lay in a lagoon north of Ravenna, and may perhaps have made the occupation of Ravenna more secure. A written 'donation of all these territories' to St. Peter and the Holy Roman Church and all pontiffs of the Apostolic See for ever was given by Aistulf and laid up among the Papal archives. Assuredly also some stronger guarantee than this for the fulfillment of Aistulf's promises was taken by the Frankish king. According to one chronicler—not of the most trustworthy character—Aistulf had to surrender a third part of the great Lombard hoard to his conqueror, to promise fealty and a yearly tribute of 5,000 solidi to the king of the Franks, and to guarantee by the surrender of hostages the fulfillment of all previous engagements to St. Peter and Pope Stephen.

When Pippin returned to his own land he commissioned the faithful Fulrad, now by interchange of hospitalities doubly bound to the Pope, to see to the fulfillment of Aistulf's promises. Accompanied by the officers of the Lombard king, Fulrad 'entered,' says the biographer, 'each one of the cities both of the Pentapolis and Emilia, received their submission, and taking with him the nobles' of each city, together with the keys of their gates, arrived at Rome. Having placed the keys of the city of Ravenna as well as of the different cities of the Exarchate along with King Pippin's donation on the tomb of St. Peter, he handed them over to the same Apostle of God and to his vicar the most holy Pope and all his pontifical successors, to be forever possessed and disposed of by them.

The biographer then gives the names of twenty-three cities and towns, which will be found in a Note at the end of this chapter. It will be sufficient here to state that they did not comprise (as one might suppose from the previous sentence) all the cities of the two provinces of the Emilia and Pentapolis. Of the Emilia only about a fifth, in the extreme east of the province, was yet obtained by the Papal see. The whole of the Pentapolis however, with the important exception of Ancona, was included in the cession to the Pope of which Fulrad was the happy instrument. This cession therefore comprised all the coast-line of the Adriatic from Comacchio north of Ravenna to Sinigaglia north of Ancona. Inland it reached up to the great dorsal spine of Italy formed by the Apennine range, and was doubtless now connected with the Ducatus Romae by the western branch of the great Flaminian Way, on which 'the Republic' had long held the key-city of Perugia and now probably acquired whatever other towns or villages were necessary to establish a secure communication between the bishop of Rome and his new dominion on the Adriatic. Narni, we are expressly told, was now again restored to him, but Narni is on the eastern branch of the Via Flaminia, over which, since the Lombard duke of Spoleto occupied that important post of vantage, we can hardly suppose the Popes to have had any claim other than one of courtesy.

Thus then is the struggle at last ended. The keys of all those fair cities repose in the well-known crypt where, amid ever-burning candles, lie the martyred remains of the fisherman of Galilee. The territory between the Apennines and the Adriatic, ruled over of late by a Greek

exarch, wrested from him by the Lombards and from the Lombards by the Frankish king, has been handed over, in spite of the 'Greek' Emperor's remonstrance, 'to the Roman Republic, to St. Peter and to his Vicars the Popes of Rome for ever.' The Pope does not yet assume the kingly title, nor must we commit the anachronism of calling him 'il Papa-Re', but it cannot be doubted that the old man at whose feet the keys of the twenty-three cities have been laid, and before whom the nobles of those cities have bowed, is recognized as their ruler, and that we behold in Stephen II the real sovereign of 'the Exarchate'.

NOTE A. List of the Cities ceded by Aistulf to Stephen II (756).

The following are the names of the ceded cities as given by the Papal biographer, with their modern equivalents, which are in some instances conjectural.

Ravenna
 Rimini.
 Pesaro.
 La Cattolica, on the coast between Rimini and Pesaro. Fano.
 Cesena.
 Sinigaglia.
 Jesi.
 Forlimpopoli.
 Forli.
 Castro Caro (near Forli).
 Montefeltro, now San Leo, S.W. of S. Marino.
 Arcevia, near Jesi.
 Mons Lucatium, in the territory of Cesena.
 Serra dei Conti, between Jesi and Fossombrone.
 The Republic of San Marino. Sarsina.
 Urbino.
 Cagli.
 Cantiano.
 Gubbio.
 Comacchio.
 Narni.

CHAPTER IX

THE PONTIFICATE OF PAUL I

We have again reached a point at which there is a clearing of the historical stage and some new actors appear upon the scene.

It was probably while Pope Stephen was still sheltering at S. Denis that the great champion of the Papacy, Boniface, received the crown of martyrdom. Revisiting the scene of his early labours in Friesland in the summer of 754, he had collected a number of recently-baptized converts on the banks of the river Boorn, in the flat land between the Zuyder Zee and the German Ocean, and was about to perform the ceremony of their confirmation. A party of Frisian heathens, revengeful for his old attacks on their idols, and coveting the ecclesiastical treasures, the vessels of silver and gold which he and his companions (for he had a long train of attendants) had brought, came upon them at daybreak on the 5th of June. Boniface forbade his followers to fight, held high the sacred relics, and said to his disciples, "Fear not them which kill the body. Anchor your souls on God, who after this short life is over will give you the prize of eternal life in the fellowship of the citizens on high". The barbarians rushed on with swords drawn. Boniface lifted a copy of the Gospels high over his head. A Frisian sword struck down the feeble defence. He was slain, and fifty-two of his companions with him. The barbarians rifled the tents, drank the sacramental wine, and hurled the precious manuscripts into the sluggish river, where long after, we are told, they were found uninjured. The very codex which the saint had used for a helmet showed the barbarian's sword-cut through it, but had all its letters visible. So perished the great apostle of Germany. The monks of Utrecht soon appeared upon the scene of the martyrdom, and carried off the precious relics of the martyrs to their own cathedral. The great prize of all, however, the body of Boniface himself, they were not permitted to retain. It was borne away up the Rhine-stream and the Main-stream to be laid in his own beloved monastery of Fulda.

It was only a few months after the surrender of the Exarchate and the Pentapolis that Aistulf, king of the Lombards, vanished from the scene. The Frankish chroniclers tell us that he was "meditating how to falsify his promises, leave his hostages in the lurch, and violate his oaths"; but no evidence is adduced of these fraudulent designs. All that we know with certainty is that he fell from his horse while hunting, was thrown violently against a tree, and died after a few days of the injuries which he had received. The accident probably happened at the end of December, 756, for in the letter which Pope Stephen II wrote to Pippin to inform him of the fact he says, "That follower of the devil, Aistulf, devourer of the blood of Christians, destroyer of the churches of God, struck by a divine blow has been swallowed up in the infernal whirlpool. For in the very days in which he set forth to devastate this City of Rome, after the year had come round, he was so stricken by the divine sword that at the very same season of the year in which he had committed so many crimes he finished his impious life".

The Lombard people, as might be expected, had gentler words to use in speaking of their departed king. Six years, nine years, fifteen years after his death he was still "our lord king Aistulf of good and holy memory".

On the death of Aistulf the Lombard state narrowly escaped the horrors of a civil war. One of the most powerful men in the kingdom was a certain Desiderius, a native probably of Brescia, who had been much favoured by the late king and advanced by him to the high dignity of Duke of Tuscany. At the head of the assembled forces of that important district he stood

forth as a claimant for the crown. Desiderius, however, was apparently a man of undistinguished birth. There were other Lombard nobles who considered themselves to rank much before him in the kingdom; and above all, the late king's brother Ratchis in his cell on Monte Cassino, notwithstanding that for seven and a half years he had worn the monkish cowl, heard with indignation that the throne which had once been his was occupied by such an one as the low-born Desiderius. He escaped to Pavia, and there for three months, from December to March, ruled in the palace of the Lombards.

As to the elevation of Desiderius to the throne is thus given in the Legend of St. Julia from a MS. Chronicle of Bishop Sieard of Cremona (who died in 1215) : I follow the translation of Abel : 'There lived in Brescia a nobleman, pious and God-fearing, named Desiderius. When the barons and chief persons of the realm gathered together at Pavia to choose a king, Desiderius said to his wife Ansa, "I will go there too". She laughed and said, "Go, mayhap they will choose thee for their king". He went, and arrived on the first day at a place called Lenum, where he lay down to rest under a tree. While he slept, a snake stole forth and wound itself round his head like a crown. His servant feared to wake him, lest the snake should bite him. Meanwhile Desiderius dreamed that a royal diadem was placed upon his head. Then he awoke, unharmed by the snake, and said, "Arise, let us go, for I have had a dream from which I judge that I shall be king". When they came to Pavia they found the people standing about in the courtyard, waiting for the decision of the electors, who had consulted together for several days without being able to come to a decision. So the crowd said to Desiderius, "Go in to them, Desiderius, and tell them that we are tired of waiting". He went in and told them what the crowd said, and when they saw Desiderius, of whom nobody had thought before as a candidate, one of the assembly cried out, "This Desiderius is an honourable man, and though he has not large possessions, he is valiant in war. Let us choose him for king". So it was done: he was arrayed in royal robes and proclaimed king amid general rejoicing. But he forgot not the place where the serpent had wound itself round his head, but built there a glorious abbey in honour of Jesus Christ and St. Benedict, and enriched it with many gifts. His wife also built at her own cost a convent for nuns in Brescia, and endowed it with estates, meadows, mills, and springs of water, with many dependants and slaves in all the surrounding bishoprics, and with costly ornaments, as became a queen of the Lombards'.

Happily a civil war was avoided, mainly as it would seem through the influence of the Pope, who beheld, doubtless with genuine disapproval, this attempt of a professed monk to return to the world and the palace which he had quitted, and who saw an opportunity to extend his newly-won dominions by working on the Duke of Tuscany's eagerness for the crown. An agreement was come to between Desiderius and Stephen, which is thus described in a letter written by the Pope to his Frankish patron : —

'Now by the providence of God, by the hands of His Prince of Apostles St. Peter, and by thy strong arm, by the industrious precaution of that man beloved of God, thy henchman Fulrad, our beloved son, Desiderius, mildest of men, has been ordained king over the nation of the Lombards. And in the presence of the same Fulrad he has promised on his oath to restore to St. Peter the remaining cities, Faenza, Imola, and Ferrara, with the forests and other territories thereto belonging; also the cities Osimo, Ancona, and Umana, with their territories. And afterwards, through Duke Garrinod and Grimwald. he promised to restore to us the city of Bologna with its district, and he professed that he would always remain in quiet peace with the Church of God and our people. He declared that he was loyal towards your God-protected realm, and he begged us to entreat your Goodness that you would confirm the treaty of peace with him and the whole nation of the Lombards.'

This compact, as we learn from the Papal biographer (as well as from the letter just quoted), was framed on the advice of Fulrad, now evidently the accepted and permanent link

between Pippin and Stephen, and it was made not only in his presence but in that of Stephen's brother Paul the deacon, and of Christopher, who had accompanied him as *regionarius* into France, who was now *consiliarius*, and who was thereafter to fill the higher office of *primicerius* and to play an important part in Roman politics. The object and motive of this stroke of Papal policy are clear. As stated by the learned editor of the *Liber Pontificalis*, the conquests of Aistulf from the Empire having been restored, it was now desired to go back a generation further and reclaim the conquests of Liutprand. These were 'the remaining cities' on the west and south of the already-ceded territory, which Pope Stephen now claimed, and some of which he actually obtained as the price of his support of Desiderius. In view of the relations which afterwards existed between this man, the last of the Lombard kings, and the Papal See, it is strange to find him here spoken of as 'mildest of men', and to remember that he was actually the favoured Roman candidate for the Lombard throne.

On receiving the document in which the promise and oath of Desiderius were contained, Stephen sent a letter of exhortation by the hands of the presbyter Stephen (one day to be himself Pope) to the monk-king at Pavia. The indefatigable Fulrad hastened with a detachment of Frankish soldiers to the help of Desiderius, who could also reckon on a contingent from the army of the *Ducatus Romae*. Ratchis saw that the scale was too heavily weighted against him. He could not fight the Franks, the Pope, and the Lombard duke of Tuscany all at once. He descended from his lately mounted throne, returned to Monte Cassino, and died there, when or how we know not. All that we know is that he, like so many other renowned sons of Benedict, lies buried on that famous hill.

In this connection it is interesting to observe that in the just quoted letter of Pope Stephen, the last that he wrote to his Frankish patron, there is a plea for pardon to the monks who had accompanied Carloman in his journey to the Frankish Court. This plea, which is preferred at the request of their abbot Optatus, shows how heavy had been the hand of Pippin on all who were concerned in that ill-starred intervention.

The promise so solemnly sworn to by Desiderius was not altogether made void. Apparently before the abdication of Ratchis was complete, the urgent Pope sent his messengers to obtain the surrender of the promised cities. They returned bringing with them the keys of Faventia, Tiberiacum, and Cabellum (Faenza, Bagnicavallo, and Cavello), together with all the towns in the duchy of Ferrara. This accession of territory rounded off the Papal dominions in the north, but the important cities of Imola, Bologna, and Ancona (with their neighbours Osimo and Umana) were still withheld by the Lombard king.

The letter in which Pope Stephen II announced to Pippin the accession of Desiderius described his friendly disposition towards the Roman See, and prayed the Frankish king to look favourably upon him, was one of the latest documents to which he set his hand. That letter seems to have been written in the month of March or April, and on the 26th of April, 757, he died. Many of his predecessors had been men of Greek nationality. In his five years' pontificate this essentially Roman Pope had done much to fasten down the great western Patriarchate to the soil of Italy. His is certainly one of the great epoch-making names in the list of bishops of Rome. As Leo the First had turned aside the terrible Hun and had triumphed over the Eastern theologians, as Gregory the Great had consolidated his spiritual dominion over Western Europe and rescued for it a great province from heathendom, so Stephen II won for himself and his successors the sovereignty over some of the fairest regions of Italy, gave a deadly blow to the hereditary Lombard enemy, and in fact if not in name began that long line of Pope-kings which ended in our own day in the person of the ninth Pius.

While Stephen was lying on his death-bed there was already hot debate going on in Rome as to his successor. A certain portion of 'the people of Rome' favoured the election of the Archdeacon Theophylact, and assembled daily in his house to discuss measures for his

elevation. This party is called by some modern writers ‘the Lombard’, by others ‘the Imperial’ party. We have no evidence in support of either conjecture.

Another, and as it proved a more powerful section of the people, favoured the elevation of the deacon Paul, brother and chief counsellor of the dying pontiff. He, refusing to go forth into the City and court the suffrages of the electors, remained in the Lateran with a few faithful friends waiting upon his brother’s death-bed. His fraternal piety was rewarded. After Stephen II had been solemnly entombed in the basilica of St. Peter, the adherents of Paul carried his election to the vacant throne, and the supporters of Theophylact dispersed, apparently without tumult.

We have already in the case of Silverius seen the son of a Pope chosen for the papacy, though not in immediate succession to his father. Now brother follows close upon brother as wearer of the Roman mitre, almost the only instance of the kind that has occurred in the long annals of the papacy. The choice in this instance seems to have been a good one, but it might have been a dangerous precedent. Considering the immense power which the Popes have wielded, it must be considered on the whole an evidence of statesmanship and courage on the part of the electors that mere family claims have so seldom determined the succession to the pontifical throne.

Of the new Pope’s character and personal history we know but little. A Roman of course by birth, like his brother, and like him brought up in the palace of the Lateran, he was probably at this time still middle life, since his ordination as deacon dated only from the days of Zacharias (741-752). What little we hear of his character seems to indicate a man of kindly temper, paying nightly visits to the cottages of his sick neighbours, or with his servants relieving the wants of the destitute : visiting the gaols also at night, and often setting free their inmates who were lying under sentence of death. Moreover, we are told, ‘if by the injustice of his satellites he had caused temporary tribulation to any man, he took the earliest opportunity to bestow on such an one the comfort of his compassion’. Even these words of praise indicate already the characteristic defects as well as merits of a government by priests, but they are valuable as evidence that already the Pope exercised all the functions of a temporal sovereign in Rome, probably therefore also in the *Ducatus Romae* and the lately annexed Pentapolis.

The ten years of Paul’s pontificate were an interval of peace between two political storms. He appears to have made it his chief aim to follow in all things the policy of ‘my lord and brother of blessed memory, the most holy Pope Stephen’; and his copious correspondence with Pippin enables us to trace the workings of this policy in relation to the Empire, the Lombards, and the Frankish kingdom. We will consider each subject separately.

I. *The Empire*. Already in the last letter written by Pope Stephen II to Pippin we find a note of alarm sounded as to the hostility of the iconoclastic ‘Greek’ Emperor. ‘And this,’ says Stephen, ‘we earnestly pray of your Exalted Goodness that you would order such measures to be taken with respect to the Greeks that the holy Catholic and Apostolic faith may through you remain whole and unshattered for ever’. This note becomes louder and more shrill throughout the correspondence of Paul, whose religious aversion to the image-breaking Emperor is mingled with his anxiety as a temporal ruler lest, either in conjunction with Desiderius or by his own unaided efforts, Constantine V should wrest from the Church its hardly-won dominions on the shore of the Adriatic.

A certain George, an Imperial secretary, had been sent from Constantinople on a roving mission to the West, to win over Pippin if possible to the cause of iconoclasm, to effect an alliance if possible with Desiderius, to recover Ravenna and the Pentapolis if possible for the empire, but at any rate and by all means to counter-work the schemes of the bishop of Rome, doubly odious at Constantinople as the great defender of image-worship and the rebellious

subject who had by Frankish help obtained possession of the best part of Imperial Italy and was now holding it in defiance of his lord. The influence of this secretary George on Western statesmen was profoundly dreaded by the pontiff. A letter, which is quoted only in abstract, contained "lamentations and tribulations, because King Desiderius has been taking counsel with George the Imperial envoy, who has come hither on his way to *Francia* to the intent that the Emperor should send his army into Italy to wrest from us Ravenna and the Pentapolis and the City of Rome". Desiderius has had 'private and nefarious conversations' with George at Naples for the same purpose. And lastly, in some mysterious way George has won over a certain presbyter Marinus to his 'unjust operations against the holy Church of God and the orthodox faith': that is, no doubt, to the iconoclastic crusade. A short time before, this Marinus had been high in favour with both Pope and Frankish King. He had been 'our most dearly beloved and faithful presbyter', to whom at Pippin's request Paul granted the *titulus* or parish church of St. Chrysogonus in the Trastevere at Rome. Now he is under the severe displeasure of the Pope and has to undergo a singular punishment. "Tell our brother bishop Wilchar", writes Paul to Pippin, "to consecrate presbyter Marinus bishop on our behalf. And order him to go and preside over some city in your dominions, which your most wise Excellency may decide upon, that he may there call to mind the wickedness which he has perpetrated and repent of his unrighteous deeds lest otherwise the Devil should lay hold of his wandering mind and raise him aloft to dash him down into utter ruin".

More than once we find the Pope repeating to his powerful patron the alarming rumours which have reached him as to the designs of 'the most wicked Greeks'. "Some of the most sincere subjects of your spiritual mother [the Roman Church] have intimated to us that six patricians, bringing with them three hundred ships, together with the navy of Sicily, have started from the Royal City [Constantinople] and are hastening to us here in Rome. What they want to do or for what cause they are being sent hither we are utterly ignorant. This only is told us, that they are directed to come first to us and afterwards to your Excellency in *Francia*".

This letter appears to have sounded a vain alarm. The six patricians, it would seem, did not make their appearance in Rome, nor were their three hundred ships descried in the offing from Ostia: but a letter from Pippin, which was probably a reply to the foregoing, informed the Pope that he was ready for the help and defence of the Holy Church of God 'when the necessity for such help should arise'; a gentle hint that it would be well not to harass a king, who had hard battles of his own to fight, with rumours of imaginary invasions.

About three years later, circa 763, (apparently) the rumour of a Byzantine invasion was revived, the tidings again coming from some of the faithful subjects of mother Church, probably some of the Roman party in Pentapolis or Ravenna. Again, 'The nefandissimi Graeci, enemies of God's holy Church and assailants of the orthodox faith, in direct opposition to God's will, are longing to make a hostile attack on us and on the region of Ravenna'. So great is the alarm into which the Pope is thrown by these tidings that he is willing to accept even Lombard help for his deliverance. Pippin is besought to send an envoy to Desiderius at Pavia, to the Lombard dukes of Tuscany, of Benevento, of Spoleto, ordering them all to hasten to the assistance of the Pope.

This too, however, was a vain alarm. The Emperor sent ambassadors, probably twice or thrice, to discuss the iconoclastic question with the Frankish king, to importune him for the restoration of the Exarchate, to wrangle with the Pope's envoys as to the wording of their master's letters, but no armed intervention of any kind was made by Constantine Copronymus in the affairs of Italy.

This exhibition of feebleness on the part of an Emperor of the strong Isaurian race, perhaps the toughest and most courageous of them all, may well surprise us till we look at the difficulties nearer home with which that Emperor had to contend. From 753 to 775 he was

almost constantly at war with the Bulgarians, the near and still heathen neighbours of Thrace and Macedonia. Most of his campaigns were successful, but even a successful campaign imposed a great strain on his resources and those of his empire.

Nor did he altogether escape the fickleness of the fortune of war. In 759 he sustained a serious defeat in one of the passes of the Balkans. In 765 a great naval armament, consisting of 2,600 transport ships, was wrecked in the Euxine, and all the crews perished. This disaster was followed by a conspiracy, in which some of the chief nobles of the Empire were engaged, and which even Constantine's own iconoclastic Patriarch of Constantinople was suspected of having favoured.

Throughout, the Emperor's fiercest fight was with his own subjects, and was caused by his remorseless, relentless vigour in giving effect to the iconoclastic policy of his father. In the year 753, two years after the Lombard conquest of Ravenna, a great synod was held at Constantinople which condemned the worship of images. The Bulgarian wars and other embarrassments prevented the immediate outbreak of persecution. It began however in full violence in 761, and from that time onwards Constantine, fiercely hated by a large party among his subjects, frantically cheered by another party (which included probably the strongest portion of his army), was pursuing, with all the energy of his soul, the ruin of the monks and bishops who yet clung to the worship of images. It was the monks who especially attracted the wrath of the Emperor, and out of whose ranks came the most celebrated martyrs to the cause of image-worship. Such an one was Andreas, who, having insulted the Emperor by calling him 'a new Julian, a new Valens', was scourged through the Hippodrome, strangled, and cast into the Bosphorus. Such an one was Stephanus, who after spending thirty years in a cave in Bithynia and having afterwards become the abbot of a monastery of refugee monks, was forcibly removed from his cell and banished to the island of Proconnesus, then thrown into prison, and fed for eleven months on six ounces of bread weekly, and at last, with the connivance if not by the express orders of the Emperor, was pulled out of prison, dragged through the streets, hacked to pieces, and cast into the malefactors' burying-place.

It does not appear that there was much actual bloodshed in this iconoclastic persecution, but there was an insulting flippancy in the methods employed by Constantine V which made his tyranny harder to bear than that of more murderous persecutors. When he found it impossible to procure the adoption by the monks of the decrees of the Synod of 753, he turned them out of their monasteries, many of which he converted into barracks for his soldiers. Some of the expelled monks were compelled to walk up and down the Hippodrome, each holding the hand of a prostitute, amidst the jeers and spittings of the mob. The Patriarch Constantine, who as has been said fell under suspicion of being concerned in the conspiracy of the nobles and who had also grown cold in his iconoclastic zeal, was scourged so severely that he could not stand. He was then carried in a litter to St. Sophia, and compelled to listen to the reading of a long paper containing the history of his misdeeds, for each one of which he received a blow on the head from the reading secretary.

Then, after the hair of his head, beard and eyebrows had been shaven off, he was seated on an ass with his face to its tail, and exposed in that state to the insults of the populace in the Hippodrome. At last, after he had been compelled by all these cruelties to recant his condemnation of the iconoclastic synod, he was beheaded, and his truncated corpse was thrown into the pit of the suicides. This depth of degradation, into which imperial tyranny had hurled the second patriarchate of Christendom, is probably the best justification that can be offered for the Roman pontiff's eagerness to obtain the position of sovereignty, which, as he might think, could alone secure him from a similar downfall.

For Constantine Copronymus himself, whatever may be our judgment upon the iconoclastic controversy, it is impossible not to feel loathing and abhorrence. Of course his

cruelties have been exaggerated by the ecclesiastical historians whose voices alone have reached posterity: but after making every reasonable deduction on this account, it is impossible to doubt that he was deliberately, wantonly, and insultingly cruel. And moreover, his antagonism to the Church was not confined to the iconoclastic controversy. He seems to have been one of the earliest instances of that free-thinking tendency which was the result of the contact of Christianity and Islamism. He spoke lightly of some of the names most venerated by Christians; he almost encouraged profanity in speech; his morals were undoubtedly licentious. A free-living as well as free-thinking ruler, bringing a round of joyous revelries into the solemn old palace by the Bosphorus, he no doubt achieved a certain popularity both with his soldiers and with the mob : but this very looseness of faith and of morality must have made his religious persecution all the more exasperating. The intolerance of a narrow bigot is hard to bear, but the intolerance of a man who is himself devoid of faith is yet more intolerable.

This Emperor, Constantine V, and these two Popes, Stephen and Paul, mark the final severance of political relations between Rome and Constantinople, to be followed in the next century by the great and final rupture of ecclesiastical relations between them. The harsh and violent character of Constantine Copronymus had something to do with this result; the fact that Stephen and Paul were Romans, while their two immediate predecessors, Gregory III and Zacharias, had been Orientals (the first a Syrian, the second a Greek), had perhaps even more to do with it: but obviously the chief determining factor was the capture of Ravenna by Aistulf, and its surrender at the command of Pippin to the Papacy. The sceptre had thus obviously departed from Constantinople and been transferred to 'Francia'. For a few years the Popes continued as a matter of form to date their letters by the year of the Emperor reigning at Constantinople, but after 772 even that survival from the old days of dependence faded away. Let us consider what this renunciation of dependence on the Eastern Augustus amounted to, for it gives a very peculiar character to the second half of the eighth century. From the time when bishops were first consecrated in Rome, down to—let us say—726, there could be no doubt that the bishop of Rome was a subject; nor (with some possible reservation for the short interval of Ostrogothic domination) that he was the subject of a Roman Emperor reigning at Rome, at Milan, at Ravenna, or at Constantinople. From 726 to 800 the Pope was practically 'amasterless man', the virtual ruler of the *Ducatus Romae*, and afterwards the acknowledged lord of the Exarchate and the Pentapolis. From the year 800 down to the French Revolution, the Pope, however great might be his spiritual pretensions, was, as regarded his temporal dominions, included, theoretically or practically, in that great, mysterious, loosely-compacted organization which was called the Holy Roman Empire. From the downfall of Napoleon to the seizure of Rome by Victor Emmanuel, a space of fifty-five years, the Pope-king was in theory as well as in practice an absolute monarch, owning no political superior however shadowy, as much a sovereign as the kings of France or Spain before the Great Revolution. Thus, from this point of view, the half-century between Waterloo and Sedan reproduced, as no intervening period had done, the half-century between Leo the Isaurian and Charles the Great.

II. *The Lombards.* We have next to consider the relations of Paul I with the new Lombard king, Desiderius. It need hardly be said that these relations soon became unfriendly, but they were scarcely interrupted by actual war. We have seen that Faenza and a little corner of territory round it were ceded to St. Peter. Further than that concession the gratitude of Desiderius for Papal help or his fear of the Papal anathema never went. On the contrary, he soon bestirred himself for the restoration of the power of a Lombard king to the fullness of its privileges in the days of Liutprand, and in doing so inevitably came into collision with the '*justitiae*' of St. Peter, and provoked the shrill outcry of the Pope.

In the last letter which Pope Stephen II wrote to Pippin (in March or April of 757), the letter in which he praised the excellent disposition of ‘the mildest of men, Desiderius’, were written these words :— “Moreover the people of the duchy of Spoleto, by the hands of St. Peter and your very strong arm, have appointed a duke for themselves. And both the Spoletans and the Beneventans all desire to commend themselves to your Excellency, preserved by God, and with panting breath are urgent to entreat your goodness”.

Here was indeed an important change threatened in the political map of Italy. True it is that the Spoletan and Beneventan duchies had often stirred uneasily and mutinously against the rule even of a strong king like Liutprand; but if the Pope’s letter accurately described the situation, if they were ‘commending’ themselves to Pippin, that meant, in the already current language of feudalism, that the two dukes desired to place their hands in his and to swear themselves the men or vassals of the Frankish king. Possibly the Pope’s language is not to be understood thus in the fullness of its technical import, but at any rate it was plain that the two southern duchies, separated as they now were from the northern kingdom by a continuous stretch of Papal territory, were in great danger of being lost to the Lombard state.

We must turn back for a few moments to consider what events had been occurring in these two duchies since the year 744. The fortunes of the Spoletan duchy during the years immediately following the death of King Liutprand are very obscure. From 745 to 751 Duke Lupus, known chiefly by his grants to the monastery of Farfa, seems to have reigned in the Umbrian duchy. After his death Aistulf perhaps took the duchy into his own hands, unless room has to be found for a certain Duke Unulf, who is doubtfully reported to have reigned for a few years. Apparently about this time the people of Spoleto took advantage of the troubles at Pavia following the death of Aistulf to choose for themselves a new duke, who (as we learn from a letter of Pope Paul) bore the great name of Alboin, and, as we have seen, they sought to secure their new independence of Pavia by placing themselves under the protection of Pippin. In Benevento, Gisulf II, who had been installed as duke by his great-uncle Liutprand, died in 751, in the prime of life, leaving a son, named Liutprand after his great kinsman, to inherit his dignity. For the young duke, who was probably but a child at the time of his father’s death, his mother Scauniperga for some years acted as regent, but apparently before the year 757 Liutprand had assumed the reins of power. There are some indications that neither Aistulf nor Desiderius was heartily welcomed as king by the family of the great Liutprand; and possibly some especial dissatisfaction at the exaltation of the latter nobleman to the throne may have led the young duke and his counsellors to venture on the treasonable course of ‘commending’ themselves to the Frankish king. However this may be—and our information as to these two Lombard duchies is extremely meagre—it was soon clear that the new king had both the will and the power to compel their unwilling allegiance. Desiderius assembled his army, marched through the Pentapolis, probably not sparing its harvests and reached Spoleto in his victorious course. Here he arrested the new duke, Alboin, with his chief nobles, and threw them into prison. He drew near to Benevento: the young duke did not dare to await his attack, but fled to Otranto, along with his foster-father John. Unable to invest that sea-coast town without a fleet, Desiderius proceeded to Naples, and there concerted measures with the Imperial envoy George for the reduction of Otranto and—so the Pope was told—for the recovery of Ravenna. The Sicilian navy was to undertake the blockade of Otranto; the Lombards were to invest it on the land side; the young prince and his governor were to be handed over to Desiderius, but the city if captured was probably to be restored to the officers of the Emperor. How far this programme was carried into execution and what became of young Liutprand we know not. At this point he disappears from history, and his place is taken by a certain Arichis, whom Desiderius installed in the duchy of Benevento, and to whom he gave his daughter Adelperga to wife. The

names of. both husband and wife, but that of the latter especially, will often recur in the later chapters of this history.

As for Spoleto, Desiderius seems for a year or two to have retained it in his own hands, but in April, 759, he invested Gisulf with the ducal dignity.

After this triumphant campaign Desiderius visited Rome. He came apparently not as a warrior but as a guest and a pilgrim, to pay his devotions at the tombs of the Apostles. He had, however, set his heart on obtaining the restitution of the hostages at the Frankish court (probably those who had been given by Aistulf at the end of the war of 756), and he hoped to accomplish this by the Pope's mediation. The price which he offered was the addition—or as the Pope called it the restitution—to the Papal territory of Imola, the next town westward on the great Emilian way after the recently acquired Faenza.

The result of this interview between Pope and Lombard King was seen in two remarkable letters dispatched by the hands of one Frankish and two Papal emissaries to the court of Pippin.

In one letter, the Pope, after thanking God for having raised to the pontificate one so humble as himself, and quoting the words of the Psalmist, 'I will take the cup of salvation and will call upon the name of the Lord', alludes to the blessing pronounced on the peacemakers, and then continues: "Let your most excellent Goodness know that our most excellent son, King Desiderius, has arrived at the threshold of the Apostles, peacefully and with great humility, and that with him we have held discourse which will be salutary to both of us. He has promised to restore to us the city of Imola: on this condition however, that we should send our *missi* to your Excellency, and that [by their mediation] he should receive back the hostages whom as it seems you have still with you, and that you should consent to confirm with him the peace [which was ratified with his predecessor]. Wherefore we pray you to restore those hostages to our aforesaid son Desiderius, to confirm your treaty of peace with him, and to correspond with him on terms of cordial friendship : so that, by the favour of God, His people of both nations may in your joyful times dwell in peace and great safety, and that Almighty God may grant you a long life on the throne of your kingdom".

So ran one letter, borne by Ruodbert, George and Stephen. The second was not like unto it. Therein the Pope details at considerable length the 'impious and cruel' deeds which have been perpetrated by Desiderius in the course of the campaign just described, and the 'nefarious' negotiations which he has been conducting with the Emperor's ambassador at Naples. After the conquest, or as the Pope calls it the 'dissolution' of the two duchies, he has come to Rome, and there "we have besought and exhorted him by the most holy body of St. Peter and by your God-protected Excellency to restore to us the cities of Imola, Bologna, Osimo and Ancona, as he once promised to do in our presence and that of your *missi* Ruodbert and Fulrad. But he was not at all inclined to assent to this. He shuffled like the trickster which he certainly is, and made several suggestions, as for instance that if he could recover his hostages who appear to be there in Francia he would then enter into relations of peace and concord with us. We have longed greatly to write to you, but could not do so on account of the Lombards hemming us in on every side. In fact we did privately, by the greatest exertion, send you two apostolic letters, which we fear may have been intercepted by them. It is for this reason that we now by the aforesaid *missi* send you another letter, written as if in compliance with the will of King Desiderius, desiring you to release his hostages and confirm the peace with him. But, O good and most excellent king, our spiritual kinsman, we so penned that letter solely in order that our messengers might be able to get through into Francia, since if we had not done so they would have had no chance of passing the Lombard frontier. But when you receive that letter do not pay any heed to its contents, and on no account consent to restore the said hostages to the Lombard party. Rather we adjure you to order the strongest pressure to be put upon Desiderius

and the Lombard nation, so that he may restore those cities which he promised to your honey-flowing Excellency, and through you to your protector St. Peter. For as to none of the things which he promised at the outset of his reign have we been able to come to a firm agreement with him”.

These two interesting but contradictory letters slumber side by side in the pages of the Codex Carolinus, as they once slumbered in the Frankish archives; but it is one of the tantalizing results of this one-sided correspondence that we do not know what answer Pippin made, nor with which of them he complied. The whole tenour of the letters, however, shows that he was determined not to undertake another Italian campaign, if it were possible to avoid it, having already wars and fightings enough on his hands on the other side of the Alps. Had Desiderius indeed attempted to wrest the already surrendered cities out of the hands of St. Peter, Pippin might have been bound in honour to interfere, but if only the status quo could be maintained, he did not feel himself called upon to take up arms for the further enlargement of the Church's territory. Thus in a letter, of which it is much to be regretted that we cannot determine the date, the Pope acknowledges that Pippin has recommended him to live in peace and love with Desiderius, king of the Lombards, and actually proceeds thus, “Now if that most excellent man shall be willing to remain in that true love and fidelity which he hath promised to your Excellency and the Holy Church of Rome, we too will remain in firm charity and stable peace with him, observing that injunction of the Lord, ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God’.”

These pacific counsels of the Frankish king and his obvious reluctance to draw the sword a third time on behalf of Peter, seem to have produced the desired effect; and Desiderius, if not harassed with entreaties to restore the remaining cities of the Pentapolis and Aemilia, appears to have been willing to remain at peace with Rome. There was indeed one interruption to this peace in 761, when he made an attack on Sinigaglia and sacked a city of Campania, but this does not seem to have been a long or serious campaign. On the whole, one would say from a perusal of the correspondence that there was something like a gradual reconciliation between Paul and Desiderius. The increasing bitterness of feeling between the Eastern and Western Churches perhaps contributed to this result, the *nefandissimi Graeci* having now taken the place of the *nefandissimi Langobardi* as chief enemies of God and His Church.

In one letter the Pope says to Pippin : “You tell us that you directed Desiderius to return to us our runaway slave Saxulus. But I ought to tell you that Desiderius came here himself to pray at the tombs of the Apostles, and that he brought Saxulus with him and restored him to us. At the same time we arranged with Desiderius that he and our *missi* should make a tour through the various cities and there settle our claims. This has now been satisfactorily accomplished for Benevento, Tuscany, and partly for Spoleto. In a postscript you told us that you had admonished Desiderius to constrain the men of Naples and Gaeta to restore the patrimonies of St. Peter situated at Naples, and to allow their bishops-elect to come hither for consecration. We thank you for this”.

Everything seems to show that by the end of Paul's pontificate a *modus vivendi* had been arrived at between the Lombards and the Roman pontiffs.

III.

The Frankish Kingdom.

The relations of Pope Paul with the Frankish king, as disclosed to us by the Codex Carolinus, consist chiefly of a lavish outpouring of spiritual compliments, of an exhibition of that gratitude which is ‘a lively sense of favours to come’, and of frequent entreaties for help which never arrives. Not once nor twice, but in almost every letter, and often many times in a

letter, Pippin and his boyish sons (who are always coupled with him) are reminded that St. Peter has anointed them to be kings. Pippin is the new Moses, the new David, a man specially protected by God, who has laid up for himself infinite treasures in the starry citadels, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt the treasures prepared for the righteous. "The name of your Excellency", says the enthusiastic pontiff, "sparkles on the book of life in the sight of God. No tongue can express the thanks which the holy Church of God and the Roman people owe to your Excellency for all the benefits conferred upon them. None of this world's rewards can be an adequate remuneration. There is but the one only God, consisting in three substances, who can fittingly reward your Excellency with the joys of the heavenly kingdom. Pray continue steadfast in that good work of our protection which you have begun. Right well has your Christian Excellency perceived how great is the impious malice of the heretical Greeks, who are eagerly plotting to humble and trample down the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church and destroy the holy orthodox faith and the tradition of the holy fathers. Do you manfully resist these impious heretics. Our strength is in your arm, and we will say, 'O Lord! save the most Christian king Pippin, whom Thou hast ordered to be anointed with holy oil by the hands of Thine Apostle, and hear him in the day when he calleth upon Thee'."

The glory of the pious king is reflected upon his faithful people. In an ecstatic psalm of thanksgiving addressed 'To the Bishops, Presbyters, Abbots, Monks, Dukes, Counts, and to the whole muster of the army of the Franks, God-protected and Christ-beloved', the Pope thus salutes them: "You, dearest ones, are a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, whom the Lord God of Israel hath blessed : therefore joy and exult because your names and the names of your kings are exalted in heaven, and great is your reward in the sight of God and His angels. For Peter is your protector, the Prince of the Apostles to whom our Redeemer has granted the power of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth".

As the *missi* went backwards and forwards between Mutual Rome and the Frankish villa, they generally bore with of Pope them some costly present, an emblem of the friendship which united Pope and King. A table (perhaps inlaid with precious stones) had been presented by Pippin to Stephen II, 'and through him to St. Peter'. "This table", says Paul, "we brought in with hymns and spiritual songs to the hall of that chief of Apostles, and laid it on your behalf on the shrine of that door-keeper of the kingdom of heaven. Then we anointed it and placed upon it the sacred oblation, which we offered up for the eternal welfare of your soul and the stability of your kingdom, laying our apostolic censure and anathema on any one who should dare to remove it from thence. In that same apostolic hall, therefore, it will remain for ever, as a memorial of you, and be sure that you will receive a fitting reward from God and St. Peter in the heavenly kingdom".

After the baptism of Pippin's infant daughter Gisila (who was born in 757), the king sent to his venerable friend the napkin which had been used in the ceremony. The Pope gladly accepted the offering, and considered himself to be thereby constituted godfather of the royal child. From that time forward his favourite epithet for Pippin, one never absent from his letters, is '*spiritalis compater*', our spiritual co-father. "With great joy", he says, "and accompanied by a whole cohort of the people, we received this napkin in the chapel where rests the holy body of the blessed Petronilla, the helper of life; which chapel is now dedicated to keep in eternal memory the praises of your name".

The story of the discovery of the body of Petronilla is told in the *Liber Pontificalis*, from which we learn that long before this time a marble sarcophagus had been discovered with these letters engraven upon it, AVREAE PETRONILLAE FILIAE DULCISSIMAE. It was not doubtful (thought the scholars of that day) that these letters had been carved by the hand of the Apostle Peter himself, to express his love for his 'sweetest daughter'. Pope Stephen II had erected a chapel in honour of Petronilla close to that of her uncle St. Andrew in the great

basilica which bore the name of her father. The dedication of this chapel had been in some way connected with the name of Pippin, and its erection was regarded as a visible monument of the league of eternal friendship between the Pope and the Frankish King. One of the first acts of Paul I on his elevation to the papacy had been to transport the body of Petronilla on a new wagon to the home prepared for her by his brother, and thither, as I have said, he now in solemn procession bore the baptismal napkin of the infant Gisila.

The Pope on his part frequently accompanied his plaintive petitions for help with some ornament or cunningly-wrought article of apparel, which may perhaps have been designed in the old days of splendour before the barbarians came, and which, secure in the treasury of St. Peter, had escaped the soldiers of Alaric and Totila, or the yet more penetrating quest of the Byzantine logothete. "I send you", he says, "by way of benediction, one *apallarea*, a sword set with jewels, with the belt belonging thereto, a ring holding a jacinth, a quilted mantle with peacocks' feathers embroidered upon it. Which little blessing we beg that you may receive uninjured. To the lords Charles and Carloman, with our great apostolic blessing, we send a ring apiece containing jacinths".

At another time the Pope sends "to your Excellency such books [probably on certain subjects named by the king] as we have been able to meet with; that is to say, a book of antiphons and responses, a grammar, a copy of Aristotle, a copy of Dionysius the Areopagite, a geometry, an orthography, and a grammar, all written in Greek, and also a clock for use at night"

In this way the intercourse of rulers was helping forward the cause of civilization, even when their own motives were not altogether pure or unselfish. Constantine Copronymus, harshly dissolute Emperor as he was, may rightly claim a high place in the musical history of Western Europe. No fewer than six of the chronicles add to their notices of the year 757 (the year of Paul I's accession) this naive sentence: "And the organ came into Frank-land". They often differ strangely from one another as to the date of wars and councils, but this one date, that of the year when the deep voice of the organ was first heard in a Frankish cathedral, seems to have fixed itself indelibly in their remembrance. And from those, which may be called the state-chronicles, we learn the fact that this wonderful organ was one of many presents sent by the Emperor Constantine to the king of the Franks.

In the still rude and barbarously furnished villa of a Frankish prince it was not perhaps easy to find a suitable present to submit to the critical gaze of the courtiers of Rome or Constantinople. This was probably the cause of a letter (unfortunately known to us only by the reply) in which the young princes Charles and Carloman expressed to the Pope their regret that they had not sent him any present. "By the same letter", says the Pope in answer, "you inform us that you are extremely ashamed that you have not been able to send us any gifts by the hands of your messengers who brought it. But why, sweetest and most loving sons, why, most victorious kings, should you yearn to gladden us with your gifts? We desire no other gifts than always to learn of your safety and prosperity, and to be able to congratulate you on your attainments, that is our enriching: your exaltation, that is the exaltation of God's holy Church: your defence of the orthodox faith; these are the best presents that we can receive".

And yet notwithstanding this lavish outpouring of sweet words, the deeds for which they were to be the payment were never done. During all the ten years of Paul's pontificate no Frankish warriors again threaded the passes of Mont Cenis in order to strike another blow for the 'justices' of St. Peter. To understand the causes of this negative result we must glance very briefly at the occupations and anxieties of the Frankish king during the same period.

In 758, the year when the first note of dissatisfaction with 'the meekest Desiderius' was sounded by Paul, Pippin was engaged in a tough struggle with the Saxon tribesmen on his north-eastern frontier, making a breach in the rampart which they had cast up for the defence of

their country, fighting many battles, slaying a great multitude of their warriors (probably not without severe loss among his own men), and at last reducing them to submission and to the promise of an annual tribute of three hundred horses.

In 759 Pippin achieved the important result of expelling the last Saracen invader from Gaul. The campaign was, it is true, not an arduous one. Having marched his troops to Narbonne and formed the siege of that city, he opened secret negotiations with the descendants of the Visigoths, who formed doubtless the bulk of its inhabitants. When they had obtained an assurance that if they became once more subjects of the Frankish king they should be allowed to live by their own national law and should not be compelled to come under the Salian or Ripuarian code, they agreed to Pippin's terms, slew the Saracen garrison, and opened the gates of their city to the Franks. Thus was ended the Moorish domination north of the Pyrenees. But though the campaign was not an arduous one, it may well have left Pippin little leisure for redressing the importunate and ever-growing claims of St. Peter.

The next year, 760, saw the commencement of a struggle which, with little intermission, occupied Pippin's whole energies for the remaining nine years of his life, which evidently brought him sometimes into serious danger, and which by its toils and anxieties probably shortened his days. This was the war with Waifar, duke of Aquitaine. That great region between the Loire, the Atlantic, and the Pyrenees, which had once belonged to the kingdom of the Visigoths and which became subject to the Franks in 507 (when the pious Clovis could no longer endure that the Arian heretics should possess so large a portion of Gaul), had probably never been so thoroughly incorporated with the Frankish monarchy as the rest of what we now call France, and had certainly of late yielded but an insecure and shadowy allegiance to the *fainéant* Merovingian kings. As we have already seen, Duke Eudo assumed an almost independent position in his wars and treaties with Charles Martel; and now his grandson, Duke Waifar, was probably unwilling to own himself the 'man' or vassal of one who had no royal blood in his veins. Doubtless if Francia was to become one coherent state, Aquitaine must be made to own the absolute sovereignty of the Arnulfing king: and it was upon the whole the greatest service which Pippin rendered to his country, that by severe toils, undertaken probably in failing health and amid many distracting cares, besides the piteous appeals of the Roman pontiff, he did succeed in accomplishing this great result.

The pretext—it may have been more than a mere pretext—for the war, was found in Waifar's refusal to restore to some churches under Pippin's special protection the property which belonged to them in Aquitaine. War was declared, and was carried on, probably with varying success, though the chroniclers record only Frankish victories, for the four years from 760 to 763. Then came a new and a threatening development of the struggle. Tassilo, sister's son to Pippin, now a young man of twenty-one years of age, who had for fifteen of those years held the dignity of duke of Bavaria, who had followed his uncle to the Italian war in 756, and had in the following year at Compiègne sworn tremendous oaths of fidelity on the holiest relics of the saints, now in the fourth year of the Aquitanic campaign flatly refused any longer to follow the Frankish standard, and falsely feigning sickness returned to his own country, from whence he sent a message that he would see his uncle's face no more. Thus did the young duke definitively renounce his allegiance to his Frankish overlord, and, what was a more outrageous offence in Teutonic eyes, by the time and manner of his defection he committed the unpardonable crime of *harisliz*, or desertion of his lord in the presence of an enemy. This act changed all the after-life of Tassilo, darkened its close, and exercised an important if indirect influence on the fortunes even of the Lombard people.

It is probable that Tassilo's defection caused the failure of the campaign of 763, and it is possible that Pippin himself may have been thereby brought into a situation of peril. If so, we may safely refer to this period two letters from Pope Paul, in the first of which he expresses his

anxiety for the king's safety, seeing that so long a time has elapsed since he heard news of him, and that gloomy tidings concerning him are arriving 'from your and our enemies'—who are probably the Greek iconoclasts.

In the second letter the Pope announces that he has heard from various pilgrims to the thresholds of the Apostles that the king has returned in safety to his home, tidings which fill his soul with joy and call forth his fervent thankfulness to God.

In a letter written some years later the Pope informs Pippin of some faint overtures towards reconciliation which Tassilo desires him to communicate to his offended overlord; but nothing seems to have resulted from this mediation.

For two years Pippin remained in his own land pondering the situation, distracted by the double war which seemed opening out before him, and collecting his forces for either event. At length he decided, no doubt wisely, that the Aquitanic enterprise alone must be proceeded with, and that the chastisement of his rebellious nephew must for the present be postponed. The three years from 766 to 768 were devoted to the prosecution of the war, evidently with ever-increasing success. At length in the midsummer of 768 Waifar, who had been for many months wandering up and down in Perigord, a hunted fugitive, was slain, apparently by one of his own followers; and the war of Aquitaine was at an end.

Theological discussions occupied some of Pippin's leisure in the interval between these triumphant campaigns. In January, 767, the Byzantine ambassadors appeared before a synod of Frankish bishops which was convened at Gentilly near Paris. As described by the chroniclers, it was assembled to decide 'questions concerning the Holy Trinity and the worship of images'. The purely theological question was the everlasting argument between Easterns and Westerns as to 'the procession of the Holy Spirit' and the words 'Filioque' surreptitiously (said the Easterns) added to the Nicene confession of faith. It is suggested that this old grievance was brought up by the Byzantine envoys in order to counterbalance the iconoclastic innovations objected against them by the Latins. The synod, however, appears to have dispersed without arriving at any harmonious conclusion—the predecessor of many equally fruitless discussions of a similar kind between the Eastern and Western Churches.

We read in the Codex Carolinus some letters in which apparently the Pope, in expectation of the holding of this synod, speaks confidently of the result, and praises the unshaken firmness of Pippin in all his dealings with the shifty and heretical Greeks, but we have none expressing the satisfaction which he must certainly have felt if he heard the result. The chronicler informs us that after his victorious campaign of 767 Pippin sent his army into winter quarters and spent his own Christmas at Bourges, where he heard the tidings of the death of the Roman Pope. The news must have travelled slowly, for the death of Paul the First actually took place on the 28th of June, 767. On account of the summer heats he had retired to the church of his namesake, S. Paolo Fuori le Mura. He was seized with sickness, and his death followed in a few days. His body, at first buried in that basilica, was after an interval of three months transported by a multitude of Romans and foreigners, with psalms and hymns, to the regular resting-place of the Popes at St. Peter's.

'And the bishopric of Rome lapsed for one year, one month [and ten days]'. So writes the Papal biographer. That lapse of the episcopate is the Church's way of describing the wild scenes of faction and disorder which will form the subject of the next chapter.

NOTE.

On the Offices of the Papal Household.

These officers, who formed practically the ministry of the Pontifical State, are thus enumerated by a MS. of the twelfth century found in the Lateran and published by Mabillon.

“In the Roman Empire and in the Roman Church of today there are seven Palatine Judges, who are called *Ordinarii*, who ordain the Emperor, and with the Roman clergy elect the Pope. Their names are as follows :—

I. *Primicerius*, and II. *Secundicerius*, who receive their names from their offices themselves. These two, walking in the Emperor on the right hand and the left, seem in a certain way to reign with him : without them no decision of importance is taken by the Emperor. Moreover, in the Roman Church in all processions they lead the Pope's palfrey, taking precedence of the bishops and other magnates.

II. The third is the *Arcarius*, who presides over the tribute.

IV. The fourth is the *Sacellarius*, who hands forth to the soldiers their pay, gives alms to the sick on the Sabbath day, and bestows upon the Roman bishops and clergy and persons in orders their *presbyteria* [stipends],

V. The fifth is the *Protoseriniarius*, who presides over the *scriniarii* whom we call *tabelliones* [scriveners].

VI. The sixth is the *Primus Defensor*, who presides over the *defensores*, whom we call advocates.

VII. The seventh is the *Adminiculator*, whose duty it is to intercede for orphans and widows, for the afflicted, and for captives.

In criminal cases these men do not judge, nor do they pronounce a capital sentence on any man, and at Rome they are clerics who are never promoted to any other rank. But the other magistrates, who are called *Consuls*, conduct trials and punish those who are amenable to the laws, and pass sentence on the guilty according to the magnitude of their crimes.”

In the four centuries which elapsed between Paul I and Alexander III many changes may have taken place, but there seems reason to suppose that the officials here enumerated were to be found in Rome in the eighth century. I would suggest, however, a doubt whether they were necessarily all ecclesiastics at the period with which we are now dealing. Christopher and his son Sergius seem to me more like laymen than clerics.

As Hegel points out, the full title of the *Primicerius* and *Secundicerius* should include the addition *notariorum*; and they may be considered as the President and the Vice-President of the Papal Chancery.

The statement that they with the Roman clergy elected the Pope would of course not be true for the eighth century, in which there was still a semblance of popular election. Savigny, however, suggests that these seven *Judices Palatini* directing the election of the Pope may have furnished the type for the seven cardinal-bishops of a later day, and may even have had some influence on the selection of seven as the number of the Electors in the Holy Roman Empire.

CHAPTER X

A PAPAL CHAOS.

The death of Paul I brought out in strong relief the difficulties which result from clothing a religious leader with temporal power. The arguments in favour of that course are obvious, and have already been often referred to. The cruelties inflicted on Popes who dared to differ from the Eastern Augustus on questions of religious dogma, the transportation of Silverius to the desolate Palmaria, the attempt to drag Vigilius from the altar to which he clung for refuge, the death of the persecuted Martin at inhospitable Cherson, the attempts on the liberty of Sergius and on the life of the second Gregory, might not unreasonably suggest, even to an unambitious Roman pontiff, that if he was to be safe he must be also sovereign; nor can we deny that the happy device of interweaving the claims of St. Peter and his Vicar with those of the Holy Roman Republic seemed to offer a plausible means of obtaining this sovereignty without too obviously abandoning the position assumed by Christ when He said, "My kingdom is not of this world".

But, however the truth might be veiled by the festoons of pious rhetoric, the substantial fact remained that the bishop of Rome was now virtually king over the central City of the world, and over fair domains touching both the Tyrrhene and the Adriatic Seas; and this proud position naturally attracted the ambition of men for whom the spiritual prerogatives of the successor of St. Peter would have had no fascination. In later centuries this motive was to be made miserably manifest when the Papal See became for a time almost an appanage of the Counts of Tusculum. We have some faint presage of those evil days in the scenes which were now enacted before the bewildered gaze of the citizens of Rome.

The little town of Nepi, about thirty miles from Rome, was, as we have already seen, one of the frontier towns of the Ducatus Romae looking towards Lombard Tuscany. Here dwelt an ambitious citizen of doubtful nationality, named Toto, who had by means unknown to us acquired the dignity of dukedom. Conspiring with three of his brothers, named Constantine, Passivus and Paschalis, and with a troop of rustics, drawn apparently from both sides of the border and devoted to his will, this adventurer conceived the daring design of giving a Pope to Rome and of ruling the new Papal territory in his name,

Pope Paul was still lingering on his death-bed under the shadow of his namesake's great basilica when Toto, his brothers, and his accomplices appeared upon the scene. They intended—so we are told—to hasten events by cutting short the feeble thread of the pontiff's life, but were prevented by the *primicerius* Christopher, who invited them and the rest of the Roman nobility into his house and gave them 'strong and salutary' counsels as to abstinence from crime. He even succeeded (so he averred) in inducing them and the heads of the opposite party to bind themselves by mutual oaths not to elect any Pope save from among the bishops, priests and deacons of the Roman Church, and not to introduce any of the suburban rustics into the City in order to carry the election. All this advice however was in vain, and the oaths solemnly taken were only so many perjuries. Scarcely had Paul I sighed out his latest breath, when Toto and his brothers with a horde of rustics from the towns of Tuscany rushed into the City through the Gate of St. Pancratius on the Janiculan height, held a tumultuary election in the house of Toto (who seems to have possessed a palace within the walls of Rome), and chose as Pope, Constantine the layman, the brother of the invading chief.

This tumultuary election took place apparently on the evening of Sunday, the 28th of June, 767, and was followed by the march of Toto, his brothers and his rustics to the Lateran palace of the Patriarchate, where George, bishop of Praeneste, was ordered to admit the new Pope to the minor orders, which were so to speak the threshold of the ecclesiastical state. The bishop at first refused, cast himself at the feet of Constantine, and begged him by the holy mysteries to cease from his presumptuous attempt and forbear from introducing such an unheard-of innovation into the Church of God. But the rough men who had just taken part in the election in Toto's palace gathered round him, and with fierce threats ordered him to do as he was bid. Terrified, the bishop consented, and ordained Constantine, who, now a cleric, stalked in and seated himself in the patriarchal chair.

When Monday dawned the same unfortunate bishop George, who had now no choice but to cast in his lot with the usurper, admitted Constantine to the successive degrees of subdeacon and deacon in the oratory of St. Laurence at the Lateran—otherwise called the *Sancta Sanctorum*—and presented him to the people to receive their oath of obedience. On the following Sunday, Constantine proceeded through the streets of Rome with his usual train of armed men (doubtless marshalled by his truculent brothers), entered the great basilica of St. Peter, and was there consecrated Pope by George of Praeneste and two other bishops, Eustratius of Albano and Citonatus of Porto.

The elevation of Constantine to the pontificate was certainly irregular, for though there had been many instances (notably the case of the great Ambrose of Milan) in which laymen had been suddenly raised to the presidency of other sees, in Rome the practice was so rare as to be almost unknown, and the Pope, by a rule which had not been broken for more than two centuries, ought to be chosen from the ranks of either the deacons or the presbyters. But however manifest the irregularity of the whole proceeding, the necessary formalities had been in some fashion complied with. There had been a popular election, the candidate had passed through the ecclesiastical grades up to that of deacon (higher rank in the Church was not necessary), had been consecrated Pope by three bishops of the Roman Church, and could now sit in the chair of St. Peter and call himself 'Servant of all the servants of God'. He did in fact for thirteen months preside over the Apostolic See, though he is not reckoned in the number of the pontiffs, nor is his face to be found in the long series which gaze down upon the beholder from the walls of the great church of St. Paul's Without the Gates.

Early tidings of these strange proceedings were brought by a notary named Constantine to his official chief Christopher, who as *Primicerius Notariorum* should in due course have presided over the election and formed one of the board of three which should have ruled Rome during the vacancy of the Holy See. Terrible were the threats of which Constantine the notary was the bearer from his namesake unless Christopher would assist in making him Pope. This however he steadfastly refused to do, betaking himself instead to tears and prayers to Almighty God for the preservation of His Church from the impending scandal.

A certain Duke Gregory, a dweller in Campania, who probably attempted to resist the usurping Pope by force of arms, was put to death, and Christopher hearing that his own death also was decreed took refuge with his sons in the church of St. Peter. He was at last induced to emerge from his place of refuge on receiving from Pope Constantine a solemn assurance, confirmed by an oath before St. Peter's tomb, that he and his sons should be allowed to dwell peaceably in their homes till the approaching Easter-tide. After that he was to be allowed to retire with his son Sergius to the monastery of the Saviour near Rieti, in the district of Spoleto.

Meanwhile the new Pope had addressed two letters of the orthodox pattern set him by his predecessor, to 'his dear son Pippin, king of the Franks and patrician of the Romans'. The ordinary phrases about the starry realms, the honey-flowing Excellency of the Frankish king, his God-protected kingdom, the duty which he owes to his protector St. Peter, and so forth,

flow from the pen of this suddenly-exalted layman as smoothly as from that of the ‘child of the Lateran’ who preceded him. Many no doubt of these sentences were ‘common forms’ which would be supplied by any of the clerks in the Papal chancery to his employer. The solecisms in grammar and spelling, even more outrageous and more frequent than those which we meet with in the letters of Pope Paul, suggest the idea of a pattern set by such a clerk and imperfectly copied by an illiterate rustic. The allusions, however, to the circumstances of his own elevation to the pontificate are peculiar, and if there be any truth in the account of the matter given by the *Liber Pontificalis*, are audacious :—

“We expect you have already heard that our predecessor Paul, of blessed memory, has by the call of God been withdrawn from the light of day, and that the inhabitants of this City and of the surrounding towns have chosen my Unhappiness to preside over them as their pastor”.

The allusion to the share which ‘surrounding towns’ have had in the election is a slight tribute to veracity.

“When I seriously consider with myself what are the duties of the office into which I have crept, in respect of tending the rational sheep of the Lord, I must confess that unbearable sadness fills my secret soul”. (The ‘office into which I have crept’ sounds like a very candid confession of the truth, but is probably due to the new Pope’s ignorance of the meaning of the words, which some crafty clerk dictated for his adoption.)

“But I who am greatly weighed down and perceive that by no virtues or attainments of my own have I been advanced to this dignity, conclude that the Divine compassion working on the hearts of the people has brought about this result : and therefore, like one awakened from a heavy sleep, I perceive with stupefaction and ecstasy that an honour has been conferred upon me which I never desired, which I never even thought of, and to which my little faint heart never aspired. For suddenly being seized by the violent hands of an innumerable multitude of people who all agreed in this thing, I was borne as it were by a mighty blast of wind up to the great and awful height of this pontificate. . . . Oh, how great and fearful a thing art thou, the responsibility of the pastor! And how can I, unhappy one, fulfill the onerous duty of the cure of souls!”.

The Pope then goes on to make a short confession of faith in order to show his absolute orthodoxy. He alludes to Christ’s converse with sinners, and (with some dexterity) to the call of Matthew the publican from the tax-gatherer’s table, and he announces the arrival of a presbyter from Jerusalem bringing the patriarch Theodore’s synodical letter addressed to the late pontiff Paul, from which it is clear that the patriarchal thrones of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria, all agree with that of Rome in upholding the worship of images. Upon the whole this rustic brother of Duke Toto plays his part so well and imitates so admirably the language of his predecessor—the rough Esau this time counterfeiting the bland voice of the peaceful Jacob—that one almost expects to see that he will succeed in carrying off the Church’s blessing.

That consummation was prevented by the energy of the two men, Christopher and Sergius, father and son, who had held the two highest offices in the Papal chancery, and who, whether from personal ambition or from honest loyalty to the traditions of the See, were determined that Constantine’s usurpation of the papacy should not be legitimized by success. We have seen that they obtained leave to retire to a monastery near Rieti after Easter, 768. The Papal biographer, who has his own reasons for disliking the two men, though he approves their deed, says that they feigned the desire to become monks, and swore that they would assume the monastic habit, in order to obtain from Constantine the required permission to depart from Rome. Instead of resorting to the convent of the Saviour at Rieti, where the abbot was waiting to receive them, they made their way to Spoleto and besought the Duke Theodicius to escort them across the river Po to the court of Desiderius. He did so, and the two ministers having

been admitted to the presence of the Lombard king, earnestly besought him to lend his aid 'that the error of such a novelty might be cut off from the Church of God'.

Desiderius appears to have authorized his the Duke of Spoleto to interfere in the Roman troubles, but not to have sent any troops of his own for that purpose. Probably the power of this suburban 'Duke' Toto was inconsiderable, and no great display of force was needed to crush him. In fact, the only persons of whom we hear as sharing in the invasion of Rome are the inhabitants of Rieti and Furcona, two insignificant towns in the Apennine highlands belonging to the duchy of Spoleto. Under the command of Sergius and a certain presbyter Waldipert, who probably came as envoy from the Lombard king to control the impending revolution, the rustic army marched suddenly on Rome by the Via Salara, and reached the bridge over the Anio at twilight on the 29th of July (768). Next day they crossed the Ponte Molle, and worked round on the north and north-west of Rome, first to the Gate of St. Peter's and then to the Gate of St. Pancratius. Some relations of Christopher opened the gate to his son, and there the Lombards stood on the Janiculum, near the site of the present church of S. Pietro in Montorio, overlooking the outspread City. They displayed the Lombard banner, but 'stood trembling on the walls, fearing the Roman people, and not daring to descend'. So says the Papal writer, but it is more probable that Sergius and Waldipert, knowing that they had friends in the enemy's camp, determined to avoid the odium of a victory won by the swords of the Lombards, and preferred to wait for the course of events. Duke Toto with his brother Passivus mounted up to the gate, having in their train two of the ministers of the Papal household, Demetrius and Gratosus, whom they believed to be their friends, but who were secretly in league with the assailants. One of the Lombards named Racipert rushed upon Toto, but was stoutly resisted, and met his own death from Toto's weapon. The Lombards wavered, and were in act to flee, when Secundus and Gratosus attacked Toto from behind with their lances and slew him. Thereupon Passivus rushed across the City to the Lateran palace and told his brother the Pope what things were being done on the Janiculan hill. Then Constantine and Passivus, with the bishop Theodore, the Pope's delegate, hastened to the great basilica of the Lateran, and fled from chapel to chapel seeking some inviolable refuge. In vain : after they had undergone some hours of suspense the officers of the Roman militia came and dragged them forth from the oratory of St. Caesarius and put them in ward, perhaps in one of the dungeons of the palace.

On the next day, which was a Sunday, Waldipert, without consulting his confederate Sergius, gathered together a number of Roman citizens, proceeded to the monastery of St. Vitus, and invited forth from thence a certain priest named Philip, whom the crowd greeted with the acclamation, 'St. Peter has chosen Philip, Pope'. They then led him in state to the Lateran basilica : a bishop offered the customary prayer; the new Pope bestowed his blessing on the people from the balcony of the church, and entered the palace of the pontiffs. Here he sat at the head of a banqueting company, among whom were some of the great ecclesiastical dignitaries and officers of the Roman militia.

But Philip, who was doubtless looked upon by the Lombard faction in the City as one of their own partisans, was, though a priest, not one of the regular parish-priests of Rome, and his election therefore, though not as irregular as that of Constantine, was contrary to the established custom of the Roman Church. As soon as Christopher (who had apparently travelled more slowly than his son) appeared upon the scene and was informed of Philip's election, he waited outside the gates of the City, and swore with a great oath in presence of the assembled Romans that till Philip was expelled from the Lateran he would not enter Rome. His word was recognized as decisive. Gratosus the chartularius, the slayer of Toto, with no very large troop of Roman citizens following him, marched to the Lateran and ordered the new Pope to depart thence. Philip, who seems to have deserved a better fate than to be made Pope at such

a time, calmly descended the great staircase of the Lateran palace, and returned amid the reverent greetings of the crowd to his monastic seclusion.

The election of the new Pope was thus taken definitely out of the hands of the Lombard faction, and was to be carried through by the *primicerius* Christopher alone. He convened an assembly of all the orders of the state at the *Tria Fata*, the northeast corner of the Roman Forum, in front of the church of S. Adriano, which probably occupied the site of that which was known in republican times as the Comitium. Here then, where once the Roman people had listened to the orators who expounded to them the policy of the Senate, was now gathered the strangely-mingled assembly which is thus described by the Papal biographer : “All the priests and leaders of the clergy; the chiefs of the militia and the whole army, and the honourable citizens and a concourse of the whole Roman people from great to little”.

This assembly, unanimously as we are told, elected Stephen, priest of S. Cecilia in Trastevere, to the vacant see. He was a Sicilian by birth, son of a man named Olivus. He was not more than fifty years of age, and had come as a boy to Rome in the time of Gregory III, who placed him in his own recently-founded monastery of St. Chrysogonus. Zacharias transferred him from thence to the Lateran ‘patriarchate’, and gave him a place in his household, at the same time consecrating him as priest of S. Cecilia. He thus became one of those ‘cardinal-priests’ (as men were beginning to call them) from whose ranks and those of the cardinal-deacons the Pope was now usually chosen. He is said to have been learned (according to the very moderate standard of that age) in the Scriptures and in the traditions of the Church, and he was probably a person of some ability, as he was sent by Paul I on an important mission to Pippin.

Such was the man who was now raised by the influence of the *primicerius* Christopher to the vacant patriarchate. The Lateran had again a lawful possessor : the interval of chaos was ended.

CHAPTER XII

THE PONTIFICATE OF STEPHEN III.

The new Pope, however skillful he may have been as a diplomatist, was not a man of any strength of will or singleness of purpose. In his short tenure of the Papacy—only three years and a half—he performed some extraordinary political evolutions and was guilty of some acts which at least resemble treachery and ingratitude. Altogether he is one of the poorest figures in the Papal annals of the eighth century.

The first business of the new reign was to decide as to the fate of the invader of the Papacy and his abettors. George, bishop of Praeneste, who had been, with his will or against his will, the chief instrument in Constantine's elevation, had been stricken with paralysis soon after that event, and was now either dead or so much enfeebled by disease as not to seem worth punishing. Strangely enough, we hear nothing of proceedings against the two bishops, of Albano and Porto, who also concurred in the consecration. The direst fury of the successful champions of the purity of Papal election was reserved for Theodore, the *vice-dominus* who had acted as ecclesiastical prime minister during the thirteen months of chaos, and who with his master sat trembling in the Lateran when the Lombards poured into the City. Some of the more lawless men of Stephen's party, whose cruelty is unsparingly condemned by the Papal biographer, laid hold of Theodore where he was kept in ward, and plucked out his eyes and tongue. Passivus, the brother of Constantine, also had his eyes plucked out, and then, as the biographer says, 'they showed themselves so unpitiful towards the men whom they had thus barbarously used, that they did not even allow them to be removed to their own homes that they might be tended by their servants, but taking away from them all their goods and their household retinue, they sent Passivus to the monastery of St. Silvester and Theodore to the monastery of Clivus Scauri' (which occupied the site of the palace of Gregory the Great on the Coelian Hill). Here suffering agonies of hunger and thirst, and vainly crying out for water, the unhappy *vice-dominus* soon after expired.

As for Constantine himself, he was brought forth from his prison; a heavy weight was attached to his feet, he was seated on a horse upon which, no doubt in derision, a lady's saddle had been prepared for him, and was thus led in ignominious triumph to the monastery of S. Saba on the Aventine.

A week had now passed since the entry of the Lombards into the City. The new Pope was to be consecrated on Sunday, but on the previous Saturday, the 6th of August, certain of the bishops and other clergy were assembled in the Lateran basilica, and Constantine being brought before them was, after the reading of the canons, formally deposed. Maurianus a sub-deacon tore the pallium from his neck and cast it at his feet, and then proceeded to cut off his pontifical shoes. Further proceedings against him seem to have been postponed to the meeting of a council. On the next August 7, day, as had been arranged, took place the consecration of Stephen III, whereat a general confession was made by the Roman people of their sin in submitting without resistance to the impious invasion of the Apostolic See; and this confession was read again in a loud voice by the scrivener Leontius from the ambo of St. Peter's.

One of the first acts of the new Pope was to send a messenger to his powerful Frankish patrons with the tidings of his elevation and a request for the summoning of a council of the Church. The messenger chosen for the purpose was naturally the all-powerful Sergius, who was now again *secundicerius*, and also *nomenclator* in the Papal court. But when Sergius arrived in Frank-land he found that the old king was already dead.

The last time that Pippin's name was mentioned he was resting at Bourges in the autumn of 767 from his eighth Aquitanian campaign, and was receiving the tidings of the death of Pope Paul. His intervention in the affairs of the distracted Papal See was, as we have seen, solicited by the intrusive Pope Constantine, but apparently the application received no reply. In the spring of 768 he again set his face south-westwards, determined once for all to make an end of the resistance of Waifar, duke of Aquitaine. A certain Remistan, Waifar's uncle, who after taking oaths of fealty to Pippin had treacherously gone over to his nephew's side and surrendered to him the towns which Pippin had entrusted to his guardianship, was captured, apparently not without guile, and hung on a gallows at Bourges. The mother, sister, and nieces of Waifar were next brought in as captives to the king's camp at Saintes. Still, however, the chief quarry escaped. Though utterly beaten, Waifar wandered hither and thither through the cave-lined valleys of Perigord, and though Pippin divided his followers into four bands and sent them in quest of the fugitive, they failed to capture him. At last however on the 2nd of June, 768, the hunt was ended, in unsportsmanlike fashion, by the murder of the quarry: Waifar was assassinated by some of his own followers, as one of the chroniclers tells us, not without suspicion of the king's privity to the crime. The action of Pippin in striving so persistently for the incorporation of Aquitaine with the Frankish monarchy was probably wise and statesmanlike, but there is nothing knightly in his treatment of the champion of her independence.

The conqueror took up his quarters at Saintes, and there held an assembly at which he regulated the affairs of Aquitaine, now virtually a new, or at least a recovered possession of the Frankish kings. The great ecclesiastics on whose behalf the contest with Waifar had been originally entered upon were restored to the full enjoyment of all their estates; new *beneficia* were carved out for the behoof of Pippin's loyal followers; yet according to the wise policy of the Austrasian kings, no attempt was made to force the unique and time-hallowed civilization of Aquitaine into the rigid mould of the half-barbarous jurisprudence of the Northern Franks. It was enacted 'that all men, Romans and Salians alike, should keep their own laws, and that if any man should come from another province he should live according to the law of his own fatherland'. We have seen a similar privilege accorded to the Visigoths of Septimania, who on passing from under the Moorish yoke were assured by Pippin that they should still retain their own laws; and thus we find already in action that curious system of 'personal laws' which was so marked a feature of Carolingian administration, especially in Italy.

But even while Pippin was thus wisely settling the affairs of his new conquest the hand of death was upon him. It was during his residence at Saintes that he began to sicken with fever. He journeyed towards the Loire; he visited the tomb of St. Martin, greatest of the saints of Gaul, and besought the intercession of the canonized soldier. In vain; but one more journey was left him to accomplish, the journey to his place of sepulture, the venerable abbey of St. Dionysius at Paris. He was still living when he reached it, but he died on the 24th of September (768). He had attained only the 54th year of his age. The Arnulfing princes were far tougher and healthier than the short-lived Merovingians, but even they did not attain to great length of days. Probably in Pippin's case the fatigues and anxieties of his nine Aquitanian campaigns hastened his end.

Pippin is one of those historical personages of whom we know just enough to be tantalized with a desire to know more. Even as to his personal appearance we have no trustworthy information. The belief so prevalent in the Middle Ages, that he was a man of short stature, perhaps originated in a confusion between him and his grandfather Pippin of Heristal, but the contrast between the little father and the giant son was so tempting that the fallacy easily took root. Already little more than a century after his death Saga was busy with his exploits. The monk of St. Gall (884-887) tells us that having discovered that the chiefs of his

army were privately casting imputations on his courage, Pippin ordered a wild bull to be let loose, and then a fierce lion after him. The lion made one spring, fastened his claws in the bull's neck, and pulled him to the ground. Thereupon the king shouted to the by-standers, 'Either drag the lion off the bull or slay him on the top of him'. With hearts frozen with fear the courtiers faltered out, "Master! there is not a man under heaven who dare attempt such a thing as that". Thereupon the king leapt from his throne, drew his sword, cut through first the neck of the lion, then the neck of the bull, sheathed his sword, and calmly resumed his throne. "Do you feel now", said he, "that I can be your master? Have you not heard what little David did to the mighty Goliath and the short-statured Alexander to his stalwart chiefs?". As if struck with thunder, the courtiers fell to the ground, saying, "Who but a madman would contest your right to rule?"

The story, pure Saga as it evidently is, may be accepted as pointing to an early tradition that Pippin was of short stature, and (which is of more importance) to the difficulties which sometimes beset his path from the insubordinate conduct of some of the leading men of his kingdom. Like our own Henry VII, he had to walk warily in the presence of men who remembered the time when he was only one of themselves. The chroniclers say but little expressly concerning these tendencies towards insubordination; but in one very important case, the debate on the Italian expedition, they admit that such tendencies existed, and we can see that they exerted an important influence on the course of affairs.

King Pippin left but three children—the little princess Gisila, of whose birth and baptism we have already heard in the correspondence of Pope Paul—and her two brothers, who had already reached man's estate, Charles and Carloman.

It is an illustration of the fragmentary and unscientific character of the Frankish chroniclers of this period that they give us no clear information of the uncertain date of so important an event as the birth of Charles the Great. His friend and biographer Einhard gives virtually three different dates—742, 743, and 744. Two annalists place it in 747, but it is hardly possible to reconcile so late a date with the commission entrusted to the young prince to meet Pope Stephen II in December, 753, nor with a document of 7603 in which he is already spoken of as a man. On the whole, the most probable conclusion is that Charles the Great was born in 742, and was therefore twenty-six years old when he succeeded his father.

As to the date of Carloman's birth we have scarcely more information. One annalist places it in the year 751, and if he is correct, Pippin's younger son was a little child of three years old when he, along with his father and brother, received the often-mentioned anointing from the Papal hands in the abbey of S. Denis. On that basis of calculation he would be seventeen years old at the time of his father's death.

The strange obscurity which hangs over the birth and infancy of the greatest of Frankish sovereigns may possibly be due to the fact that he was not born in wedlock. Even this cannot be positively asserted; but there is some authority for dating the marriage of Pippin with Bertrada, daughter of Charibert, count of Laon, in the year 749, which was certainly after the birth of Charles, though before the birth of Carloman. The sovereigns of Arnulfs line, though not licentious, were notoriously irregular in their matrimonial relations, and seem generally to have kept for some years as a mistress the woman whom they afterwards married with the rites of the Church. According to Frankish law, even on this theory, the subsequent marriage of his parents rendered Charles legitimate, but in the relation which existed between the two brothers, and especially in the somewhat contemptuous tone which Carloman occasionally assumed towards Charles, we may perhaps see indications of the fact that the younger brother prided himself upon the strict legitimacy of his birth and looked upon the elder as little better than a bastard.

The division of his dominions between his two sons had been one of the last occupations of the dying king. The details of that division cannot be quite accurately his sons, stated, but we may say generally that the dividing-line ran more nearly east and west and less from north to south than in some previous partitions. Thus we are told that Austrasia fell to the share of Charles; Burgundy, Provence, Septimania, Alsace and Alamannia (Swabia) to that of Carloman. The allocation of Neustria is not mentioned, but it seems probable that it was allotted to Charles. As to Aquitaine, the authorities differ irreconcilably; the historian whom we have just quoted declaring that it was divided between the two brothers, while the author of the *Annales Einhardi* says that it was all included in the lot of Charles. Bavaria is not mentioned in the scheme of partition, a striking illustration of the virtually independent position obtained by its Duke, Tassilo.

We find with some little surprise both the two young kings fixing their residences in the northern part of the realm. Samoussy near Laon and Attigny on the Aisne are the places from which Carloman dates his charters in the spring of 769, while Charles celebrated the Christmas of 768 at Aquae Grani (Aix-la-Chapelle or Aachen), the first and last love apparently of the great Austrasian.

As has been already hinted, the relation between these two brother sovereigns was very unlike that brotherly harmony which prevailed in the previous generation between the elder Carloman and his brother Pippin. The blame of Carloman's ill-temper is laid by one annalist on 'evil counsellors among his nobles', and it is hinted that at one time there was a danger of actual civil war between the two brothers. As Carloman disappeared early from the scene, we do not of course hear the story as it would have been told by his partisans. Probably, besides the motives of personal pique and thwarted ambition, there may have been working in the minds of the counsellors of the two young kings some of those 'centrifugal' tendencies, the rivalries between Frank and Burgundian, between the men of pure Teutonic descent and their Gallo-Roman competitors which led a century later to the disruption of the Frankish monarchy.

The first event which disclosed to all the world the gaping chasm between the two brothers was the war in Aquitaine. Almost immediately after the death of Pippin a certain Hunold, probably related to the family of the dethroned duke, raised once more the trampled standard of Aquitanian independence. Charles marched southwards in the spring of 769 to suppress this revolt, and called on his brother for aid; but though Carloman came to meet him at a place called Duasdives, he brought no troops with him, and entirely refused to assist in the reconquest of Aquitaine; an unbrotherly act if the province had been assigned to Charles alone, an incomprehensible one if it was held by the two brothers in partnership.

After all, the revolt of Hunold proved to be but a feeble affair. The old king in his nine campaigns had crushed the spirit of the men of Aquitaine too thoroughly to leave much work to be done there by his son. Charles marched to Aquitaine, and Hunold was soon fleeing before him. He fled to Gascony, and placed himself under the protection of Lupus, duke of that remote corner of Gaul. At the threat of war, war which, as Charles declared, should be continued till Gascony was reduced to the same condition of dependence as Aquitaine, Lupus surrendered his guest, together with that guest's wife, and promised implicit obedience to all the commands of the Frankish king. What became of Hunold and his wife we are not told; but Charles was through life, except on one or two occasions of special exasperation, a merciful conqueror. He built a strong fort at Fronsac near the junction of the Dordogne and Garonne, and returned in triumph to his Austrasian home.

While these events were occurring in Gaul, Pope Stephen III, having obtained the consent of the two young kings, was holding a synod in the Lateran basilica in order to obtain the solemn judgment of the Church on the recent anarchical proceedings at Rome. The synod was not ecumenical; it did not even represent all the countries of the Western Patriarchate; but the

presence of twelve Frankish bishops ‘very learned in the divine Scriptures and the ceremonies of the holy canons’, along with forty ecclesiastics from the various districts of Northern and Central Italy, was a wise precaution to give dignity to the proceedings of the assembly and to prevent its seeming the mere mouthpiece of a vindictive Roman faction.

The bishops being all assembled in the great basilica, and Pope Stephen III having taken his place as president of the synod, Constantine, the late Pope, now sightless, and having endured for eight months the hardships of a dungeon, was brought in and placed in the midst of the assembly. It was sternly enquired of him, ‘why he, a layman, had presumed to invade the Apostolic See and to do a deed so new and wicked in the Church of God’; whereupon he declared that he had been forced into that deed by the people of Rome, weary of the exactions and injustices of the late Pope, Paul—an important hint as to some of the causes that had been at work in the recent revolution—and, as he averred, after the vote of the people had been taken by show of hands he had been laid hold of and forcibly inducted into the Lateran palace. Then falling to the ground and stretching forth his hands on the marble pavement, he confessed with tears that he had been guilty of sins more in number than the sand of the sea, for which he implored the merciful forgiveness of the synod. They caused him to be raised from the ground and sent back to his dungeon, adjourning their decision for a day.

On the morrow, when he was again questioned as to the ‘impious novelty’ of his deed, Constantine, who seems to have recovered a little of his lost self-confidence, replied that for a layman to be consecrated bishop was no novelty at all. He might have appealed to the well-known case of the election of Ambrose of Milan, but he chose more recent instances. Only seventeen years before, Sergius, a layman, whose wife was still living, had been consecrated archbishop of Ravenna, and though it was true that he had been cited to Rome on account of the alleged irregularity, and even imprisoned there, the irregularity had been condoned by Paul I, and he had been allowed to return to his see, an archbishop in full communion with Rome.

So too, only three years before the date of the Lateran synod, Stephen, a layman and governor of Naples, who had earned the enthusiastic love of the Neapolitans, had been at a time of terrible pestilence chosen bishop by the people, and had gone to Rome, where he received episcopal consecration at the hands of the same Pope Paul.

When Constantine urged these examples in mitigation of his offence the whole assembly was filled with fury. Unmoved to pity by the vacant gaze of those poor sightless eyes, they buffeted him on the face, they forced him to bow his neck, and finally thrust him out of the church. As to his ultimate fate the Papal biographer is silent. The members of the synod then brought the registers of Constantine’s Papal acts and the records of the council which had been held under his presidency and burned them all in the midst of the presbytery. This done, Pope, priests and people cast themselves to the ground, chaunting *Kyrie Eleison*, with floods of tears—those copious ecclesiastical tears!—confessed their grievous sin in having received the communion from Constantine’s hands, and all submitted themselves to the penance due for so great an offence.

The Papal biographer relates at great length the deliberations of the synod concerning the difficult question of ecclesiastical orders bestowed by the hands of the intrusive pontiff. The practical result was this, that the ecclesiastics who had been raised by Constantine to the rank of bishop were deposed from the episcopal office, but, after submitting themselves to a second election by the clergy and people, were reconsecrated by Stephen. Those men, on the other hand, who had been but laymen before and had received consecration as deacons or presbyters from the intruder, were thrust down from their clerical office (to which Stephen vowed that he would never again raise them), but not being allowed to return into the world and resume the duties and privileges of laymen, were ordered to retire into monasteries and spend the rest of

their lives in religious meditation. Unhappy victims, these, of the revolution which in the eighth century corresponded to a change of ministry in the nineteenth!

The usual decree that 'with great honour and affection the sacred images should be venerated by all Christians', and the usual anathema on 'the execrable synod which has been lately held in the regions of Greece for the deposition of those sacred images', received the probably unanimous assent of the council. More important than these, however, as affecting the constitution of the Church for the eleven centuries which have since passed over it, was the solemn resolution framed under anathema by the council, 'that no layman nor man of any other order should presume to be promoted to the holy honour of the Pontificate, unless ascending by distinct steps he had first been made [cardinal] deacon or cardinal presbyter'. We here meet, for the first time apparently, with the term cardinal applied to the parochial clergy of Rome, those hinges of the ecclesiastical organization of the Metropolis. They shared it with the 'sub-urbicarian' bishops of the territory in the immediate vicinity of Rome; and from this time forth it was established as a sacred principle of the Church that only from one of these three orders, cardinal-deacons, cardinal-priests, cardinal-bishops, could a bishop of Rome be chosen. Thus the cardinals were now the alone eligible persons; but it was not till three centuries later that they became the alone electors.

It was probably some months, it may have been a year, after this synod of the Lateran, that Stephen III addressed to the two young Frankish kings a letter in which he congratulated them that the dissensions between them, rumours of which had evidently reached even to Rome, were now at an end, and exhorted them to turn their re-established harmony to good account by vigorously urging the assertion of all the just claims of St. Peter. 'If any one tells you that we have already received satisfaction of these claims, do not believe him'.

Harmony was indeed for a short time in the course of the year 770 re-established between the two Frankish kings, but it was by means of which Pope Stephen little dreamt, and which drove him nearly wild with anger and alarm when he discovered their nature.

The chief agent in this reconciliation was the dowager-queen Bertrada, who now after her husband's death emerges from the comparative obscurity of her earlier career, and plays with statesmanlike prudence and sagacity that part of all-controlling, all-counselling queen-mother with which we are so familiar in later chapters of French history. The policy which she advised, and which doubtless found many other advocates in the Frankish council-chambers, was not precisely that of the earlier years of her late husband, though towards the close of his reign he had seemed to be tending thitherward. "Is it wise", we can imagine the counsellors of Bertrada's party to have questioned,—“is it wise to spend the energies of the loosely-compacted Frankish kingdom in expeditions across the Alps, in order to enforce these shadowy, ever-growing, never-satisfied claims of St. Peter? We thereby make the Lombard our deadly enemy, him who so lately as in the days of Liutprand and Charles Martel, was our cordial, our ancestral ally. And not only the Lombard, but with him goes the young duke of Bavaria [for Tassilo a few years before this time had married Liutperga, daughter of Desiderius, and formed a strict alliance with his new father-in-law]; and Tassilo's relation to the monarchy is one of the darkest spots in our horizon. The late king never ventured to punish him for his great *harisliz* in 763. What the old hero dared not attempt, his young and inexperienced sons are not likely to succeed in. Were it not better to renounce the thoughts of vengeance and to have at least a friendly, an allied, if we cannot have a humbly obedient Bavaria? Aquitaine is but just tranquillized; she is still heaving with the turmoil of the nine years' war of her subjugation. Then on the north-eastern frontier of the realm hover the fierce, still heathen Saxons. There in those trackless forests, in those wide-spreading marshes between the Weser and the Elbe, lies the real danger, and also the true vocation of the Frankish monarchy. Even the Church can be better served by forcing those wild heathen tribes to bow

their necks to the yoke of Christ, than by wresting a few more Italian cities from the Lombards and handing them over to the successor of St. Peter. But before all things peace is the present need of the Frankish kingdom; peace instead of strife between the two royal brothers, peace with the Lombard and peace with the Bavarian. And if the Pope should storm and threaten us with the wrath of St. Peter and the terrors of the Day of Judgment, let him storm and let him threaten. He has been already paid handsomely enough for that holy anointing at S. Denis of which we have heard so much. It is time now for the sons of Pippin to think of themselves and their own country, which is Frank-land, and not ‘the province of Italy’.”

Probably by some such reasonings as this was that great change in Frankish policy brought about, which was signalled by the journey of queen Bertrada to Italy in the year 770. The point which to us is left in the greatest obscurity is how the reconciliation with the Lombards was connected with that which was undoubtedly the object nearest to Bertrada’s heart, the reconciliation between Charles and Carloman. That there was some such connection is clear from the words of the annalists, but it would be mere guess-work to say in what way it was brought about.

Intent on carrying through this scheme of reconciliation, Bertrada undertook the labours and not inconsiderable hardships of a journey from the north of Gaul into Italy. Starting probably from her son Charles’s court at Liège, she met Carloman by appointment at a little place called Selz in Lower Alsace. There, doubtless, mother and son conferred on the new course of policy, and she obtained his consent to the projected alliances. Journeying thence to Bavaria, she no doubt conferred with Tassilo as to the best means of securing the future friendship of Franks, Bavarians, and Lombards. Having crossed the Alps, she probably visited the court of Desiderius at Pavia and there opened the purport of her journey. “Friendship between the Frankish and Lombard courts : more than friendship, matrimonial alliances : your daughter Desiderata for my eldest son: my little daughter Gisila, now twelve years old, to become hereafter the wife of your son Adelchis”; this was the flattering, the surprising offer made by the widow of the pious Pippin to the ‘most unspeakable’ Lombard king. Even in making it, however, Bertrada did not wholly forget the claims of St. Peter. Certain additional cities were to be handed over to the Pope; a condition to which Desiderius gladly consented. Though all is left painfully vague as to this part of the negotiation, it appears that some cities—how many we know not—were actually ceded by the Lombard at this time to the Papal See. Bertrada, who as we are told, when she had finished her business, went to worship at the threshold of the Apostles probably took to the pontiff the soothing news of this surrender. We may say almost with certainty that she said nothing at Rome of the projected double marriage. Having probably called on her return journey at Pavia, she recrossed the Alps, taking with her the intended bride. Desiderata arrived at Charles’s court; the existing lady of the palace, Himiltrud, was divorced if she was his wife, or simply dismissed if she was his concubine, and the daughter of Desiderius was hailed as queen of the Franks, while some of the chief men of the kingdom swore to the observance of the treaty of peace and friendship which Bertrada had concluded between them and the Lombards.

When the news of this astounding alliance, either actually accomplished or about to be accomplished, reached Rome, the rage of the outwitted Pope knew no bounds. He seized the pen and wrote to the two brothers one of the fiercest, haughtiest, most scornful letters that ever proceeded even from the Papal chancery, a letter which already seems instinct with the spirit of Hildebrand rather than with the meek submissiveness of a bishop just emancipated from the heavy yoke of Byzantium.

After dilating on the virtue of constancy in the faith as exhibited by God’s chosen servants, and alluding to the fall of man, which through the wiles of the Ancient Enemy was brought about by the weak nature of woman, Pope Stephen proceeds :—

“Now a thing has been brought to our hearing which we cannot even speak of without great pain in our heart, namely, that Desiderius, king of the Lombards, is seeking to persuade your Excellencies, that one of your brotherhood should be joined in marriage to his daughter. Certainly if that be true, it is a veritable suggestion of the devil, and not a marriage, but rather a most wickedly imagined concubinage. How many men, as we learn from Holy Scripture, through unsanctified union with a woman of another nation, have departed from the commandments of God, and fallen into grievous sin! But what indescribable folly is this, O most excellent sons and mighty kings, that your illustrious Frankish race which shines supreme above all other nations, and that most noble royal line of yours, should be polluted—perish the thought—by union with the perfidious and foully stinking race of the Lombards, which is never reckoned in the number of the nations, and from which it is certain that the tribe of lepers hath sprung! No one in the possession of his senses would ever suspect that such renowned kings would entangle themselves in such hateful and abominable contagion. For what fellowship hath light with darkness, or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?”

The Pope then alludes to the fact, of which he appears to speak without any hesitation, that both the young kings have already, by the desire of their father, married fair and nobly-born wives of their own Frankish nation. This positive utterance of his seems to force us to the conclusion, opposed as it is to the statements of most of the chroniclers, that Himiltrud, the mother of Charles’s eldest son (afterwards known as Pippin the Hunchback), was his awfully-wedded wife and not a concubine. But who shall unravel the mysteries of the marriages of these most Christian kings of the Franks?

The Pope proceeds with his passionate exhortation : “None of your ancestors ever accepted a woman of another kingdom and a foreign nation as his wife”, an assertion which he would have found it hard to justify from history. “And who of your most noble house ever condescended to contaminate himself by mixing with the horrid nation of the Lombards, that you should now be persuaded to defile yourself with that horrible people?”

Knowing doubtless the share which Bertrada had taken in these hateful negotiations, he reminds her, through her son, that his predecessor Pope Stephen II had dissuaded Pippin from divorcing her—we know not on what pretext—and expresses his hope that the sons will imitate the obedience which the father then manifested towards the Holy See. The same obedience had been shown in rejecting, under Papal advice, the offer of a brilliant alliance for the little Gisila with the son of the Byzantine Emperor.

The Pope then returns to his strongest argument. “You have promised firm and lasting friendship with St. Peter’s successors. Their enemies were to be your enemies; their friends your friends. That league of mutual friendship was the reward of my pious predecessor Stephen II’s journey across the Alps, a journey which he would have done well never to have undertaken if the Frank, whose aid he invoked, is going to join the Lombard against us. He reminded you of that promise in a letter which he wrote to you on his death-bed. Where is that promise now?

“Wherefore the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, who received the keys of the kingdom of heaven from the Lord, adjures you through my unhappy mouth; and with him all the bishops and presbyters, the nobles and judges, and all the rest of the clergy and people of Rome adjure you, by the majesty of God and by the tremendous day of future judgment, that by no manner of means shall either of you two brothers presume to receive in marriage the daughter of the aforesaid Desiderius, king of the Lombards : nor shall your sister, the noble lady Gisila, dear to God, be given to Desiderius’ son : nor shall you dare to put away your wives.

“This warning of ours we have placed upon the tomb of the blessed Peter, and have over it offered sacrifice to God, and we do now with tears direct it to you from the same sacred

sepulchre. And if (which God forbid) any one shall presume to act in opposition to this our adjuration and exhortation, let him know that by the authority of my lord the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, he is fast bound in the chain of our anathema, and is banished from the kingdom of heaven, and with the devil and all his horrid crew and the rest of the wicked ones is sent down to be burned in the everlasting fire. But he who shall keep this word of our exhortation, being honoured with celestial benedictions from the Lord, shall be counted worthy to receive the rewards of eternal joy with all the holy ones, elect of God.

“May the heavenly grace keep your Excellencies in safety”.

This extraordinary letter, as we have seen, failed to produce any effect. The policy of Bertrada and her counsellors was for the time triumphant. Desiderata, the Lombard princess, was enthroned in Charles’s palace and received on her head the precarious crown-matrimonial of the Austrasian Franks. Seeing this, the Pope, though doubtless bitterly enraged, concealed his resentment and bided his time. The next two letters from him that we find in the Codex Carolinus are full of words of cloying sweetness, towards Bertrada, towards Charles, and towards Carloman. He announces to Charles and his mother that their envoy Itherius, who was dispatched for the restoration to the Holy See of its patrimonies in the duchy of Benevento, has accomplished his mission with admirable prudence and fidelity, and prays that he may be rewarded according to his deserts. He rejoices at receiving the greatly desired ‘syllables’ from the God-protected Carloman which announce the birth of a son, and craves to be allowed to act as godfather to the infant Pippin, that there may be the spiritual relationship of cofatherhood established between them, to the great joy both of the Pope and the people of Rome.

But all this time events were ripening for a new and astonishing change in Italian politics. “Since my Frankish patrons have deserted me”, Stephen seems ° to have said to himself, “since they have left me alone to face the fury of the now omnipotent Lombard, what hinders me from following their example, and making my peace, unknown to them, with the common foe?”. There were indeed two great living hindrances to the adoption of this tempting policy—Christopher and his son Sergius, *Primicerius* and *Secundicerius* of the Papal household, and all-powerful in the Lateran palace. These men by accepting the aid of Desiderius against the intruder Constantine and then seating their own candidate, not his, on the Papal throne, had sinned too deeply against the Lombard king for any hope of forgiveness. Moreover, in all the subsequent demands for the recognition of the *justitiae* of St. Peter their voices had ever been the loudest and the most importunate. But probably the weak and vacillating Sicilian Pope was weary of the domination of these men, and his weariness made him listen gladly to the suggestions of another of his servants, the chamberlain Paulus Afiarta, who had been gained over by Desiderius and stood at the head of the Lombard faction in the City. The sacrifice of Christopher and Sergius was therefore resolved on, and when in the season of Lent (771) Desiderius came with an army, professedly to worship at the tombs of the Apostles, and when Pope Stephen went forth to meet him and ostensibly to confer with him concerning the restitution of St. Peter’s rights, all Rome probably suspected, and Christopher and Sergius knew, that what would be called in modern phrase a change of ministry was impending. It happened that a certain envoy of Carloman named Dodo was then in Rome, probably at the head of a body of troops. Some of the peasants of Tuscia and Campania, and even from far-off Perugia, had also been gathered together for the defence of Rome, when it was known that Desiderius was on his way. The gates of the City were closed, new ones were hung on their hinges where the old were too rotten to resist attack, the citizens were called to arms, and (again to use a modern phrase) the City was proclaimed to be in a state of siege.

The contemplated defence of the City of Rome against the Lombards had this peculiarity, that the man who should have been the representative of all that was most Roman and national among the besieged was supposed, not untruly, to be in league with the besiegers. We know

from many instances in modern history how ill it fares with a king or a commander-in-chief in such circumstances, and what a menacing shape the indignation of the mob can assume against a half-hearted or traitorous general. In this case, Christopher and Sergius, with their Frankish ally and Dodo and a troop of armed men at their heels, rushed to the palace of the Lateran; 'intent on murdering me', writes the resentful Pope. That is most improbable, but that they meant to put pressure on Stephen to compel him to renounce his alliance with Desiderius is not to be doubted. "They entered with arms" (he continues)"the sacred *patriarchium* of the Lateran, they smashed the doors and tore the curtains of the palace with their lances, and entered with their coats of mail and their spears into the basilica of Pope Theodore, where we were sitting, and into which no one had till then penetrated with so much as a knife in his hand".

The Pope, we are told, sharply chided the insurgents for coming armed into the holy *patriarchium*, but he condescended to take an oath, 'by all the sacred relics that were contained in the Lateran basilica', that he would have no secret dealings with Desiderius, and thus quieted them for the time. Next day, however, he contrived to elude their vigilance by some ingenious device, and made his way, attended by certain of his clergy, to the great basilica of St. Peter, which was practically the head-quarters of Desiderius. In the conference which there took place the Lombard king appears to have promised to satisfy all the claims of St. Peter, if only those evil counsellors, Christopher and Sergius, might be delivered into his hands. Meanwhile St. Peter's was closed to prevent the egress of the clergy who had come with the Pope; closed too and rigorously guarded were all the gates of the City; everything seemed to portend a bloody encounter.

The Lombard party was, however, undermining the position of Christopher and Sergius by promises, threats and gold. The great authority of the Papal name was freely used to discourage the citizens who were holding the City against their own bishop. Two bishops, Andrew of Praeneste and Jordanes of Signia, presented themselves before the Porta Sancti Petri, bringing to the two chief rebels the Pope's fatherly advice that they should either enter some monastery for the salvation of their souls, or at once come forth and meet him at St. Peter's. Though Christopher and Sergius knew the Lombard's resentment against them too well to trust themselves to his mercy, others less deeply involved began to waver. The Pope's envoys again approached the gates and cried with a loud voice, "Hear ye what Pope Stephen orders by the command of God. Do not wage war against your brethren, but expel Christopher and Sergius from the City, and free the City, yourselves and your children from peril". With that, many began to swarm down the walls that they might make their way to the besieging army. A certain duke Gratosus, who was a kinsman of Sergius, feigned to depart to his own house, but collected a band of citizens and went to the Porta Portuensis, hoping to be able to open it. Finding it hopelessly barred, they wrenched it from its hinges, and so went forth by night to the Papal presence. And now all the City was in an uproar; everywhere men were trying to open the gates and pass out through them; the two ministers saw that they were surrounded by traitors and the game was lost. When the hour of Vigils sounded from the great bell of St. Peter's, Sergius climbed down the wall and hastened to that basilica, but was arrested by the Lombard sentinels and carried off to their own king. Christopher followed, was also captured, and brought into the presence of the Pope, who promised that his life and that of his son should be preserved if they would quit their public career and enter a convent.

Next day the Pope celebrated mass in the presence of Desiderius, and returned (apparently) to the Lateran palace after giving orders that Christopher and Sergius, whom he left at St. Peter's, should be quietly brought back into the City at nightfall. But as soon as the sun began to set, Paulus Afiarta, with a band of reckless partisans and with at least the connivance of Desiderius, forced his way into St. Peter's, carried off Christopher and Sergius,

and brought them to the gate of the City. Here, in accordance with that barbarous practice which the New Rome had taught to the Old, his men plucked out the eyes of both prisoners. The aged Christopher, who was carried to the monastery of St. Agatha, died in three days of the torment which his brutal captors had inflicted upon him. Sergius, imprisoned in Pope Gregory's monastery on the Clivus Scauri and afterwards transferred to the *cellarium* of the Lateran, lingered there in blindness and misery till the death of the reigning Pope.

It is impossible not to feel, in conning these pages of the *Liber Pontificalis*, what a wave of barbarism has swept over the leading citizens of Rome, both lay and ecclesiastical, since the days of Gregory the Great. Partly no doubt this is due to the long descent into ignorance and superstition during the course of the seventh and eighth centuries, but it seems to have become more rapid and more fatal since the two Gregories and Zacharias vanished from the scene. Is it an unwarranted conjecture which would connect this increasing ferocity of Roman politics with the acquisition of temporal power by the Roman pontiff?

When the revolution was accomplished the question naturally arose, 'What will the kings of the Franks say when they hear of the deeds that have been done?'. In order to propitiate their resentment Stephen wrote a long letter to Bertrada and her son Charles, in which he described the whole affair from the point of view of Paulus Afiarta and Desiderius. The Lombard king, once so 'unspeakable' and 'stinking', is now 'our most excellent and God-preserved son, King Desiderius, without whose aid we and all our clergy and all the faithful members of God's Church would have been in peril of our lives'. "The most unspeakable Christopher and his most wicked son took counsel with Dodo, the envoy of your brother Carloman, to slay us. Behold what villainies and devilish machinations the aforesaid Dodo put in operation against us, but we are sure that our most excellent son his master will at once disavow his proceedings. It was the enemies of Christopher and Sergius who rushing upon them plucked out their eyes, without our will or counsel, as we call God to witness". (When Stephen lay upon his death-bed he did not assert his innocence of this crime quite so positively.)

Lastly, "let your Religiosity beloved by God"—this to Bertrada, "and your most Christian Excellency"—this to Charles—"recognise how in the name of the Lord the most excellent and God-preserved king Desiderius has met us with all good will. And we have received from him full and entire satisfaction of all the claims of the blessed Peter". (On this point also, when Stephen lay at the point of death, he told a different tale to his successor.)

From this time, the Lent of 771 to February 772, Paulus Afiarta, a bold, unscrupulous man, probably reigned supreme in the Papal council, and Stephen was fain to live in outward amity with Desiderius, veiling his fear and his dislike of the unspeakable one as well as he could. Scarcely had this great change in his policy been accomplished when he learned that with a little patience it might have been avoided. Charles the Frank was not after all irrevocably committed to friendship and alliance with Desiderius. It was probably in the summer of 771 that he sent back Desiderata to her father's court, a woman scorned and a repudiated wife. No reason seems to have been given for this insulting breach of the marriage covenant, but its cause was probably personal rather than political. The Monk of St. Gall (writing it is true more than a century after the event) says that she was in delicate health and unlikely to bear children, and therefore, in accordance with the judgment of the holiest ecclesiastics, was deserted as if she were dead.

We may perhaps reasonably conjecture that this delicate Italian flower bore but ill her transplantation to the keen air of Brabant and Westphalia, and that Charles, who was a man of brisk and joyous temperament, spending most of his life in the open air and expecting his wife and his children to follow him to the chase and on the campaign, came to the speedy conclusion that the pale Lombard princess was no wife for him, and cut the knot with as little ceremony as our own Henry Tudor.

There were not wanting voices and remonstrance in his own palace against this selfish desertion of a lawfully wedded wife who had done him no wrong. Bertrada, who had arranged the marriage and had brought the young bride across the Alps, was deeply mortified by the divorce, which caused the only serious dissension that ever separated the mother and the son. His young cousin Adalhard also, though still only a page in the palace, boldly condemned the divorce, which, as he declared, would make the king an adulterer, and all his nobles who had sworn fidelity to the new queen, perjurers. Having thus delivered his soul, Adalhard retired from court life into a monastery.

Politically, of course, such an event could have but one result. As close as the alliance between Desiderius and Charles might have been had they remained kinsmen, so deep and impassable was now the chasm between the injured father and the faithless husband of Desiderata. Only, between the dominions of the two kings stretched the wide realm of Carloman, and it is by no means clear what would have been his attitude towards either. The line of policy pursued by his envoy Dodo at Rome looks like hostility to the Lombard, who, as we shall see, expected him to take a bloody revenge for the murder of Christopher and the blinding of Sergius. But on the other hand, Einhard expressly tells us—and his words seem to point to this period of their history—that many of Carloman's partisans strove to break the bond between the two brothers, so that some purposed to engage them even in civil war. And it would seem certain that at this crisis, after the repudiation of Desiderata, any one who was the enemy of Charles must have been the friend of Desiderius.

But all such speculations were set at rest for ever by the death of Carloman, which occurred on the 4th of December, 771. We know nothing of the cause or the manner of this untimely ending of a life which had lasted but twenty years. Nor is the character of the young king, or what might have been the possible future of his career, at all made clear to us. A far less forcible and far less pathetic figure than his uncle the elder Carloman, he seems to us—but herein we may do him wrong—only a somewhat petulant and querulous young man, the impracticable partner of his heroic brother. Like the dark star which, as some astronomers tell us, circles round Sirius, so Carloman interests us only by the question how long he will continue to obscure the transcendent glory of Charlemagne.

Two months after Carloman, died Pope Stephen III, after a short and troubled pontificate of three years and a half. What passed between him and his successor Hadrian, when he was lying on his death-bed, will be related in a future chapter.

CHAPTER XII

RAVENNA AND ROME.

Before we enter upon the memorable pontificate of Hadrian I, which lasted twenty-three years and witnessed great changes in the political aspect of Italy and the Papacy, it will be well to give a glance at the ecclesiastical relations existing between Rome and the dethroned capital of Ravenna. Our information on this subject is fragmentary, obscure and confusing; but, even in its confusion, it evidently reflects the troubled and uncertain state of men's minds whenever the relation of the two cities came under discussion.

If we consider their previous history we shall see that there was sure to be some such trouble and uncertainty. Here was Rome on the one hand, which had first obtained her high ecclesiastical position as the political capital of the world, and had then languished for three centuries under the neglect of the great Imperial absentee, but was now virtually throwing off the yoke of Constantinople and winning for herself a new, a temporal, and an Italian dominion by her opportune alliance with the great Austrasian house. Ravenna, on the other hand, which had been the seat of the Imperial lieutenants for two centuries, had now lost all the pomp and splendour which they had conferred upon her. No more now would an Exarch fresh from Constantinople, surrounded by his life-guards and followed by his obsequious eunuchs and chamberlains, ride through the streets of Ravenna to hear mass sung in the basilica of St. Ursus or St. Vitalis. The Exarch gone, the Archbishop of Ravenna felt his own importance diminished and power slipping from his hands. Was Ravenna to be only one of the many cities of the Lombard kingdom? Or, yet worse, was it to be politically subject to the see of Rome; the Pope not merely an ecclesiastical superior whose claims to the Universal Patriarchate of the West might be decorously admitted in theory and on suitable occasions evaded in practice, but an actual sovereign, with power of life and death, able to enforce his edicts, and in the last resort judging all causes, civil as well as temporal, at Rome? Even in the days of the great Gregory, when the see of Ravenna was held by his own friend and disciple Marinianus, things had not always gone smoothly between the two pontiffs. Since then, apparently, the estrangement had increased rather than diminished; and now this claim on the part of the Roman Pope to rule Ravenna as a subject city was as much as possible waived aside, and always bitterly resented by the Archbishop and people of Ravenna.

It is this contention which gives sharpness to the tone of the ecclesiastical historian of Ravenna whenever he has occasion to mention the see of Rome. Long ago I ventured to bring before my readers some of the strange, often puerile legends which Agnellus, abbot of St. Mary's and St. Bartholomew's, told of the archbishops of Ravenna in that extraordinary book, his *Liber Pontificalis*. We have now come to a different portion of his history. Though still inaccurate and blundering, he has no longer so much need to draw upon his imagination for facts. As we are now within thirty-five years of his birth within seventy years of the composition of his history, we may take his narrative as almost that of a contemporary, vouched for as it is by such notes of time as 'this man was my predecessor at four removes in the government of my monastery' and 'my grandfather was concerned in that rebellion'. Above all, the dislike of the Papal claims to sovereignty, which is shown in every page, is an important symptom of the times. We shall certainly follow the counsel of the good Benedictine Editor, who tells us that all these calumnies against the Holy See are to be read with caution,

but the existence of the antipathy which prompted the calumnies is itself a fact of which we are bound to take notice.

It was an archbishop John, sixth of that name, who occupied the see of Ravenna during the eventful reign of the Lombard Liutprand and for ten years after his death. Agnellus mentions the siege of the city by Liutprand and the act of treachery on the part of one of its citizens by which the Lombard king effected its capture. But he says nothing expressly as to its subsequent surrender to the Byzantines, though he implies it by his mention of the Exarch as again ruling in the city. Nor (which is more extraordinary and in fact inexcusable) does he make the slightest mention of the final capture of Ravenna by the Lombards under their king Aistulf in the year 751. To atone for his silence on these important events, he retails some of the ecclesiastical gossip of the city. Archbishop John having become unpopular with the citizens was banished to the Venetian territory for a year. Then Epiphanius the *scriniarius*, lamenting the widowed condition of the Church of Ravenna, persuaded the Exarch to order his recall. On the archbishop's return Epiphanius suggested that he should offer a handsome present to the Exarch and prevail upon him to issue process against the enemies who had procured his banishment. "If you will do this covertly", said Epiphanius, "I will conduct the suits, while you can preserve the pontifical character and appear to have no desire for the punishment of your foes". It was done: the accusers were summoned before the judgment-seat, and to each one the *scriniarius* said with righteous indignation, "What sort of a sheep was you who, when thy shepherd was leading thee through grassy meads, didst strike him with thy horn and prepare a bill of indictment against him?". Thus by the terrors of the law large sums of money were collected, the promised *honorarium* was paid to the Exarch; possibly something remained over for the ingenious *scriniarius*, and the archbishop was never again molested by his foes.

During the same pontificate, says Agnellus, an Imperial *ministrategus* came against Ravenna, thinking to ravage it. And then follows the strange story about the battle in the Coriander-field between the the 'Greeks' and the men of Ravenna which has been briefly given in a previous volume. Have we in this wild and somewhat childish legend a remembrance, however distorted, of some genuine engagement between the men of Ravenna and the troops of the iconoclastic Emperor? Were Agnellus a more trustworthy historian, we might question whether after all Ravenna was wrested by the Lombards from the Empire, whether it had not succeeded in throwing off the yoke of Byzantium and was a small but independent state when Aistulf conquered it and annexed it to his kingdom.

On the death of John VI (in 752) Sergius was elected to the vacant see. The cause of the election of this young man, whom Agnellus describes as 'short of stature, with a smiling face, grey eyes and comely figure, and sprung from very noble ancestors', is an unsolved enigma. For Sergius was a layman, who by reason of his youth can hardly have won the confidence of his fellow-citizens as did Ambrose of Milan and Stephen of Naples when they were invited or constrained to exchange high office in the State for high office in the Church. Moreover, Sergius was married, and his wife Euphemia was still living, though now consecrated as a deaconess by the husband from whom she was thus strangely separated. The sole explanation that can be suggested for these irregular proceedings is that Ravenna was still in the throes of a revolution, only just annexed to the Lombard kingdom, suffering many vexations (as Agnellus tells us) from the Lombards and Venetians—this incidental notice of war with the maritime islanders is perhaps significant—and that there may have been some political reasons for placing the representative of one of the noblest families in Ravenna at the head of the Church, the only institution which seemed to have a chance of maintaining Ravenna's independence.

However, the expedient answered but poorly. Sergius had long disputes with his clergy, most of whom refused to communicate with him, whereupon he consecrated other priests in

their places whose claims very nearly caused a schism in his Church. This dispute, however, was healed by smooth words from the young archbishop of the smiling countenance, and by some mutual concessions in the important matter of vestments. Then, however, came a struggle with Rome. Though Sergius had received consecration at the hands of the Pope he was summoned to Rome by Stephen II on that pontiff's return from his memorable journey across the Alps. We are told that he had trusted in the King (doubtless King Aistulf), that he would lend him his aid, and being deceived by him was fraudulently led to Rome by some of his own fellow-citizens. Probably the meaning of all these obscure hints is that the semiindependence of the see of Ravenna was an obstacle to Pope Stephen's designs of obtaining temporal dominion over the Exarchate and Pentapolis, and that the irregularity of the election of Sergius, though condoned at the time, now furnished a useful pretext for beating down a dangerous rival.

The enquiry into the cause thus cited to Rome seems to have lingered, for Sergius is said to have been detained there for three years. At last a synod was assembled which was ready to cast him down from his 'pontifical' rank. The Pope (whom Agnellus calls the *Apostolicus*) thus addressed him: "Thou art a neophyte; thou didst not belong to the fold, nor serve according to the canons in the Church of Ravenna, but didst creep in like a thief into the episcopal chair, and hast repelled the priests who were worthy to taste the honours of the Church, and by main force and the favour of secular persons thou hast kept possession of the see". To this Sergius answered: "It was not by my presumption, but because the clergy and all the people elected me. Thou didst thyself put to me all the canonical questions, and I disclosed everything to thee; that I was a layman, that I had a wife, that I had [suddenly] come into the clerical status. All this I made known to thee, and thou saidst that there could be no obstacle [in the way of my consecration]. After thou hadst heard all these things concerning me, why then didst thou consecrate me?"

After this defence the assembly was divided, but all—says Agnellus, probably untruly—asked with anxiety, "How can we who are disciples judge him who [as archbishop] is our master?". Then the Pope in anger declared that he would on the morrow tear off the pallium from the neck of Sergius.

All that night the exiled archbishop passed in prayer, with floods of tears, at the altar of St. Nicholas. In the morning all Rome knew that Pope Stephen II had died suddenly and peacefully in his bed; 'by the judgment of God' says the apologist of the pontiffs of Ravenna. At dawn, Paul, the brother of the deceased Pope and his destined successor, entered the cell of Sergius, and said to him, "What wilt thou give me for leave to return in peace and with augmented honour to thy home?". Delighted at the prospect of being thus liberated from captivity, the archbishop said, "No small rewards will I give thee. Come to the archbishop's palace at Ravenna and examine the treasures stored up there—gold, silver, vessels of price, hoards of money. All shall be given thee; only whatsoever thou likest to leave me as a *benedictio*, thou canst leave". To this compact they both swore. On that very day the late Pope's brother was raised to the papacy, and celebrated his accession by releasing all captives [Sergius among them] and pardoning all criminals. He sent for Sergius and received him with all honour. When the archbishop of Ravenna fell prostrate on the ground before him—it is a marvel to find Agnellus admitting even that confession of inferiority—Paul raised him therefrom, fell on his neck and gave him the kiss of peace, and ordered his seat to be placed next his in the hall of audience.

After receiving from the new Pope words of peace and comfort, Sergius returned to his own see in the third year after he had quitted it. He was received with moderate congratulations by his flock, and moderate peace reigned in the City. Possibly this lukewarm reception was the cause why the returning exile proceeded to the church of St. Mary in Cosmedin and after

singing mass prostrated himself before the altar of his patron, St. Nicholas, where he prayed for a very long time, and shed tears, 'which,' says Agnellus, 'are preserved unto the present day', that is to the eighty-fourth year after their first effluxion.

In course of time the Pope appeared at Ravenna to claim the fulfillment of the archbishop's compact. The ecclesiastics of the city, knowing that he was coming to rifle their treasury, took counsel together. Some said, 'Let us suffocate him'. Leo the deacon, *vice-dominus* of the archbishop, said, 'Not so; let us beckon him away to yonder cistern, as if we were about to show him some more treasures, and then push him in, so that he may appear no more among men'. At this moment Wiliaris, archdeacon and abbot of St. Bartholomew (Agnellus' predecessor at the fourth remove), came up, saw their plotting, and heard their diverse voices. Thereat he cried out, 'O my brethren, what are you planning? To slay the Pope? God forbid! Nay, but when night covers the sky, and the Romans, weary of eating and drinking, are stretched in slumber, then let us extinguish the lights, and stow away all the treasures of the church, or as many as we may be able to hide, without the archbishop's knowledge'. So said; so done; but ere they had finished their task, the Pope at dead of night appeared upon the scene, ordered the keys to be brought him by the *vestiarii* (vergers), and opened all the doors of the church. He carried off the relics, which they had not been able to hide, and many precious vessels of gold and silver to Rome. The citizens of Ravenna, when they heard of the robbery of their church, set off in pursuit of the waggon that bore the precious vessels, but the charioteers, alarmed, turned into Rimini for shelter, whereupon the men of Ravenna returned home disconsolate.

After his return to Rome the Pope sent letters couched in flattering terms to the archbishop and nobles of Ravenna, praying for the surrender of the men who had plotted against his life. This was granted; the men were all sent to Rome (the grandfather of Agnellus being one of them), and remained there in prison till they died.

'Now Sergius', says Agnellus, 'judged all the Pentapolis from Pertica as far as Tuscany and the table of Walanus just like an Exarch, and arranged all things as the Romans of old had done. He made a league with the Venetians, because he disliked the king of the Lombards and feared that evil might befall him from that quarter. In order to carry through this negotiation he gave seven purses of money apiece to each of the chief nobles among them.

On the death of Sergius, which occurred on the 23rd 01 August, 769, there was a dispute as to the succession to the see of Ravenna, of which Agnellus tells us nothing, but the Roman *Liber Pontificalis* makes it one of the articles of accusation against Desiderius and the Lombards. There was apparently an attempt to turn the election of Sergius into a precedent, and once more to seat a layman in the archi-episcopal palace of Ravenna. Michael, a *scriniarius* or registrar of the church, a man with no sacerdotal rank, obtained the help of Maurice, the duke of Rimini, who in his turn leant upon the aid of Desiderius, and this coalition succeeded by main force in installing Michael as archbishop of Ravenna, instead of Leo the archdeacon of the church, upon whom the election would otherwise have fallen. As Maurice, the duke of Rimini, by whom this state-stroke was accomplished, is characterized by the papal biographer as 'unspeakable', and as he acted in cooperation with Desiderius, he was probably a Lombard; and in any case his attitude appears to have been one of entire independence of Rome and even of actual opposition to the Holy See. Yet Rimini was one of the places which thirteen years before had been solemnly surrendered to Abbot Fulrad, and by him handed over to Stephen II. Thus we have in this event one proof the more how precarious and shadowy were the rights secured to the Pope by the great Donation of Pippin.

For a little time the intrusive archbishop seemed likely to establish himself in the see. Leo was shut up in prison, and a deputation was sent from Duke Maurice and the civil rulers of Ravenna to the Pope, praying him to consecrate Michael archbishop, and offering costly gifts

to secure his compliance. Weak as he was, however, Stephen III utterly refused to take part in a ceremony which would have entirely stultified his protest and that of his brother ecclesiastics against the election of Constantine. The Church's treasures went to the Lombard at Pavia instead of to Stephen at Rome, and for a year the help of Desiderius thus purchased succeeded in keeping Michael on his archiepiscopal throne. Then the stubborn refusal of the Pope to consecrate and the terror inspired by a peremptory message from the Frankish king Charles, won the day. There was a popular insurrection at Ravenna. Michael was sent bound to Rome for judgment, Leo was liberated and elected archbishop. He hastened to Rome with a long train of nobles and ecclesiastics, and was solemnly consecrated archbishop towards the end of 770, a little more than a year before the death of his champion Stephen III. Though he owed so much to Rome, his attitude during the eight years of his pontificate was generally one of stubborn opposition to the Papal claims.

The relations of the two Churches of Rome and Ravenna during the middle of the eighth century, which have been here briefly reviewed, vividly exhibit the uncertain nature of the Papal sovereignty over the Exarchate and the Pentapolis. It was one thing to get a 'page of donation', conferring wide-spread territories on the vicar of St. Peter; it was quite another thing to establish what modern diplomatists call 'effective occupation' of those territories. With such a royal or imperial mandate and with a full treasury, a Pope of the fifteenth century would probably have had but little difficulty in hiring a *condottiere* captain who would have made his claim effective. But though she had within her abundant elements of disorder, Italy was not cursed with *condottieri* in the eighth century.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ACCESSION OF POPE HADRIAN.

Pope Stephen III died, as we have seen, on the 3rd of February, 772. The waves of strife which had tossed him to and fro during his short and troubled pontificate were still raging round his deathbed. To the fierce and unscrupulous Paulus Afiarta it was a matter of life and death to preserve the ascendancy of the Lombard faction and to crush any attempt of the Roman or Frankish parties to elect a Pope who would reverse the recently-adopted policy. Many of the clergy and civil magistrates of the City were sent into exile, even while Stephen III was dying, and a more terrible vengeance was taken on the hapless Sergius, who, though blinded and in prison, was still formidable to the imagination of Paulus. There seems to have been a *junta* of counsellors who at this time of crisis wielded all the power of the dying Pope. They were Paulus himself (who held the office of chamberlain), John the *dux Romae* (who was brother of the Pope, and whose implication in these deeds of violence renders it probable that Stephen himself had really concurred in the recent revolution), Gregory the *defensor regionarius*, and another chamberlain named Calvulus. These men signed an order to the warders of the prisons in the Lateran for the delivery of the body of the captive Sergius. In the of first hour of the night, eight days before the Pope's Sergius-death, Calvulus presented himself at the dungeon door with two men of Anagni, Lumisso a priest and Leonatius a military officer, and obtained possession of the person of the blind captive. The course of the narrative looks as if the two men of Anagni had some private resentment of their own to gratify by the murder of the fallen minister. However this may be, he was straightway slain and buried in a street close to the Arch of Gallienus.

Happily for the fame of the Holy See, these unscrupulous attempts to silence the voice of opposition to Paulus Afiarta and his party were not successful. We may perhaps conjecture that if there was a Lombard party in the Papal Curia represented by Paulus, and a Frankish party of which Christopher and Sergius had been the heads, there was also a Roman party representing the best traditions both of the City and the Church, who were determined that the most exalted office in Christendom should no longer be made the prize of victory in the bloody strife of *cubicularii* and *primicerii*. It was probably the voice of this respectable middle party which secured the election of one of the greatest Popes of the eighth century.

Hadrian I, son of Theodore, was a pure Roman by birth, born at a house in the Via Lata, near to where the modern Corso opens out into the Piazza di Venezia. His parents, who belonged to the highest nobility of Rome, died in his childhood, and he was brought up in the house of his uncle Theodotus, who had been formerly consul and duke, but afterwards filled the office of *primicerius* of the Roman Church. Hadrian grew up, a young man of handsome presence and generous and manly character, conspicuous while still a layman for his devout attendance at the neighbouring church of St. Mark, his almsgiving, his austerities, his study of the canons of the Church. Such a man, in the intellectual atmosphere of Rome, was naturally attracted within the ecclesiastical orbit. At the urgent invitation of Pope Paul he became first *notarius regionarius*, then sub-dean; and the succeeding Pope Stephen III advanced him to the rank of deacon, and admitted him to his intimate confidence. Though the biographer speaks of the devotion to study which marked him from his earliest youth, his learning, if measured by classical standards, would probably have been found woefully deficient. His letters, contained in the Codex Carolinus, swarm with grammatical blunders of which a schoolboy would be

ashamed : and this is the more extraordinary, because (as was explained in an earlier volume) Hadrian was the Pope by whose orders the letters of his renowned predecessor Gregory I were collected into the great Register in which most of them have become known to later ages. And those letters, though not written exactly in the style of Cicero or even of the younger Pliny, are at least free from the solecisms which disfigure the letters of Hadrian. However, ‘in the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king’, and in the dense ignorance which prevailed at Rome in the middle of the eighth century Hadrian seems to have been reputed a learned man. He soon became a great and popular preacher, and this undoubted popularity caused him to be elected (9th of February, 772) as successor of Stephen III on the Papal throne.

The new Pope at once showed that he did not intend to be a mere instrument in the hands of Paulus Afiarta. On the very day of his election, even before his consecration, he ordered—and this prompt exercise of his power shows how truly monarchical was now the Papal character—that all the nobles of Church and State whom Paulus had banished from the City should be at once invited to return, and that all the political prisoners should be liberated. For the hapless Sergius, whom men doubtless expected to see now emerging from the dungeons of the Lateran, the order of release came too late.

Desiderius heard with concern that a new Pope who was not amenable to the counsels of his partisan was sitting in the palace of the Lateran. He sent an embassy, consisting of Theodicius duke of Spoleto, Tunno duke of Ivrea, and Prandulus the keeper of his wardrobe, to propose a renewal of the same friendly relations which had of late subsisted between Pavia and Rome. The speech in which Hadrian replied to the smooth words of these ambassadors was one of startling and undiplomatic frankness. “I for my part wish to live in peace with all Christians, including your king Desiderius, and in that covenant of peace which had been established between Romans, Franks and Lombards I shall study to abide. But how can I trust that same king of yours when I remember what my predecessor in this office, lord Stephen of pious memory, told me confidentially concerning his broken faith. For he told me that he had lied to him in everything which he had promised with an oath on the body of the blessed Peter, as to restoring the rights of God’s holy Church : and further that it was only under the persuasion of the unjust arguments of the same Desiderius that he caused the eyes of Christopher and Sergius to be dug out, and executed the will of the Lombard on those two officers of the Church”.

(It was not therefore wholly without the consent of Stephen III that that barbarous deed was done.)

“And in this way he caused us great harm and loss, for [the alleged reconciliation] brought no advantage at all to the apostolic cause. All this my predecessor, for the love which he bore unto me in my humble station, confided unto me : and moreover he shortly after sent unto him his own messengers, exhorting him to fulfill his promises to St. Peter. But this was the [insulting] reply which those messengers brought back with them :—

It is enough for the apostolic Stephen that I have cut off Christopher and Sergius from the world, since they were domineering over him. He need not talk about recovering the rights of the Church ; for if I do not myself help the apostolic man, he himself will soon be ruined, since Carloman, king of the Franks, the still surviving friend of Christopher and Sergius, is making ready an army to avenge their fate by marching to Rome and taking the pontiff himself captive.

“That was his reply. Lo! there you have the honour of King Desiderius and the measure of the confidence that I may repose in him”.

After Hadrian had liberated his soul by this outburst, the Lombard emissaries assured him with solemn oaths that their master was this time in earnest in his desire for a league of amity with the Holy See, and would purchase it by the surrender of all the territory for which Pope Stephen III had striven. Once again the blandishments of the Lombard prevailed. Hadrian

believed their words, and sent two ambassadors, of whom Paulus Afiarta was one, to receive the surrender of the desired territory.

Hardly, however, had the Papal messengers reached Perugia on their journey towards the Exarchate when they learned that Desiderius, far from preparing to cede any more cities to the Roman See, had appropriated Faenza, Ferrara and Comacchio, that is, had resumed possession of the cities which he surrendered in 757, and had added thereto Comacchio, which formed part of the territory ceded by Aistulf to Pippin's representative in 756. The faithlessness, and more than that, the inconsistency, the childish levity of purpose which characterize these Lombard kings, exasperate the chronicler of their deeds and make him almost ready to acquiesce in the 'unspeakable' names hurled at them by Papal biographers.

It may be suggested with some probability that the cause of this sudden change of front on the part of Desiderius was the arrival of the widow and children of Carloman at the Lombard court. To understand the bearing of this event we must go back to the closing month of 771, in which the opportune death of Carloman relieved the Frankish world of the fear of a civil war between the two brothers. Charles's measures were taken with such exceeding promptitude as to suggest the thought that his plans had been matured while Carloman was dying. He hastened to Carbonacum, a royal 'villa' in Champagne, just over the frontier, and there met a number of the most eminent nobles and ecclesiastics of his late brother's kingdom. Chief among them were the venerable Fulrad, abbot of S. Denis, and Wilchar, archbishop of Sens, both of whom had often carried Pippin's messages to Rome. Carloman had left two infant sons, and the claims of both of these to share their father's inheritance were doubtless discussed in the assembly of Carbonacum. But the evil result of these divisions of the kingdom was too obvious, the lately impending danger of civil war was too terrible. The majority of the counsellors of the late king gave their voices for reunion under Charles, who celebrated his Christmas at Attigny as sole lord of all the Frankish dominions.

On learning the decision of the assembly, Gerberga, the widow of Carloman, taking with her the two infant princes, crossed the Alps and sought shelter at the court of Desiderius. With her went some, apparently not a large number, of the courtiers of her late husband, pre-eminent among whom was Duke Autchar, the same doubtless who eighteen years before had escorted Stephen II on his memorable journey Italy. King Charles, we are told, took very patiently his sister-in-law's flight to the court of his enemy, though he considered it 'superfluous', or, as a modern would probably express the matter, 'in bad taste'.

The arrival of Gerberga with her children and counsellors put a new weapon in the hand of Desiderius for revenge on the husband of his daughter. For to that revenge all calculations of mere policy had now to yield, the pale figure of the divorced and uncrowned queen of the Franks, 'not quite a widow, yet but half a wife', being ever in his sight and mutely appealing for the redress of her wrongs. Nor as a question of mere policy did the scheme which now shaped itself in his mind seem an unwise one. If he could have Carloman's children (the sole strictly legitimate heirs of Pippin, since Charles was not born in wedlock) confirmed in the succession to their father's kingdom; a barrier thus erected between him and the Austrasian king; his son-in-law Tassilo of Bavaria united to him, both by kinship and alliance; Desiderius might reasonably reckon on being left at liberty to pursue his designs for the subjugation of the whole of Italy, unhindered by meddlers from beyond the Alps. Obviously the doubtful element in the calculation was the degree of support which Gerberga could obtain in Frank-land itself for the claims of her infant sons. The chances of that support were no doubt overestimated both by her and by her right-hand man, Autchar; but when have the exiled pretenders to a throne rightly calculated the chances of a Restoration?

For the fulfillment of the designs of Desiderius it was desirable that he should make the Pope his confederate, in order to obtain the religious sanction conveyed by his consecration of

the infant princes as kings of the Franks. The Lombard king evidently hoped to wrest this concession from the Pope by the same mixture of flattery and intimidation which had been so successful with his predecessor. He had yet to learn how different from the wavering will of Stephen III was the steadfast mind of Hadrian.

It was doubtless in order to execute these projects that Desiderius, not two months after the accession of Hadrian, made that fierce dash across the Apennines in the course of which, as already related, he wrested from the Roman See its newly-acquired cities of Faenza, Ferrara and Comacchio. At the same time the territory round Ravenna was ravaged by the Lombards, who ransacked the farms and cottages, and carried off the herds of cattle and the slaves of the farmers and the stored-up provisions of the peasants. Two tribunes brought to Hadrian from Leo the new archbishop of Ravenna the tidings of these outrages, with a piteous appeal for help, 'since no hope of living was left to him or his people'.

A fresh embassy from the Pope—since the mission of Paulus Afiarta and his colleague had proved so fruitless—brought to Desiderius the grave rebuke of Hadrian for these repeated outrages and violations of his promise. And now in his answer to this embassy the Lombard king showed at what he was aiming: "Let the Pope come to hold a conference with me, and I will restore all those cities which I have taken". The Papal messengers, who doubtless saw Gerberga and Autchar at the court of Pavia, perceived that this personal conference would involve a request or a command to anoint with the holy oil the children of Carloman.

Meanwhile what was Paulus Afiarta, so lately the omnipotent minister of the Pope, doing at the court of his friend Desiderius? He lingered on there, perhaps conscious of the peril which awaited him at Rome, but seeking by braggart words to reassure the king as to his undiminished credit at the Papal court: "You desire, O king, to have colloquy with our lord Hadrian. Trust me to bring it to pass. If needs be, I will tie a rope to his feet, but I will by all means bring him into your presence". And so saying he started on his return journey to Rome.

At Rome, meanwhile, in the absence of Paulus Afiarta, the murmurs and the suspicions caused by the disappearance of Sergius had grown stronger and stronger. At last the Pope summoned all the keepers of the *cellarium* in the Lateran and began a formal enquiry into the fate of their late prisoner. The warrant for his delivery to the chamberlain Calvulus was produced, and he, being questioned, admitted having transferred Sergius to the keeping of the two men of Anagni. They were sent for from Campania, brought into the Papal presence, and, apparently, examined by torture. Thus urged they confessed that they had slain Sergius, and were sent, under the guard of some of the Pope's most trusted servants, to show his place of burial. They came to the Merulana, to the Arch of Gallienus, near to which they dug for a little while, and then showed the guard the body of the ill-fated *secundicerius*, his neck bound tight with a rope and all his body gashed with wounds. Whereupon the beholders concluded that he had been suffocated, and then buried while still alive.

The bodies of the two fallen ministers Christopher and Sergius were now taken up and buried with honour in the basilica of St. Peter. The sight of the mangled body of Sergius stirred his late colleagues, the officials of the Church and State, to such a passion of indignation that they with a whole crowd of the commonalty of Rome rushed to the Lateran palace and clamorously besought the pontiff to take summary vengeance on the torturers and murderers of a blind prisoner. Accordingly Calvulus the chamberlain and the two men of Anagni being handed over to the secular arm, as represented by the Prefect of the City, were led down to the public prison and there examined in the presence of the people. The meaner criminals, the two men of Anagni, repeating the same confession which they had already made in presence of the Pope, were transported to Constantinople, there to be dealt with as should seem fitting to the Emperor. Of their further fate we hear nothing. Calvulus refused to confess his share in the

crime, and, as we are told, 'expired by a cruel death in prison'. Probably this means that he died under the torture which failed to extract the desired confession.

Two men, who from their exalted position deserved the severest punishment of all, Duke John the late Pope's brother and Gregory the *defensor regionarius*, seem from the Papal biographer's silence as to then cases to have been left unmolested. But for Paulus Afiarta, the friend of the Lombard, the recreant servant of the Pope, another fate was in store. He had already left Pavia, and had been arrested by the Pope's orders at Rimini, the reason for that detention being apparently his treasonable practices with the Lombard. Now the minutes of the proceedings during the enquiry into the murder of Sergius were forwarded to Archbishop Leo at Ravenna, with instructions to deal with the case according to the ordinary course of justice. On receipt of these instructions the archbishop handed the prisoner over to the *consularis* of Ravenna, the officer who, now that the Exarch was gone, appears to have wielded the highest secular authority in the city. A public examination took place; the minutes forwarded from Rome were read; Paulus Afiarta confessed his guilt. The Roman pontiff expected that his brother at Ravenna would make a formal report of the case to him, but the archbishop having now got an old enemy into his power had no intention of allowing him to escape out of his hands.

In these circumstances, strange to say, Pope Hadrian, who seems to have been sincerely anxious to save the life of Paulus though desiring his punishment, tried the desperate expedient of an appeal to Constantinople. To Constantine Copronymus and his son Leo, now associated with him in the Empire, he sent a memorandum setting forth the crime of Paulus, and praying them to arrest him and keep him in close confinement in 'the regions of Greece'. A chaplain named Gregory, who was being dispatched to Pavia on one of the usual embassies of complaint to Desiderius, was instructed to halt at Ravenna and give to Archbishop Leo the necessary orders for the transmission of the culprit to Constantinople on board a Venetian vessel. The archbishop, however, somewhat insolently replied that it would be a mistake to send Paulus Afiarta to Venetia, since Maurice the duke of that district was in anxiety about his son, a captive in the hands of Desiderius, and would be tempted to make an exchange of prisoners, surrendering Paulus to his Lombard friend and receiving back his son. The Papal messenger proceeded on his journey, after giving a solemn charge to the archbishop and all the magistrates of Ravenna that not a hair of the prisoner's head was to be touched : but on his return from Pavia he found that the *consularis*, by order of the archbishop, had put Paulus Afiarta to death. Great was his indignation at this act of disobedience to his master, and sharply was expressed. Archbishop Leo, perhaps somewhat terrified by the thought of what he had done, wrote to Hadrian praying for a consoling assurance that he had not sinned in avenging the innocent blood. He received however only a curt reply: 'Let Leo consider for himself what he has done to Paulus. I wished to save his soul, by enjoining him to lead a life of penance, and gave my orders to my chaplain accordingly'.

The proceedings in this complicated affair are narrated in the *Liber Pontificalis* with a tedious minuteness which suggests the probability that the chaplain Gregory himself composed this part of the narrative and desired to clear himself and his master of all complicity in the death of Paulus Afiarta. The narrative however is not without its value, since it shows that still, so late as the year 772, the Pope was willing to recognize a certain jurisdiction over Roman citizens as vested in the Emperors at Constantinople, heretics and iconoclasts though they might be. It also illustrates the growing independence of the archbishops of Ravenna and their determination not to acknowledge the bishops of Rome as their superiors in any but purely ecclesiastical concerns.

The fall of Paulus Afiarta destroyed the last link between the Roman pontiff and the Lombard king. The latter now pursued without check or disguise his brutal policy of forcing

the Pope to become his instrument by despoiling him of his domains. The summer 772 and autumn of 772 were occupied by a campaign—if we should not rather call it a raid—on two sides of the Papal territory. In the Pentapolis the Lombards seized Sinigaglia, Iesi, Urbino, Gubbio, Mons Fereti and several other ‘Roman’ cities. In fact, when we consider how much Desiderius had abstracted before, we may doubt whether in these Adriatic regions any city of importance was left to St. Peter except Ravenna and Rimini. This raid was accompanied, as we are told and we can well believe it, by many homicides, many conflagrations, and the carrying off of much plunder.

Even more insulting; and more ruthless were the proceedings of the Lombard ravagers in the near neighbourhood of Rome. Blera, only thirty miles north-west of Rome, was one of the four cities which thirty years before had been surrendered by the great Liutprand to Zacharias after the conference at Terni. It was assuredly the act of a madman, made ‘fey’ by the shadow of approaching doom, to harry the lands which his great predecessor had formally handed over to St. Peter’s guardianship. Yet the word of command having been given, the rough Lombard militia of Tuscany poured into the territory of Blera, while the citizens, with their wives, their children, and their servants were engaged in the peaceful labours of the harvest. The invaders slew the chief men of the city (who were probably foremost in resisting the invasion), ravaged the country all round with fire and sword, and drove off a multitude of captives and of cattle into the land of the Lombards. Several other cities of the Ducatus Romae suffered more or less from similar depredations, and Otricoli on the Via Flaminia, a stage nearer to Rome than Narni, was occupied by the Lombard host.

While these deeds of lawless aggression were being perpetrated, the insolent diplomacy of Desiderius also held on its course. Several times did his messengers, Andrew the *referendarius* and Stabilis the duke, appear at the Lateran desiring the Pope to come and talk with their master ‘on equal terms’. The answer of Hadrian was firm and dignified: “Tell your king that I solemnly promise in the presence of the Almighty, that if he will restore those cities which in my pontificate he has abstracted from St. Peter, I will at once hasten into his presence wheresoever he shall choose to appoint the interview, whether at Pavia, Ravenna, Perugia, or here at Rome; that so we may confer together about the things which concern the safety of the people of God on both sides of the frontier. And if he have any doubt of my keeping this engagement, I say at once that if I do not meet him in conference he has my full leave to reoccupy those cities. But if he does not first restore what he has taken away, he shall never see my face”. There spoke the worthy successor of Leo and of Gregory, the truly Roman pontiff, who showed that a citizen of the seven-hilled City had not quite forgotten the old lesson ‘to spare the fallen and war down the proud’. In truth this year 772, which might have been the Lombard’s great opportunity, had he known how to use it, was the year which brought out in strongest relief what there was truly heroic in Hadrian’s character. We hear at this time of no cry for help to Frankish Charles. Both Hadrian and Desiderius knew full well that such a cry would have been uttered in vain, Charles had now begun that which was to prove the hardest and longest enterprise of his life, the subjugation and conversion to Christianity of the fierce Saxon tribes who dwelt in the regions which are now called Hanover and Oldenburg, on the north-eastern frontier of the Frankish kingdom. Though in the course of Charles’s great career he was eventually carried across the Alps and the Pyrenees, though the Voltornus and the Ebro saw the waving of his standards, his heart seems to have been always in his own native Austrasia, and his conception of his kingly duties was connected much more with the civilization of Central Europe than with the extension of his dominions along the shores of the Mediterranean. Thus it was that, carrying forward the policy of his father and the preaching of St. Boniface, he determined that heathenism should cease throughout Saxonland, and devoted the first energies of his kingdom, when consolidated by the death of Carloman, to the

attainment of that great object. Assuredly the work took longer time than he had expected. It began in 772, and was not completed till 804, after thirty-two years of almost incessant war. Possibly, had he known how long a road lay before him, he might never have entered upon the journey : but if so, it is fortunate for Europe that the future was hidden from his eyes, for however ruthless were some of his methods, however ghastly some pages of his slaughterous evangel, there can be no doubt that, in one way or another, the work had to be done, and that the world is better for the doing of it. If therefore, from an Italian point of view, Charles's action shall sometimes seem to us fitful, capricious, and lacking in unity of design, we must remember that during all the years of his vigorous manhood this arduous Saxon problem was absorbing the best energies of his body and his soul.

Intent on his great design Charles summoned his *placitum*—or, as we may call it, using the language of later centuries, the diet of his kingdom—to meet at Worms, probably in the early summer. From thence he advanced into the land of the Saxons, accompanied not only by his stalwart Frankish soldiers, but by bishops, abbots and presbyters—a numerous train of the tonsured ones. There were three great divisions of the Saxon people, the Angarii in the middle of the country, the Westfali on their western, the Ostfali on their eastern border. Charles marched against the Angarii, laid waste their land with fire and sword, and took their stronghold, Eresburg on the Diemel. From thence he marched to the Irminsul, a gigantic tree-trunk in a dense forest, which had been fashioned into a resemblance of the ash Yggdrasil of the Edda, the supporter and sustainer of the universe, and which was the object of the idolatrous veneration of the Saxons. Having hewn down the tree-idol he remained three days near the scene of his triumph. But a great drought prevailed in the land, and the army suffered grievously for want of water. The drought might be interpreted by the outraged idolaters as evidence of the anger of the gods; but the torrent which burst forth from the mountain's side and saved the whole army from perishing of thirst was a clear indication that the Christian's God was mightier than they. In these labours and dangers the campaigning season of 772 passed away: Charles having carried his standards triumphantly to the Weser, returned to Austrasia and celebrated his Christmas at Heristal in Brabant. The months of February and March (773) he spent at the villa of Theodo in the valley of the Moselle, sixteen miles north of Metz.

To this place (which is now called Thionville by the French and Diedenhofen by the Germans), in one of those winter months at the beginning of 773, came the Pope's messenger Peter with a piteous cry for help. Embassy after embassy had been sent in vain to Desiderius to beseech him to restore the captured cities, and had only been answered by further outrages on the Roman territory and by an announcement of his determination to march upon Rome itself. So closely were the roads beset that Peter found it necessary to make his journey by sea from the mouth of the Tiber to Marseilles.

Even while Peter was pleading the Papal cause at Thionville, Desiderius in fulfillment of his threat was moving towards Rome. Taking with him his son Adelchis, who had been for more than thirteen years the partner of his throne, and the widow and children of Carloman with their counsellor Autchar, he marched southward at the head of his army. He sent forward his messengers, Andrew and two other Lombard nobles, to inform the Pope of his approach, and received the answer, already repeated to weariness, "Unless he first repairs the wrongs done to St. Peter, he shall not be admitted to my presence". Still Desiderius pressed forward, and it seemed clear that an armed invasion of the Ducatus Romae was imminent. In Roman Tuscany, in Campania, and in Perugia, something like a levee *en masse* was made, and even from the cities of the Pentapolis, notwithstanding the presence of the Lombard garrisons, some men came to help in the defence of the threatened pontiff. The two great basilicas of St. Peter and St. Paul, being without the gates, were emptied of their most costly treasures, which were

brought within the City, and the doors of St. Peter's were closed and barred with iron, to prevent the Lombard king from entering the church, as he probably intended, in order to carry the election of an anti-pope and the anointing by him of the infant princes. The great gates of the City had already some months before been closed, and small wicket-gates had been opened in them for the passage to and fro of the citizens.

Having made all these material preparations, Hadrian began to ply the spiritual artillery which had so often proved the best defence of Rome. Three ecclesiastics, the bishops of Albano, Palestrina and Tivoli, sallied forth from the City to the Lombard camp, which was fixed at Viterbo, fifty miles from Rome, and there presented to Desiderius the Pope's word of anathema, protesting against him by that word of command and exhortation, and adjuring him by all the divine mysteries that he should by no means presume to enter the territories of the Romans, nor to tread their soil, neither he nor any of the Lombards, nor yet Autchar the Frank.

Wonderful to relate, this 'word of anathema' was sufficient to foil the whole scheme of invasion. As soon as he had received this word of command from the aforesaid bishops, Desiderius returned immediately with great reverence and full of confusion from the city of Viterbo to his own home. Either he had overrated his own and his soldiers' courage in the face of the terrors of hell with which he and they were threatened, or he found that the *levée en masse* of Roman citizens would make his task more difficult than he had anticipated, or at last when too late he shrank from encountering the wrath of the Frankish king. For Charles was now evidently at liberty to attend to the affairs of Italy. In reply to the embassy of Peter he dispatched three envoys to Rome, the bishop George, the abbot Gulfard, and his own intimate the friend Albuin, to enquire into the truth of the Pope's charges against Desiderius. These men satisfied themselves that the Lombard king's assertions that he had already restored the cities and satisfied all the just claims of St. Peter were impudently false. They heard from his own lips the surly statement that he would restore nothing at all, and with this answer they returned to their master, who was probably at this time keeping his Easter-feast at the ancestral villa of Heristal. They carried also the Pope's earnest entreaties that Charles would fulfill the promises made by his father of pious memory, and complete the redemption of the Church of God by insisting on the restoration of the cities and the surrender of all the remaining territory claimed by St. Peter.

CHAPTER XIV

END OF THE LOMBARD MONARCHY.

At last the reign of the shifty and perfidious Desiderius was to come to an end. He had climbed to the throne by the help of a Pope whom he had deluded with vain promises. He had maintained himself thereon for sixteen years by a policy cunningly compounded of force and fraud. Now the day of reckoning was come.

Though we have really no Lombard history of this period—alas for the silent voice of the national historian Paulus—we have sufficient indications that the reign of Desiderius was unpopular with many of his subjects, and we may conjecture that the whole state was honeycombed by domestic treason. In November, 772, the young King Adelchis, enthroned in Brescia, signed a document by which he conveyed to the monastery of St. Saviour ‘all the property and serfs of Augino, who has revolted and fled to Frank-land’, together with all the farms, territories and serfs of eight other proprietors whose names are mentioned, and of other their accomplices, ‘which they have lost for their disloyalty and which have thus become the property of our palace’.

We hear also of the avowed disaffection of Anselm, formerly duke of Friuli, who in 749 had laid down his ducal dignity, had assumed the monk’s cowl, and had founded the monastery of Nonantula, a few miles north-east of Modena. Banished and proscribed by Desiderius, he was now living in retirement at Monte Cassino, but was using all the power which he had acquired by his deserved reputation for holiness to shake the throne of his royal antagonist. As he was a brother of Giseltruda, Aistulf’s queen, we have in Anselm’s disgrace probably another indication of the ill-will which existed between the families of the two last kings of the Lombards.

All these elements of weakness in the Lombard state were doubtless known to Charles, when, after deliberation with his Franks, probably at the Field of May, he determined to follow his father’s example and invade Italy in the service of St. Peter. A levy of the nation in arms was ordered and while it was proceeding Charles, still treading in his father’s footsteps, sought by diplomacy to render the war needless. We are told that he offered Desiderius 14,000 solidi of gold, besides an [unnamed] quantity of gold and silver [vessels], if he would comply with the demands of Hadrian. The transaction looks suspiciously like a duplication of the similar offer of Pippin, but if the offer was ever made, it was this time also ineffectual. ‘Neither by prayers nor by gifts did Charles avail to bend the most ferocious heart’ of Desiderius.

The Frankish host was mustered at Geneva, and Charles then proceeded, according to a favourite strategic plan of his, to divide his army into two portions, one of which, under the command of his uncle Bernhard, was to march by the pass of the mountain of Jupiter, now called the Greater St. Bernard, while Charles himself was to lead the other over the Mont Cenis.

What next followed is told us in meagre and confused fashion by the annalists on one side and the Papal biographer on the other; and it is only by the help of one or two conjectures that we can combine the details into any harmonious picture. With that aid the story may be thus narrated. As before, there no fighting on the actual summits of the passes, but Desiderius prepared to meet the invaders in the narrow gorges on the Italian side before they had got clear of the mountains. He himself advanced from Susa to meet King Charles, while his son Adelchis, marching from Ivrea, awaited the approach of Bernhard. When Charles descended

toward the valley of the Dora he found his further progress barred not only by the Lombard army, but by walls which they had built and by warlike engines commanding the pass. To force his way through seemed so difficult an enterprise that he again tried the path of diplomacy. He renewed his offer of the 14,000 solidi if Desiderius would restore the conquered cities. When this offer was refused he reduced his demand. Without the actual restoration of the cities he would be satisfied with the surrender of three hostages, sons of Lombard nobles, as a pledge for their future restitution. This too was met with a surly negative by Desiderius, and thereupon the young Frankish king was actually about to turn back and reascend the mountain. A dangerous enterprise surely with an embittered foe behind him! The question was then probably trembling in the balance whether the name of Charles the Great should ever be heard of in European history. But just at this crisis, on the very eve of the intended retreat, a panic seized the host of Desiderius. They left their tents, with all the stores that they contained, and fled in terror down the valley, at first pursued by no man, but soon followed by the Frankish soldiers, who slew numbers of them, though Desiderius and his nobles succeeded in making their escape to Pavia.

What was the cause of this sudden terror? Almost probably certainly the advance of Bernhard, who had succeeded in eluding or defeating Adelchis, and now, advancing on the flank of the army of Desiderius, threatened to cut them off from Pavia. The strategic operation planned by Charles, involving an attack by two converging hosts on an enemy in the centre of the circle, is admitted to be a very dangerous one for the assailant, but when it succeeds, the effect is crushing. It was the consciousness that they were thus utterly outmanoeuvred which drove Desiderius and his men in headlong rout down the valley .

Charles now meeting no obstacle in his onward march, in the beginning of October commenced the siege of Pavia. Seeing, however, that it was likely to be a long and tedious affair he returned to Frank-land, and fetched from thence his girl-wife Hildegard, an Alamannian lady of noble birth, only thirteen years of age, whom he had married immediately after his repudiation of Desiderata. She came with her infant son Charles and with his half-brother Pippin, the son of the first of all Charles's wives, Himiltrud. A boy of some seven or eight years old, probably, was this Pippin, born apparently to high destinies, but unhappily deformed in his person. The family affection, conspicuous in the Teutonic conquerors of Rome, shows itself in this young Austrasian warrior Charles, who must have his wife and children beside him if he is to endure the weariness of the long blockade of Pavia.

That blockade occupied eventually more than eight months, but not all of that time was spent by Charles himself before the walls of the city on the Ticino. When he learned that Adelchis, son of Desiderius and partner of his throne, had fled with Gerberga and her sons to Verona, Charles marched thither with a chosen band of Frankish warriors, and, notwithstanding the strong position of Verona, appears to have taken it without much difficulty. Gerberga and her sons, with their chief adviser Autchar, surrendered themselves at once to Charles. All of them at this point vanish from history : a fact which may be interpreted differently according to our estimate of the character of the conqueror. To me, considering the clemency with which Charles usually treated his vanquished foes, it seems probable that all their lives were spared, though it is not unlikely that Gerberga and Autchar were recommended to embrace the monastic life, and that the sons were educated for the service of the Church. As for Adelchis, he escaped from Verona and began that life of wandering and exile which was his portion for the remainder of his days. Charles returned to the upper valley of the Po, and took many cities of the Lombards without relinquishing his grasp on Pavia.

Meanwhile, or perhaps even before some of the events just related, important political changes had been taking place in Central Italy. When it was seen that the throne of Desiderius was tottering, the Lombards of Spoleto, who had probably never heartily accepted the

sovereignty of the Tuscan upstart, proceeded to make terms for themselves with him who seemed now likely to become the most powerful of Italian princes, the Bishop of Rome. “The leading men of Spoleto and Rieti”, says the biographer, “ere yet Desiderius and his Lombards had arrived at the Alpine passes, fleeing for refuge to St. Peter, handed themselves over to Pope Hadrian, swore fealty to the Prince of the Apostles and the most holy Pope, and were tonsured after the manner of the Romans”. Their example, we are told, would have been followed by all the inhabitants of the Spoletan duchy, but they were restrained by fear of Desiderius. After his defeat and flight to Pavia, and when his Spoletan soldiers had returned home, “immediately the whole body of inhabitants of the various cities of the duchy of Spoleto streamed together into the presence of the lovely pontiff, and rolling themselves at his feet earnestly besought his holy Thrice-Blessedness that he would receive them into the service of St. Peter and the Holy Roman Church, and would cause them to be tonsured after the manner of the Romans”. Pope Hadrian marched with his new subjects to St. Peter’s, administered the sacrament, received their oath of fidelity for themselves and their remotest descendants, gave them the desired Roman tonsure, and ‘appointed them a duke whom they themselves had chosen of their own free will, to wit the most noble Hildebrand, who had previously taken refuge with the rest [of his followers] at the Apostolic See.’

At the same time, the citizens of Fermo, Osimo and Ancona, at the southern end of the Pentapolis, and the Tuscan town of Castellum Felicitatis, west of the Apennines, submitted themselves in similar manner to the Pope and his successors. Well may the biographer describe with exultation the extension of the Papal territory which Hadrian had thus obtained by his own unaided efforts. The commendation—for such the above transaction seems to have been—of the great duchy of Spoleto and the annexation of the other cities just mentioned, gave to the dominions of St. Peter the shape and extent which they retained down to our own day. The Adriatic provinces were now joined to the Ducatus Romae, not by the slender and precarious thread of Perugia and the Via Flaminia alone : a solid block of territory covering both sides of the Apennines and including the old Roman province of Picenum now gave roundness and symmetry to dominions which reached, nominally at any rate, from Ferrara in the north to Terracina in the south, a distance in a straight line of some two hundred and twenty miles.

The winter passed away, Eastertide was approaching, and Charles, who had probably a wider mental horizon than Pippin, determined to visit that great metropolis of Christendom which his father had never seen. Leaving of course all the working part of his army encamped round beleaguered Pavia, he started with a brilliant train of dukes, counts, bishops and abbots, and a sufficient body-guard of soldiers, on the road through Tuscany to Rome. He marched in haste, and was within a day’s journey of the City, ere Hadrian heard of his arrival. ‘Falling into an ecstasy of great astonishment,’ the Pope directed all the magistrates of the City to go thirty miles along the north-western road to meet the great Patrician. They met him at the place called Ad Novas, the third station on the Via Clodia, near the shores of Lake Bracciano, and here they presented him with a standard, probably such an one as St. Peter is represented as granting ‘Carulo Regi’ in the mosaic outside the Lateran.

At one mile from the City the Pope had ordered that the illustrious visitor should be met by all the regiments of the little army of the Ducatus Romae, together with their officers and the boys who had come to Rome, probably from all the countries of the Christian West, to learn the language of the Church. The great crosses, which were, so to speak, the standards of the Church, were brought forth, as was the custom when an Exarch or Patrician entered Rome. All the Romans, men and boys alike, sang hymns of praise, in which Charles’s Frankish soldiers joined with their deep Teutonic voices. As soon as Charles saw the crosses being borne towards him, he alighted from his horse, and in lowly pedestrian fashion, with the nobles who followed his example, accomplished the scene at rest of the journey. And now the

venerable basilica of St. Peter—a building utterly unlike the domed Renaissance temple of Bramante and Michael Angelo—rose before them on the Vatican hill, and there in the long *atrium* outside the doors of the church stood Pope Hadrian and all his clergy, who had risen at early dawn to welcome their great deliverer. At the foot of the hill King Charles knelt down, assuredly in no feigned reverence, but overcome with emotion at the sight of the long dreamed of sanctuary, and kissed each step that led up to the crowded *atrium*. When he reached the summit, King and Pope clasped one another in a loving embrace—no Byzantine prostration of the ecclesiastic before his sovereign, no Hildebrandine abasement of the sovereign before the ecclesiastic—and so, while Charles cordially grasped the right hand of Hadrian, they together entered ‘the venerable hall of St. Peter, Prince of Apostles’, all the clergy and brethren of the monastic orders chanting the while with loud voices, ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’

Let us pause for a moment to gaze at the figures of the two men, the highest types in their day of the old Roman and the new Teutonic civilization, who accomplish this fateful meeting on the steps of St. Peter’s basilica. Hadrian, a Roman of the Romans, sprung of a noble stock, born almost under the shadow of the mausoleum of Augustus, bearing the name of the most artistic of Roman Emperors, ‘elegant and very graceful in person’, but a man of indomitable will and of courage that had never quailed before the threats of the brutal Desiderius—this man, as worthily as Leo or as Gregory, represents the old heroic spirit of the men of Romulus, transformed yet hardly softened by the teachings of the Man of Nazareth.

And Carl, not the majestic yet somewhat out-worn Emperor of medieval romance, but a young and lusty warrior who has not reached the half-way house of life. The very name of this grandson of Charles Martel has a Teutonic ring in it, and reminds us of the day when the unmannerly messenger burst into the second Pippin’s presence as he was sitting by the solemn Plectrude and shouted out ‘It is a Carl’. But though he is Teuton and Austrasian to the core, a descendant of untold generations of Rhine-land warrior-chiefs, and though the Frankish lawless love of women stains many pages of his history, he never forgets that he is also the descendant of the sainted Arnulf of Metz, and that his father was crowned by the not less saintly Boniface. The welfare of the Church is dear to his heart. If he be not a pattern of morality himself, he will not tolerate immorality in that Church’s ministers. He has perhaps already begun to read the book which will be the delight of his middle life and old age, Augustine’s great treatise ‘On the City of God’; and with the help of this great Roman, the Vicar of Peter, he has visions of one day bringing that city down to dwell on the earth, such wide spaces of which are subject to his rule.

A word as to the personal appearance of the great Austrasian. He was of commanding stature, probably not less than six feet five in height. His nose was long, his eyes large and sparkling, his face bright and cheerful. His hair, which when Einhard drew his picture was ‘beautiful in whiteness,’ we may imagine to have been at this time golden in hue, descending in long curls to his shoulders. His gait, even when he was an old man, was firm and martial: how much more when he now for the first time trod the soil of Italy at the head of his Frankish warriors.

Such were the two men who on Holy Saturday, the 2nd of April, 774, met in the atrium of St. Peter’s. They marched together up the long nave, followed by all the bishops, abbots and nobles of the Franks, drew nigh to the *confessio* of the Apostle, and there, prostrate before the relics of the saint, offered up their loud thanksgivings to Almighty God for the victory which had been wrought by his intercession. Prayer being ended, Charles humbly besought the pontiff for leave to worship at the various churches in Rome. It was not the Patrician, come to set in order the affairs of the City, but the pilgrim from across the Alps come for the healing of his soul, who preferred this lowly request. Then they all went down the steps into the crypt and

stood by the actual (or alleged) body of the Apostle, while Pope, King, and nobles gave and received solemn oaths of mutual fidelity.

We need not follow the enthusiastic biographer through his minutely-detailed description of the ceremonies which followed this 'joyous entry' of Charles into the City of Rome. On Saturday, the numerous baptisms usual on this day of the Calendar were administered by the Pope at the Lateran basilica. On Easter Sunday, a great presentation of Roman magistrates and officers to Charles was followed by a mass at S. Maria Maggiore, and then by a banquet at the Lateran palace. On Monday there was mass at St. Peter's, and on Tuesday at St. Paul's. But on Wednesday there was enacted, if the Papal scribe speaks truth, that great event the Donation of Charles to Hadrian, an event of such transcendent importance that the biographer must be allowed to tell it in his own words :—

'Now on the fourth day of the week, April 6, 774, the aforesaid Pope, with his officers both of Church and State, had an interview with the King in the church of St. Peter, when he earnestly besought and with fatherly affection exhorted him to fulfill in every particular the promise which his father, the late King Pippin of holy memory, and Charles himself with his brother Carloman and all the Frankish nobles, had made to St. Peter and his vicar Pope Stephen II on the occasion of his journey into Frank-land: this promise being that divers cities and territories of that province of Italy should be handed over to St. Peter and his vicars for a perpetual possession. And when Charles had caused this promise which was made at Carisiacum in Frank-land to be read over to him, he and his nobles expressed their entire approval of all things therein contained. Then, of his own accord, with good and willing mind, that most excellent and truly Christian Charles, king of the Franks, ordered another promise of gift like the former one to be drawn up by his chaplain and notary, Etherius. Hereby he granted the same cities and territories to St. Peter, and promised that they should be handed over to the pontiff, according to their defined boundaries, as is shown by the contents of the same donation, to wit, from Lima with the isle of Corsica, thence to Surianum, thence to Mount Bardo, that is to Vercetum, thence to Parma, thence to Rhegium, and from thence to Mantua and Mons Silicis, together with the whole exarchate of Ravenna, as it was of old, and the provinces of the Venetiae and Istria; together with the whole duchy of Spoletium and that of Beneventum. And having made this donation and confirmed it with his own hand, the most Christian king of the Franks caused all the bishops, abbots, dukes and counts to sign it also. Then placing it first on the altar of St. Peter, and afterwards within, in his holy *confessio*, the king and all his nobles promised St. Peter and his vicar Pope Hadrian, under the sanction of a terrible oath, that they would maintain his right to all the territories included in that donation. Another copy thereof, by order of the most Christian king, was made by Etherius, and to keep alive the eternal memory of his own name and the Frankish kingdom, was placed by Charles's own hands upon the body of St. Peter under the gospels which it is the custom to kiss in that place. Certain other copies of the same donation made by the bureau of our Holy Roman Church were carried away by his Excellency.'

By this transaction on the 6th of April, 774, if the Papal biographer is to be believed, the bishop of Rome became the actual or expectant sovereign of two-thirds of Italy. Actual or expectant, I say, because some part of the territory thus assigned was still in the hands of the Lombards, and yet more because the provinces of Venetia and Istria still, probably, owed allegiance to the Emperor Constantine. But in fact all enquirers who have carefully considered the question admit the impossibility of reconciling this alleged donation with the facts of history. The Pope of Rome never, we may confidently assert, was (as this donation would have made him) lord of all Italy with the exception of Piedmont, Lombardy, the immediate neighbourhood of Naples, and Calabria. The explanations of the difficulty are numerous. Forgery by the biographer, interpolation by a later hand, forgery by accepting a papal scribe,

misunderstanding by the unlettered Frank, confusion between ownership of estates and lordship of territories, an early surrender by the Pope of rights which he found himself unable to maintain—all these solutions of the enigma have been suggested. For a slight and far from exhaustive discussion of the subject I must refer to a note at the end of this chapter. Only this much may be said at the present point, that the more completely the reader can banish from his mind the thought that in 774 Charles the Frank deliberately and of set purpose made Pope Hadrian sovereign of two-thirds of Italy and of the island of Corsica, the easier will he find it to follow the events of the next quarter of a century.

From Rome the Frankish king soon returned to Pavia, where the long siege was drawing to a close. Disease was rife within the city, and more men fell under its ravages than by the sword of the enemy. At last on a Tuesday in the month of June 1 the city surrendered, and Desiderius with his wife Ansa and a daughter whose name we know not became prisoners of the Frankish king. Recent events might well have embittered Charles against his Lombard father-in-law, but he displayed his usual clemency, and sparing his life sent him, apparently accompanied by the two royal ladies, to the monastery of Corbie in Picardy, the same holy house to which young Adalhard had retired when he refused to connive at repudiation of the Lombard princess Desiderata, and of which he was one day to be the venerated abbot. Here, we are told, the exiled king remained till the day of his death, passing his time in prayers and watchings and fastings, and many other good works. His wife, who had always been a zealous builder of churches and monasteries, doubtless shared this pious ending to that which had been in her husband's case a troubled and somewhat ignoble career.

The reader has now before him the historic facts as far as they are known, concerning the siege and fall of Pavia. He may be amused by seeing the transformation which, in the course of a century, these facts had undergone in the hands of monastic rhapsodists.

'There was in the court of Desiderius', wrote the Monk of St. Gall (in the book on the deeds of Charles which he dedicated to his great-grandson), 'a chief minister of King Charles named Otker, who having incurred his master's displeasure sought a refuge among the Lombards. When the war had broken out and the approach of Charles was expected, Desiderius and Otker together ascended a tower which commanded a very wide view. When the baggage wagons drew near which would have not misbeseemed the expeditions of Darius or Julius, Desiderius said to Otker, "Is Charles in this mighty army?". "Not yet," said Otker. The rank and file of soldiers collected from so many lands appeared: then the corps of guards, for ever intent on their duty: then the bishops, abbots and chaplains with their trains. At the sight of each successive company Desiderius asked, "Is not Charles with these?" and [for some unexplained reason] the appearance of the ecclesiastics filled him with more overmastering fear than all the rest, so that he longed to leave his tower and hide himself underground from the face of so terrible an enemy. But Otker said to him, "When you see an iron harvest bristling in the plain, and these rivers Po and Ticino which surround your walls black with the reflection of iron-clad warriors, then know that Charles is at hand." Even while he spoke a dark cloud from north and west seemed to overshadow the light of day. But then as the monarch drew nearer, the reflection from his soldiers' arms made a new daylight more terrible than night. Then appeared that man of iron, Charles himself, with iron helmet, gauntlets and breastplate, with an iron spear held erect by his left hand, for his right was ever stretched forth to his unconquered sword: the outer surfaces of his thighs, which for ease in mounting on horseback are with other men left bare, with him were encircled in rings of iron. Why speak of his greaves, for they, like those of all the rest of his army, were iron? Of iron too was his shield; and his iron-grey horse had the strength as well as the colour of that metal. Him, the great leader, all who went before, all who flowed round him on each side, all who followed him, imitated to the utmost of their power. The iron river filled all the plain, reflected the rays of the

sun, struck terror into the pale watchers on the walls. "O the iron! alas for the iron!" so rose the confused murmur of the citizens. All these things I, a toothless and stammering old man, have told you at far greater length than I should have done, but then he, the truthful sentinel Otker, took them all in at a glance, and turning to Desiderius said to him, "Lo, now you have him whom you so earnestly desired to behold"; whereupon Desiderius fell fainting to the ground.'

The Monk then goes on to describe how, as there were still some among the citizens of Pavia who refused to open the gates to the Franks, Charles in order that the day might not pass over without some worthy deed, ordered his men to build a basilica in which they might render service to Almighty God outside the walls, if they could not do so within them. So said, so done. The men dispersed in all directions, some seeking stones, some lime for mortar, some timber, some paints and painters, and thus setting to work at the fourth hour of the day, before the twelfth hour thereof 'they had erected such a basilica, with walls and roofs, with ceilings and pictures all complete, that no one who looked upon it would have supposed that it could have been built in less than a twelvemonth'.

After this, that party among the citizens which was in favour of surrender prevailed, and on the fifth day of the siege, without shedding a drop of blood, Charles was master of the city.

Thus with the lapse of three generations had the story of the siege of Pavia been transformed, and the long and weary blockade of eight months' duration had become changed into a sudden capture, caused by the magic of his presence, a capture almost as marvellous and quite as unhistorical as the building in eight hours of the suburban basilica.

Passing from the realm of Saga, we are forced to ask ourselves the question why it was that the Lombard power went down so easily before the impact of the Franks. We ask, but our materials are so scanty that we must be contented with a most imperfect answer. We have seen that there were treachery and disunion in the Lombard camp, and that, from some disadvantage of birth or defects of character, Desiderius failed to win for himself the loyalty of the whole Lombard people. Moreover, throughout the two centuries of their history the 'centrifugal' tendency, which was the bane of so many of the new Teutonic states, was fatally manifest in the Lombard nation. Benevento and Spoleto were always bound by a very loose tie to Pavia, and at the least provocation Trent and Friuli were ready to fly off from the central power. Then there was probably the same want of cohesion between the Teutonic and the Latin elements of the population which led to the early downfall of the Burgundian and Visigothic kingdoms. The condition of the Roman *aldius* may have been, probably was, far better under Desiderius than under Alboin or Authari, but still he felt himself to be a subject where his fathers had been lords, and he saw no reason why he should fight for the maintenance of Lombard supremacy. To this must be added the inextinguishable and to us inexplicable animosity of the Church, to which, however orthodox their profession of faith, however lavish their gifts to convent and cathedral, the Lombards were still the same 'most unspeakable, most foul and stinking' race that they had been at their first entrance into Italy. Assuredly in this case the antipathy was one of race rather than of religion. The ecclesiastic who was perhaps the son of a Roman *aldius* hated the man 'who dressed his hair after the manner of the Lombards', not now as a heretic, but as the descendant of the invaders who had reduced his fathers to slavery.

And lastly, but perhaps not of least importance, we may suggest that the influence of climate was not unimportant in weakening the fibre of Lombard manhood. The soldiers of Alboin came, fresh and hardy, from the forests of the Danube and the glens of Noricum (very different countries assuredly from the pleasant lands which now represent them); they came into the softer climate of a land whose thousand years of civilization not all the ravages of the barbarians had availed wholly to obliterate. They came, they enjoyed, and probably they lost some of their ancient manhood.

Whatever the cause, it must be admitted that there is something which disappoints us in the meagrely-told tale of the downfall of the kingdom of the Lombards. Herein they differ from the Anglo-Saxons, their old neighbours, with whose history their own for so many years ran parallel. In both nations there was for long the same want of cohesion (till the Church, the enemy of Lombard unity, accomplished the unity of England); in both there was the same slackness, the same tendency to procrastination, the same absence of wide and far-seeing statesmanship. But the old Anglo-Saxon battle-songs found a fitting close on the well-fought field of Senlac, while the course of Lombard history trickled out to an unworthy end amid the famine and fever of Pavia.

NOTE

The Alleged Donation of Territory in Italy by Charles the Great to Pope Hadrian.

I. In the first place, let us have before us the actual words in Vita which the Papal biographer records this memorable transaction:

“At vero quarta feria, egressus praenominatus pontifex cum suis iudicibus tam cleri quamque militiae in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli, pariterque cum eodem rege se loquendum conjungens, constanter eum deprecatus est atque ammonuit et paterno affectu adhortare studuit ut promissionem illam, quam ejus sanctae memoriae genitor Pippinus quondam rex et ipse praecellentissimus Carulus cum suo germano Carulomanno atque omnibus iudicibus Francorum, fecerant beato Petro et ejus vicario sanctae memoriae domno Stephano juniore papae, quando Franciam perrexit, pro concedendis diversis civitatibus ac territoriis istius Italiae provinciae et contradendis beato Petro ejusque omnibus vicariis in perpetuum possidendis, adimpleret in omnibus. Cumque ipsam promissionem, quae Francia in loco qui vocatur Carisiaco facta est, sibi relegi fecisset, complacuerunt illi et ejus iudicibus omnia quae ibidem erant adnexa. Et propria voluntate, bono ac libenti animo, aliam donationis promissionem ad instar anterioris ipse antedictus praecellentissimus et revera Christianissimus Carulus Francorum rex adscribi jussit per Etherium, religiosum ac prudentissimum capellanum et notarium suum : ubi concessit easdem civitates et territoria beato Petro easque praefato pontifici contradi spondit per designatum confinium, sicut in eadem (sic) donationem continere monstratur, id est: A Lunis eum insula Corsica, deinde in Suriano, deinde in monte Bardone, id est in Verceto, deinde in Parma, deinde in Regio : et exinde in Mantua atque Monte Silicis, simulque et universum exarchatum Ravennantium sicut antiquitus erat, atque provincias Venetiarum et Istria: necnon et cunctum ducatum Spolitinum seu Beneventanum. Factaque eadem donatione et propria sua manu earn ipse Christianissimus Francorum rex earn conroborans, universos episcopos, abbates, duces etiam et grafiones in ea adscribi fecit: quam prius super altare beati Petri et postmodum intus in sancta ejus confessione ponentes, tam ipse Francorum rex quamque ejus iudices, beato Petro et ejus vicario sanctissimo Adriano papae sub terribile sacramento sese omnia conservaturos quae in eadem donatione continentur promittentes tradiderunt. Apparem vero ipsius donationis eundem Etherium adscribi faciens ipse Christianissimus Francorum rex, intus super corpus beati Petri, subtus evangelia quae ibidem osculantur, pro firmissima cautela et aeterna nominis sui ac regni Francorum memoria propriis suis manibus posuit. Aliaque ejusdem donationis exempla per scrinium hujus sanctae nostrae Romanae ecclesiae adscriptum ejus excellentia secum deportavit”.

II. As to the geographical import of the donation. The mention of Corsica is simple enough. That island at this time was possibly Lombard. At any rate it soon became part of the Frankish dominion. On the mainland of Italy the boundary traced begins from the gulf of Spezzia, and then runs nearly due north past Sarzana (Surianum), following upward the course of the river Magra till it strides across the Apennines at La Cisa (Mons Bardonis). Thence in a more north-easterly direction past Berceto (Vercetum) to Parma : along the Via Emilia for a short distance to Reggio, and thence at right angles to its former course till it reaches Mantua. From Mantua it goes nearly east till it reaches Monselice (Mons Silicis), about fifteen miles south of Padua. From thence we must draw some conjectural line to include the two provinces of Venetia and Istria, though the mention of Monselice makes it hard to draw the line so as not to exclude the westernmost part of Venetia. When we have traced this northern frontier our work is done; for the Exarchate of Ravenna as it was anciently held (of course including the Pentapolis) and the two great duchies of Spoleto and Benevento practically include all Italy south of this line, unless we ought to make a reservation for the fragments of southern Italy which still belonged to the Empire, and which probably at this time consisted only of the territory immediately surrounding Gaeta, Naples, and Amalfi, the district which now bears the name of Calabria, and so much of the south-east of Apulia as went with the possession of Otranto—a district perhaps equivalent to the modern province of Lecce. Instead, therefore, of enumerating the portions of Italy which were included in the alleged donation, it will be simpler to consider what portions were excluded from it. They were (in modern geographical terms) Piedmont, the Riviera di Ponente and the Riviera di Levante as far as Spezzia, the late duchy of Piacenza, Lombardy north of the Po, Verona and (probably) Vicenza; Naples, Calabria, and Otranto. About two-thirds of Italy, as I have mentioned in the preceding chapter, were thus assigned to the vicars of St. Peter, and only one third was left for the Frankish King and the Empire to share between them.

III. Of this alleged donation, notwithstanding the statement by the biographer as to the copies deposited at Rome among the Frankish archives and elsewhere, no copy exists today, nor do we, I believe, ever find in any historian the slightest allusion to the production of such a copy. It is never once alluded to in the copious correspondence between Charles and Hadrian which is contained in the Codex Carolinus. And to fit it in with the course of dealing between the two powers, Frankish and Papal, during the forty years that intervened between the conquest of Italy and the death of Charles, is a task so difficult as to be all but impossible.

IV. In this dilemma various theories have been suggested, the discussion of which has filled many volumes. Here of course the discussion can be but very briefly summarized. We may divide the theories into two classes, those which uphold and those which deny the authenticity of the document contained in chapters the *Vita Hadriani*.

A. Upholders of the authenticity.

(1) Chief among these, and entitled to speak with preeminent authority, must be named the Abbé L. Duchesne, the distinguished editor of the *Liber Pontificalis*. He firmly maintains the authenticity and the contemporaneous character of the *Vita Hadriani*. The donation, wide as are its terms, is, he believes, a donation of territory, not a mere restoration of scattered 'patrimones' violently abstracted by the Lombards. At the same time he admits, of course, that the Popes never really bore sway over the vast territories here conceded to them. He argues therefore that, after the conquest of Pavia, Charles changed his point of view. As he had now made himself king of the Lombards and was friendly to the Pope, there was no longer the same necessity for the Pope to be put in possession of such large domains in order that he might be protected against the malice of his enemies. Also Charles may have seen that now that the

Lombard power was destroyed there was no longer, on the part of the Roman population, the old willingness to come under the Papal rule. These changes in his mental attitude were taking place between 774 and 781, the date of his third visit to Rome. The Pope had also been discovering that he had not the power to rule such wide domains, and that even in the Exarchate and Pentapolis he could barely hold his own against the ambitious archbishop of Ravenna. In 781 therefore (presumably) an arrangement was come to, whereby, in consideration of some material additions to the Ducatus Romae in Tuscia and Campania, the Pope abandoned his vast and shadowy claims under the Donation of 774, which thenceforward passed out of notice.

The theory is ingenious and explains some of the facts. It is well argued for by Duchesne, but I find it difficult to believe that such an enormous abandonment of well-ascertained Papal rights would ever have been made, or being made would have left no trace in the Papal-Frankish correspondence.

(2) Another theory, which is advocated by Prof. Theodor Lindner with more elaboration but less lucidity than by Duchesne, is, virtually, that the document was not a donation of territory, but a restoration of 'patrimones' within the limits described. Lindner's view is that both Pippin and Charles from the beginning had set before themselves no other object than the satisfaction of the just claims ('justitiae') of the successors of St. Peter. True it was that by a sort of legal fiction, according to which St. Peter represented the 'respublica Romana', the territories of the Exarchate and the Pentapolis, lately torn from the Empire by Aistulf, were looked upon as a sort of 'jacens hereditas' to which St. Peter was entitled, and so far Pippin's action had the result of conferring territorial sovereignty on the Pope. True also that the Ducatus Romae had by the force of circumstances, by the absenteeism of the Emperors, and the ever-present activity of the Popes, become in fact purely Papal territory. But as to all the rest of the lands and cities comprised within the boundary which started 'a Lunis', all that, according to Lindner's view, Charles promised to Hadrian was that those 'patrimones' which had once belonged to St. Peter and had been wrested from him by the Lombards should, on production of the necessary evidences of title, be restored to the Holy See.

The theory is a plausible one. One may even go further and say that in all likelihood it represents with sufficient exactness what actually took place in St. Peter's on the 6th of April, 774. What Charles probably intended to do was to confirm in the fullest manner possible the Pope's sway (as ruler) over the Exarchate, the Pentapolis, and the Ducatus Romae, and to recover for him the possession (as landlord) of the estates in the rest of Italy of which he had been robbed by the ravaging Lombards. But the question now before us is not what Charles promised, but what the Papal biographer represents him as having promised. And here it seems to me that Lindner's contention fails. How can his statement of the character of the donation be got out of the words in the *Vita Hadriani*? Not a mention there of 'patrimonia', a large and unrestricted grant of 'civitates et territoria', no distinction drawn between the Exarchate or Pentapolis and other parts of Italy, for instance Tuscia, which had been Lombard for centuries: full words of grant of 'pro-vincias Venetiarum et Istriae et cunctum ducatum Spolitinum, seu [= et] Beneventanum'. Lindner battles bravely with this obvious difficulty, but if words are to have any meaning at all, these words cannot be taken in the limited sense which he would impose upon them.

It may be noted in passing that Abbé Duchesne, though fighting on the same side as Lindner in defence of the genuineness of the passage in question, entirely rejects the 'patrimonial' theory. He says 'Et ici je dois écarter l'idée que les régions limitées par la frontière *a Lunis—Monte Silicis* soient indiquées, non comme concédées dans leur entier et avec les droits de souveraineté, mais comme contenant des patrimoines revendiqués par

l'Église Romaine'. But this often happens in this strange discussion. The champions on the same side destroy one another's arguments. As Faulconbridge says in 'King John'
 'Austria and France shoot in each other's mouth.'

It may also be observed that Charles's promise, on Lindner's theory, would fall short of that which Hadrian had a right to expect. There was at least one large and important patrimony, that of the 'Alpes Cottiae,' situated north-west of the line traced by the donation. If it were merely a question of the restitution of plundered estates, why should that not have been restored along with the others?

Let us pass to some of the arguments advanced by

B. The opposers of the genuineness of the donation.

(1) In the first place, we ought to notice the possibility that the donation, though literally genuine, was in fact a forgery, having been obtained from Charles by some trick such as a skillful notary might practise on an unlettered sovereign. This is certainly not impossible. The Roman Court would contain at that time some of the most practised scribes in Europe, whereas Charles, as we are told by Einhard, though he tried hard to learn the art of writing, never succeeded in doing so, having begun too late in life. And though we know that he was not altogether illiterate, but greatly delighted in such a book as St. Augustine's 'De Civitate Dei', yet even this seems, from Einhard's account, to have been read to him at his meals, rather than by him in his library. But then Charles was not alone on this occasion, but was accompanied by all the great ecclesiastics as well as nobles of his realm, and it seems reasonable to suppose that among all of these there would be at any rate someone able and willing to detect any gross literary fraud practised upon his master.

Considerable stress has been laid on the mention of the name of Etherius, 'religiosus ac prudentissimus capellanus et notarius Caroli'. This is no doubt the same person as Itherius, abbot of St. Martin at Tours, who was sent in 770 to claim from Desiderius the return of the Papal patrimonies in Benevento on which he had laid hands, but all the theories founded on the personality of this man (some of them not very favourable to his loyalty to Charles) are mere baseless conjectures.

(2) It is suggested that the three chapters in the *Vita Hadriani* which record the donation are an interpolation of a later date into an authentic and contemporary document.

We may take Dr. Martens as the advocate of this theory, which he has maintained with much earnestness and diligence in his monographs 'Die Römische Frage' (1881).

Dr. Martens assigns the forgery of all three documents, the Donation of Constantine, the *Fragmentum Fantuzzianum*, and the three chapters in the *Vita Hadriani*, to about the same time, somewhere in the pontificate of Hadrian. All the rest of the *Vita* he looks upon as genuine and trustworthy, nor does he attribute to the Pope any complicity with this fabrication, but he thinks that it was probably imagined by some Roman ecclesiastic during Hadrian's lifetime—perhaps about 780 or 781—and then after his death was tacked on by him to the genuine *Life* (of which I suppose Martens considers the later chapters to have been at the same time suppressed). He thinks that this forger used for his purpose the slightly earlier *Fragmentum Fantuzzianum*, and built his romance upon it. His secret intention was to express his disappointment that Charles had so meagrely fulfilled the hopes of a great extension of the Papal dominion which had been founded on his anticipated victory over the Lombards. For this purpose, with malicious subtlety the author sketches the Frankish king in that attitude which the Roman clergy would have liked him to assume in 774, knowing all the while that in actual fact things turned out very differently. Charles really played his part as 'Defensor Ecclesiae' very coldly, only granting that which was of most urgent need and which it was scarce possible to withhold. The *Vita*, on the other hand, offers us the lying statement that Charles 'propria voluntate, bono ac libenti animo' bound himself by an utterly exorbitant promise, and swore a

fearful oath for its fulfilment. As neither the Life of Hadrian I nor that of Leo III contains any account of the redemption of this promise, the king of the Franks stands before us in the pages of the *Liber Pontificalis* as a confessed oath-breaker. Thus to compromise the character of the great prince was the main object of the forger, but he may also have nourished a secret hope that some successor of Charles would deem himself bound to fulfill in its integrity the promise which here stood charged to the account of his ancestor.

(3) Such is the theory of Dr. Martens. Accepting, as I do, many of his arguments, I venture to go a little further and to suggest that the whole Life, as we have it, is the product of a slightly later age, and was composed in the hope, perhaps not a very confident hope, that the weak monarch who bore, not for nought, the title Louis the Pious, might be induced to acquiesce in its extravagant pretensions.

In this connection it seems to me an important fact that three times in the *Vita Hadriani* (though not in the now disputed chapters), Charles's name is mentioned with the addition *Magnus*, which he did not usually bear in his lifetime, but which was generally used soon after his death.

On the other side, in favour of the contemporaneous character of the *Vita Hadriani*, may be quoted undoubtedly the great authority of Abbé Duchesne, who thinks that the first forty-four chapters (that is the whole historical part of the Life) were composed in this very year 774. 'It is enough,' he says, 'to read these pages with some knowledge of their historic environment, to feel oneself in the presence of an absolutely contemporary narrative. It was not in 795, twenty years after the disappearance of the Lombard dynasty, that a writer would have dwelt so minutely on the details of the negotiations with Desiderius, on the punishment of Afiarta and his partisans, on the political correspondence with Constantinople, on the negotiations of the Spoletans with the Pope, even on the journey of Charlemagne to Rome in 774. At the death of Hadrian, men were already far from this earlier period : important events had succeeded, amongst others, two journeys of Charlemagne to Rome in 781 and 787, which have left their marks on the Papal correspondence, on the monuments, on the constitution of the Roman state : certain courses had been taken, new ways of looking at things had become necessary: of all which we find no trace in the narrative before us. It represents well enough what might be written, what ought to be written in 774, not what would be written after the death of Hadrian V

I can accept nearly all these statements of the eminent editor of the *Liber Pontificalis*, without accepting his conclusion that the *Vita Hadriani*, as we have it, is a contemporary document. Let me remind the reader of the extraordinary phenomenon which that work presents to us. Here we have a so-called life of the Pope which narrates with great minuteness the events of the first two years of his reign, which just leads up to the alleged donation by Charles, tells in a few lines the conquest of Pavia, and then is absolutely silent as to the last twenty years, most important years, of the same reign, giving us instead of history a most wearisome and diffuse catalogue of all the ecclesiastical rebuildings, and of all the articles of upholstery wherewith Hadrian enriched the Roman churches during his long pontificate. Surely there is something suspicious in this extreme loquacity as to two years and this utter silence as to the succeeding twenty. Whether there ever was or was not a life of Hadrian worthy of the name, must be I think a matter of conjecture. As to this production which is now before us, it appears to me to be what the Germans call a *Tendenzschrift*, having for its object the assertion of certain preposterous claims for papal sovereignty over two-thirds of Italy. I suggest that it was composed during the reign of Louis the Pious, that the compiler copied certain genuine and contemporary documents with reference to the collapse of the party of Paulus Afiarta and the negotiations with Desiderius, tacked on to them his absolutely fictitious account of the donation of Charles (perhaps to some extent copied from the *Fragmentum Fantuzzianum*), and

they left the remaining twenty years of Hadrian's pontificate undescribed, knowing that at every step of the real history he would have been confronted with facts which proved the absurdity of his romance. To obtain the necessary length for his biography he has (like many other authors of the Papal lives but at greater length than they) ended that biography with the aforesaid catalogue of furniture, for which, very likely, trustworthy materials existed in the Papal *bureaux*.

We have thus three fictitious documents of great historical importance emanating from the Papal chancery or written in the Papal interest, during the hundred years between 750 and 850; possibly within a much shorter compass of time. They are the Donation of Constantine, the Donation of Pippin (*Fragmentum Fantuzzianum*), and the Donation of Charles.

One document of a slightly later date, the Privilegium of Louis the Pious addressed to Pope Paschal II in 817—a document which is now generally quoted as the *Ludovicianum*—after remaining long under a cloud of suspicion, has been of later years, chiefly by the exertions of two German scholars, Ficker and Sickel, rehabilitated as a genuine and trustworthy document. But this vindication of the Privilege of Louis does not help, but rather damages the alleged Donation by his father. For the *Ludovicianum*, though sufficiently generous towards the Popes, gives no more territory to them than is perfectly consistent with the course of historical events disclosed to us by the *Codex Carolinus*, and when it travels far afield beyond the limits of the three provinces (*Exarchate*, *Pentapolis*, and *Ducatus Romae*), it carefully introduces the word *patrimonia*. There is also a very distinct reservation of the Imperial supremacy over the duchies of Tuscany and Spoleto, accompanying the grant of certain revenues out of those provinces. Considering the characters of the men, it is almost inconceivable that the Popes would have accepted from the weak and pious son the limited grant of territories contained in the *Ludovicianum* if they had in their archives a document conferring far larger territories, bearing the signature of the strong and statesmanlike father. The *Ludovicianum* is therefore distinctly a witness against the *Vita Hadriani*.

There is no doubt, however, that in the course of the ninth century the fabrication had obtained extensive currency, being no doubt by that time fairly installed in the *Liber Pontificalis*. It is quoted in the *False Decretals of Isidore*, and it reappears in the *Ottonianum*, or 'Privilegium' granted to the Pope by the Emperor Otto I in 962.

After being in modern times generally discredited, the Caroline Donation has recently found some staunch and able defenders; but the qualifications and reservations, which even these authors have to make, show the extreme difficulty of the task which they have undertaken, and, at any rate in the judgment of the present writer, it is not probable that the cause which they have championed will finally prevail.

The whole discussion and the ever-expanding character of the Papal claims for territory at this period seem to be the best explanation of the forethought exhibited by the great Frankish ruler when he pinned down his Papal correspondents to certain positions by collecting their letters in the *Codex Carolinus*.

BOOK IX.
THE FRANKISH EMPIRE.

CHAPTER I.
THE PONTIFICATE OF HADRIAN I.

POPE Hadrian occupied the chair of St. Peter for twenty-three years, ten months, and seventeen days, a longer period than had fallen to the lot of any of his predecessors, except the twenty-five years which tradition assigns to St. Peter himself. That part of his pontificate which still lies before us was, as far as Italy was concerned, a long and level space, not marked by any such striking events as those with which the preceding thirty years had been thickly studded, nor will it require to be considered in so much detail.

Of course in Italy and all the western world the figure that loomed largest in the eyes of men was that of the great Austrasian, Charles, 'King of the Franks and Lombards and Patrician of the Romans'. His intervention in the affairs of Italy was necessarily fitful and intermittent, for (as has been already said) he had hard tasks to perform north of the Alps, tasks which sometimes well-nigh over-strained even his marvellous energy, and more than once exhausted his long-enduring patience. A very brief outline of these transalpine labours of his will serve to indicate that which lay in the background of Italian history during this quarter of a century.

The great, the Herculean labour of Charles during all the central portion of his reign was his Thirty Years' War for the subjugation of the Saxons. Subjugation, as Charles soon perceived, meant Christianization, and would not be accomplished without it. Christianization by moral and spiritual agencies was a slow process, too slow for the masterful Austrasian. There were therefore compulsory baptisms, fierce laws against obdurate heathens or relapsed converts, at last a terrible massacre. Then came great transportations of men, in the style of Sargon or Nebuchadnezzar; Saxons carried away into the heart of Frank-land; Frankish settlements planted in ravaged Saxonia. Thus at length, by harshest and least spiritual means, outward conformity to the religion which called itself Christianity was secured, and order reigned in Saxon-land.

Eighteen campaigns were needed to accomplish the work which was not ended at the time of the death of Hadrian. I here only lightly touch on the chief crises of that deadly struggle.

In 772 (as has been already related) Charles marched against the central tribe of Saxons, the Angarii, and hewed down their great tree-idol, the Irminsul. This act of defiance of the national faith was avenged by an invasion of the Saxons in 774. They entered Hesse, ravaged the country, sacked the abbey of Fritzlar erected by the holy Boniface, but were restrained—miraculously restrained said the monkish chroniclers—from setting fire to the church. This invasion occurred while Charles was busy with his Lombard campaign. On his return across the Alps, during his winter residence at Carisiacum, he resolved that the Saxon truce-breakers should be either Christianized or exterminated. And in the great campaign of 775, notwithstanding a serious reverse which befell one of his generals, his arms were on the whole triumphant. The rebellion of Hrodgaud, duke of Friuli, called him across the Alps in the spring of 776, but he returned that same year, and prosecuted his military operations with such success that the great majority of the Saxons owned themselves beaten, surrendered to him their land, promised henceforth to live as his loyal subjects, and were baptized by thousands in the waters of the Lippe.

It was a deceitful calm, a mirage of victory. There was one chief, stronger and fiercer than all the others, the Westphalian Widukind, who had shared neither the baptism nor the homage to the conqueror, and he for eight years (777-785) waged obstinate war with Charles, leading

his Saxons into the very heart of Austrasia while Charles was besieging Spanish towns and enduring the disaster of Roncesvalles, then retreating before the irresistible onset of the Franks, taking refuge with the heathen king of Denmark, returning to the fray, and guiding, evidently with some military skill, the movements of his insurgent countrymen. But in 785 even Widukind's stubborn soul bowed before the persistent energy of Charles. He surrendered, was baptized, and troubled his conqueror no more. A truce for six or seven years (785-792) followed, but war with the Saxons—now allied with the Frisians, a formidable combination—again broke out at the end of that time, and this war was taxing Charles's utmost energies, when the long pontificate of Hadrian came to a close. Undoubtedly this mighty conflict, not with enervated Lombards but with the grim, exasperated Teutons of the North, was always in the background of the great king's thoughts, even when the affairs of Italy and the Pope's appeals for help most imperiously claimed his attention.

Another war which, near the end of the period, called Charles with large armies to the banks of the Danube, was that which from 791 to 796 he waged against the nation of the Avars. We have seen, this Asiatic horde, successors of the Huns both in ethnological and in geographical position, enter Europe about the middle of the sixth century, ally themselves with Alboin, and afterwards invade and cruelly ravage the duchy of Friuli which was ruled by the descendant of Alboin's comrade. For some time they had ceased to be an overwhelming terror either to Italy or to Byzantium, and now, at the close of the eighth century, by a series of masterly campaigns, Charles succeeded in shattering their power, in storming their capital girdled as it was by nine concentric rings of fortification and carrying off the immense hoard which for two centuries had been accumulated there, the results of the ravage or the ransom of the fair lands to the south of the Danube. Chagan and Tuduns (such were the barbarous titles of the king and princes of the Avars) came humbly to Charles's court to ask for baptism and the favour of the mighty Frank. No greater deliverance did Charles work for Europe than this dispersal of the thunder-cloud which had so long hovered over its eastern horizon.

Almost equally important in its bearing on the formation of the future German *Reich* was the war in which Charles crushed the rising independence of Bavaria; but, as has been already hinted, the fortunes of the Agilolfing princes were so closely linked in prosperity and adversity with those of the Lombards, that the story of the fall of Tassilo, duke of Bavaria, may be fitly told hereafter in connection with the affairs of Italy.

Last to be mentioned here, but among the first of these events in the order of time, was Charles's passage of the Pyrenees in 778, his capture of Pampeluna. (previously held not by the Moorish misbeliever but by the Christian king of Asturias), possibly followed by the capture of Saragossa, but more certainly followed by his speedy return across the Pyrenees and by the disastrous defeat of his rear-guard at Roncesvalles.

We must now glance at the family relations of the great king during these central years of his life. We have seen how speedily the place of the divorced Lombard princess Desiderata was filled by the Swabian lady Hildegard (771-2). She is said to have been little more than a child, at most thirteen years of age, at the time of her marriage, and her married life lasted but for the same number of years, during which she bore nine children to her lord, four sons and five daughters. She was apparently of all Charles's wives the one who was most beloved both by her husband and by his people. She generally accompanied him on his campaigns, and thus it came to pass that her third son Louis (known to history by his surname the Pious or the Debonnair) was born, shortly before the disaster of Roncesvalles, in that country of Aquitaine of which he was to be during the first forty years of his life the nominal or real ruler.

Hildegard died in 783, and in the same year Charles lost his mother Bertrada, to whom he was fondly attached, and whose counsels, we are told, he had ever followed, except in the one

matter of his repudiation of Desiderata, which was the only root of bitterness that ever sprang up between mother and son.

Not many months after the death of Hildegard the uxorious king took for his third wife Fastrada, the daughter of an Austrasian, Count Radolf. This was the least fortunate of all Charles's matrimonial ventures. Fastrada was a hard and cruel woman, whose influence, says Einhard, often urged her husband to actions contrary to the natural kindliness of his character. Two conspiracies against the throne (in one of which the hunchback Pippin, Charles's son by Himiltrud, was implicated) are attributed by the same writer to the resentment of the Frankish nobles at the cruelties of Fastrada. She died at Frankfurt on the 10th of August, 794, leaving two daughters, Theoderada of the golden locks and Hiltrud. At the end of the period with which we are now dealing, Charles was still a widower, but possibly living in concubinage with her who was to be his fourth and last wife, the beautiful Swabian lady, Liutgard.

While the Frankish king was thus travelling past the meridian of his days, marrying often and seeing a crowd of sons and daughters growing up around him, more than one change was passing over the palace by the Bosphorus, where dwelt the only Christian sovereign whose power could be likened to his own.

In August, 775, a little more than a year after the fall of Pavia, died the Emperor Constantine V, surnamed by his enemies Copronymus. His hereditary and inveterate hostility to the worship of images, his equally inveterate hostility to the monks and his attempts to degrade or to destroy them, the miserable life which the patriarchs of Constantinople (even though iconoclasts) led under his insulting tyranny, and the curious vein of artistic Paganism which blended with his Puritan iconoclasm, are the chief characteristics of a reign with which we need not now further concern ourselves.

Constantine was succeeded by his son, Leo IV, who was nicknamed the Khazar, in memory of the fact that his mother Irene was daughter of the Khan of the Khazars. His reign lasted but five years (775-780), and was distinguished by no important event. He was apparently a man of dull, unoriginal character, the sort of son that often grows up under the shadow of so masterful a character as Constantine Copronymus. In his dull way he carried on the iconoclastic policy of his father; he married a daughter of Athens, the energetic and ambitious Irene; he secured the succession for his son by that lady, and having done little else he died on the 8th of September, 780. He was succeeded by his widow and son, Irene and Constantine VI, reigning, not as regent and minor, but as joint sovereigns.

The character of Irene and her position both in political and religious history are so peculiar and so important as to require some special notice. An orphan, presumably beautiful, and certainly quick-witted, she had in some way fixed upon herself the affections of the young heir, Leo, who obtained his stern father's consent to marry her. Brought from Athens to a villa on the Sea of Marmora, she was escorted thence on the 1st of September, 769, with great pomp to Constantinople. The Bosphorus and the Golden Horn were covered with cutters and pinnaces bright with their silken sails, and all the nobles of Constantinople accompanied the exultant Athenian to the palace, where she was betrothed to Leo the Khazar. Three months later the marriage ceremony was performed, and at the same time she was crowned as Augusta, her husband already possessing the imperial dignity in association with his father.

The Isaurian dynasty had, however, committed a fatal blunder when it allowed its future chief to link his fortunes with those of the fair Athenian. To 'the City of the Violet Crown' the stern iconoclasm of Constantine Copronymus was supremely unattractive. When the man of Tarsus visited it seven centuries earlier he found it 'wholly given to idolatry', and it was a true daughter of those aesthetic loungers in the Agora who had now climbed up into the palace at Constantinople, though not the statues of Apollo or Athene, but the stern visage of the Saviour, the crowned Mother of God, and innumerable representations of apostles, martyrs and fathers,

were the objects of her secret devotion. It was doubtless some distrust of her early educational environment which caused her father-in-law soon after her arrival in Constantinople to administer to her a solemn oath that she would never desert the iconoclastic party. She conformed outwardly through the remainder of his reign and through the reign of her husband, but during a fierce outbreak of Leo the Khazar (March, 780) against the worship of images by which he found that his own palace was invaded, the name of the Augusta herself was introduced as favouring the forbidden rites. Some of the proscribed images were found in her bed. She denied that she had ever worshipped them, but her angry and incredulous husband reproached her with her violation of the oath which she had sworn to his father, and banished her from his presence. He had apparently not taken her back into his favour when six months afterwards he died—a most opportune death for the lovers of the sacred emblems.

Irene having never been deposed from her imperial dignity succeeded now as joint sovereign with her son, Constantine VI, a boy ten years of age. Naturally, for some years, her will alone prevailed and she was sole ruler of the Empire. Her inclination towards the party of the image-worshippers might be inferred from the fact that she gave back a diadem which her husband had abstracted from one of the churches of Constantinople, and replaced in its own church the body of the virgin-martyr Euphemia which Constantine Copronymus, enraged at its alleged miraculous powers, had ordered to be thrown into the sea. Being, however, sufficiently occupied in quelling a revolt which was raised on behalf of the five princes, her late husband's half-brothers, she proceeded cautiously in the early years of her reign, and while tolerating, did not venture to enforce the worship of images.

It was at this period, while she still felt herself in need of external support, that she commenced negotiations for a matrimonial alliance between her family and that of the great monarch of the Franks. In the year 781, while Charles was spending Easter at Rome (his second visit to the Eternal City), he received there an embassy from Constantinople, consisting of Constans the Treasurer and Mamalus the Grand Chamberlain, who came charged by Irene to negotiate a marriage between her son and the princess Hrotrud (whom the Greeks called Erythro), the eldest daughter of Charles and Hildegard. As the proposed bridegroom was only eleven and his intended bride only nine years of age, of course the contracting parties contemplated a long betrothal, but, such as it was, the proposal was accepted: the imperial boy and the royal girl were formally affianced to one another, and the Eunuch Elisha, an imperial notary, was sent to the Frankish court to instruct the future Augusta in the Greek language and literature and in the ceremonial observed in the 'Roman Empire'.

This alliance between the Isaurian and the Frankish dynasties is one of the great unrealised possibilities of history. It is probable that, had it been perfected, Charles would never have taken the title of Emperor of Rome. It is conceivable that the estrangement of feeling and eventual hostility between the Latins of the West and the 'orthodox Romans' of the East, which prepared the way for the Turkish capture of Constantinople, might have been avoided, if Elisha's lessons had borne their intended fruit, and the little princess Hrotrud had been eventually escorted as Empress by acclaiming multitudes to the palace of Constantine.

Side by side with Irene's negotiations for the Frankish alliance, she was also labouring cautiously for a reconciliation with the See of Rome. In the year 783, on the abdication of the patriarch Paul, who declared that his conscience was disturbed by his iconoclastic isolation from the other Churches, Irene procured the election of her secretary Tarasius to the patriarchal throne of Constantinople. Tarasius was a layman, and admitted, nay emphasized the irregularity of his elevation, but stipulated for the convocation of a general council which should at the same time confirm his election and reverse the decrees against image-worship which had been passed at the so-called 'seventh ecumenical council' under Constantine Copronymus.

The messengers who brought to Pope Hadrian the tidings of this intended ecclesiastical revolution must have caused him some perplexity. Great on the one hand was the rejoicing over the prospect that the iconoclastic controversy which had raged for half a century was to be terminated by the triumph of the image-worshippers and of Rome; but on the other hand, the election of a layman to the patriarchal chair was a direct violation of the principle recently asserted in the synod of the Lateran; and this newly-made patriarch still claimed the title of 'ecumenical' which, two centuries before, had so grievously vexed the soul of Gregory. But on the whole, the advantages of the proposed change seemed to predominate. Hadrian addressed letters to Irene and to Tarasius, in which, while gently chiding that which seemed blameworthy, he praised their orthodoxy on the question of image-worship, and agreed to send representatives to the proposed council. He did not omit, however, to claim the restoration of the 'patrimonies of St. Peter' which had been confiscated by Leo III at the time of the first outbreak of the controversy.

An attempt to hold the desired ecumenical Council at Constantinople in August, 786, was foiled by the iconoclastic party. The war-worn veterans of Constantine Copronymus, still true to the memory of their victorious leader, rushed into the church where the ecclesiastics were assembled, and in fierce tones threatened to slay the new patriarch, the orthodox bishops, and the abbots. Vain were all attempts to quell the mutiny. The threatened churchmen were only too glad to dissolve the Council and to escape from the church, while the bishops (still numerous) of the iconoclastic party triumphantly shouted, 'We have conquered!'

Their triumph was of short duration. Irene had the monks, and probably the mob of Constantinople, on her side. The soldiers who had taken the lead in the late disturbances were expelled from the city. More obsequious troops were brought from the 'themes' on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, and on the 24th of September in the following year (787), a Council which ranks in ecclesiastical history as 'the seventh ecumenical' and 'second Nicene' Council, was held at the venerated sanctuary of Nicaea.

At this Council Tarasius presided, and any irregularity in his election was therefore fully condoned. Numerous bishops who had joined in the iconoclastic movement recanted and were purged of their offences against triumphant orthodoxy. Most important of all was the 'definition' which received the assent of the Council at its seventh session (October 13, 787): 'As the figure of the Holy Cross, so also holy pictures, whether coloured or made of stone or any other material, are to be portrayed on vessels, on garments, on walls, or on tablets, in houses or by the road-side, especially pictures of Jesus Christ, of our immaculate Lady, of the venerable angels, and of all holy men. As often as these representations are looked at, the beholders are stimulated to think upon and imitate the originals, and therefore they are right in bestowing upon them salutation and honouring worship, but not that peculiar service which is due to the Godhead alone'.

The Second Nicene Council marks the great triumph of the image-worshipping party. It is true that there was a certain backwater of iconoclasm in the ninth century, but it does not seem to have ever after this had any chance of permanent victory in the Eastern Church.

Meanwhile, however, to turn from ecclesiastical to political relations, the correspondence about the Franco-Byzantine marriage was not proceeding smoothly. Great obscurity hangs over this abortive negotiation, and, strangely enough, each party to the contract seems to have desired to have the credit, or discredit, of its final rupture, which took place in the year 787. It was of course from the first a purely political arrangement, and as the years passed on, both parties discovered that it was not so suitable to their policy as they had supposed. The Byzantines wished to be free to support the Lombard exile, Adelchis; Charles was possibly already beginning to dream of an imperial crown. Female vanity and ambition concurred to the same result. Irene, who was becoming jealous of her son, feared the increase of power which

he might derive from an alliance with the Frankish king. Possibly Fastrada also, who during the long course of the marriage treaty had taken the place of the dead Hildegard by Charles's side, disliked the thought that her young step-daughter would obtain a higher place in European ceremonial than her own, as the result of so splendid an alliance. Whatever the cause, the negotiations were broken off, bitter resentment took the place of the interrupted friendship, and the little Hrotrud grew up in her father's court, spent her life there, and died in 810 at the age of thirty-eight, a princess of rare charms and endowments, but, unfortunately for her reputation, a mother though not a wife.

As for Constantine, his mother sent for a damsel from Armenia named Maria, and ordered him to marry her. The youth obeyed, but his resentment at being deprived of his Frankish bride was, we are told, one cause of that estrangement from his mother and of that long duel between them which, though the beginning of it (789) falls within our present period, will be best related in a future chapter in connection with its terrible end.

It may have been partly a cause and partly a consequence of the estrangement between the two courts that Charles and Irene eventually took opposite sides in the iconoclastic controversy. Possibly the hard struggle which Charles and his servants had to wage against the stubborn idolatry of the Saxons made him impatient of these decrees, which on the strength of fine-drawn distinctions between 'veneration' and 'worship', or 'worship' and 'service', seemed to them practically to commit the Christian Church to the worship of idols. But we perceive also an element of personal antipathy to Irene, of Western antagonism to the East, working in the mind of Charles, when we find him remonstrating against the presumption of the Eastern sovereigns in calling themselves 'God's chosen instruments', and in styling their own edicts *divalia*; objecting to a woman dictating her decrees to the Church, 'since woman, as the weaker vessel and the one most easily deceived, ought to be in subjection and repressed by the authority of the man'; and lastly, when we hear his invectives against 'certain rulers and priests of the Eastern regions, who, leaving sound doctrine and forgetting the apostolic anathema on any who should bring to his Galatian converts another gospel than that which he had preached to them, by their infamous and most silly synods strive to bring into the Church practices which neither the Saviour nor His Apostles ever taught'.

These passages are taken from the celebrated *Libri Carolini*, in which Charles (or some learned man, probably Alcuin, writing by his authority) utters a long tirade—not unaccompanied by argument—against the acts of the Second Nicene Council. With some show of impartiality he censures the iconoclasts as well as the image-worshippers. There is no reason, he says, why there should not be pictures in the churches, in order to stimulate devotion, and preserve in the minds of the people the memory of the events recorded in Scripture; but it is a matter of indifference to the Church whether they are there or not. By no means ought their presence in the churches to be insisted on; still less should Christians under peril of anathema be commanded to venerate them, as they were commanded by the rash, impertinent and silly council lately held in Bithynia.

The *Libri Carolini* were composed in 790 : and four years later, in 794, at a Council of Frankish bishops held at Frankfurt, a solemn condemnation was pronounced upon 'the Greek synod at Constantinople', which was accused of directing that the same adoration and service should be rendered to the holy images which was rendered to the Trinity. This last statement was due to an utter misunderstanding, and probably to a mistranslation of the proceedings of the council thus condemned. The fact that this mistranslation was to all appearance the work of some scribe in the Lateran (since Hadrian forwarded to Charles a copy of the proceedings translated into Latin) is an evidence of gross carelessness or ignorance, or both, in the officials of the Papal chancery, and is a fact that has an important bearing on the question of the donation of territory, referred to in the preceding chapter.

About the same time as the holding of the Council of Frankfurt, Charles addressed to Hadrian a letter similar to, but not identical with, the *Libri Carolini*, in which he besought the Pope to join in his condemnation of the detested Council of Nicaea. Of course Hadrian, who saw in the proceedings of that Council the victory of the cause for which he and his predecessors had been striving for half a century refused to issue any such condemnation. With great patience, in a very lengthy letter, he answered Charles's objections, point by point, indicating some errors into which he had been betrayed by his ignorance of the past history of the controversy. But in Hadrian's mind all roads led eventually to the question of the patrimonies of St. Peter. As he said to Charles, 'When the controversy about the sacred images first broke out, they took from us our patrimonies [in the south of Italy and Sicily]. Now they have renounced, it is true, the errors of iconoclasm, but we cannot get any answer to our reclamation of these patrimonies which are ours by an undoubted title for the lighting of candles [at the tomb of the Apostles] and for the nourishment of the poor. Wherefore, with your approval, we propose to send the Emperor an answer, thanking him for again erecting the sacred images in their old places, but warning him that if he fails to restore its patrimonies to the Holy Roman Church, we shall decide him to be a heretic for thus obstinately persevering in his old error'.

As to the precise issue of this discussion we are not informed. Possibly Hadrian's death, which occurred soon after, prevented the proposed letter from being ever sent. But the whole of these negotiations are most important in their bearing on the historical question of the separation, political and ecclesiastical, of the East from the West. This separation is often attributed to the iconoclastic controversy as its sole cause. Doubtless the hostile attitude of Leo the Isaurian and Constantine Copronymus on the question of image-worship had much to do with estranging the Pope from the Emperor, but it must not bear the whole blame for the final separation. For here, during the years from 787 onwards, we have the Church of Constantinople absolutely reconciled to the Church of Rome on the question of image-worship, and the Empress Irene, the foremost personage in the Empire, the enthusiastic defender of that usage of the Church. On the other hand, Charles and his bishops take up a position, nominally of neutrality, but really of bitter opposition to the Second Nicene Council, advancing arguments which the Pope condemns, and defending positions which he considers heretical. Both sides might agree to ignore the question, yet far on into the ninth century the opposition still continued. Yet in the year 800 we shall find a Pope (not Hadrian but his next successor) taking the lead in the great revolution which severed Rome from Constantinople and broke the last links of allegiance that bound the Pope to the Eastern Caesar.

CHAPTER II.

THE PONTIFICATE OF HADRIAN I.

WHEN Louis XVIII recovered the throne of his ancestors after the downfall of Napoleon, he said—or some astute person said for him ‘Rien n’est changé : il n’y a qu’un Français de plus.’

Something like this seems to have been the attitude of Charles the Great in 774 towards his new Italian conquest. There was no attempt to force the Lombard nation into the Frankish mould. Their laws were left substantially unchanged. Even the administration of those laws was often left in Lombard hands. Of the counts, who for the most part superseded the Lombard *gastalds*, many probably belonged to the conquered nation; nor does there appear to have been any extensive confiscation of the estates of the Lombard nobles. The authority which Charles now wielded (and which he doubtless meant, as he had leisure to extend his dominion, to wield over the whole peninsula) was appropriately expressed by the new title which he used for twenty-six years, till it was superseded by one yet more majestic. He was now *Carolus Rex Francorum et Langobardorum atque Patricius Romanorum*. He was king of the Franks by inheritance from his father; king of the Lombards by conquest, but also, as far as we can see, by the general consent of the Lombard people, tired of the passionate weakness of Desiderius and glad to have the great Teutonic hero for their king. But he also now began to make systematic use of that title ‘Patrician of the Romans’ which Stephen II had bestowed upon his father, but which, so long as they held no territory south of the Alps, had been rather a burden than a delight to the Frankish sovereigns. Now that Charles was a great lord in Italy, it was worthwhile to try what rights were slumbering in that venerable designation, which the Popes had almost forced upon his family, but which now might be available for keeping the Pope himself in his proper place, as well as for winning the obedience of the non-Teutonic population of Italy.

It is not easy to ascertain what had been the ideal reconstitution of Italy which the Popes had floating before them when they invoked the intervention of the Frankish kings, but it is clear that the addition of the word ‘Langobardorum’ to Charles’s royal titles by no means corresponded with their anticipations. It was soon seen that any one, were he ever so loyal a client of St. Peter, who claimed the rights of a Lombard king, must come into collision with the kingdom-cleaving designs of the Roman pontiff; and though expediency dictated the continued employment of such epithets as ‘mellifluus’ and ‘a Deo servatus’ in Hadrian’s correspondence with Charles, we may be pretty sure that there were times when a full-bodied ‘nefandissimus’ or ‘Deo odibilis’ would have better expressed the Papal emotions. The history of Italy during the quarter of a century before us, is almost entirely the history of the strained relations between the two men, Charles and Hadrian, who had sworn eternal friendship over the corpse of St. Peter.

I. First of all in this correspondence we are met by Hadrian’s complaints of the arrogance and cupidity of Leo, archbishop of Ravenna. “Soon after your return to Frank-land”, says the Pope, “this man, with tyrannical and most insolent intent, turned rebel to St. Peter and ourselves. He has brought under his sway the following cities of the Emilia: Faenza, Forlimpopoli, Forli, Cesena, Bobbio, Comacchio, the duchy of Ferrara, Imola and Bologna,

asserting that they, together with the whole Pentapolis, were given to him by your Excellency; and he has sent his missus, Theophylact, through the Pentapolis, desiring to separate the citizens thereof from their service to us. These men, however, are not at all inclined to humble themselves under him, but wish to remain loyal to St. Peter and ourselves, as they were when Stephen II received from your pious father the keys of the cities of the Exarchate. But now that nefarious archbishop, detaining those cities of the Emilia in his own power, appoints such magistrates as he chooses, expelling those whom we have appointed, and drawing all suits to Ravenna, to decide them according to his own pleasure.

“Thus, to our great disappointment, your holy spiritual mother, the Roman Church, sustains a severe rebuff, and we ourselves are brought into great contempt, since the very territories which even in Lombard times we were known to govern with full powers, are now in your times being wrested from us by perverse and impious men, who are your rivals as much as ours. And, lo! this taunt is hurled in our teeth by many of our enemies, who say with scorn, ‘How have you profited by the wiping out of the nation of the Lombards and by their being made subject to the Frankish realm? Behold, none of those promises which were made to you are fulfilled, and even the possessions which were aforesaid granted by Pippin to St. Peter are now taken from you”.

Next year Leo made his appearance at Charles’s court, and Hadrian, on being informed of his rival’s visit, professed a joy which was certainly mingled with alarm. “The Truth itself bears witness that we are always glad when we hear of any one approaching your royal footsteps. Had he informed us that he was about to enter your presence we would gladly have sent one of our own envoys along with him”. In the letter which follows this, a grave charge of disloyalty is brought against the detested archbishop. John, the patriarch of Grado, had sent an important letter to the Pope, probably announcing the imminent rebellion of Hrodgaud, count of Friuli. This letter as soon as it arrived in Rome was copied and sent off to Charles, both Hadrian and his clerk feeling the matter to be of so great importance that they would not touch meat or drink till they had despatched it to their patron. The letter however, on its way through Ravenna, had been tampered with by Archbishop Leo, who had broken the seals and redirected it to the Pope. Hadrian roundly accused him of having done this in order that he might communicate the contents to Arichis, duke of Benevento, and Charles’s other enemies, an accusation which was probably quite destitute of truth. In a postscript to this letter Hadrian asserts that the archbishop of Ravenna was puffed up with intolerable pride on his return from the Frankish court. The old complaints about his lawless proceedings in the Emilia and his vain attempts to seduce the men of the Pentapolis from their loyalty to St. Peter are renewed, and it is asserted that some of the judges who had been appointed by the Pope in the cities of the Emilia are actually kept in bonds by the arrogant archbishop. In November of the same year these charges are repeated in a more definite manner:

“We sent our treasurer Gregory to bring the magistrates of those cities hither, and to receive the oaths of fidelity of the citizens, but Leo would not allow him to continue his journey. Then there was Dominicus [possibly a Frankish official], whom you yourself recommended to us in the church of St. Peter, and whom we appointed count of the little city of Gabellum, giving him our written authority to govern that city. This man was prevented from exercising his office by Leo, who sent an army, brought him bound to Ravenna, and still keeps him in custody there. Puffed up with pride, he refuses, as aforesaid, to obey our commands, and by the strong arm keeps possession of Imola and Bologna, declaring that you did in no wise grant those cities to St. Peter, but to him : and as to the remaining cities of Emilia, namely Faenza, the Duchy of Ferrara, Comacchio, Forli, Forlimpopoli, Cesena, Bobbio and Tribunatus-decimo, he allows none to come forth or to bring their actions to be pleaded before us, though they were all ready to seek our presence.

“As to all the other citizens of both the regions called Pentapolis, from Rimini to Gubbio, all come freely to us to have their suits decided and abide loyally in our service. Only that archbishop stands aloof in his ferocity and pride”.

Here, in November, 775, the correspondence leaves the question of the Exarchate. We see Hadrian, notwithstanding the cession of territory which was undoubtedly made by the Lombard king to his predecessor Stephen II, quite unable to assert his rights over Ravenna itself and the province of Emilia which lay to the west of it. In the Pentapolis, however, the provinces between the Adriatic and Apennines to the south of Ravenna, the Pope can reckon on the loyal subjection of the people, who probably, with that tendency towards municipal isolation and jealousy which was so marked a feature of the civic life of Italy, had their own reasons for hating Ravenna and preferring the distant Hadrian to the near and insistent Leo. There is no evidence that matters mended for the Papal jurisdiction during the rest of the life of Leo, but on the death of that ‘ferocious’ archbishop, which probably occurred in June, 777, a successor was appointed, John VII, who apparently arranged terms of reconciliation with the Papal See.

II. Another burning question at this time, and one in which the Papal rights are more obscure than in the case of the Exarchate, is that of the duchy of Spoleto. A review of the various statements about this Umbrian province, so important to the consolidation of the Papal dominions, leads us to the conclusion that there was here a genuine misunderstanding, in the literal sense of the word, between the Pope and his powerful friend. As far back as the spring of 757 both Spoleto and Benevento had made some sort of ‘commendation’ of themselves to Pippin, blending the Pope’s name with his in a manner highly suggestive of future controversies. But Pippin, who in 758 had to lead an army against the Saxons, and from 760 to the end of his reign was involved in the arduous struggle with Waifar of Aquitaine, had no mind to leave these urgent affairs in order to cross the Alps and vindicate a shadowy supremacy over those distant Apennine provinces. Thus the matter remained, save that Desiderius made both Spoleto and Benevento feel the curb of their Lombard overlord more tightly than any prince since the days of Liutprand. In the crisis of the fate of the Lombard kingdom, the Spoletans deserted the cause of their nation and put themselves under the protection of the Pope, to whom the new duke Hildebrand swore fealty, his predecessor Theodicius having possibly fallen fighting for Desiderius against the Franks. This commendation of Spoleto to the Pope is, as we have seen, confirmed by a document of the year 774, which is dated by no regnal year either of Frank or Lombard, but ‘in the times of the thrice blessed and angelic lord, Hadrian, pontiff and universal Pope’.

It was with the consciousness of this peaceful victory won by the Church that Hadrian met Charles on the steps of St. Peter’s on the 6th of April, 774. It seems probable that whatever may have been left unsaid or undefined, the Pope did mention his recent acquisition of the lordship of Spoleto, and that Charles did at the time consent to his retaining it, or was understood by Hadrian so to have consented. Not otherwise, as it seems to me, can we explain the clear statement made by Hadrian in a letter written about eighteen months afterwards to the Frankish king: “Moreover you offered the duchy of Spoleto itself, in your own proper person, to St. Peter, Prince of Apostles, through our Insignificance and for the ransom of your soul”. But to establish the Papal claim to Spoleto it was necessary that the new duke and his people should give their consent to its recognition, and this, notwithstanding their recent oath of fealty, they appear to have stubbornly refused. After the fall of the Lombard monarchy there was no longer any need to seek the protection of the Pope against the wrath of Desiderius, and both prince and people preferred to be under the yoke of the brilliant Teutonic warrior who called himself *Rex Langobardorum*, rather than under that of the unwarlike priest who could scarcely open his lips without showing his detestation of ‘the unutterable Lombards’. Hence it comes to

pass that in January, 776, we find in a donation to the monastery of Farfa ‘Hildeprandus gloriosus et summus dux ducatus Spoletani’ dating the document by the year of the reign of ‘Charles, the most excellent king of the Franks and the Lombards, in the second year, by Divine favour, of his reign in Italy’. And the same mode of dating (a clear indication that Charles and none other was Hildeprand’s overlord) is found in two other documents of 776 and five of the year 777.

III. Not only in Spoleto was the newly-won Papal power endangered. It will be remembered that near the sources of the Tiber, on the Tuscan side of the Apennines, the little ‘Castle of Happiness’ had commended itself to Hadrian’s protection. Here too the claims of St. Peter were being trampled under foot. “We must tell you”, wrote the Pope to the King, “that that perfidious man, sower of tares and rival of the great Tempter of the human race, Raginald, formerly *gastald* in the Castellum Felicitatis, who appears now to be duke of Clusium, is by his unjust proceedings doing great harm to your holy mother the Church. For he seeks to wrest from us all the possessions which your Excellency offered to the Prince of the Apostles for the ransom of your soul, and to bring them into bondage to himself. Hastening with his army to our city, Castellum Felicitatis, he has carried off its inhabitants. I can in no wise believe that your Royalty, strengthened by God, together with our most excellent daughter the queen and your sweetest children, and all the God-marshalled army of the Franks, wrought the late mighty change in Italy for the exaltation of this duke Raginald, and not rather for the support of the holy Church of God which loves you, that by your benign championship she may shine in perennial glory.

“Therefore I pray and beseech you, for the love of St. Peter, not to allow the aforesaid Raginald (who was of old time a sower of strifes and scandals under King Desiderius) to remain in the regions of Tuscany nor to hold any delegated functions from you”.

This is a type of many letters from Hadrian which were addressed to the Frankish king during the first two years after his Italian campaign. Endless complaints of the unutterably wicked and diabolical neighbours of the Pope, perpetual reminders of the faith solemnly plighted over the body of St. Peter, words of honeyed sweetness for Charles himself, for Hildegard, for the little princes and princess, and the divinely-protected army of the Franks, but also faithful warnings of the punishment which will overtake the king at the last day if he has allowed any one of the rights of his patron St. Peter to fall to the ground,—such are the ever-recurring themes of the Papal correspondence.

There are indications that this monotony of grumbling severely tried the long-suffering patience of Charles. He had done as much for the Pope and for himself also in Italy as suited his present purpose. The care of the Saxon war hung heavy upon his soul, and did not seem likely soon to be lifted from it. That also was surely an enterprise pleasing in the sight of God and St. Peter, for had he not solemnly vowed in his palace at Quierzy to prosecute ceaseless war with the Saxons till they should either become Christians or be swept from the face of the earth? And now when he returned weary and war-worn to his ‘villa’ on the Oise or the Roehr he was sure to find some smooth-shaven, dark ecclesiastic from Rome, bearing one of these querulous letters from the Pope, and importuning Charles to lead an army across the Alps in order to enforce the ever-growing ‘justitiae’ of St. Peter in the Exarchate or Spoleto or Tuscany.

IV. Not only were the letters irritating; the who bore them were not always well chosen, and sometimes failed in proper respect towards the most powerful prince in Europe. In 774, soon after Charles’s return from Italy, the Pope sent as his representative his chamberlain Anastasius, commending him to the royal favour. How that mission sped we know not, but

next year Anastasius was again sent on a similar errand, and this time he was accompanied by a certain Lombard named Gausfrid of Pisa, who had taken refuge in Rome with a story, probably untrue, of an attempt to assassinate him, at the instigation of a Lombard duke named Alio. "Pray receive Gausfrid kindly", said Hadrian, "for the love of St. Peter and because we ask it of you, and deign to grant him the help of your favour and protection. We add also this request, that the generous exercise of your authority should secure him in the possession of those farms which you have bestowed upon him".

This recommendation appears to have been a blunder on Hadrian's part. His next letter was in reply to one from Charles which told him that Gausfrid was a detected swindler, who for his frauds had been dismissed from the royal service and who had bribed the king's notary to issue forged letters of grant in the royal name, probably with reference to those very farms for his quiet possession of which Hadrian interceded. The Pope pleads, no doubt truthfully, his entire ignorance of these deceitful practices of his client, and hopes that no scandal may be thereby engendered between him and his royal friend, but the incident was not likely to improve the relations between the two potentates.

Even more serious was the difficulty caused at the same time by the insolence of the chamberlain Anastasius, who in pleading his master's cause (probably with reference to the affairs of Ravenna and Spoleto) used such 'intolerable' words that the anger of the high-minded king was raised, and putting him in custody he refused to allow the chamberlain to return to Rome. What were these intolerable words? It seems highly probable that they amounted to a charge of breach of faith on the part of the Frankish king, a charge which the Teutonic warrior would resent more fiercely than one of the crowned diplomatists of Constantinople, and of which perhaps even the Roman courtier scarcely felt the whole insulting significance. Here, as in the interview at St. Peter's and all the transactions between Pope and King which rested on oral communications, we have once more to remember that the difference of language opened a wide door to mutual misunderstandings. Charles could read Latin, it is true, but we have no evidence that he spoke it fluently, and Hadrian, a Roman of the Via Lata, of course never demeaned himself to learn the barbarous Frankish tongue.

The Pope bitterly complained of the detention of his envoy, which, as he said, lowered him in the eyes of the Lombards and the citizens of Ravenna, making them think that he had altogether fallen out of Charles's favour. "Never since the beginning of the world", as he averred, "had it been known that an envoy of St. Peter, great or small, had been detained by any nation" : an assertion which might safely be made for the centuries intervening between the creation of the world and the Christian era. He prayed that Anastasius might be sent back to Rome : "We will most severely enquire into the matter, and correct him according to his ascertained guilt".

We hear in a later epistle of the return of Anastasius, but have no hint of his trial or punishment. Probably when the hot blood of the Frank had cooled, Charles perceived that it was better not to insist on the punishment of the Pope's too zealous representative.

V. Towards the end of 775, Hadrian was thrown into alarm by the rumours of an impending combination of Lombards and Byzantines against himself and his Frankish patron. Hrodgaud, a Lombard whom Charles had allowed to remain as duke of Friuli, was probably the soul of this combination, perhaps its only zealous member: but Hadrian believed that Hildeprand of Spoleto, Arichis of Benevento, and his special foe Raginald of Clusium, were all working for the meditated revolution, and were all in communication with the Emperor at Constantinople, at whose court Adelchis, the dethroned son of Desiderius, was residing, an honoured guest. It is possible that some such combination was being formed, and that the death of Constantine Copronymus (which happened on the 14th of September, 775) struck the

keystone out of the arch and relieved Charles from serious peril: but we have as yet only the word of Hadrian for the fact, and as far as Hildebrand and Arichis are concerned, it is probable that he accused them unjustly.

Evidently Charles thought, and had reason for thinking, that if he could free himself from the embarrassing schemes of the ambitious Hadrian he could settle the affairs of Central Italy by negotiation, better than by the sword. He sent two envoys, the Bishop Possessor and the Abbot Radigaud, into Italy, but not in the first place to Rome. Hadrian, who knew that such an embassy was coming, waited for it (as he told Charles) through September and October, on into November, but waited in vain. He wrote to the governor whom Charles had installed at Pavia, and received only the chilling reply, "The king's envoys are not coming to you": a reply which filled him with sorrow. The next article of his indictment against the ambassadors (for he persisted in professing to believe that the ambassadors were in fault and not their master) must be told in his own words:—

"We were very desirous to receive your Excellency's envoys with due honour, and through them to be satisfied of your safety. Wherefore we made all the preparations which became your royal dignity, and sent horses on the road to meet them. But they, when they had arrived at Perugia, instead of coming right on to us—as you had enjoined them and as your letters to us set forth—despising us, went to Hildebrand at Spoleto, sending us word to this effect: 'We are only going to converse with Hildebrand, and then, according to our orders, we will visit you at [the shrine of] our Apostolic Lord'.

"Afterwards, when they had talked with the aforesaid Hildebrand and were tarrying long time with him, we directed to them our apostolic letters to this effect: 'By Almighty God and the life of our most excellent son the great King Charles, pray come to us at once that we may talk over the things which concern the exaltation of the Church and the praise of our King. Then we will leave you to go according to your orders to Benevento'. But they, we know not on what errand, went immediately from Spoleto to Benevento, leaving us in great disgrace, and have thereby increased the insolence of the Spoletans towards us.

"We pray you to remember, sweetest and most loving son, with what extreme kindness you addressed us, when you had hastened to the thresholds of St. Peter and St. Paul, saying that it was not in quest of gold or jewels, or silver, or letters (?), or men, that you and your God-protected army had undergone so great labour, but only to insist on the recovery of the rights of St. Peter, the exaltation of Holy Church, and our safety.

"As if actually present before your royal honey-flowing glances, we beg of you speedily to comfort and gladden us in the deep depression into which we have been thrown by the conduct of your envoys. Moreover, you yourself offered the duchy of Spoleto to St. Peter through us for the ransom of your soul. Therefore we earnestly pray you speedily to deliver us and the aforesaid duchy of Spoleto from this affliction, that by the intercession of St. Peter you may receive your due reward from our most merciful God".

At last the long-expected messengers, Possessor and Radigaud, arrived in Rome, charged by Hildebrand with apologies and entreaties for forgiveness. Far from obtaining his pardon, they had doubtless enough to do to shield themselves from the storm of Hadrian's reproaches. He sent a messenger, his treasurer Stephen, to Spoleto, who returned with more circumstantial accounts of the great impending invasion.

All the four dukes, in combination with the mob of the Greeks and the exiled Adelchis, were going to swarm over land and sea to the attack on the *Ducatus Romae*. The City was to be stormed, all the churches to be sacked, the precious jewelled canopy of St. Peter's tomb was to be carried off, "we ourselves—which God forbid!—to be carried captive", the kingdom of the Lombards to be restored, and Charles's power in Italy to be destroyed.

Hadrian sent up a piteous cry for help : “Do not leave us alone, nor postpone your consolation : lest the nations that are in all the world should say, ‘Where is the confidence of the Romans, which after God they placed in the king and kingdom of the Franks?’. Redeem those pledges which with your own hands you offered to God for the salvation of your soul, that in the great day of future judgment you may be able to say, ‘O my lord Peter! Prince of Apostles! I have finished my course; I have kept my faith towards thee; I have defended the Church of God committed to thee by Almighty goodness, and have freed her from the hands of her enemies. And now standing without spot before thee I offer to thee thy sons, whose deliverance from the power of the enemy thou didst commit to my hands. Lo! here they are, safe and sound’. Thus shalt thou, who holdest the reins of power in this present life, be permitted to reign with Christ in the life to come, hearing that welcome voice of His, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’.”

VI. Charles did march into Italy in the early part of 776, but his campaign, of which we have most meagre notices from the annalists, was all conducted within sight of the Alps. It seems to have been while he was keeping his Christmas (775) at Schlettstadt in Alsace that news was brought to him that ‘Hrodgaud, the Lombard whom he had himself given as duke to the men of Friuli, was making a rebellion in Italy, had declared himself king, and that many cities had revolted to him. He judged speed to be necessary for the repression of this uprising, and accordingly, having collected his bravest soldiers, he marched with haste into Italy, slew Hrodgaud, recovered Friuli, Treviso, and all the other cities which had rebelled, established Frankish counts in them, kept his Easter at Treviso, and then returned into Frank-land with the same speed with which he had come. Scarcely had he recrossed the Alps when he heard that the fortress of Eresburg had been taken by the Saxons, and the garrison of Franks expelled therefrom. Then followed one of Charles’s splendid storm-sweeping marches over the land, his arrival at the sources of the Lippe-stream, and his meeting there with a vast number of the natives, who, cowering in fear, prayed his pardon for their rebellion, and were baptized by thousands in the waters of the Lippe. A conversion on a larger scale than any that rewarded the preaching of the first Apostles, but less durable in its results.

It was probably in part the fear of impending troubles in Saxon-land which caused King Charles to hasten his return across the Alps without paying the often-talked-of visit to Rome. Yet not entirely: the diplomacy which detached Spoleto and Benevento at this critical conjuncture from the threatened anti-Frankish confederacy had probably accomplished its purpose at the cost of some sacrifice of the Papal claims. As to Benevento, indeed, it is impossible for us to say what were the precise relations existing at this time between him who now called himself Prince of that city, Arichis, son-in-law of Desiderius, and the Frankish sovereign. But as we have already seen, Hildebrand of Spoleto seems to have remained satisfied with a condition, practically, of vassalage under Charles, and the negotiations carried on with him through the medium of Possessor and Radigaud had probably guaranteed him against any enforcement by Frankish arms of the claims of Papal sovereignty which he now set at defiance.

VII. It can hardly be doubted that at this time the relations between Pope and Emperor were strained almost to the point of breaking. There is an ominous interval of more than two years in the correspondence copied in the Codex Carolinus. Either no letters between the estranged allies in the period between February 776 and May 778, or those which were written and received were so bitter in their tone— like the ‘insupportable’ words of Anastasius—that,

when the reconciliation took place, they were by common consent blotted out of the book of remembrance.

It is to this interval that a recent enquirer assigns the signature of a convention whereby Hadrian claim to renounced all claim to sovereignty in Spoleto and Tuscany, in consideration of certain yearly revenues to be paid to him out of the taxes of those two provinces. The evidence for this 'convention' rests on the alleged confirmation contained in the grant of Louis the Pious to Pope Paschal in 817, which has been before referred to. It is certainly possible so to interpret that document, but its language is perhaps intentionally obscure, and would be consistent with an entirely different series of transactions between Pope and King, nor is there anything which fixes the date of the 'convention' to the year 777 or 778.

But however we may by our conjectures fill up this mysterious interval in the correspondence of the two statesmen, it is certain that after that interval is passed the correspondence begins again on an entirely different footing. Still is the Pope urgent for the satisfaction of the claims of St. Peter, still are the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell invoked to keep the Frankish sovereign up to the required pitch of devotion to the Apostolic service, but from this point onward the word 'patrimonies', for which we have hitherto looked almost in vain in the earlier letters, is of continual occurrence. Claims of territorial sovereignty seem to be tacitly abandoned, and the one constant demand of the Pope is that the landed estates, which have been violently torn from him or his predecessors in the days of the Lombard oppression, shall now be restored to the Holy Church of God, which is ready to produce the necessary vouchers and title-deeds to show that they are rightfully hers.

VIII. Yet, though this is the general character of the correspondence, we find with some surprise, in the very first letter after communications are re-opened, an allusion—the first allusion in any authentic document—to the imaginary donation of Constantine. After expressing his regrets that Charles has not been able to fulfill his promise of coming to Rome at the Easter of 778 and bringing his infant son Carloman to be baptized, Hadrian continues : “And as in the time of St. Silvester the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Rome was exalted by the generosity of the most pious Constantine, the great Emperor, of holy memory, and he deigned to bestow on it power in these regions of Hesperia, so in these times, which are so prosperous for you and for us, may the Holy Church of God, that is of the blessed Apostle Peter, grow and flourish and be more than more exalted, that all the nations when they hear of it may shout, ‘O Lord, save the King, and hear us in the day when we call upon Thee, for, lo, a new and most Christian Emperor Constantine has arisen in our day, through whom God has been pleased to bestow all gifts on His Holy Church’.”

We surely cannot be mistaken in thinking that this passage, with its pointed allusion to 'the regions of Hesperia', refers to the celebrated fictitious document which was discussed in a previous chapter. But the Pope in this same letter goes on to claim, not widespread territorial sovereignty, but the restitution of “those possessions which Emperors, Exarchs, and other God-fearing men have for the good of their souls bestowed on the Church in the regions of Tuscany, Spoleto, Benevento and Corsica, together with the Sabine patrimony. Let these possessions, which have been abstracted by the unutterable Lombards through long periods of years, be restored in your days. We have many deeds of donation relating to these in our bureau at the Lateran; and these for your satisfaction we have sent by our aforesaid *missi*. We pray your Excellency therefore to order the patrimonies in their entirety to be restored to St. Peter and ourselves. So may the Prince of Apostles plead before the tribunal of Almighty God for your safety and long life and the exaltation of your kingdom”.

The language of such a letter seems quite clear. It is specific estates—of vast extent it is true—secured by special title-deeds, not the sovereignty of two-thirds of Italy, for which the Pope here pleads in the name of St. Peter.

IX: The Pope speaks here of “these days of your and our prosperity”. The times seem to have been less prosperous for the people than for their rulers. There was a terrible earthquake (778) in the territory of Treviso, by which many persons perished; forty-eight, we are told, in a single night in one village. “Great tribulations”, says a ninth-century chronicler, “fell upon Italy after the Frankish conquest: by the sword, by famine, by wild beasts many persons perished, so that some towns and villages were left altogether bare of inhabitants”. Hadrian himself in a singular way bears unconscious witness to the same fact, the misery of the people. It seems that Charles had enquired as to an ugly rumour which had come to his ears that Roman citizens were engaged in selling slaves to ‘the unspeakable Saracens’. Such a charge in the honey-flowing letter of his illustrious friend was passionately repelled by Hadrian : “Never have we fallen into such wickedness, nor has any such deed been done with our permission. It is true that the unspeakable Greeks have traded along the Lombard shore and bought families from thence, and have formed a friendship for slave-trading purposes with the Lombards themselves. Wherefore we ordered duke Alio to prepare many ships that he might capture the Greeks and burn their fleet, but he refused to obey our commands. As for us, we have neither ships nor sailors to catch them with. But God is our witness that we have done all that we could to repress this mischief, for we ordered the ships of the Greeks that were in our harbour of Centumcellae to be burned, and we detained the crews in prison for a long time. But the Lombards themselves, as we have been told, constrained by hunger, have sold many families into slavery. And others of the Lombards have of their own accord gone on board the slave-ships of the Greeks, because they had no other hope of a livelihood”.

The chronological order of the letters which relate to the seventeen years now before us is so uncertain that it will be better to deal with them in their geographical relations.

X. We begin with the province of Istria, that long peninsula studded with cities which crowns the Adriatic gulf, and which played such an important part in the long controversy concerning the Three Chapters. Here, as we learn from a letter of Hadrian, the bishop Maurice, a loyal adherent of the Roman See, was employed to collect certain revenues due to St. Peter and transmit them to Rome. A suspicion arose that in his journeyings to and fro on these errands he was secretly stirring up the inhabitants to throw off the Byzantine yoke and acknowledge themselves subjects of Charles. The ‘most nefarious Greeks’ together with some of the natives of Istria arrested him, and in Byzantine fashion plucked out his eyes. He escaped to Rome, and the Pope sent him to Marcarius, duke of Friuli, at the same time addressing a letter to Charles begging him, as he valued his soul, to order Marcarius to reinstate him in his bishopric. As Istria was still a province of the Empire, it is not easy to see how this could be done without an actual declaration of war.

XI. We pass from Istria to the Venetian Islands, not yet the Venice of medieval history, for the city on the Rialto was still unbuilt, and Heraclea and Equilium were the chief cities of the confederation. After the fall of the Exarchate, followed by the overthrow of its Lombard conquerors, the Venetians seem to have clung more tightly than ever to their connection with Constantinople, and to have been willing, in their loyalty to the Empire, to brave even the anger of the Pope. “We beg to bring to the notice of your Excellency”, writes Hadrian to Charles, “that as you in your day of triumph directed that the Venetian traders should be expelled from the regions of Ravenna and the Pentapolis, we immediately sent our orders to

those regions that we might give effect to your royal will. Moreover we have directed our precept to the archbishop of Ravenna, that wherever, in the lands subject to our sway, the Venetians hold either forts or property, he should absolutely expel them from thence, and resuming such possessions keep them in his own hands as property of the Church”.

XII. The expulsion of the Venetians, it will be seen, extended to Ravenna as well as to the Pentapolis. As we have no more complaints of the usurpations of the archbishop of Ravenna, it may be inferred that the successors of Leo were during this period accepting quietly the yoke of St. Peter. Here, however, as well as elsewhere, we have evidences of the extreme difficulty with which the Popes, with the scanty material forces at their command, maintained the dominion which in theory was theirs. Strangely helpless is the letter which Hadrian addresses to Charles in 783 concerning the wicked deeds of ‘those foolish and useless triflers’ Eleutherius and Gregory, who appear to have been magistrates at Ravenna. “In their insolent obstinacy they have been grievously oppressing the poor and weak inhabitants in their district, selling men into slavery among the pagan natives, and greedily devouring their bread without compassion. Moreover, collecting a crowd of base and bloody men, they have not ceased daily to perform shameful murders. Once, when mass was being celebrated in the church, at the same hour when the deacon was preaching the Gospel to the people, these most impious men were shedding innocent blood in the self-same sanctuary, accomplishing the murder of men instead of sacrifice to God. These men, puffed up in arrogance, are about to appear in your royal presence, and dare to cherish the hope that they will separate you from St. Peter and ourselves. Pray let their impertinence not be permitted to behold your glorious countenance smiling upon them, but send them back to us, dishonoured and disgraced, under the charge of your most faithful *missi*, that so you may be rewarded in the day of judgment by your patron St. Peter”.

The whole tenour of the communication indicates the strange, the almost indescribable, relation which existed between the Pope and the Frankish King of the Lombards and Patrician of the Romans. Ravenna was undoubtedly one of the cities included in the Donations of Pippin and Charles. Here, if anywhere, the Pope, unless thwarted by the archbishop of the city, might claim to exercise jurisdiction as a sovereign. Yet even here he seems to be unable by his mere authority to punish magistrates who have so flagrantly abused their powers as Eleutherius and Gregory have done, and there is evidently a virtual right of appeal from his decision to that of the Frankish king.

In ecclesiastical matters, however, as we might expect, Hadrian takes a different tone. He absolutely refuses to admit Charles’s claim to interfere in the election of a new archbishop of Ravenna; he repels, almost with acrimony, the charge of the king’s *missi* that he has connived at simoniacal practices in that church; but on the other hand (though this is not a purely ecclesiastical affair), he graciously concedes to his royal friend the right to transport some of the mosaics of Ravenna to his palace at Aachen. The letter giving this permission is so curious that it deserves to be quoted :—

“We have received your bright and honey-sweet letters brought us by Duke Arwin. In these you expressed your desire that we should grant you the mosaics and marbles of the palace in the city of Ravenna, as well as other specimens to be found both on the pavement and on the walls [presumably of the churches]. We willingly grant your request, because, by your royal struggles, the church of your patron St. Peter daily enjoys many benefits, for which great will be your reward in heaven. By the hands of the same Arwin we have received one sound horse sent to us by you. The other, which was despatched at the same time, died on the road. For your remembrance of us in this thing we return you thanks.

“But in consideration of the love which in our inmost heart we do bear towards your glorious kingdom, pray send us such splendid horses, shapely in bone and fullness of flesh, as may be worthy of our riding. Such animals, in all respects worthy of praise, will cause your illustrious name to shine in triumph; and for this you will receive your wonted and worthy reward from God’s own apostle, so that after reigning in this world with the queen and your most noble progeny, you may deserve to obtain eternal life in the citadels of heaven”.

XIII. Travelling southward along the great Flaminian Way we come to the Umbrian duchy of Spoleto, where the Lombard Hildebrand, first the client and afterwards the pertinacious opponent of the Pope, held sway for fifteen years after the fall of the Lombard monarchy. We have seen that, though recalcitrant to the yoke of St. Peter, he was willing, perhaps eager, to profess himself the loyal adherent of Charles. This dependent relation (which it is hardly permitted us yet to speak of technically as vassalage) was owned and emphasized when, in 779, Hildebrand, having crossed the Alps, presented himself before Charles at the villa of Virciniacum and offered great gifts to his lord. We may reasonably conjecture that then at least, if not before, the Frankish king assured the Spoletan duke that his act of ‘commendation’ should protect him from all claims of a similar kind that might be urged against him by the bishop of Rome. With this state of things Hadrian had perforce to rest content, though it was certainly not without a pang that he saw himself constrained to abandon the project of adding the duchy of Spoleto to the territories on the Adriatic and Tyrrhenian seas which it would so admirably have welded together. But that he did thus accept his defeat seems to be shown by a letter in which he submissively begs for the supply of certain woods which could be furnished only in the regions about Spoleto, and which were required for renewing the wainscotings in the basilica of St. Peter.

We shall find Duke Hildebrand in the year 788 taking part with other Lombards and Franks in resisting a Byzantine invasion, probably on the coast of Apulia. In the next year (789) he died, and was succeeded, not by any Lombard, but apparently by a Frankish warrior named Winichis, who had taken a leading part in resisting the same invasion. This man was ruler of Spoleto during all the rest of the life of Charles, and at last, in 822, he resigned his ducal rank and retired into a monastery.

XIV. At Rome itself the chief events during the twenty-one years that we are now reviewing were the second and third visits of Charles to ‘the threshold of the Apostles’, which took place in the years 781 and 787 respectively, each time at the great festival of Easter. We will deal here with the first of these visits.

He started from Worms in 780 to fulfill his long-delayed project of presenting his son Carloman to the Pope for baptism. He was accompanied by Hildegard, and by his two younger children, Carloman and Louis, the former three, and the latter two years old

In the four years which had elapsed since Charles was last in Italy, quelling the revolt of Hrodgaud of Friuli, memorable events had happened. Besides the endless invasions of the land of the Saxons, he had removed his court and his army into the province of Aquitaine (April 778), had crossed the Pyrenees, besieged Saragossa, and suffered in his retreat at Roncesvalles, that great disaster to his rear-guard which will forever be as world-famous in song as it is insignificant in history.

Having crossed the Alps, Charles took up his quarters in the old Lombard palace of Pavia, where the new *Rex Langobardorum* kept his stately Christmas. He lingered for some time in Upper Italy, where there were doubtless many disorders which needed his strong, reforming hand. On the 15th of March (781) he was at Parma, giving a charter to the merchants of Mantua, where, (according to the generally received opinion,) he held a solemn *placitum* for

the enactment of the decree which goes by the name of the *Capitulare Mantuanum*. By Easter Day, 15 April, he was in Rome, face to face with Hadrian after seven years of absence and chilling correspondence.

We have no such detailed account of his entry into Rome as on his first and last visits to the City, but assuredly the Roman populace had no lack of gorgeous ceremonies on the occasion of this visit. In the first place, there was the baptism of the four-year-old son, who entered the baptistery as Carloman and emerged from it as Pippin, having received that royal name from his godfather Hadrian. Why the name was thus changed we are not informed, but it seems probable that it was in order to publish to the world that Pippin the Hunchback, son of Charles and Himiltrud, was on account of his deformity excluded from succession to the throne. It is noteworthy that after this ceremony Hadrian always studiously addresses Charles as his spiritual co-father, and Hildegard as spiritual co-mother, a designation which helps us to distinguish between the letters written before 781 and those subsequent to that date.

After the baptism of Pippin, he and his baby brother Louis were crowned by the Pope, to denote that they had been named by their father as kings of Italy and Aquitaine respectively. It was perhaps not altogether politic on the part of Charles to give the Pope so prominent a place in the investiture of his sons with the regal dignity. A few more precedents of like kind, and the opinion might grow-up that no one could be a rightful king of the Franks and Lombards who had not received his crown from the hands of the pontiff.

Again another sight for the spectacle-loving citizens of Rome. It was while Charles still abode in the City that the ambassadors of Irene, Constantine the Treasurer and Mamulus the Grand Chamberlain entered it, doubtless with imperial pomp, in order to conclude the treaty of marriage between their young lord Constantine and the Frankish maiden Hrotrud. One marvels how Hadrian comported himself between the representatives of the old and the new regime; between the ambassadors of the sovereign *de jure* and the visible sovereign *de facto*. It was indeed a strange complication. Here was the eunuch Elisha, whose name went back to the days of Hebrew prophets, come to instruct a daughter of the Franks in 'the language and literature of the Greeks and the customs observed in the monarchy of the Romans'. Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, the three languages of the superscription on the cross, were blended in the commission of this envoy from Constantinople.

'The monarchy of the Romans'; that was still the name borne by the state whose centre was the city of Constantine, a name to which it could prove its right by an unquestioned pedigree. And here was the bishop of Rome, who till nine years before this time had dated all his documents by the year of the Byzantine sovereign, who had never been formally released from his allegiance to the Roman Emperor, who could not now plead that heresy unloosed all bonds (for Irene was an orthodox image-worshipper), treating probably the envoys from Constantinople as the representatives of a foreign though friendly power, and professing himself the comrade, friend, or subject of a certain 'Patrician of the Romans' who was also king of a German tribe settled on the lower Rhine. Alas! that no historian has recorded for us the artifices by which diplomacy veiled this strange entanglement.

Soon after Easter, Charles appears to have left Rome and to have journeyed leisurely through Upper Italy, visiting the monastery of his late uncle Carloman on Mount Soracte, settling disputed claims in the neighbourhood of Florence, making grants to ecclesiastics at Pavia and Brescia, assisting at the baptism of his youngest daughter Gisila at Milan, and finally returning across the Alps about the month of August. This year 781 was one of those which were more especially dedicated by the great monarch to Italian affairs. He doubtless perceived that many disorders had crept into the Frankish administration of the country during the seven years that it had been deprived of 'the master's eye'. He now left it under the nominal vice-royalty of his son Pippin, the newly-crowned king of Italy. The child-king, still only four years

old, was destined to grow up into a strong and capable if somewhat hot-tempered man. Meanwhile the kingdom was probably administered in his name by Frankish regents or governors, the name of one of whom, Rotchild, has been preserved to us. We hear very little as to his deeds or character, and that little is not favourable.

XV. Some weeks after Charles had left Rome and while he was still in Italy he received an interesting letter from the Pope. "We have greatly rejoiced", says Hadrian, "to receive your wise and God-inspired letters in which you say that your cause is ours and ours is yours. We trust that this truth, which has certainly been taught you by divine inspiration, will shine forth manifest to all men". The Pope then goes on to describe the disputes which had arisen between the monks of the great monastery of St. Vincent on the Vulturno and their abbots. Of these abbots, one, Autbert, had by Charles's command been summoned to Rome to justify himself before the Papal tribunal, but had died suddenly, worn out by the fatigues of the journey. A synod was then held at Rome to investigate a charge of treason against his rival and successor, Abbot Potho. Before this synod appeared the monk Rothgaud, and gave testimony as follows : "My lord, when we were performing the service for Sexts, and according to custom were singing, for the safety of the king and his progeny, the psalm 'Save me, O God, by Thy name', suddenly the abbot stood up and refused to sing. Afterwards, as we were walking together, the abbot began to say, 'What do you think of our cause, for I expected to see a sign and have not seen it?'. Rothgaud uttered a pious commonplace about God's power to humble the heart of man, and the abbot (according to his statement) answered, 'If it were not for the monastery and my Beneventan land, I would hold him [King Charles] of no more account than one dog'. Then he added, 'There are only as many Franks left [in the country] as I could carry on my shoulders'.

"Abbot Potho being asked what he had to say in answer to this charge, said, "Of course our congregation always prays for his Excellency and his children. But while I was at the service, when the prayers were ended and the boys began to sing "*Domine in nomine tuo salvum me fac*", I suddenly rose in order to attend to some business for the good of the monastery. As for our talk on the road, what I said was, 'If it were not that it would seem like desertion of the monastery and its property, I should certainly go to some place where I need not care for anybody'. As for the Franks, I said nothing at all of the kind which he alleges against me".'

Rothgaud was re-examined, and could produce no testimony in confirmation of his charge. He was alone with the abbot when the conversation took place. Evidence was given that he was himself a man of bad character, who having committed incest with his niece had been obliged to leave the priesthood and turn monk.

Then three monks who had belonged to the party of Autbert complained that they had been illegally detained and imprisoned to prevent them from resorting to Charles's court for justice. Potho replied that he certainly did station guards upon the bridge [over the Vulturno] to prevent these and all other monks from violating their rule and 'going back to their vomit in the world'.

The result of the trial was that Potho was acquitted on the oath of ten monks, five Franks and five Lombards, that they had never heard him utter any treasonable sentiments against King Charles's Excellency.

XVI. Many letters passed soon after this about the great affair of the Sabine Patrimony. Unfortunately neither they nor any of the chroniclers of the time appear to give us any precise indications of what this Sabine territory was. All that can be said is that it was situated in the neighbourhood of Rieti. We saw that Liutprand restored to Pope Zacharias a Sabine territory of

which the Popes had been despoiled thirty years before. Possibly it had again fallen back into Lombard hands. What we know is that Charles during his second visit to Rome appointed two *missi*, Itherius and Maginarius, to go with the Pope's envoys to investigate St. Peter's claim to the territory in question. They went, and assembled about a hundred men, who swore on the Virgin's altar that this patrimony had of old belonged to St. Peter and the Roman Church. But 'perverse and unjust men', as the Pope complained, hindered the restitution of the patrimony. Letter after letter was sent. Hadrian declared that the imperial envoy, Maginarius, had seen the whole claim of St. Peter to the territory, as it resulted both from old Imperial donations and from grants made by the insolent kings of the Lombards themselves, indicating the territory in question and the farms belonging to it; a claim which even the faithless Desiderius himself had not dared to dispute in its totality, though he had denied it as to some individual farms. Hadrian quoted Scripture, 'Thy God hath commanded thy strength', from the 68th Psalm, and—not too reverently—applied the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews to God's marvellous working 'in these latter days' by the hand of Charles in favour of St. Peter. At last after five letters had been written, and probably a couple of years had elapsed, the royal *missi* were successful in completing the transfer of the Sabine patrimony to the Pope and setting up boundary-stones to mark off its precise limits where it touched the territory of Reate.

XVII. The chief anxiety of Hadrian during all these years came from the principality of Benevento on his southern border. Here was one of the hated Lombards, a son-in-law of the arch-enemy Desiderius, reigning in glory and in virtual independence. Extension of the *Ducatus Romae* in the direction of Campania, recovery of some of the lost patrimonies in the south of Italy, were both difficult while that strong and detested Lombard held the 'Samnite' principality. There was also a fear, perhaps a genuine fear, that someday, when Charles, the champion, was fighting far away in the forests of Saxon-land, the prince of Benevento might join forces with 'the most wicked' Greeks, besiege Rome by sea and land, 'and even carry us captives—God forbid!—into their own land.

Prince Arichis, who now ruled in Benevento, and had held sway there since 758, was in some respects the finest specimen of a ruler whom the Lombard race produced. Brave in war, capable in administration and diplomacy, able to hold his own and to guide his bark through the troubled sea of Italian politics, he was also a man of considerable intellectual culture, generous towards the Church (like so many others of the 'unutterable' Lombards), and able to share and sympathize with the literary interests of his wife, the accomplished Adelperga.

This princess, the daughter of Desiderius, was apparently the pupil of Paulus Diaconus, who for her composed that history of the Roman Empire (the so-called *Historia Miscella*) which has been so often quoted in the foregoing pages, and the object of which was to continue the work of Eutropius and to enrich it with those notices as to ecclesiastical history which Adelperga looked for in vain in the pages of the heathen historian.

Though not apparently descended from the dukes of the old Beneventan line whose names were borne by himself and his sons, and though originally planted in the Samnite duchy as the friend and relation of Desiderius, Arichis seems to have been gladly accepted by the inhabitants of that duchy as their sovereign, and to have rooted his dynasty deep in their affections.

He was evidently a great builder, and we may well suppose that the splendid Roman monuments which adorned the city (some of which, like Trajan's noble arch, remain to this day) had an influence in directing the minds of the prince and princess of Benevento towards the literature of the wonderful race who had spanned the Calore and the Vulturno with their bridges, and had carried the Via Appia straight over hill and dale to Brindisi from Rome.

But not only were the princely pair attracted towards the literature of the Latins. With the Greeks of Constantinople (*Romans* as they persisted in calling themselves) they had, after the revolution of 774, a strong tie, in the fact that Adelperga's brother Adelchis was now living at the Imperial court, slowly subsiding into middle age and the condition of a great Byzantine noble, but ever and anon making desperate attempts, with the help of Greek soldiers and sailors, to recover his lost Lombard throne. It was probably this Byzantine influence which caused Arichis to build what Erchempert calls "a most wealthy and becoming temple to the Lord, which he named after the two Greek words *Hagia Sophia*, that is Holy Wisdom; and having founded there a monastery and endowed it with most ample farms and various wealth, he handed it over for ever to the Order of St. Benedict V".

The church and the monastery still remain, and the cloister of the latter, with its pillars bearing capitals of strange devices, is one of the loveliest in Italy, but successive earthquakes ruined the stately building of Arichis, and two tombs and a few columns are all that now remain thereof, save a bas-relief in the tympanum over the church-portal, depicting St. Mercury in soldier's attire presenting to the Saviour the kneeling Arichis, who wears the crown and the princely mantle.

The fortification of Salerno on the sea-coast was doubtless significant of this altered attitude of Benevento towards Constantinople. Hitherto the Lombard had looked upon the sea as his enemy, fearing invasion by the fleets of the Emperor or the Caliph. Now, however, that the Frank was the dominant power in Italy, and that help in resisting his menaces might come from a friendly Byzantium, it was important to have a stronghold upon the sea-coast. For this purpose Arichis fortified with massive walls the city which gives its name to the beautiful bay of Salerno, which at the same time he adorned with stately buildings seen from afar by mariners, and turned into a second capital of his principality.

About the year 778 the Pope found himself confronted by the allied Greeks and Beneventans in his attempt to retain his hold on some part of Campania. "Know" (he says to Charles) "that your and our rivals, the most unutterable Beneventans, are trying to seduce our people in Campania from their allegiance, working to this end in concert with the [Imperial] Patrician of Sicily, who is now residing at Gaeta and to whom they have bound themselves by strong oaths, as well as with the men of Terracina. We have, by means of the bishops, ordered the Campanians to come into our presence or to send five of the principal men of each city to your Excellency. This they refuse to do, though we have sent another urgent message to that effect by Bishop Philip and our nephew Paschalis. We have therefore decided to send our militia thither in order to compel their obedience. We pray you in the presence of the living God to order these most unutterable and God-hated Beneventans to cease from thus tempting our Campanian subjects. We for our part will hold no communication with them, nor will we receive their envoys or have aught to do with the consecration of their bishop, since they have become contrary to St. Peter, to us, and to you".

Hadrian seems, perhaps by means of his *generalis exercitus*, to have recovered possession of Terracina for a short time; but it was soon again wrested from him by 'the most wicked Neapolitans, together with the Greeks hateful to God, Arichis, duke of Benevento, giving them his malignant counsel.' This manner of speaking of the Neapolitans seems to show that Naples, though essentially a Greek city and nominally belonging to the Empire, was beginning to take a somewhat independent position in South Italy, as Venice was doing in the North.

Hadrian implored Charles to send his officer Wulfin speedily to his aid, so as to arrive before the 1st of August. "Let him order all the Tuscans and Spoletans and even the wicked Beneventans who are in your service and ours to come and recover Terracina, and if possible to capture Gaeta and Naples also, recovering our patrimony in that territory". He proceeds to

describe a scheme, so clever as to be almost unintelligible, by which he had hoped apparently to get hold of Naples without losing his claim on Terracina :—

“We made a compact with the false Neapolitans last Easter through their envoy Peter, by which we sought to recover the patrimony of St. Peter which is in that city, and at the same time to subdue them to your service. It was agreed that they should give us fifteen hostages of the noblest of their sons, and that we should abandon our claim to Terracina. Then they were to go to their Patrician in Sicily [to obtain his permission to] hand over to us our patrimony, which being done they should recover both the city and their hostages. But we on our part could not give up either the city or the hostages without your sanction, and so we hoped to keep these hostages for your service. All this, however, was hindered by that most unfaithful Arichis, duke of Beneventum, who, continually entertaining the envoys of the most wicked Patrician of Sicily, prevented our receiving the hostages from the aforesaid Neapolitans. For he is daily expecting; to his own perdition, the son of Desiderius the long-ago-not-to-be-mentioned king of the Lombards, that together with him they may attack both us and you. Pray let nothing cool your love to St. Peter. We care nothing for the city of Terracina itself; we only wish that the faithless Beneventans may not in this thing find the desired loophole for escaping from their allegiance to you”.

XVIII. As I have before said, it is the misfortune of a history compiled from a one-sided correspondence like the *Codex Carolinus* that it is always describing the beginning of transactions of whose end it is ignorant. We know nothing as to the final settlement of the disputes last recorded, save that it is clear that the Pope’s schemes for obtaining a footing in Naples were not successful.

As far as Beneventan affairs are concerned, there is an eventless interval of about seven years (780-786). This lull in the storm is doubtless due to the death of Leo the Khazar (September, 780), the accession of Irene and her son, and the friendly relations which were almost immediately established between the Greek and Frankish courts. Not even on the occasion of Charles’s second visit to Rome (Easter, 781) do we hear of any direct communications, friendly or unfriendly, between him and Arichis of Benevento.

The years which intervened between the second and third visits of the Frankish monarch to Rome were some of the most memorable ones in his Thirty Years’ War with the Saxons.

In 782, supposing the subjugation of the Saxons to be complete, he convened an assembly at the sources of the Lippe, and there promulgated that stern and rigorous Act of Uniformity which was called *Capitulatio de Partibus Saxoniae*, and which denounced death, not merely on those who were guilty of sacrilege or other obvious crimes such as the murder of a priest; not merely on those who still openly celebrated the old heathen sacrifices; but even on those who only negatively disobeyed the rule of the Catholic Church, for instance by not fasting in Lent or by hiding in order to escape from baptism.

Soon did Charles discover that he had not yet quelled the spirit of Saxon heathenism. Widukind returned from Denmark and preached everywhere revolt against the tyranny of the new lords. At Mount Suintal three Frankish generals were defeated by the Saxons; two of their number, together with four counts and twenty other nobles, were slain, and the Frankish army was almost annihilated. Then came Charles’s terrible campaign of revenge, and that atrocious massacre of 4,500 Saxon prisoners by the banks of the Aller, which is in Charles’s history what the massacre of Drogheda is in that of Cromwell, the one fatal blot on a career otherwise noble and magnanimous. Before this invading army Widukind fled, and after two more years of Frankish triumph he came in, made his full submission to Charles, and underwent the rite of baptism (785), the Frankish king himself acting as his godfather.

So, for a time, the Saxon storm was laid, but during these later years the relations with Constantinople had been growing steadily worse, the marriage treaty was collapsing, and, as an inevitable consequence, trouble for Charles and the Pope was brewing in Southern Italy.

In 786 (apparently) Hadrian wrote to Charles with a requisition for 1,000 pounds of tin for the roofing of St. Peter's, and informed him that Arichis was trying to wrest Amalfi—that near neighbour of Salerno—from the duchy of Naples and add it to his dominions. The Neapolitans resisted by force of arms, and many Beneventans were slain. Soon, however, Arichis, hearing rumours of an impending visit of Charles to Italy, decided to end this quarrel and to close up the ranks of the dwellers in Campania ere the Frank approached their borders. He made over to the Neapolitans some long-desired lands and revenues in the Terra di Lavoro and the district of Nola, strengthened the fortifications of Benevento and Salerno, and probably re-opened the long-closed negotiations with the Greek Empress and her son.

XIX. The time had evidently come, after more than five years' absence, for another visit of the *Rex Langobardorum* to Italy. Accordingly at the end of autumn (786) he crossed the Alps, and, apparently without visiting his palace at Pavia, journeyed straight to Florence, where he spent his Christmas. He came not now, as on his previous visit, accompanied by wife and children. The much-loved Hildegard was dead, and the proud and difficult-tempered Fastrada had for three years shared his throne. Possibly he was not unwilling to escape from her harsh companionship for some months, while his paternal heart was gladdened by the thought of seeing again the young king Italy, Pippin, now a bright boy in the tenth year of his age.

Early in the year, Charles arrived in Rome, and probably remained there a month or more, but of his entry into the City and his interviews with Hadrian we have nothing recorded. With reference to both his second and third visits we have good reason to complain of the utter silence of the so-called Vita Hadriani in the Liber Pontificalis, which is in fact only a history of two years of that long pontificate. We learn, however, from the annalists that while he was in Rome, Romwald, the eldest son of Arichis, a youth of great intellectual promise, the joy and stay of his parents, appeared in the presence of Charles, offering on his father's behalf great gifts and a promise of perfect obedience to the will of his overlord if only he would refrain from invading the territory of Benevento. The submission seemed sufficient to the Frankish King, but the Pope, ever hostile to the Lombard duchy, counselled war, and the fiery nobles in Charles's train echoed his words. Into the Beneventan territory he accordingly marched, visiting the venerable monastery of Monte Cassino on his way, and by the 22nd of March he had taken up his quarters at Capua. According to one late and doubtful authority a battle followed between Charles and Arichis, but it seems more probable that no battle was fought. Arichis shut himself up in his strong city of Salerno, and looked doubtless over the sea for the hoped-for Grecian galleys. Meanwhile the Frankish host was quartered in the land, and, 'like locusts', were eating up the fruits thereof. The prince of Benevento saw that his case was desperate, and sent another humble message to Charles, offering as before "that he and his people would willingly obey all Charles's commands, that he would pay a yearly tribute of 7,000 solidi, and, as a pledge for his fulfillment of these conditions, he proposed the surrender of thirteen noble Beneventan hostages and two of his children, his younger son Grimwald and his daughter Adelgisa". The last condition, as both poets and annalists agree in telling us, was especially hard to the paternal soul of Arichis. Erchempert tells us that it was included in the conditions that the Beneventans should shave their beards after the manner of the Franks, and that all charters and coins should bear the name of Charles.

Large treasure was at the same time brought by the ambassadors. Charles accepted their terms, being as we are told, especially desirous to spare the churches and monasteries of the land from the ravages of an invading army. Romwald, who had hitherto been kept a

prisoner, was released and allowed to return home. Grimwald followed in Charles's train beyond the Alps. Adalgisa, on her father's earnest prayer, was restored to her parents.

It was apparently during Charles's stay in Capua that he received the Imperial ambassadors who came to make the final demand for the hand of the princess Hrotrud, and to whom he gave his final answer, that he would not allow his daughter to be carried away from him into that distant land.

At the end of March he left Capua for Rome, kept his Easter there (April 8, 787), then visited Ravenna (where he was the guest of the Archbishop Gratosus), spent the early summer in Upper Italy, and, before the middle of July, had crossed the Alps and was back in his own Rhine-traversed city of Worms. So ended this Italian journey. Thirteen years were to pass before he again appeared in Italy to make his fourth, his last and his most famous pilgrimage to Rome.

XX. Soon after these events death laid a heavy hand on the princely house of Benevento. On the 21st of July, 787, died the heir of the house, Romwald, in the 26th year of his age. A month later (August 26, 787) died Arichis himself, after living fifty-three years and reigning thirty. Another son, Gisulf, had apparently died some years before. Only Grimwald remained, and he was a hostage and a captive in the hands of the Frankish king. Now all the efforts of the widowed Adelperga's diplomacy were put forth to obtain the surrender of Grimwald, that he might return and take his place on his father's throne, and all the efforts of Hadrian's diplomacy were put forth to prevent that surrender.

The story is complicated by the fact that Hadrian, ever mindful of the interests of St. Peter, had asked for and apparently obtained from Charles a concession of certain towns in the Beneventan territory. It seems probable that the consent of Arichis to this diminution of his principality had been one of the conditions of the treaty which was the price of Charles's withdrawal from his land. The names of these towns (if we may trust the enumeration of them in the grant which is called the *Ludovicianum*) were Sora, Arce, Aquino, Arpino, Teano and Capua—certainly a goodly addition to the *Ducatus Romae* on its eastern and south-eastern border.

As to Capua, there was clearly a party in that city, headed by a certain presbyter Gregory, which was willing to accept the Papal yoke. In January, 788, Gregory came with nine of his fellow-citizens (who, it Capua, is to be observed, nearly all bore Lombard names) to swear allegiance to St. Peter.

Hadrian evidently had some fear of offending his great patron by accepting the proffered allegiance, but in any case, as he shrewdly remarked, "our doing this will sow dissension among them, and when they are thus divided they will be more easily overcome by our excellent son, for his benefit and St. Peter's". The purport of the oath was "to keep fealty to Peter the Apostle of God, and to the royal power of the Pope and the Frankish King".

After the oath had been administered, Gregory sought a private interview with the Pope, saying, "I have a secret which I must impart to you after swearing that oath". The secret was that immediately after Charles's return from Capua the preceding year, the late prince Arichis had opened disloyal negotiations with Constantinople, praying for the honour of the Patriciate, the addition of Naples to his dominions, and an armed force to protect him from the anger of Charles and to replace his brother-in-law Adelchis on the Lombard throne. In return for these concessions he was willing to become a subject of the Empire, and, as the outward sign of his submission, to adopt the Grecian garb and the Grecian mode of trimming his hair and his beard. On receiving these overtures, the Emperor, according to Gregory, had sent two of the officers of his guard along with the governor of Sicily, bearing gold-enwoven robes, a sword of honour, and a comb and tweezers for the important operation of dressing the converted

Lombard's hair. They were at the same time instructed to claim the surrender of Romwald as a hostage for his father's good faith.

All these elaborate negotiations however—for which we have only the word of the intriguing Gregory, and which are probably untrue as far as Arichis is concerned—were snapped in twain by the sudden deaths of Arichis and his son. The Greek ambassadors however—and here we have no reason to doubt the truth of Gregory's statement—had landed at Acropolis in Lucania, had thence journeyed by land to Salerno (January 20, 788), had had an interview with Adelperga and the nobles of Benevento, but had been adjured by them not to bring them into trouble with Charles (whose envoy, Atto, was then in their city) by their presence at Salerno till the much-desired Grimwald was safe at home again. They had therefore betaken themselves to Naples, where they had been received by the Neapolitans with banners and standards—(why should they not, since Naples was still an Imperial city?)—and were there watching their time for the renewal of negotiations with the young Grimwald as soon as he was once more in his father's palace. Adelchis meanwhile was hovering about the Adriatic : 'at Treviso or Ravenna' said one account, 'at Taranto' said another, which added that Adelperga was meditating a pilgrimage, in company with her two daughters, to the shrine of St. Michael on Mount Garganus, doubtless not for the sole purpose of kissing the Archangel's footprints, but in order to creep round to Taranto—only eighty miles distant from Sant' Angelo—and greet her brother on his landing.

Such was the tangled web of truth and error which was laid before Charles in the early months of 788 by the successive letters of the importunate Hadrian. The one piece of advice which he urged with most monotonous pertinacity was, 'Do not let young Grimwald go'; and next to that was the exhortation to move his troops into the south of Italy before the 1st of May, and not to allow the Beneventans to put him off with excuses and perjured promises till the spring season, which was most suitable for warlike operations, should be passed.

Charles however, who had spent so large a part of the year 787 in Italy, was by no means disposed to undertake an expedition thither in 788 in order to soothe the nervous fears of the Pope, or assist him to nibble off some further portions of the Beneventan principality. As for keeping the young prince Grimwald in captivity and so making his father's house desolate, there was something in Charles's nature too magnanimous to accept so mean a policy. Moreover, Paulus Diaconus, who had been the constant companion of his leisure for the last six years, had probably instilled into his mind some of his own love and admiration for Adelperga and her children. And though it was manifest that the Court of Constantinople was making desperate efforts to bring about the restoration of Adelchis and so overthrow the Frankish dominion in Italy, it was by no means clear to the statesmanlike intellect of Charles that the best way of guarding against such an attack was to refuse the reasonable request of the Beneventans for the return of their prince, and so drive them into irreconcilable hostility. He held his hand therefore for the present, and meanwhile despatched two successive embassies to Italy in order to examine the state of affairs in that country and report to him thereon. The first embassy consisted of a deacon, named Atto and Guntram the Keeper of the Gate in the royal palace. The second embassy included Maginarius, abbot of S. Denis, a deacon named Joseph, and Count Liuderic. Maginarius had already been often sent to the Papal Court, and had been especially concerned in the affair of the restoration of the Sabine patrimony. Atto had been before engaged in Beneventan business, and it is perhaps allowable to suppose that he had some leaning towards Adelperga's, as Maginarius had towards Hadrian's side of the controversy. However this may be, it is worthwhile to glance at two letters written by the Pope and one by Maginarius, which relate the somewhat adventurous story of the two embassies, and which shed a valuable light on the political condition of South Italy in the year 788.

The two embassies apparently arrived in Rome at the same time, but Maginarius and Joseph had not yet been joined by their colleague Count Liuderic. The other two envoys, Atto and Guntram, went forward to a little place called Valva, while Maginarius and Joseph, after they had been joined by their belated companion, travelled by way of the river Sangro to the Beneventan territory. There seems to have been some misunderstanding between the two parties as to the rendezvous, and thus it happened that, in spite of Hadrian's earnest entreaties that they would all keep together, the Atto embassy reached Benevento four days before the Maginarius embassy, and after waiting some little time, pushed on to Salerno, where the princess was abiding, and where alone they could discharge their commission. What happened to Maginarius when he in his turn arrived at Benevento shall be told in his own words, as he described it to his royal master :—

“But when we arrived at the Beneventan frontier, we perceived that the inhabitants had no loyal feeling towards your Excellency. We therefore wrote to the other envoys, begging them to wait for us at Benevento, that we might act in concert as the Apostolic Lord [Hadrian] had counselled us, and if we found the men of Benevento loyal, proceed together to Salerno, and if not, consult together what was best to be done. We had been told that they wished to wait for us, and thus take counsel together before proceeding to Salerno. But when we had passed through the ranks of the people disloyal to you (God be contrary to them!) and had arrived at Benevento, hoping there to find our comrades and to consult with them as to the discharge of your commission, we found that one day before our arrival they had departed for Salerno.

“This brought us into great tribulation, both because we had not got our comrades with us, and because the men who were loyal to you told us that if ever we reached Salerno we should be detained there till they knew what was to be done with Grimwald and with their envoys to you. And they assured us that if we could not give them a sufficient guarantee that you would let them have Grimwald for their duke and that you would restore to them those cities of theirs which you had given to St. Peter and the Apostolic Lord, they would not fulfill your orders, but would keep us fast bound as their prisoners. If we could make these promises, however, then they would obey all your orders.

“On receipt of this intelligence, I, Maginarius, pretended to be very sick, so that it was impossible for me to journey to Salerno. Then in order that we might have our colleagues restored to us, I wrote a letter to Adelperga and the other Beneventan nobles to this effect; that I, Maginarius, wished to forward Joseph and Liuderic on their journey to her, but that they entirely refused to go without me. Let them therefore send to us Atto and Guntram, and twelve or fourteen, or as many as they pleased, of the nobles of Benevento. We would then disclose to them the nature of our commission, and discuss as to the best course to be pursued for your advantage and the safety of their land. After I had recovered my health, if it were possible, I would go with them to Salerno, but if not, the other four would all revisit Salerno and there treat of all things with the nobles.

“Adelperga, however, refused to send any of the nobles to us, but Guntram alone was allowed to rejoin us at Benevento. Then when we had learned from your faithful subjects that they were determined to ruin us, we told Guntram all that we had heard of their disloyalty to you, and he told us the same story. And Guntram wished for Atto's sake to return to Salerno; but we said that it was better that one should be detained prisoner than two.

“Having heard much more about the disloyal designs of the Beneventans, and seeing that we could in no wise serve your interests by remaining, we departed at cock-crow without their consent, and by the help of God fought our way through till we reached the territory of Spoleto in safety”.

The same story substantially is told by the Pope, with this additional information, that the plan of the ruling party at Salerno had been, if the envoys went thither, to entice them out to

some spot by the seaside, and there to have a sham-fight with their neighbours of Amalfi, Sorrento and Naples, in the course of which Charles's envoys might be slain as if accidentally, while no blame for their death would attach to anyone. The story of this plot, like so much else to the discredit of the Beneventans, came from that marvellous story-teller, Gregory of Capua. He was probably also responsible for the statement, admitted to be made only on loose hearsay, that the envoy Atto, when he heard that his colleagues had fled, took refuge at the altar in the church of Salerno. "But the Beneventans", said Hadrian, "persuading him, and as I think dissembling their real intentions, soothed his fears, and hypocritically sent him back to your Excellency, professing themselves your faithful subjects in all things".

On a review of the whole story it seems probable that there was no justification for the fears, in their extreme form, of the nervous and timid Maginarius. There was evidently a strong anti-Frankish party at Benevento and Salerno, and men's minds were in an excited state, so long as it was deemed possible that Charles would abuse the advantage which he possessed in the possession of the person of young Grimwald, to terminate the line of the princes of Benevento. But, guided by the advice of his one brave envoy, Atto, Charles adopted the nobler course. In the spring of 788 Grimwald returned to his native land and was received by his subjects with great joy. It was of course stipulated that he should accept the same position of dependence towards Charles which his father had occupied in the last year of his reign. He swore that deeds should be dated and coins engraved with the name of the Frankish king, and in the important matter of hair-dressing that the Lombards should shave their beards in Frankish fashion, wearing only the moustache.

XXI. Doubtless the dependence of the Beneventan prince on his Frankish overlord was of a somewhat slight and shadowy character. The coins and the deeds did not always bear the name of Charles, nay, in later years there was actual warfare between Grimwald and his young overlord Pippin. But, in the main, the generous policy of the king was proved to be also true statesmanship. Especially was this made manifest in the autumn of 788, when the long-threatened Greek invasion of Italy at last became a reality. The exiled prince Adelchis, with Theodore the administrator of Sicily, and John, treasurer and paymaster of the Imperial army, having landed their troops in Calabria (which still designated the district near Brindisi, the 'heel' and not the 'toe' of Italy), moved westwards and began to ravage the territory of the Beneventans. To meet them, advanced a mingled armament of Lombards and Franks. Hildebrand, duke of Spoleto, and Grimwald of Benevento—loyal to Charles though the invader was own brother of his mother—fought under the generalship of Winichis, who, notwithstanding his Lombard-sounding name seems to have been an officer on the staff of Charles, and at any rate commanded the detachment—not a large one—of Frankish troops. The battle may very likely have been joined somewhere in Horace's country, within sight of the volcanic cone of Monte Vulture. It resulted in the complete defeat of the invaders, a defeat admitted by the Greeks, as it is claimed by the Frankish historians. Four thousand of the Greeks were slain, and one thousand taken prisoners. John the Sacellarius probably fell on the battle-field. It is clear that the Franks alone could not have won this victory, and that the policy of King Charles in dealing tenderly with the great Lombard dukes was abundantly justified by the issue of this campaign.

As for Adelchis, he appears to have escaped from the field of battle and returned to Constantinople, where he probably reached old age in inglorious ease, a well-fed Byzantine patrician. Charles Edward Stuart had played his part and was transformed into the Cardinal of York.

XXII. The return of the young Beneventan prince to his father's palace was regarded with much disfavour by Pope Hadrian. He wrote to Charles, saying, "We beg of your Excellency that no man may be allowed to hinder your own holy desires, and that you will not treat Grimwald, son of Arichis, better than your own patron Peter, the blessed key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven. That Grimwald when he was at Capua in the presence of your envoys congratulated himself thus : Our lord the king has ordered that any one, whether great or small, who wishes to be my man shall without doubt be my man or any one else's whom he may choose'. [That is, there was to be no compulsory allegiance to the Pope, but anyone who pleased might change his service for that of Grimwald.] And, as we have heard, some Greek nobles residing at Naples said with howls of insulting laughter, 'Thank God! all their promises [that is the promises of the Franks] are brought to nought'. For our part we care nothing for their laughs and their mockeries, though the Greeks themselves remarked that the apostolic envoys had now twice returned without effect".

How the question of the Beneventan cities was left is not clear from the Papal correspondence, but it seems doubtful whether Capua at any rate was firmly bound over to the Papal service. In the letter just quoted Hadrian complains that the fair words of Charles as to Populonia and Rosellae and the Beneventan cities are not backed by corresponding deeds on the part of Charles's envoys: "We sent dukes Crescentius and Hadrian together with your envoys into the regions of Benevento to accomplish your royal wishes; but [the latter] would not hand over to [our representatives] anything except bishops' houses, and monasteries, and court-houses, and at the same time the keys of cities without the men, for the men themselves have it in their power to go in and out as they please. And how can we keep the cities without the men, if their inhabitants are allowed to plot against [our rule]? But we want to have freedom to rule and govern these cities in the same way and by the same law as we do the other cities in Tuscany which are comprised in your gift".

Evidently there was a fault in the working of the political machine, for which neither Charles nor Hadrian could be considered altogether responsible. It was admitted that certain large portions of Central Italy were to be held and governed by the Pope—possibly with a certain reservation of supreme rights to the Patrician of the Romans—but the Pope had no army worth notice under his command, no organized system of police, and as his orders were thus destitute of material sanction, his dominions from Ravenna to Capua were constantly on the point of slipping from his hold.

XXIII. In order to continue the story of 'the Samnite Duchy' it may be stated that Grimwald began gradually to disregard the command to date his charters by the years of his lord paramount and to stamp his effigy on his coins, and that his attitude towards the Frankish king became more and more obviously that of a revolted subject. He also obtained in marriage the hand of a 'Greek' princess, named Wantia, said to have been the niece of an Emperor. The marriage indeed did not turn out happily, and eventually his love was turned into such bitter hate that (as the chronicler tells us) 'he made the opposition of the Franks an excuse for sending her in Hebrew fashion a writing of divorcement', and forcibly transporting her to her own home. That quarrel may, however, have happened some years later. Meanwhile the Greek alliance and the signs of impending revolt caused Charles to send one, or perhaps two, hostile expeditions into the Beneventan territory. In 791, we are told, Charles, on his return from a victorious expedition against the Avars, ordered his son Pippin to march into the land of Benevento and lay it waste with fire and sword. In the following year two of the young princes were sent against the rebellious duchy. Louis, then a lad of fourteen, who had been staying with his father at Ratisbon, was ordered to return to his own kingdom of Aquitaine, collect troops, and march over the Mont Cenis into Italy. He accomplished the journey in the autumn,

reached Ravenna, spent his Christmas there, and then, with his Aquitanians, joined his brother Pippin. Together they invaded the Samnite duchy, and at least succeeded in ravaging it so thoroughly that their own soldiers were well-nigh reduced to starvation, and had to receive the Church's pardon for eating flesh in Lent, no other victuals being accessible. No victories, however, are placed to the credit of the young invaders, and the campaign was probably an inglorious one, as it is not even mentioned by the official chroniclers.

XXIV. The remaining seven years of Hadrian's pontificate (788-795) have not left any great mark on the *Codex Carolinus*. These were the years of great and victorious campaigns against the Avars (791-795), and of a revival of the long duel with the Saxons, who took the opportunity of Charles's absence in the Danubian lands to attack and to inflict a crushing defeat on the Frankish general Theodoric (793). Their land, in reprisal for this attack, was again laid waste by Charles's armies (794), and they had to submit to the transportation of more than 7,000 men—a third of the whole population—from Bardengau (the old home of the Lombards on the left bank of the Elbe), and to their replacement by colonists of pure Frankish blood (795).

To this period also belong the commencement of one of King Charles's most magnificent undertakings, the digging of a canal in North Bavaria between the Danube and the Rhine (793), and the assembling of a general council of bishops from all parts of Charles's dominions, held at Frankfurt-on-the-Main (794). At this council Charles presided like another Constantine, the heresy of the Adoptionists was condemned, and the declaration against image-worship was promulgated in defiance of the decrees of the Second Nicene Council.

As to the domestic relations of the great king during the interval before us, the one most conspicuous and most sorrowful event was the conspiracy of his eldest son Pippin the Hunchback, the offspring of his marriage with Himiltrud. This conspiracy, which was hatched during Charles's absence in Bavaria, in connection with his Avar campaigns, was partly caused by the cruelty and arrogance of queen Fastrada, but was joined by many noble Franks, both old and young, and aimed we are told at nothing less than the murder of Charles himself and all his sons by Hildegard, that Pippin might be his unquestioned heir. It was discovered through the information given by a Lombard named Fardulf, faithful now to Charles, as he had been to his former sovereigns Desiderius and Adelchis. On its detection the chief offenders were put to death, all save the Hunchback himself, who received the tonsure and passed the remaining nineteen years of his life (792-811) in monastic seclusion at Prum, in the Moselle country. Three years afterwards (795) Fastrada died, little regretted by the subjects of her husband.

As has been said, few important letters passed between the Pope and King during this last period of seven years. We find with interest and some surprise that Hadrian has to reassure himself with the text "If God be for us who can be against us?" on hearing of an alleged scheme of our own countryman, Offa, king of Mercia, to thrust him down from the papacy and elect another in his stead. Offa's own relations with Charles were generally but not uniformly amicable. Here too the breakdown of a marriage treaty produced a temporary rupture between the two courts. Offa's daughter was sought in marriage for the young Charles, but when he proposed to enlarge the treaty so as to obtain the hand of Charles's daughter Bertha for his son, the Frankish king, indignant and always averse to his daughter's leaving him for any husband, broke off the negotiations, and for a time put an embargo on all the English merchant-ships. But the dispute was ere long settled, probably by the mediation of Alcuin, Offa's subject and Charles's friend.

In a letter written about the year 791 the Pope exhorts Charles not to listen to any complaints made against his administration by the men of Ravenna and the Pentapolis, and insists that, even as he does not receive any of Charles's 'men' coming without their lord's

licence to the thresholds of the Apostles, so Charles shall not give admittance to any of the Pope's 'men' who seek audience at his court unless they bring the Pope's licence and letters dismissory. In the same letter he uses the following remarkable words:

"We pray your Excellency not to allow any change to be made in that whole burnt-offering which your sainted father offered and you confirmed to St. Peter. But even as you assert that the honour of your patriciate has been irrefragably guarded and ever more and more increased by us, similarly may the patriciate of your patron St. Peter, granted in writing in its fullness by lord Pippin and more amply confirmed by you, remain ever his by irrefragable right".

This expression 'the patriciate of St. Peter' has been much commented on by scholars, and has been thought by some to express in juristic terms the relation of the Pope to that part of Italy which was under his sway. It is perhaps safer, however, to look upon it as a mere rhetorical phrase employed by the Pope to urge his suit with Charles. "You are Patrician, and I have ever honoured you as such; but I too, as representing St. Peter, and the rights which you have conferred upon him, may claim to be in a certain sense a Patrician, and I claim that you shall respect those rights as I respect yours".

At length the long pontificate of Hadrian came to an end. He died on Christmas Day, 795, and was buried in St. Peter's on the day following. Charles, who was on the point of despatching for his acceptance certain rich presents, part of the vast treasure taken from the Ring or circular city of the Avars, had now to send them to his successor, Leo III, who was elected on the very day of Hadrian's funeral and enthroned on the day following (December 27, 795).

As we have seen, the relations between the Frankish King and the Roman Pope had not been uniformly of a friendly character, but we are assured by Einhard, Charles's friend and biographer, that when he heard of Hadrian's death he wept for him, as if he had been a brother or the dearest of his sons.

CHAPTER THREE

TASSILO OF BAVARIA.

In order not to interrupt the current of Italian, and especially of Papal history, I have postponed to the present chapter all mention of one of the most important of Charles's enterprises, and one too which very closely concerned the fallen Lombard dynasty. I allude to his long duel with his rebellious vassal, Tassilo, duke of Bavaria.

In a previous chapter we have glanced at the history of the Agilolfings, the ducal house of Bavaria, during the seventh and eighth centuries. We have seen them drawing into closer and closer ecclesiastical connection with Rome, but at the same time we have seen their political connection with the Frankish monarchy growing weaker and weaker, and in spite of Charles Martel's intervention in their affairs, in spite of his marrying the daughter of one duke and Tassilo's refusal to follow Pippin into Aquitaine giving his own daughter in marriage to another, we have seen the position of the great lord who reigned at Ratisbon approximating more and more nearly to absolute independence. This tendency towards independence manifested itself in the most audacious manner when, in 763, the young duke Tassilo flatly refused any longer to follow the standards of his uncle and overlord Pippin in his campaign against Waifar of Aquitaine. With the Teutonic ideas as to the obligation of military service, and especially as to the duty of the 'companion' to follow his lord to battle, and if need were to die in his defence in the thickest of the war-storm, this was to commit an almost unforgivable offence, the grievous crime of *harisliz*. Politically too such a desertion was of evil omen for the future unity of the widespread Frankish realm. Thereby the young duke of the Bavarians seemed to say, "What is it to me whether the men of Aquitaine obey the rule of my Australian uncle at his palace in Champagne, or whether they set up for themselves as an independent kingdom? Perhaps they will do well if they can accomplish this. We too, I and my Bavarians, are not too deeply enamoured of the rule of these domineering Franks".

But however insolent was the defiance thus thrown in the face of Pippin, that monarch, now waxing old and infirm, was too closely occupied by the long war with Aquitaine to have leisure to accept the challenge of Tassilo. At his death in 768, Bavaria under its Agilolfing duke must be considered as having been practically independent. Tassilo was probably already at that date married to Liutperga, daughter of Desiderius.

Then came the good queen Bertrada's journey to Ratisbon and to Pavia (770), the marriage-treaty which she concluded for her son with the delicate daughter of Desiderius, the short-lived league of friendship between Frank, Lombard and Bavarian. It seems that, as far as Charles and Tassilo were concerned, the way had been prepared for this reconciliation by Sturmi, abbot of Fulda, successor of the great Boniface. Intent on his great work of the Christianization of the Saxons, he desired that the energies of the Frankish king by whom that work had to be accomplished should not be frittered away on needless wars in the south of Germany. Himself a Bavarian by birth, he undertook a mission from Charles to his native prince, and was 769 (?) so successful in his diplomacy that he established a peace between the two cousins which lasted for many years, and which apparently was not shaken by the repudiation of Desiderata, perhaps not even by the overthrow and exile of Desiderius. One evidence of the long continuance of this friendship is furnished by the fact that in 778 he sent a detachment of soldiers to serve under Charles in that Spanish campaign which ended in the disaster of Roncesvalles.

But during all this time Tassilo was assuming the style of an independent sovereign. He summoned synods, over which he presided; he left out the name of Charles and inserted his own in public documents; he even ventured to speak in them of “the year of my kingship”. Through the whole of this period Bavaria seems to have been prospering under his wise and statesmanlike rule. In the East he subdued and converted to Christianity the rough Sclovenes of Carinthia; in the South he recovered, probably by friendly arrangement with Desiderius, the places in the valley of the Adige which had been taken from his ancestors by Liutprand. As a reward for his acknowledged services to Christianity, Tassilo’s son Theodo (whom he made the partner of his throne in 777) was in 770 baptized at Rome by Hadrian.

On all this increase of reputation and territory, however, Charles was not likely to look with favouring eye, so long as he must entertain the painful thought that this fair Danubian land, which had owned the sovereignty of the weakest Merovings, was daily slipping from his grasp. On his second visit to Rome (781) he appears to have discussed Bavarian affairs with his Papal host, and the result of their conversation was the despatch of a joint embassy to Tassilo (two bishops sent by the Pope, a deacon and grand butler by the king), to remind Duke Tassilo of the oaths which he had sworn long ago, and to warn him not to act otherwise than as he had sworn to the lords Pippin and Charles. And when these ambassadors in pursuance of their instructions had spoken with the aforesaid duke, so greatly was his heart softened, that he declared his willingness at once to proceed to the presence of the king’ (who had by this time returned to Frankland), if such hostages could be given as would leave him no doubt of his safety. On receipt of these hostages he went promptly to the king at Worms, swore the prescribed oath, and gave the twelve hostages who were required at his hands for the fulfillment of his promises, and whom Sindbert, bishop of Ratisbon, brought into the king’s presence. But the said duke returning to his home did not long remain in the faith which he had sworn.

The hollow truce thus concluded lasted for six years, A hollow till Charles’s third visit to Rome. By this time, 781-787, he had, as he thought, thoroughly subdued the Saxons. Widukind had been baptized, and for the time there was peace in North Germany. In Italy, too, Arichis of Benevento had without bloodshed been brought to his knees, nor had his brother-in-law of Bavaria apparently stretched out a hand to help him. Yet Tassilo seems to have known that his position was insecure; he sent accordingly two envoys, Arno, bishop of Salzburg, and Hunric, abbot of Mond See, to beg the Pope to reconcile him with King Charles.

The Pope seems to have honestly done his best to bring about the desired reconciliation. earnestly besought Charles to renew friendly relations with his cousin of Bavaria. “The very thing that I desire”, answered Charles : “I have been long seeking for the re-establishment of peace between us, but have not been able to accomplish it”. The envoys were called in, but when the Pope proceeded to examine them as to the conditions which Tassilo was willing to accept, it appeared that they were in no sense plenipotentiaries, and had no other commission than simply to hear and carry back to their master the words of the king and pontiff. At this Pope Hadrian, not without cause, lost his temper. “Unstable and mendacious, false and fraudulent” were the words which burst from his lips: and he proceeded to pronounce the anathema of the Church on Tassilo and all his followers unless he fulfilled to the letter the promise of obedience which he had sworn to Pippin and his son. “Warn Tassilo”, said he to the envoys, “that he prevent effusion of blood and the ravage of his land by manifesting entire obedience to his lord King Charles and his sons. If otherwise, if with hardened heart he refuse to obey my apostolic words, then King Charles and his army will be absolved from all peril of punishment for sin, and whatever shall happen in that land, burning or homicide or any other evil that may light on Tassilo and his partisans, lord Charles and his Franks will remain thereafter innocent of all blame”.

The annalist then describes King Charles's return to his own land, his meeting with his queen Fastrada, and his convocation of a synod in Worms (July, 787), before which he declared all that had recently been done in the matter of the Bavarian duke. Once more an embassy was sent to remind Tassilo of the obligations of his oath and to summon him to the presence of his lord. On his refusal to obey the summons Charles prepared for the invasion of Bavaria, and according to his favourite system of strategy, divided Charles his army into three parts. He himself entered the Bavaria, country from the west by way of the river Lech and the city of Augsburg. The united forces of the Austrasian Franks, the Thuringians and the Saxons (for Charles already ventured to employ Saxons in his army) entered from the north-west, by way of Ingolstadt. The boy-king Pippin with his Italian forces came by way of the duchy of Trient and advanced as far as Botzen. Tassilo, seeing himself Tassilo surrounded on all sides and conscious that many of his own nobles wavered in their fidelity (preferring doubtless the distant Frankish overlord to the near Agilolfing duke), threw up the game, came into the presence of Charles, confessed that he had sinned grievously against him, resigned into his hands the ducal dignity which he had received from Pippin and received it back again on confessed terms of vassalage. He again swore the oaths of fealty and gave thirteen hostages, his son Theodo being one of them, for the faithful performance of his promises. Satisfied herewith, King Charles returned to his palace at Ingelheim on the Rhine and there celebrated Christmas and Easter.

The accord between the two cousins, the lord and the vassal, was of short duration. It was again proved that

‘Never can true reconciliation grow

Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep.’

The early part of 788 was an anxious time for the Frankish king. War both with the Greeks and the Avars was evidently impending, and this was the time moreover when Hadrian was plying him with perpetual insinuations as to the hostile designs of Adelperga and her Beneventans and beseeching him not to surrender his hostage Grimwald. Tassilo it is true was humbled, but was not his very humiliation dangerous? Was he likely ever to forget that he came of an older and nobler line than that cousin who claimed him as his vassal; that his ancestors were dukes and all but kings of Bavaria, when the ancestors of Charles were but head-servants in Austrasia? And there were not only his own wrongs, but his wife's also, rankling in his mind. Liutperga's father had been dethroned and shut up in a monastery, her mother and sister had been forced to take the veil, her brother was wandering in hopeless exile; all these injuries cried aloud for vengeance, and smarting under their bitter memory she was—so men believed—even now urging on her husband to dangerous and treacherous designs.

Charles determined to deal first with the suspected rebel at home ere he struck at the enemy abroad. He called a general assembly of all his subjects, Franks and Bavarians, Lombards and Saxons, to meet him at Ingelheim. Tassilo was summoned and did not dare to disobey the call. Sundry of his own Bavarian subjects appeared to bear witness against him. They accused him (1) of having opened treasonable communications with the Avars, (2) of having summoned to his court men who had ‘commended’ themselves as vassals to King Charles and then laid snares for their lives, (3) of having ordered his men when they swore [oaths of fealty to Charles] to practise ‘mental reservation’ and swear deceitfully, (4) of having said (doubtless with reference to the fact that his son Theodo was hostage for his fidelity), “If I had ten sons, I would lose them all rather than stand by my sworn compact with the king. It is better for me to die than to live on these terms”. To none of these accusations, we are told, was Tassilo able to offer a denial, and in truth the gravest of them all, the accusation of treasonable correspondence with the Avars, was confirmed by an expedition of that barbarous people against Friuli and Bavaria, only a few months later. Pondering these charges, and taking

account also of the old and never-atoned-for crime of *harisliz* against King Pippin in 763, the assembled nations judged the Bavarian duke guilty of death. Charles however, “for the love of God and because he was and kinsman”, commuted the sentence to deposition from his ducal rank and confinement in a monastery.

Tassilo bowed to the inevitable doom : he is even represented by the chronicler as entreating permission to enter a convent that he might there repent of his many sins. This, however, is doubtless the invention of the courtly historian. A more natural and more probable turn is given to the narrative by another annalist who tells us that “with many prayers he besought the king that he might not be shorn of his locks then and there in the palace, but might be spared the shame and humiliation of having this thing done to him in sight of all the Franks”. The king hearkened to his prayers, and he was sent to the place where the body of St. Goar reposes on the banks of the Rhine. There he was made a ‘cleric’, and after that he was banished to the monastery of Jumieges. His two sons, Theodo and Theotbert, his two daughters, and his wife, the Lombard Liutperga, were all sentenced to the same religious seclusion. Charles was averse, for the most part, to the shedding of blood, but he highly valued, for his enemies, the opportunities for meditation and prayer afforded by the monotonous stillness of the cloister. At the same time some persistently loyal adherents of Tassilo were banished the realm.

Six years after these events the monk Tassilo was once more brought out into the light of day and obliged to face his victorious kinsman. At the synod of Frankfurt “appeared that Tassilo who aforetime was duke of Bavaria, to pray for pardon for all the faults which he had committed whether in the time of King Pippin or King Charles, at the same time with pure mind laying aside all wrath and bitterness of spirit for the punishment which had been inflicted upon him. As to his claims to property in Bavaria which had belonged to him or to any of his children, he utterly renounced them all, and declared that no demand in respect of them should ever be made in future. And he commended his sons and daughters to the compassion of the king. Upon this the king, moved with pity, freely forgave the aforesaid Tassilo for all the faults that he had committed against him, and promised him that he should live thenceforward in his favour and on his alms”; but did not apparently let him out of the monastery. He had probably been brought forth from its seclusion only in order to cure some technical defect in the former acts of deposition and confiscation. Herewith the once magnificent Tassilo vanishes out of history, even the year of his death being unknown: and with him ends the great Agilolfing line which for two centuries had seen its fortunes so closely interwoven with those of the Lombard kings of Italy.

CHAPTER FOUR

TWO COURTS : CONSTANTINOPLE AND AACHEN.

I

Constantinople.

THE Imperial palace at Constantinople at the period of which we are treating was a building already more than two centuries old, the *Chrysotriklinion* or Golden Hall reared by Justin II in 570. Its garden front looked south-eastward to the near waters of the Bosphorus. North-westward it looked towards the building which was still called the roman Senate-house, to the great Imperial forum known as the *Augusteum*, peopled with statues, and over that to the Hippodrome, where the charioteers of the Blue and the Green factions engaged in their maddening rivalry.

It was a building already haunted by some gloomy memories. From hence, if the popular legend were true, the Empress Sophia had sent the fatal distaff to Narses. Hither came Heraclius to die, heart-broken by the Mohammedan conquest of Jerusalem, and here probably his widow Martina suffered the barbarous mutilation which was the punishment of her audacity in aspiring 'to reign over the Romans.' From this palace Constans was driven forth to his Cain-like wanderings over the world by the spectre of his murdered brother; and here Justinian II, last scion of the race of Heraclius, spent the strange seventeen years of his mad misgovernment. In this palace reigned, as we have seen, in the year 790, a woman and a young man—Irene, widow of Leo the Khazar, Irene, and her son Constantine VI Irene was a woman in middle life, and Constantine was a youth of twenty.

She was keen-witted, fond of power, with something perhaps of the old Athenian brilliancy, and certainly, as has been already said, with the old Athenian tendency to be 'wholly given to idolatry'. But as her image-loving propensities fell in with that which was finally the prevailing fashion in the Orthodox Church, the atrocious crimes which she committed were glossed over by the scribes of the convent, and they have even dared to speak of her to posterity as 'the most pious', 'the God-guided', 'the strong-souled and God-beloved Irene'.

It is a sore temptation to an ambitious woman to find herself in command of the great machinery of a despotic government, with only a boy, and that boy her own son, for her future rival. The formation of that son's character lies almost entirely in her own hands, and without forming at first any deliberate schemes of wickedness, it is easy for the mother to foster the boy's natural disposition to indolence or pleasure, or extravagance, and thus to destroy his chances of ever successfully competing with her for power. The instances of Catherine de' Medici and Catherine of Russia will at once occur to the reader's mind; but Irene was prepared for the sake of power to wade far deeper into crime than either of the Catherines.

In the year 790 the long-repressed discontent of the young Emperor with his present position began to display itself. Over and above his disappointment at being commanded to marry the Armenian Maria instead of the Frankish Hrotrud, there was the daily annoyance of perceiving that while his presence-chamber was almost deserted, crowds of suppliants thronged the halls of Stauracius the logothete, the confidential adviser of his mother. Constantine was now twenty years old, and there were not wanting men of eminence in the state (among them his tutor was chief captain of the guards, Peter the commander-in-chief, and two patricians, Theodore and Damian) to urge him to assert his rightful position, banish Irene to Sicily, and

reign as sole Emperor. But on the 9th of February (790) it happened that the city was shaken by a great earthquake, which so alarmed the inhabitants that they all went and lodged in tents in the fields outside the city. Irene and her son took up their quarters in the precincts of the church of St. Mamas, north of the city wall and looking across the Golden Horn towards the Valley of Sweet Waters. Apparently this change in the arrangements of the imperial party led to the discovery of the plot.

The coarse energy of Stauracius successfully asserted itself against the high-born conspirators. The nobles were flogged, tonsured, and shut up in their own palaces, and the tutor was banished to Sicily. Constantine himself, the young man of twenty, was beaten and scolded by his mother like a naughty child, and forbidden for many days to show himself in public.

In order to guard against any similar attempts in future, Irene caused an oath to be administered to all the regiments in the capital and its neighbourhood : "So long as thou livest we will not suffer thy son to reign, and we will always put thy name before his". But by this monstrous demand she prepared her own downfall. When the imperial messengers presented themselves to administer the new oath to the soldiers in the Armeniac 'theme', those men, mindful of many a victorious battle fought under the leadership of the father and grandfather of Constantine, flatly refused thus to disinherit the lawful heir for the benefit of the Athenian woman. Irene sent a certain Alexius, colonel of the palace-guards, to quell the mutiny, but the Armeniacs, shutting up their own general, gave the command to Alexius, and with jubilant shouts proclaimed Constantine sole Emperor. When the news of this *pronunciamento* reached Constantinople, all the other regiments, little hampered by their oaths, followed the example of the Armeniacs. On the 14th of October the legions were collected together in a place called Atroa, and insisted on Constantine coming forth to meet them. Irene did not dare to refuse their request. He came, and was unanimously acclaimed sole Emperor. Irene was allowed to retire to a palace of her own building, in which she had stored the greater part of her wealth. Stauracius suffered the usual fate of unsuccessful politicians at Constantinople, being flogged, tonsured, and sent into exile in Armenia. At the same time Michael Lachanodrakon, a war-famed veteran of the old Isaurian time, was made commander of the household troops.

In the following year Constantine engaged in two somewhat unsuccessful expeditions against Cardam, king of the Bulgarians, and against the generals of the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid in Cilicia. His absence from the capital, perhaps also his obvious inefficiency in war, encouraged the party of Irene once more to raise their heads, and in January of 792 the feeble young Emperor found, or imagined, himself compelled once more to associate his mother with himself in the government of the empire, and to receive again with her the acclamations of the multitude, 'Long life to Constantine and Irene'. With Irene came back Stauracius to help her in playing a slow, patient game for her son's ruin.

In July, 792, the young Emperor, yearning to emulate the great deeds of his ancestors and misled by the vain prediction of a certain 'false prophet and astronomer' named Pancratius, attacked Cardam in a strong position which he held with some of the bravest of his troops. The attack failed disastrously, and Constantine had to fly headlong, leaving his tents, his horses, and his royal furniture in the hands of the Bulgarians, and many of his best officers (including the brave old Lachanodrakon) dead on the field of battle. That the futile astronomer Pancratius shared the fate of the brave men whom he had lured to their ruin was the least part of the disaster.

The ignominious end of the Bulgarian campaign made a great rent in the popularity of Constantine. Still worse for his fame was the severity with which he repressed an attempt to place his uncle Nicephorus, son of Constantine Copronymus, on the throne. Nicephorus was blinded, and his four brothers, two of whom had borne the title of Caesar, suffered the cruel Byzantine punishment of amputation of the tongue.

If there was one man more than another to whom Constantine owed his attainment of imperial power it was Alexius, who at a critical moment had headed the troops in the Armeniac theme when they acclaimed Constantine sole Emperor. Now, listening to the evil surmisings of Irene and Stauracius, who suggested that Alexius was aiming at the diadem, he refused to accede to the demand of the Armeniac soldiers that their beloved commander, then detained in honourable captivity at Constantinople, should be restored to them; and on the repetition of the demand with shrill urgency, he ordered Alexius to be blinded. At the news of this infamous act of ingratitude, which showed too plainly that all the supporters of the son would be sacrificed to the vengeance of the mother, the Armeniac soldiers rose in rebellion. From November, 792, till the 27th of May, 793, there was civil war in the Armeniac theme, and it was only by mustering all his forces, and at last by employing the base services of traitors, that eventually, on the date just mentioned, Constantine prevailed over his old allies. The chief officers and an iconoclastic bishop who had headed the revolt were put to death. The other leaders were severely punished with fines and proscriptions; and as for the rank and file, one thousand of them were brought chained into the city of Constantinople through the gate of Blachernae, and led ignominiously through the streets, bearing on each of their foreheads the words, tattooed in ink, 'Armeniac Conspirator'. Such were the rewards which the weak youth at his cruel mother's instigation conferred on his old supporters.

Grievously indeed, in the three years since he grasped the reins of power, had Constantine declined in the favour of his subjects, and he now proceeded to an act which brought him into hostility, not merely with the Church, but with all that was best and healthiest in the lay world of Constantinople. He had always disliked his wife Maria, and now 'by the advice of his mother, who in her longing for power wished that he should be condemned by all', he constrained that wife to enter a convent, and in August, 795, crowned as Augusta his paramour Theodote, one of the ladies-in-waiting on Irene. The next step, after the coronation and the avowed cohabitation, was to obtain the sanction of the Church to the marriage, and this, even with the submissive Church of Constantinople, was not an easy matter. The patriarch Tarasius refused to perform the ceremony, but consented at last to stand aside and allow another ecclesiastic, the abbot Joseph, to officiate in his stead. In September, 795, Constantine and Theodote were solemnly married in the palace of St. Mamas.

The Church of the Middle Ages, whether in Eastern or Western Europe, never seems more worthy of our respect than when she is upholding the rights of an injured wife and refusing to allow powerful princes to treat the sacred laws of marriage as of no account for persons in their high position. The part which Innocent III played as champion of Ingeberga, the repudiated wife of Philip Augustus, was taken in the case of the divorced Maria by Plato and Theodore, an uncle and nephew, heads of the renowned monastery of Saccudia on the flanks of the Bithynian Olympus. On Theodore, as the younger man, fell the brunt of the battle, but Plato also felt the heavy hand of the imperial bigamist, for announcing to Tarasius that he could no longer hold communion with him on account of his connivance at an adulterous union. It is true that Constantine and his new Empress—herself a cousin of Theodore's—resorted to almost abject entreaties in order to disarm Plato's just indignation but when these proved fruitless the imperial thunderbolt fell on the inmates and the neighbours of the Bithynian convent. Plato was brought to Constantinople and shut up in a narrow cell in the precincts of the palace, while Theodore, his brothers, and the other monks were sent under an imperial escort into exile at Thessalonica. In a long and interesting letter to his uncle, Theodore: describes the incidents of this journey. The letter does not give one the impression of any great hardships endured or severity displayed, but what it does show us is that in every town there was a large number of persons who sympathized with the monkish martyr and were

indignant at his punishment. Assuredly some rivets in the ship of the state were loosened by the imprisonment of Plato and the exile of Theodore Studita.

In the embittered and unnatural relations which now existed between Irene and her son, even the events which should have consolidated the dynasty hastened its downfall. In October (796) the young Emperor, while taking the warm baths at Broussa, heard the joyful news that his wife, who remained at Constantinople, had borne him a son. He hastened off to the palace eager to welcome the longed-for heir, to whom he gave the name of his father, Leo. Meanwhile Irene, who had gone with him to Broussa, began to tamper with the allegiance of the soldiers, and by all sorts of gifts and promises to form a party among the officers, pledged to destroy her son and make her sole Empress. In March (797), Constantine, who had returned to Bithynia, set forth with a body of picked campaign, light-armed soldiers, amounting to 20,000 men, to fight the Saracens. The expedition ought to have achieved a great success, but the old intriguer Stauracius, knowing that victory would make Constantine's position impregnable, bribed the imperial scouts to bring in a lying report that the Saracens had fled and were nowhere to be seen. The easily-fooled Emperor returned home again inglorious, and deep discontent doubtless pervaded the whole army at such a display of military inefficiency on the part of the grandson of the great Copronymus.

On the 1st of May the child Leo died, and was bewailed by his tender-hearted father with floods of tears. On the 17th of June, after a great chariot-race in the Hippodrome, the Emperor sought the shade and sea-breezes of the shore below St. Mamas. On the road an attempt, an unsuccessful attempt, was made by the conspirators to seize him, but being warned in time he embarked hastily in the imperial gondola and escaped to the opposite shore of the sea of Marmora, intending to flee to the Anatolic theme, where the descendant of the great Isaurians was sure to find a welcome and a shelter. But the very companions of his flight, though he knew it not, were traitors. The people began to rally round their fugitive sovereign. Irene, who felt that it was now a fight to the death between her and her son, became alarmed. She feigned a desire for reconciliation, sent mediators, sent bishops to beg for a guarantee of her own personal safety, and offered, if that were given, to retire into a corner of the palace and spend the rest of her days in obscurity. Meanwhile, however, she was writing to her fellow-conspirators, "If you do not find some means to hand him over to me at once, I shall reveal to the Emperor all that has passed between you and me". Alarmed, the conspirators arrested Constantine early on the 15th of August, the festival of the Assumption of the Virgin, hurried him on board the imperial boat, and carried him across to Constantinople. There he was imprisoned in the same Purple Chamber of the palace in which, twenty-seven years before, his birth-cry had been heard by the woman who was now consenting to his death. With brutal violence the conspirators plucked out his eyes, desiring that he should perish under the ghastly operation. He did not however die, but lingered on for at least twenty-three years but so broken and miserable in his blindness that in all the many palace-revolutions of the time no one thought of restoring to the throne 'the last male descendant of Leo the Isaurian'.

So terrible a deed as this, the worse than murder of a son by the order of his own mother, shocked even, the courtiers and ecclesiastics of Constantinople, inured as they were to tidings of barbarities from the imperial palace. On the one hand, men noted, that as it was at the ninth hour (3 P.M. on Saturday the 15th of August) that Constantine VI was blinded and all but slain, so it had been on the ninth hour on the same day of the week in September, five years before, that his uncle Nicephorus had been blinded and his four other uncles mutilated by the order of the young Emperor. But again, after this deed of wickedness was done, "the sun", says Theophanes, "was darkened for seventeen days, and did not give forth his rays, so that ships wandered about and drifted hither and thither, and all men said and confessed that on account

of the blinding of the Emperor the sun withheld his beams. And thus did Irene his mother acquire the sovereignty”.

She was indeed “cursed with the burden of a granted prayer”, this devout Medea, who had had no pity for the fruit of her body, when maternal love was weighed in the balance against the lust of empire and found wanting. The history of her short reign is only a record of disastrous defeats and provinces ravaged by the Saracens, of attempts cruelly suppressed to set one or other of the mutilated sons of Copronymus on the throne, of bickerings between Irene’s eunuch-ministers, Stauracius and Aetius, each of whom, watching with hungry eyes the failing health of his imperial mistress, was scheming to secure the splendid prize of the diadem for some relation of his own.

On Easter Monday, 799, the Empress made a solemn procession through the streets of Constantinople, starting from the great Church of the Holy Apostles, where all the Emperors and Patriarchs who had ruled the State and Church for near five centuries lay entombed. Irene sat aloft on a golden car, drawn by four milk-white steeds; and four patricians, groomlike, walked by the side of the horses. Imitating the custom of the old Roman consuls, she scattered money among the crowd as she moved along, and doubtless their venal throats became hoarse with cries of ‘Many years to the new Helena! Long life to the August Irene!’. But under all this show of devotion there was evidently a feeling that a new and a monstrous thing had happened in ‘the Empire of the World’. It was not merely that the pious idolater had stained herself, Athaliah-like, with the blood of her own offspring. It was that no woman, however virtuous or however beloved, had a right to sit alone on the throne of the Caesars. It was true that Pulcheria, that manly-minded woman, had been hailed as Augusta on the death of the brother whose counsels she had guided, but that was with the implied condition that she should make Marcian the partner of her throne. True that Theodora and Sophia had at the request of their doting husbands received from the Senate the same splendid title, but that was only as consorts of the reigning Emperor, nor had the influence of either Theodora or Sophia been obviously beneficial to the Empire. But the latest and the most striking instance of the foiled attempt of a woman to occupy the imperial throne was the case of Martina, widow of Heraclius, to whom, when she stood forth in the Hippodrome claiming to rule along with her son and step-son, the populace shouted, “O Lady, how can you receive the ambassadors of the barbarians or exchange words with them when they come to the imperial palace? God preserve the polity of the Romans from ever coming into such a condition as that.”

The fact was, that there was ever a lingering consciousness that the Roman Emperor had come to his power in a different way and was altogether a different kind of ruler from the despotic kings and queens of the East. True, those Oriental monarchies might have had their Semiramis or their Dido, their Tomyris or their Queen of Sheba; but these were no precedents for the Roman State, which was still in theory a republic, and whose head was in theory—however absurdly different might be the customary fact—a brave general who, having won a victory over the enemies of Rome, was saluted by his enthusiastic soldiers with the title Emperor.

Thus the outcome of the whole matter was that at the close of the eighth century there was a generally diffused feeling that a wonderful and a horrible thing had been done in the polity of the Romans, and that the woman who called herself Augusta and rode in her golden chariot through the streets of Constantinople had no right to the name or the magnificence of the Emperors of Rome.

II. Aachen.

We now turn from the Bosphorus to the Rhine; from the dull splendour of the Byzantine palace to the fresh if somewhat rude magnificence of the Frankish *villa*; from that Fury-haunted abode where a widowed mother plotted the ruin of her only son, to the joyous cavalcade of Charles and his daughters, as they rode with mirth and song from palace to palace of the beautiful Rhine-land.

The list of Charles's resting-places after his campaigns were ended, shows us in the clearest manner where his heart was fixed. He had inherited sovereignty over the country which we now call France, but apparently he only once visited Paris. He completed the conquest of Aquitaine, but he spent only one Easter in that region. He made himself master of Italy, yet only thrice after his conquest did he visit Rome, and then half-reluctantly, on the urgent invitation of the Pope to settle the troubled affairs of the peninsula or to take part in some great religious ceremony. He had been born a Ripuarian Frank, and Ripuarian he remained to the end of his days, never happy when far away from the banks of the great German river by whose shores rose three of his great palaces, at Worms, at Ingelheim, and at Nimwegen, and which was lined with the stately Romanesque churches that told of his pious munificence. It was not actually by the banks of the Rhine, but in its neighbourhood, between it and the sister stream, the Meuse, that Charles built the last, perhaps the stateliest of his palaces, certainly the one which was longest connected with the memory of his greatness. Unmentioned in the literature and even in the road-books of the Romans, but certainly known to some of the Roman officers, the warm sulphur-springs of Aquae Grani bubbled out of the hills overlooking the Meuse, forty miles south-west of that city on the Rhine which was emphatically called Colonia. The earliest name of the town which grew up around these springs was derived from a surname of Apollo which was widely known in the north of Europe, though here again the classical authors are silent concerning it. This is the place which the Germans call Aachen, and the French, from the memory of Charles's great Christian temple, call Aix-la-Chapelle.

It was in 788, just after the Byzantine invasion of Italy, that Charles kept his first Christmas at Aachen, and from this time onwards it begins to dispute with Heristal in Brabant and Worms on the Rhine the honour of being his favourite place of abode. From 795 the end of his life it held the undisputed preeminence, thirteen out of his twenty remaining Easters and fourteen Christmases being spent beside the healing waters of Grannus. For the great attraction of the place, though it has a fresh and salubrious air, lay in those thermal waters heated by Nature to a temperature varying from 82° to 99° (Fahrenheit), and richly laden with salt, sulphur and carbonic acid. At the time when Charles began to pay more frequent visits to Aquae Grani he was entering the sixth decade of his life, and was probably beginning to feel those rheumatic or gouty pains which so often hang about the vestibule of old age, and which saline or sulphurous waters generally alleviate. One of the poets of his court describes the occupation of the labourers employed in searching for new hot springs, surrounding them with walls, and fixing magnificent seats on the marble steps. Charles himself, who was a strong and swift swimmer, would often invite, not only his sons but his friends and ministers of state, sometimes even his men-servants and body-guards, to accompany him to the bath, so that there would often be a hundred men or more swimming about together in the wide, warm pools of Grannus.

Thus then it came to pass that a Westphalian watering-place became the favourite residence of the Frankish king, and afterwards the second city of his empire. The minster of Aachen was the regular crowning-place of the Western Emperors for seven centuries, and in it thirty-seven kings and ten queens received the sacred diadem. In the sixteenth century this privilege was transferred to Frankfurt; a terrible fire which broke forth at Aachen in 1656 destroyed two-thirds of the city; it underwent a rapid decline, and though its cloth factories and the high repute of its thermal waters have restored some of its old prosperity, it has of course

never regained the importance as a political centre which it possessed in the long ages from Charles the Great to Charles the Fifth.

The palace which Charles built at Aachen, and to which he transported the great brazen statue of Theodoric from Ravenna, has long since perished. In 881 the fire kindled by the invading Danes injured it; in 978 a degenerate descendant of Charles, the Frenchman Lothair, allowed his soldiers to plunder it. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was twice ruined by fire. Finally, in 1353, a Town-hall, which again in our own days (1883) has suffered from fire, was built over its ruins.

But the great basilica which Charles founded at Aachen in honour of the Virgin, and which according to Einhard "he adorned with gold and silver, and candelabra and *cancelli* and gates of solid brass, and with columns and marbles brought from Rome and Ravenna", still stands, at least the most important part of it. This is the octagonal chapel, built after the model of S. Vitale at Ravenna, to which an atrium at the west end and a splendid choir at the east were added in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Thus Charles's church with its remembrance of S. Vitale stands supported on either side by its younger and taller brethren, as if marking the beginning and the end of the Middle Ages.

The palace stood on the edge of a vast pleasaunce, green with woods and bright with waters, through which herds of deer wandered, and in which Charles and his courtiers often enjoyed the pleasures of the chase, or watched the evolutions of the young horsemen of the court in games which almost anticipated the medieval tournament. It was doubtless in this wide-stretching park that one Oriental visitor passed most of his European life. This was the great elephant Abulahaz (a present from the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid), whose arrival in Frank-land in 802 and death in 810 on a campaign of its master against the king of Denmark are solemnly recorded by the chroniclers.

Of Charles himself, the centre of the busy scene at Aquae Grani, and his manner of life there, a vivid picture is given us by his biographer Einhard. Of his commanding stature, bright eyes, long hair, and manly carriage this biographer has already told us. He further informs us that his neck was somewhat too short for symmetry, and his belly prominent; but the shapeliness of his other members concealed these defects. His voice was clear, but hardly so loud as one would have expected from his giant frame. His health till he had passed his sixty-eighth year was excellent; but for the last four years of his life he suffered from frequent fevers and limped with one foot. All these troubles, however, lie yet ahead of us. We are still only at the date 795, and the Frankish hero has reached but the fifty-third year of his life. We hear with some amusement that, sick or in health, he insisted on regulating himself according to his own notions, rather than by the counsel of his physicians, whom he well-nigh hated because they always recommended him to eat boiled meat instead of roast.

Except on the memorable occasions of his visits to Rome he wore the national Frankish dress—shirt and drawers of linen, a tunic fastened by a silken girdle, and leggings. His thighs were bound round with thongs, his feet with [laced-up] shoes. In the winter he protected his chest and shoulders with a vest of otter-skins and ermine. Over all he wore a blue cloak, and he was ever girt with a sword, whose hilt and belt were either of gold or silver. Sometimes, but only at high festivals or when he was receiving the ambassadors of foreign nations, he wore a jewelled sword. At these festivals also he wore a robe inwoven with gold, shoes bedecked with jewels, a golden clasp holding his cloak together, and a diadem of gold adorned with precious gems. On all other days, his dress varied little from the ordinary costume of his people.

On rising, Charles appears to have held something in the nature of a *levée*; for while his clothes were being put on and his shoes fastened, not only were his friends admitted to his presence, but if the Count of the Palace had any hard case which required his decision, Charles would call the litigants before him and pronounce sentence as if he were sitting on the

judgment-seat. So too, at this time, he would give the necessary orders to any of his ministers or the heads of his household.

He was very temperate in the matter of drink, holding drunkenness in uttermost abomination, especially in himself and those nearest to him. In the matter of feeding he was also temperate, but hardly came up to the Church's standard of abstinence, complaining that her rigid fasts were injurious to his health. After the midday meal in summer time he would eat an apple and take some cooling drink, and then doff his upper garments and shoes, and sleep as if it were night for two or three hours together. The evening banquet was evidently the chief meal of the day. On high festivals he invited a large number of guests, but generally he supped alone with his family. The ordinary meal consisted of only three or four courses besides the roasted game, to which he was most partial, and which the hunters were wont to bring in on spits. While he was dining, he listened either to music or to the reading of a book, especially a book of history telling of the deeds of the past, or the works of St. Augustine, among which the treatise on the City of God was his chief favourite.

His sleep at night—perhaps partly owing to his long *siesta* in the day—was not sound. He would often wake four or five times, and he sometimes beguiled the wakeful hours by trying to form letters on the tablets which for this purpose were always placed under his pillow. But he began the study of calligraphy so late in life that he never therein achieved any great success.

He had a fine flow of natural eloquence, and could, when he chose, express his thoughts with perfect clearness. In fact, so great was his readiness in speaking that it sometimes almost amounted to loquacity. He studied foreign languages, and was accustomed often to pray in Latin. Greek he could understand fairly well, though he never mastered its pronunciation. But after all, his own native Teutonic tongue was dearest to his heart. He began to compose a grammar of the Frankish language, and he wrote down and committed to memory the ancient and (as Einhard deemed them) 'barbarous' songs in which the deeds and wars of the old kings were celebrated. Would that his successors had taken the same interest in the true national literature of the German races! But Charles's successor Louis, himself more than half a monk and bred up in latinised Aquitaine, cared not for these spirit-stirring songs of his Ripuarian forefathers, and so they soon for the most part died out of the memory of men. Truly we at this day find it harder to forgive the 'debonnair' Louis for the loss of his father's ballad-book than even for the ruin of his father's Empire.

Somewhat anticipating the modern tendency of our German kinsfolk to use only home-grown words even in scientific terminology, Charles invented Frankish names for the twelve months, and enlarged the number of names of the winds from four to twelve.

We do not need the biographer's assurance that Charles 'most reverently and with the utmost piety cultivated the Christian religion with which he had been imbued from infancy', nor that 'beyond all other holy places he venerated the church of the blessed Apostle Peter at Rome.' Morning and evening, and at all hours of the day or night when the sacrifice of the Mass was being offered, he was zealous in his attendance at church so long as his health permitted.

He was extremely careful that all things pertaining to divine worship should be done decently and in order, and would often admonish the vergers not to allow anything common or unclean to be brought into the church or remain within its precincts. He made lavish provision of gold and silver vessels for the service of the sanctuary, and his supply of vestments was so liberal that even the doorkeepers were clothed in them. He took a keen interest in the subject of the Church's psalmody, following herein the example of his father, who had introduced the Gregorian music into the churches of Gaul; but he gave even more attention to the lectionary and homilies of the Church, eradicating to the utmost of his power the barbarisms which a succession of ignorant priests had introduced into their reading and preaching to the people

But vivid as was Charles's interest in ecclesiastical affairs, and zealous as was his championship of the faith against pagans and heretics, the contrast between the professions and the practice of churchmen did not escape his keen intelligence. "We wish", he says in one of his capitularies, "to ask the chief ecclesiastics and all those who are engaged in teaching from the Holy Scriptures, who are those to whom the Apostle saith, "Be ye imitators of me"? or what he meant when he said, "No one who is a soldier of God entangleth himself with the things of this world"? How is the Apostle to be imitated? How is any one to be a soldier of God? Pray let them show us truly what is meant by that "renouncing the world" of which they so often speak, and explain how we are to distinguish between those who renounce and those who follow the world. Is the difference only in this, that the former do not bear arms and are not publicly married? I would enquire also if that man can be said to have renounced the world who is unceasingly striving to augment his possessions by drawing persuasive pictures of the blessedness of heaven, and by threatening men with the everlasting punishments of hell? or that man who, in the name of God or of some saint, is for ever stripping simpler people, rich or poor, of their possessions, disinheriting the lawful heirs, and driving men thus unjustly deprived of their paternal estates to robbery and all sorts of crimes, the result of the dire necessities of their position?"

One asks oneself in reading such sentences as these whether Charles was thinking of certain letters of Hadrian, in which all the machinery of the joys of paradise and the terrors of hell was brought into action in order to add Comacchio or Capua to the Papal territory.

We must not, however, enter here on the wide question of the great king's relation to the Church. It is with Charles as head of a family and centre of a court that we have here to deal. At the date which we have now reached most of Hildegard's children were grown up. Hrotrud, the once-destined bride of Constantine, was twenty-three years of age. Nearly as old was her brother Charles, Pippin king of Italy was eighteen, Louis king of Aquitaine was seventeen years old. Probably that antagonism between the younger Charles and Pippin which was to embitter some of the later years of their father's life had already declared itself, but the two young kings of Italy and Aquitaine grew up each in his own kingdom, and only occasionally formed part of their father's court. Fastrada was now dead, but had left two daughters, probably little more than children. The Alamannian lady Liutgard, once mistress, afterwards wedded wife of Charles, was perhaps already sitting as queen in the palace at Aachen. Of the young tribe of princes and princesses whose mirth was dear to their father's heart Einhard gives us an attractive picture, yet one that is not without its shadows :—

"He determined that his children should be so educated that sons as well as daughters should be trained in liberal studies, to which he himself also gave earnest heed. The sons, as soon as their age permitted, were taught to ride after the manner of the Franks, and were practised in the use of arms and in the exercises of the chase. The daughters were ordered to learn to use the distaff and spindle, and to busy themselves with wool-work that they might not grow slothful through too much leisure.

"He took so keen an interest in the education of his sons and daughters that he never supped without them when at home, and never deprived himself of their company when travelling. On such journeys his sons rode beside him, and his daughters followed behind with a strong rear-guard of soldiers.

"As these daughters were most beautiful and he loved them dearly, it was strange that he never gave one of them in marriage, either to one of his own people or to a foreigner, but kept them always with him in the house till the day of his death, declaring that he could not dispense with their daily companionship. On this account, prosperous as he was in other respects, he had to endure the malignity of adverse fortune, but he so concealed his feelings that no one could

ever tell that he was aware of any shadow of disgrace having fallen upon the good name of his daughters”.

The scandals thus gently hinted at by Einhard have not grown smaller in the gossip of posterity, which has even (apparently without justification) coupled Einhard’s own name with that of a supposed daughter of Charles, named Emma, in a well-known story of illicit love. But some of these domestic ‘misfortunes’ of Charles left unmistakable traces in Carolingian pedigrees. Princess Hrotrud herself, who died in her thirty-ninth year (810), though never married, left a son Louis, who was afterwards abbot of S. Denis, and prothonotary to her nephew Charles the Bald.

Much as he loved the merry talk of his daughters, Charles in the midst of his warlike and peaceful cares delighted none the less in the companionship of the most learned men of his age whom he succeeded in gathering round him. Indeed, this is beyond all his other achievements the distinguishing glory of his character and his reign, that he, though himself imperfectly educated, knew how to appreciate the learning of others, and, turning back the tide of barbarism and ignorance which had submerged Gaul since the days of Clovis, made himself the centre and the rallying-point of a literary and scientific movement, hardly less important than the great Renaissance of the fifteenth century. It is one of the many points of resemblance between these two periods of Renaissance, that the little literary and ecclesiastical *coterie* which gathered round Charles at the end of the eighth century took names—for the most part classical names—by which they were known to one another in their correspondence, instead of the rough Teutonic ones which they had received from their fathers, and of which they were perhaps partly tired and partly ashamed

Charles’s own *sobriquet* was not classical, but biblical. He was King David, a name well chosen to symbolize the great conqueror, the wide-ruling king, and also the man who had such large and irregular experience of the ‘love of women’. But David with his blood-stained hands was not allowed to build the temple of the Lord, and therefore, as Charles did build the stately basilica of Aquae Grani, he was sometimes addressed by his friends under the name of Solomon.

An honoured guest at the Frankish palaces before Charles took up his abode at Aachen was the Lombard historian who has been so often quoted in previous volumes, Paulus Diaconus. He came, probably in 782, when he was himself about fifty-seven years of age, to plead the cause of his brother Arichis, who had incurred the displeasure of the Frankish king. In an elegiac poem Paulus thus laid bare to Charles the misery that had fallen upon him and his family:—

‘Hear, great king, my complaint and in mercy receive my petition;
Scarce in the whole round world will be found such a sorrow as mine.
Six long years have passed since my brother’s doom overtook him,
Now ’tis the seventh that he, a captive, in exile must pine.
Lingers at home his wife, to roam through the streets of her city
Begging for morsels of food, knocking at door after door:
Only in shameful guise like this can she nourish the children,
Tour little half-clothed babes, whom she in her wretchedness bore.
There is a sister of mine, a Christ-vowed virgin of sorrows:
Wellnigh with constant tears quenched is the light of her eyes.
Reft of its scanty equipment is now the home of our fathers;
Us in our utmost need no neighbour will help or advise.
Gone is the pride of our birth. Thrust forth from the acres paternal,
Now we are equalled in rank with those, the slaves of the soil.
Harsher doom we deserved: I own it. Yet, merciful monarch,

Pity the prayer of the sad. End our distress and our toil.
 Give but the captive back to his fatherland and his homestead,
 Give him the modest estate, his family's portion and stay:
 So shall our mouths sing ever the praises of Christ the Redeemer,
 Christ, who alone for your grace fitting rewards can repay'.

Taken literally this metrical petition would suggest the thought that Paulus had himself been concerned in hostile designs against the Frankish power. It is possible however, and is generally considered probable, that he here but speaks of 'us' and 'our deservings' in order more effectually to move the pity of the conqueror by associating himself with the guilt of the condemned man. Amid the many uncertainties which surround the life of the Lombard historian, one thing seems tolerably clear, that he had been for some years an inmate of Monte Cassino before he sought the court of King Charles to plead for his exiled brother. From the favour which was shown to Paulus during the four years of his stay at the Frankish court there can be no doubt that his petition on behalf of his brother was promptly granted. He seems to have generally followed the court in all its peaceful promenades, and it was probably in one of these progresses that he found himself at the Villa Theodonis, where, as the reader may remember, he was interested in measuring the length of his shadow on Christmas day. Being himself a Greek scholar, he gave lessons in that language to the ecclesiastics who were chosen to accompany the little princess Hrotrud to Constantinople. He wrote the history of the bishops of Metz, duly glorifying Charles's sainted ancestor Arnulf. He also wrote epitaphs in respectable elegiacs on Charles's queen Hildegard, on two of his daughters and two of his sisters, and he was in fact during the four years of his stay in Frank-land a kind of literary prime minister of Charles the Great, entrusted by him with that work of revising the lectionaries and homilies of the Church to which allusion has already been made.

It was probably about the time of Paulus' arrival at the Frankish court that another literary man of some eminence made his appearance there. This was the aged Peter of Pisa, who many years before had become famous by a disputation which he held at Pavia with a certain Jew named Lull, and who now was invited across the Alps to teach grammar to the young nobles of the court, the great king himself often forming one of his audience. Between these two men, Paul the deacon and Peter the grammarian, there was an interchange of banter and half-ironical compliments, which seems to have amused their royal master as much as it perplexes the modern student, who after an interval of more than a thousand years strives to recover the meaning of these fossil *facetiae*.

Peter (who writes on behalf of Charles) in high-flown strains salutes Paul, "most learned of poets, who rivals Homer among the Greeks, Virgil among the Latins, Philo in his knowledge of Hebrew, Horace in his use of metre, Tibullus in eloquence. ... A glory which we hoped not for has now risen upon us. You have heard that at the bidding of Christ our daughter [Hrotrud] is about to cross the seas under the escort of Michael in order to wield the sceptre of the Eastern realm. For this cause you are teaching our clerics Greek grammar, that they may go thither, while still remaining in our obedience, and may seem to be learned in the rules of the Greeks".

Paulus answers that he perceives that all this is said ironically, and that he is "derided with praises and oppressed by laughter", all which makes him very miserable. He has never thought of imitating any of those mighty ones who have trodden the trackless road to fame; rather is he like one of the little dogs that have followed at their heels. "I do not know Greek", he says with untruthful modesty, "and I am ignorant of Hebrew. I have heard, and I exult in the news, that your fair daughter, O king, is to cross the seas and grasp the sceptre, so that through your child the power of your kingdom will spread over Asia. But if in that country your clerics

who go from hence shall speak no more Greek than they have learned from me, they will be as dumb as statues and will be derided by all”.

It was apparently the king’s habit to send by an officer of his guard a riddle or a sort of acrostic charade to one or other of these two grammarians, and humorously press for an immediate answer. Each of these riddles, as far as we can understand them, seems to be vapidness itself, but they have been the means of procuring for us vivid pictures of the handsome soldier from the palace who brought at sunset to Paulus what he calls ‘the fire-tipped arrows’ of Charles, and of the youth with beautiful body, in whose beard the dew-drops were hanging, when he stood at daybreak charged with a like perplexing message at the door of Peter.

The reader finds it difficult to repress his impatience when he reads the records of these elaborate trivialities. Yet even the nonsense of the court seems to bring us nearer to the Frankish hero than the bare record of his campaigns or the disputed text of his donations to the Pope. And at least this is the real Austrasian Charles with whom we are thus brought in contact, not the shadowy and unreal Charlemagne of romance.

About 786 Paulus seems to have returned to Italy, possibly in the train of Charles, who, as we have seen, spent Christmas of that year in Florence and the following winter at Rome. We hear very little about his old age, but there can be little doubt that he returned to Monte Cassino, for which retreat his heart yearned even in the midst of the splendours of Charles’s court, and that he there in the end of his days composed his invaluable History of the Lombards, dying in one of the closing years of the eighth century.

About the same time when Paulus first visited the Frankish court, another learned ecclesiastic, a country man of our own, made his appearance there, a man destined to make a much longer stay and to exercise a more powerful influence than the Lombard historian. This was Alcuin, or (as he preferred to write his name) Albinus, a man already of much renown for his learning when in the year 781 he met King Charles at Parma and was persuaded by him to enter his service.

Alcuin was born probably about the year 735. He was sprung from a noble family in the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria, was of the same stock whence half a century earlier had sprung the sainted Willibrord, and if not actually born at York, was sent thither in very early childhood to be trained for the priesthood. The kingdom of Northumbria had not yet lost all its ancient glory, the glory of Edwin and Oswald; and York, the successor of the Roman Eboracum, was not only a great political centre, but was in fact the predecessor of the university towns of later ages. The venerable Baeda, the most learned man in Europe, was no more, having died perhaps in the very year of Alcuin’s birth, but the tradition of his great attainments was kept alive by Egbert, who was archbishop of York from 732 to 766, and who took a keen interest in the education of the young Alcuin. Already when a boy of eleven years old, Alcuin had felt the exceptional charm which Virgil possessed for the students of Latin in the Middle Ages, and already, as with Jerome and Augustine, the influence of the great Mantuan was in some degree antagonistic to that of prophets and apostles. Though regular in his attendance at the morning service, he seldom visited the church after sunset. The rough and ignorant monk in whose cell he slept was equally lax in his midnight devotions. One night, says the biographer, when the porter at cockcrow called the brotherhood to rise for vigils, the monk, unaroused, continued in his snoring sleep, and the bright boy who shared his cell was also slumbering. Suddenly the cell was filled with black spirits, who surrounded the old monk’s bed, saying, “Thou sleepest soundly, O brother!”. He awoke and heard their taunting cry, “When all the brethren are keeping their vigil in the church, why art thou alone snoring here?”. Thereat the spirits began to chastise him with cruel blows. The boy meantime was praying hard for deliverance : “O Lord Jesus, if ever after this I neglect the vigils of the church and care more for Virgil than for the chanting of psalms, then may such stripes be my lot. Only

I pray Thee deliver me now". The spirits, when they had finished chastising the clown, cast their eyes round the cell. "Who", said the leader of the fiends, "is this other, sleeping here in the cell?". They answered, "It is the boy Albinus, hiding under the bed-clothes". "We will not chastise him with stripes because he is still raw, but we will punish him somewhat on the hard soles of his feet, and make him remember the vow which he has just made". They pulled the clothes from his feet, but Alcuin made the sign of the cross and repeated fervently the 12th Psalm. Thereupon the spirits disappeared, and the terrified monk and boy rushed into the church for shelter.

The story seems worth telling, however little belief we may have in the spiritual nature of the monk's tormentors, because it indicates the character of Alcuin's education, and his position midway between literature and theology. There can be no doubt—every letter from his pen proves it—that he was deeply imbued with the knowledge and the love of the great literature of heathen Rome. Yet he was also a loyal and devoted son of the Catholic Church, well acquainted with the Scriptures and with the works of the chief Latin fathers, and he devoted the best powers of his trained and cultivated intellect to the defence of Catholic doctrine against heretics. In this capacity he fought as chief champion of the Church against Felix of Urgel and Elipandus of Toledo, who taught that Jesus Christ might be properly described as the adopted Son of God. In this capacity also he was probably engaged in the composition of the *Libri Carolini*, the celebrated treatise in which Charles endeavoured to define the true *Via Media* as to the worship of images.

The part which Alcuin played in these controversies is fully explained when we turn to his letters and poems and compare them with the letters and the biographies which proceeded from the Papal chancery. While Paul and Hadrian and their biographers express themselves in a Latin so barbarous, grotesque and ungrammatical that it would have seemed like a foreign language to Virgil or Seneca, the prose and poetry of Alcuin, and we may add of most of his companions in the literary *coterie* which gathered round the Frankish king, are grammatically correct and sometimes elegant. Doubtless there is in most of this Caroline literature a lack of freshness and spontaneity; the writers tend towards bombast and set too high a value on mere prettinesses of expression; in their poems especially, some of them borrow so extensively from the great Latin authors that they remind one of an idle school-boy trying to fill up his required number of lines by pilfered and unacknowledged quotations. Still, what these men wrote is Latin, if not always of the purest and noblest kind, and that is more than can be said of the letters in the *Codex Carolinus* and the lives in the *Liber Pontificalis*.

To return to the history of Alcuin. He was brought into close relations, as a pupil or friend, with three successive archbishops of York—Egbert, Aelberht, and Eanbald. While still a young man he seems to have accompanied the second of these on a journey to Italy, in the course of which he stayed at Pavia (then probably still the residence of a Lombard king), and there was present at the memorable disputation between Peter of Pisa and the Jew Lull, to which allusion has already been made. On Aelberht's elevation to the archbishopric (767), he succeeded him as head of the school attached to the church of York. On the death of Aelberht, he was sent by his friend Eanbald, who was elected to the vacant archiepiscopal throne, to receive his pallium from Rome. It was probably in the course of this journey that he met Charles at Parma and was earnestly entreated by him to take up his residence at the Frankish court. He refused, however, to do this without first obtaining the leave of his king and archbishop. That leave obtained, he repaired, about the beginning of 782, to Charles, then residing at Quierzy-sur-Oise, and at once received from him the gift of two rich abbacies.

With the exception of an interval of about two years spent in his native land, Alcuin remained till 796 at the court of his patron, organizing the school for the court-pages, renaming the courtiers with names taken from the classical poets, probably advising as to the services of

the royal chapel, always acting as the literary and sometimes as the ecclesiastical prime minister of the great king.

In 796 he obtained permission to retire to the great monastery of St. Martin at Tours, of which he was made abbot, and there he spent the remaining eight years of his life (796-804), dying 'full of days' on the 19th of May, 804. For us this absence of Alcuin from the Frankish court is the most fruitful period of his life, because to it belong the bulk of the letters which he addressed to his royal patron, and from these we may infer what manner of counsels he gave while still dwelling under his roof.

I have been thus precise in stating the years of Alcuin's companionship and correspondence with Charles, since it is clear that he exercised a quite extraordinary influence on the mind of the Frankish hero, and to Alcuin's love of the Latin classics and close familiarity with their pages must in large measure be ascribed the specially Roman turn taken by Charles's policy in the great year 800.

The correspondence between Alcuin and Charles gives us a pleasant impression of the characters of both men. The scholar does not fawn and the king does not obviously condescend; and, most agreeable trait of all, there is an occasional exchange of banter between 'David' and 'Flaccus,' that being the Horatian name which was assumed by the British ecclesiastic. Thus, when Charles has asked Alcuin a question, not easy to answer, about the reason for the names given by the Church to the Sundays before Lent—Quinquagesima, Sexagesima, and Septuagesima; and when Alcuin has given an answer which is obviously an attempt to hide his ignorance under a cloud of words, Charles, after consulting some of the young clerks in the *Schola Palatii*, sends an explanation which is at any rate more intelligible, and probably nearer to the truth, than that given by Alcuin. But as Charles had apparently adopted the Alexandrian method of beginning the year from the autumnal equinox, Alcuin says, "I left Roman lads in the palace-school: how have Egyptians crept in there?". And with jokes about Egyptian darkness and frequent hits at the too great cleverness of 'your Egyptian lads' he tries to cover his retreat, though he admits that "I, the loiterer, I, forgetful of my former self, have perhaps rightly borne the scourge of your striplings states".

In serious matters the influence of Alcuin on the mind of the Frankish king seems to have been generally exerted in favour of a broad and tolerant policy. A favorable specimen of his style is furnished by a letter which he wrote soon after his retirement to Tours, in the autumn of 796. After congratulating the king on his victories over the Huns [Avars], 'a nation formidable by their ancient savagery and courage', he goes on to recommend that to this new people there be sent pious preachers, men of honourable character, intent on following the example of the holy Apostles, who may feed them with milk, and not disgust their 'fragile minds' with 'more austere precepts'.

"After weighing these things, let your Piety, under wise advice, consider whether it is good to impose on a rude people like this at the beginning of their faith the yoke of tithes, exacted in full amount and from every house. It is to be considered whether the Apostles, who were taught by Christ Himself and sent forth by Him for the evangelization of the world, ever ordered the exaction of tithes, or demanded that they should be given to them. We know that the tithing of our property is a very good thing; but it is better to forego it than to lose the faith. Even we, who were born, bred, and trained up in the Catholic faith, scarce consent to the full tithing of our substance; how much less will their tender faith, their childish intellects, and their covetous dispositions consent to such large claims on their generosity? But when their faith is strengthened and their Christian habits are confirmed, then, as to perfect men, may be given those stronger commands which, their-minds braced by the Christian religion, will no longer reject with loathing".

Around Alcuin as a centre gathered a school of learned and nimble-minded men, his disciples, who helped forward the civilizing and educating work of the king of the Franks. Two of these may be noticed here, Angilbert, abbot of S. Riquier, and Theodulf, bishop of Orleans.

Angilbert was sprung from a noble Frankish family, and was brought up, almost from infancy, in the palace of Charles. His teachers were Alcuin, Peter of Pisa, and another grammarian named Paulinus. He accompanied the young Pippin into Italy, and was apparently one of his chief counsellors, having probably then already taken orders. He returned to the Frankish court, and in 790 was made by Charles abbot of the monastery of S. Riquier in Picardy. It was probably about the same time that he was appointed archchaplain to the king.

Angilbert was three times sent on important missions to Rome. The object of his second mission was to obtain from the Pope that condemnation of the Second Nicene Council which Hadrian, being himself an ardent image-worshipper, could not grant. But though thus engaged in serious ecclesiastical affairs, Angilbert was essentially a *littérateur* and a man of the world. The abundance of his poems (only a few of which are preserved to us) obtained for him in the literary club at the palace the *sobriquet* of Homer. He became enamoured of Charles's daughter Bertha, and though marriage was doubly impossible on account of his profession and her royal birth, she bore him two sons, to whom he seems to have been a loving father. Nor does Charles appear in any wise to have withdrawn his favour from his irregular son-in-law.

To Alcuin, who followed the fortunes of his pupil with anxious interest, Angilbert's intense fondness for the pleasures of the theatre caused some uneasiness. "I fear", he said, in writing to his friend Adalhard, "that Homer will be made angry by the edict forbidding spectacular entertainments and devilish figments. All which things the Holy Scriptures prohibit: insomuch that I find St. Augustine saying, "Little does the man know who introduces actors and mimics and dancers into his house, how great a crowd of unclean spirits follows them." But God forbid that the Devil should have power in a Christian home. I wrote to you about this before, desiring with all my heart the salvation of my dearest son, and wishing that you might accomplish that which was beyond my power".

Writing again two years later to the same friend, Alcuin rejoices over Angilbert's reformation. "I was much pleased to read what you have written about the improved morals of my Homer. For although his character was always an honourable one, yet there is no one in the world who has not to "forget the things which are behind and to reach out to the things which are before" till he attains the crown of perfectness". Now one of "the things that are behind" for him related to the actors, from whose vanities I knew that no small peril impended over his soul, and this grieved me. Wherefore I wrote him something on this subject, to prove the genuine sincerity of my love. And I was surprised that so intelligent a man did not himself perceive that he was doing blameworthy deeds and things which consisted not with his dignity".

One or two of the extant poems of Angilbert give us some interesting glimpses of life at Charles's court. He seems to have been always specially devoted to his former pupil Pippin, and, on that prince's return from Italy in 796, he greeted him with a poem of effusive welcome. He pictures the young Charles and Louis looking anxiously for their brother's arrival. The impatient Charles wonders if he is hindered by the badness of the roads. Louis, though he loves Pippin quite as dearly, is of more placid temperament (how like the future 'Debonnair' Emperor!) and comforts his brother by the recital of a dream, in which Pippin stood by him and assured him that ere the moon was at her full he would be with them.

Then Pippin arrives, and is greeted by father, stepmother, brothers, sisters and aunt. (Gisila 'the bride of heaven') with various manifestations of joy. The poem ends with pious

aspirations, unhappily not fulfilled, for the fraternal union and concord of the three brothers, Charles, Pippin and Louis.

Another poem of more historical importance, which now bears the name of 'Carolus Magnus et Leo Papa', is attributed, though with some hesitation, to Angilbert. It opens with high-flown praises of Charles's qualities (among which we note especially his easy, genial manners, his love of the study of grammar, and his oratorical fluency), and then, after a description of the rise of the new capital of Aquae Grani, the poet proceeds to depict with some fluency, though at portentous length, the events of a day's boar-hunting in a vast wooded chase between the city and the hills. Charles himself is called 'the Pharos of Europe'. His horse, with heavy gold trappings, delights to be bestridden by the greatest of kings. Charles's sons are described with a monotony of laudation which savours too much of 'fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum'. The dress of Queen Liutgarda and of Charles's six daughters is minutely described, and if we could trust the poet's accuracy we should have here a valuable piece of evidence for the attire of Frankish dames of high station : but when we find that each of the ladies goes hunting with a gold coronet on her head, in which emeralds, or chrysolites, or jacinths are blazing, we are forced to suspect that the picture is conventional, and that each princess insisted on being described in the most gorgeous of her court costumes.

We may, however, accept from the poet his description of the flaxen, or yet paler than flaxen hair of several of the young Frankish princesses. And we note with interest his elaborate portrait of the brilliant Bertha, surrounded by her girl-friends; Bertha, whose voice, whose manly courage, whose quick-glancing and expressive face recalled the image of her father. For this was that one of Charles's daughters who was one day to be the unwedded wife of the poet.

After the boar-hunt the tents were pitched in the middle of the forest, and a splendid banquet followed, which was attended not only by the young sportsmen who had followed Charles, but by the grave and reverend seniors invited thither from the city.

The poet then proceeds to relate the interview between the King and Pope which will be the subject of the next chapter.

One word deserves our especial attention in this poem. It was composed probably in the year 799, certainly not later than June, 800, for it speaks of Queen Liutgard as still living : yet twice Charles is spoken of as 'Augustus', the name appropriated beyond all others to the Emperor of Rome. Certainly Angilbert had heard some whispers of the event which was to make the Christmas of 800 memorable.

Theodulf, the other great poet of Charles's court, the most copious of all save Alcuin, was born about 760 in the old Gothic province of Septimania, which since the middle of the century had formed part of the Frankish kingdom. After taking deacon's orders he seems to have made his way to Charles's court, where his learning and his zeal for reform of manners in Church and State obtained for him a high position. It is thought, however, that he never sat as a pupil in the *Schola Palati*, nor formed one of the innermost circle of the friends of Alcuin, and consequently he has no Latin nickname like the members of that *coterie*. About the year 798 he was consecrated bishop of Orleans, with the right of holding three or four rich abbacies along with his see. In this year he was also sent together with Leidrad (afterwards bishop of Lyons) as *missus dominicus* to hold synods, reform manners, and execute justice in the region of Gallia Narbonensis. Of this journey he has given us a valuable account in his longest and most important poem addressed 'Ad Judices.' In 801 and 802 he had a sharp dispute about right of sanctuary with Alcuin, who had then recently retired from the headship of the monastery of St. Martin at Tours. A certain accused person had fled from Theodulf's jurisdiction and taken refuge at St. Martin's shrine. Theodulf demanded, Alcuin passionately refused, the surrender of the criminal. Our countryman was probably in the wrong, since Charles, intervening in the

dispute, gave judgment in Theodulf's favour, and strongly condemned the angry tone of Alcuin's letters.

After Charles's death Theodulf was for some time in high favour with his successor, Louis the Pious, to whom he addressed a poem of welcome on his passage through Orleans to Aachen. He was accused, however, of taking part in Bernard's rebellion against his uncle Louis, and was banished to Angers. It is not quite clear whether he was ever pardoned. According to one, somewhat late, authority he received permission to return, but was poisoned on the road home (821).

The style of Theodulf's Latin poems is considered by some critics to be superior to that of any of his contemporaries. To me he seems often intolerably diffuse, and I find it difficult to admire the poetical taste of a man who could spend weeks (as he must have done, if not months) in composing thirty-five vapid (necessarily vapid) verses of 'prayer for King Charles', which when read perpendicularly, horizontally, and along the lines of an inscribed rhomboid, give eight other acrostic verses to the same purport. Still his Latin is generally correct, and when he is clear of literary artifices like this and free from the enervating influences of the court, it is sometimes even forcible. His poems, with fewer plagiarisms than those of Angilbert, show an extensive acquaintance with the works of the Latin classical poets, especially with those of Ovid, whose fate as an exile vainly pleading for the return of court favour, that of Theodulf was, at the end of his life, so closely to resemble. It would be an interesting question to enquire where, at a distance from Charles's court, the 'Goth' (as he always styles himself) of Narbonne can have accumulated so large a store of classical learning. May we believe that, first under Visigothic and then under Saracen rule, the old Provincia which included Narbonne and Marseilles had retained sufficient trace of its old Latin culture to prevent it from being barbarized down to the level of Gregory of Tours?

The longest and best of Theodulf's poems is an address to all Judges, warning them against bribery, partiality, indolence and pride. As has been said, it contains, parenthetically, a long account of the author's journey to the Narbonese Gaul, with Leidrad for his colleague. He says, "I have often perceived that when I inveigh against the bribery of judges the secret thought of my hearers is that I, if I had the opportunity, should do even as they". It is in order to repel this insinuation that he tells the story of his journey down the valley of the Rhone to those 'Hesperian' lands round Narbonne which gave him birth. At every place he was beset by corrupt aspirants to his favour. One man offered a silver vase on which were carved with marvellous skill some of the labours of Hercules. This vase should be Theodulf's if he would only consent to annul the deed of enfranchisement by which the petitioner's parents had given freedom to a multitude of slaves. Another, who had a dispute about the ownership of some cattle, offered as a suitable bribe a robe woven in Saracenic looms, in which a cow with her calf was depicted with marvellous skill. And so on with many other gifts, costly if offered by the rich, of trifling value if offered by the poor, but all distinctly put forward as bribes, and as such rejected by Theodulf. He truly remarks that these things would not have been offered to him unless similar gifts had been accepted by many of his predecessors. It was probably the unfavourable impression which he thus received of the venality of Frankish judges which caused him to write these words of solemn warning against a wide-spread vice.

Interwoven with the practical advice which Theodulf gives to the judges we find some interesting pictures of the forensic life of a Frankish city: "When the dull murmur of the law-suits calls you to the Forum and you have to execute the duties of your office, first resort to some holy place and pray God to direct your actions that you may do nothing displeasing to Him. Then, according to custom, repair to the gates of the resounding Forum, where the band of litigants expects you. When you are on your way, perhaps some poor man will address to you words of entreaty, some man who may afterwards say that he could not have speech of you

while you walked surrounded by your people. You go forward, you are received within those proud doors, while the common people are shut out. But let some faithful and compassionate servant walk near to you, to whom you can say, "Bring into our presence that man who uttered his complaint in such a loud voice" : and so having introduced him into the judgment-hall, discuss his cause first, and afterwards attend to every one in his own order.

"If you ask my advice when you should go to the Forum, I should say "Go early," and do not grudge spending the whole day on the judgment-seat. The more a man ploughs, the better harvest he will reap. I have seen judges who were slow to attend to the duties of their office, though prompt enough in taking its rewards. Some arrive at eleven and depart at three. Others, if nine o'clock sees them on the bench, will rise therefrom at noon. Yes, if they have anything to give, you will not find them till three in the afternoon; if anything to receive, they are there before seven. The man who was formerly always late, is now brisk enough in his movements.

"Gluttony is always to be avoided, but especially at the time when the duty awaits you of handling the reins of justice. He who devotes himself to feasting and slumber, comes with dulled senses to the trial of causes, and sits in his court flabby, inactive, mindless. Some difficult case comes on, the rapid play of question and answer demands his keenest attention, but there he sits and sways to and fro, lazy, panting, overcome with nausea and pain, in crass hebetude. Beware therefore of too abundant banquets, and especially of the goblets of Bacchus. If you are a drunkard you will be laughed at in stealth by all your people. One passes on the hint to another, and soon the brand of infamy will be fixed upon you.

"The janitor of the court must control the gaping crowd, and not suffer the lawless mob to rush into the hall and fill the building with their noisy complaints, of which, the louder they shout, the less one can understand. But he too must be a man of clean hands, and must be expressly admonished not to take any douceurs from the people. Alas! this is a vice which every janitor loves. The janitor loves a bribe, and among his masters the judges you will scarce find one in a thousand who hates it".

Before we part from the works of this keen-witted, if not grandly inspired poet, we must listen for a short time to his description of the court of King Charles at Aachen, as contained in his poem 'Ad Carolum regem,' written about the year 796.

After listening to prayers in 'that hall whose fair fabric rises with marvellous domes' (doubtless the great church of St. Mary), the king proceeds to the palace. The common people go and come through the long vestibules; the doors are opened, and of the many who wish to enter a few are admitted. One sees the fair progeny of Charles surrounding their father, Charles the younger in his adolescent beauty and the boyish Louis, both strong, vigorous, with minds keen in study, and able to keep their own counsel. Then the virgin band, Bertha, Hrotrud and Gisila, and their three younger sisters; no one more beautiful than the others. With these is joined the fair Amazon, Liutgarda, 'who shines both by her intellect and her wealth of piety, fair indeed by her outward adornment, but fairer yet by her worthy deeds, beloved both by nobles and people; free-handed, gentle, courteous ; she seeks to benefit all, to injure none.' (One may be allowed here to suspect a veiled allusion to the opposite character of her predecessor, Fastrada.)

The children crowd around their father in friendly rivalry of good offices. Charles takes from him his heavy double pallium and his gloves, Louis takes his sword. The daughters receive the loving kisses of their sire. Bertha brings roses, Hrotrud violets, Gisila lilies, Bothaid apples, Hiltrud bread, Theoderada wine. All these maidens wear beautiful jewels, some red, some green; golden clasps, bracelets and necklaces. One delights her father by her graceful dance, another by her merry jokes.

Then draws near the king's sister, the holy Gisila. She kisses her brother, and her placid face shows as much joy as can co-exist with her joy in the heavenly Bridegroom. She begs

Charles to explain to her some dark passage of Scripture, and he teaches her that which he has himself learned of God.

A description of the courtiers follows.

Thyrsis (whose Teutonic name we know not) is the active and able but bald chamberlain whose business it is to regulate the entrance into the presence-chamber, admitting some and courteously excusing himself for preventing the entrance of others.

Flaccus (Alcuin) is ‘the glory of our bards, mighty to shout forth his songs, keeping time with his lyric foot, moreover a powerful sophist, able to prove pious doctrines out of Holy Scripture, and in genial jest to propose or solve puzzles of arithmetic’. Sometimes these questions of *Flaccus* are easy, sometimes desperately hard. Charles himself is often one of those who rather desire to find than succeed in finding the answers to these ‘Flaccidica.’

Richulf (bishop of Mainz) comes next, strong of voice, yet with polished speech, noble by his art and his fidelity. If he has tarried long in distant regions he has returned thence not empty-handed.

Homer (Angilbert) is absent; else my Muse should sing to him a song of delight.

Ercambald (chancellor from 797 to 812) has two tablets in his hand, on which he writes down the king’s orders and hums them over to himself with inaudible voice

Lentulus (whose real name we know not) brings in some apples in a basket. He is a faithful fellow with quick perceptions, but very slow in speech and gait.

Nardulus (the name is perhaps meant for Einhard) rushes about hither and thither like an ant. His little body is inhabited by a mighty spirit. He is now bringing in big books and now literary arrows to slay the Scot.

At the mention of this Scot—to whose identity we have unfortunately no clue—Theodulf bursts into a storm of fury; fury surely fictitious and merely humorous. “Such kisses will I give thee as the wolf gives to the donkey. Sooner shall the dog cherish hares or the fierce wolf lambs than I, the Goth, will have any friendship with the Scotsman. Take away one little letter, the third in the alphabet, a letter which he cannot himself pronounce, and you have the true description of his character, a sot instead of a Scot”.

After the banquet the Theodulfica Musa is called upon to sing. All kings and chieftains love to hear her voice, but a certain Wibod (possibly a count of Perigueux, another enemy or pretended enemy of Theodulf) cannot abide it. He shakes his thick head of hair thrice or four times at the minstrel, and in his absence hurls out dreadful threats. But only let the king summon him to his presence, and in he goes with shambling gait and trembling knee; a very Jove with his awful voice but a Vulcan with his lame foot.

So, with a torrent of pretended indignation against this Wibod and the mysterious Scot the poem concludes, the pious author praying his readers in the name of that Christian charity which beareth all things not to be offended by anything that he has written.

I trust that I have not dwelt too long on the histories of these *littérateurs* in Charles’s court. In reading their lives and their poems—small as the literary merit of these latter may be—one feels how broad a chasm divides them from the illiteracy and barbarism of the Merovingian days. True, the intellectual impulse came from abroad, and pre-eminently from our own great Northumbrian scholars. But it was Charles’s supreme merit to have attracted it to himself, to have made his court the focus of all the literary light and beat of Western Europe, to have offered the richest prizes in Church and State as the rewards of intellectual eminence. As has been before said, the age of Charles the Great was a veritable literary and architectural Renaissance, and even the mimic combats of the wits of the court, their verbal subtleties and classical affectations, remind us not seldom of the literary coteries of Florence in the age of the Medici.

Like that brilliant age, moreover, was the age of Charlemagne in its care for the manuscripts of classical antiquity, only that where the Florentine bought, the Frank superintended the copying of the priceless manuscripts. The very characters bore the impress of the new movement of literary reform. Small but clear uncials took the place of the barbarous scrawl of the two preceding centuries. Monastery vied with monastery in the splendour and the number of its parchment codices. For the fragments of Greek literature which have been preserved we are of course chiefly indebted to Constantinople, but it is difficult to calculate how great would be the void in extant Latin literature had it not been for the revival of letters at the court of Charlemagne.

CHAPTER V

POPE AND EMPEROR.

To a student of the life of Charles the Great the question will sometimes suggest itself whether his connection with the affairs of Italy and the Church of Rome brought him more of gladness or of vexation. Often when his head was already weary and his hands over-full with the care of his long wars against the heathen, there would come some message from over the Alps which seemed to cause his cup of bitterness to overflow. Even such a message came to him in the spring of 799; a rumour of terrible deeds done in Rome, which was followed in July by the actual appearance in his camp at Paderborn of a ghastly figure, the successor of St. Peter, the most venerated person in Western Europe, with bloodshot eyes, with pallid face, with mutilated tongue which could scarce speak the customary words of blessing. What barbarous hands had inflicted such cruel wounds on the holy Pope of Rome? Not the hands of 'unspeakable Lombards,' nor even of tyrannous Byzantine officials, but the hands of his own Romans, of ministers of his Church, brought up in the shadow of the Lateran. To understand what had happened we must go back rather more than three years to the day after the death of Hadrian.

Leo III, who on the 27th of December, 795—only two days after the decease of his predecessor—was raised to the vacant throne, was by birth a Roman. His education had been purely ecclesiastical, and through the incense-smoke of the conventional praises of the biographer we may perhaps discern that he was an eloquent man, and eminent as an almsgiver, both from his own funds and from those supplied to him by admiring members of his congregation. He had passed through the grades of deacon and presbyter, and was officiating as *vestatarius* when the unanimous choice—so it is affirmed—of the nobles, clergy and people of Rome raised him to the pontificate.

One of the earliest cares of the new Pope was to write to the Frankish king assuring him of his humble obedience and promising fidelity to his person. Charles replied in a letter brought by the 'Homeric' Angilbert, in which he condoled with the Roman Church on the death of his 'sweetest father' Hadrian, mentioned the fact that he had intended to send some presents (part of the Avar spoil), which, since too late for Hadrian, were now offered for the acceptance of Leo, and desired the new Pope to confer with Angilbert 'on all matters which might seem necessary for the exaltation of the holy Church of God, the stability of your honour, and the consolidation of our patriciate'.

Both to Angilbert and to Leo himself Charles speaks of the necessity that the Pope should obey the canons and show purity in morals, firmness in faith, and honesty in his conversation. Viewed in the light of subsequent events, this anxious care for the Papal morality suggests the thought that Charles or one of his advisers, possibly Alcuin, had heard unfavourable reports as to the stability of character of the eloquent and popular *vestatarius*.

One paragraph in this letter is so important as describing the relation—in itself so hard to define—between Pope and Frankish King, that it will be well to translate it literally: "For as I made a covenant of holy compaternity with your most blessed predecessor, so I desire to conclude an inviolable treaty of the same faith and love with your Blessedness, that by your prayers drawing down upon me the grace of God, I may be everywhere followed by the apostolic benediction, and the most holy seat of the Roman Church may be always protected

by our devotion. It is our duty, with the help of God, everywhere externally to defend the Church of Christ with our arms from the inroads of pagans and the devastation of infidels, and internally to fortify it by our recognition of the Catholic faith. It is yours, most holy Father, with hands like the hands of Moses raised in prayer to God, to help our warfare, so that by your intercession, by the gift and guidance of God, the Christian people may everywhere and always win the victory over the enemies of His holy name, and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be magnified in all the world”.

This conception (which was also the Roman conception) of the duties of the Frankish monarch towards the Church was aptly symbolized by the presents sent him by Leo in announcing his own elevation to the pontificate. They were, the keys of the *confessio* or crypt in which reposed the body of the Apostle Peter, and the banner of the City of Rome. So thoroughly united were now the two ideas of the Galilean fisherman and of the City founded by Romulus. Probably, even to themselves, Hadrian and Leo would have found it hard to explain how much they claimed on behalf of the one and how much on behalf of the other.

At this day the pilgrim who visits the Eternal City may see the graphic embodiment of these ideas in a mosaic the original of which was perhaps affixed to the walls of the Lateran in the very year of Leo III's accession. On an eighteenth-century building adjoining the Lateran church may be seen portrayed, on a brilliant gold background, the gigantic figure of St. Peter, who dispenses gifts to a suppliant on either side of him, men of smaller stature, as is befitting for contemporaries when brought into the presence of the saints of old. On his right hand kneels Pope Leo, to whom he is giving the pallium of hierarchical pre-eminence; on his left, King Charles, wearing a moustache, and with a curious conical cap on his head, to whom he gives the consecrated banner. In the barbarous misspelled Latin of the time the Apostle is implored to give life to the pious pontiff Leo, and victory to King Charles.

For certain reasons which are not very clear to us, the position of the new Pope was a precarious one. Throughout his long papacy he seems always to have been hated by a party among the Roman nobles. Possibly there was something in his moral character which gave an easy handle to slander—it is not denied that his enemies accused him of adultery and perjury—but again it may be fairly argued that the scoundrels who mutilated his body would not hesitate, if the occasion offered, to murder his good name. Certain it is that the most conspicuous of his assailants were two men, nephews of the deceased Pope Hadrian, one *nomenclator* and the other *sacellarius* in the Papal court, Paschalis and Campulus.

Let us look for a moment at the previous career of these two Papal nephews. In a letter of Hadrian to Charles written in May, 778, we find that ‘our nephew Paschalis’ is sent by the Pope to recall the citizens of Terracina to their obedience. In two letters written a little later, Campulus, bishop of Gaeta, appears as the informer concerning the machinations of the Greeks and Beneventans. The name being not a very common one, it seems probable that this was the same person as Hadrian's nephew. Thus we have two men whose detestable deeds committed against the venerated person of the Pope are about to be related, high in office in the Roman Church and curia, and evidently placed there by the favour of their uncle. Hadrian's own character must suffer somewhat for the ill deeds of his kinsmen. Either he was himself unscrupulous in the promotion of his relatives, or he was grievously deficient in discernment of character.

On the 25th of April, 799, the Pope prepared to ride along the street which is now called the Corso, and forth along the Via Flaminia, in order to celebrate the Greater Litany. This ceremony had taken the place of the old Pagan Robigalia, and, like that festival, was intended to implore the Divine Providence to avert rust and mildew from the springing corn. As the Pope set forth from the Lateran palace, the *primicerius* Paschalis met him, and with hypocritical courtesy apologized for not being robed in his chasuble. “I am in weak health”,

said he, “and therefore have come without my *planeta*”. Doubtless the fact was that the heavy chasuble would have hindered the bloody deed upon which his soul was set. The Pope gave him his pardon, and the two conspirators, as if in lowly attendance upon him, and with words of treacherous sweetness on their lips, followed in his train.

The procession was meant to go forth by the Porta del Popolo, cross over the Ponte Molle, and wind round under Monte Mario to St. Peter’s. The chief rendezvous for the citizens was the church of St. Lawrence in Lucina. At the neighbouring monastery of St. Stephen and St. Silvester the main body of the conspirators was assembled. They rushed forth and clustered round their two leaders. The people who had assembled to view the procession, unarmed and prepared only for a religious rite, dispersed in panic terror. Leo was thrown violently to the ground; Paschalis stood at his head and Campulus at his feet; some of the ruffians in the crowd tried to cut out his tongue, others struck him in the eyes, and then they dispersed, leaving the Supreme Pontiff of Rome blinded and speechless in the middle of the Corso

There was evidently a great lack of plan and purpose in the truculent villains who did this cruel deed, and there is also a disposition on the part of the Papal biographer to exaggerate the injuries inflicted on the unhappy pontiff in order to magnify the miracle of his recovery. According to this authority, the impious men, ‘like veritable Pagans’, returned to their victim, and finding him still alive, dragged him to the ‘*confessio*’ of the monastery of Stephen and Silvester, and there ‘again twice more thoroughly pulled out his eyes and tongue, and striking him with divers blows and clubs, mangled him and left him only half alive, rolling in his blood before the very altar’. It is not easy to recover the exact details of this atrocity, but on the whole it seems safe to accept the cautious statement of some of the Frankish annalist that the conspirators mutilated the tongue of their victim and endeavoured to blind him, but did not entirely succeed in the latter operation.

The Pope was at first confined in the monastery of the two saints, Stephen and Silvester, but fearing a rescue his captors conveyed him by night to the monastery of St. Erasmus on the Coelian, a Greek foundation, whose abbot, or (as he was styled) *hegumenos*, appears to have been in league with the malefactors. While he was imprisoned here, a miracle, according to the biographer, was wrought by the intercession of St. Peter, and ‘he both recovered his sight, and his tongue was restored to him for speaking’. Moreover, there was still some loyalty left in the servants of the Lateran Court. The chamberlain Albinus, taking counsel with some faithful friends, planned successfully his master’s escape from the Greek convent. He was let down the wall by a rope in the night-time, and being received by his friends at the bottom was conveyed by them to St. Peter’s. The people, in whose hearts there was doubtless a reaction of pity towards the victim of such a barbarous outrage, gathered round him, and in the familiar words of the Psalter praised ‘the Lord God of Israel who alone doeth marvellous things, the Lord who is the light and salvation of His people’, for the deliverance granted to His servant. The conspirators, who felt themselves baffled, were well-nigh ready to turn their arms against one another in their rage and terror, but in fact accomplished nothing but the ignoble revenge of sacking the house of the faithful Albinus.

Still Leo’s position in the great but unfortified basilica of St. Peter was by no means free from danger. It happened however that Winichis, the brave general who defeated the Greeks in 788, and who had since been made duke of Spoleto in succession to Hildebrand, was now at St. Peter’s in the capacity of *missus* from King Charles. He had a band of soldiers with him, and marching at their head he escorted Leo to the safe shelter of the Umbrian stronghold, Spoleto. From thence in the early summer he set forth upon his journey to the Frankish court, accompanied, says the biographer, by delegates—bishops, nobles of Rome and provincial nobles— from all the chief cities of Italy. After meeting first Charles’s arch-chaplain Hildebald and then his son Pippin, who were sent to welcome him on to Frankish soil, he arrived, as we

have seen, at Charles's camp of Paderborn about the month of July. He was received by the king with all the usual demonstrations of reverent welcome, and he with his large train of attendants had another camp pitched for them near the royal tents. Apparently Charles reserved judgment on the charges brought against Leo (for his opponents also found their way to the camp and persisted in their accusations) until the matter should have been thoroughly sifted by a commission sent for that purpose to Rome. But in the meantime king and courtiers listened to the marvellous story of the miraculous restoration of sight to the ruined eyes and the power of speech to the mutilated tongue, and the Pope's ministrations were invoked for the consecration of the new church which Charles had erected at Paderborn; an evident proof that Leo was still in the eyes of his powerful protector the lawful pontiff. In the act of consecration the Pope deposited in the altar of the church some relics of the protomartyr Stephen which he had brought with him from Rome, assuring the king that their mysterious efficacy would protect the church from a repetition of the destruction which it had before frequently undergone at the hands of the heathen.

Were the summer months of 799 during which Leo abode at the court of Charles occupied by a negotiation between the two heads of Christendom, the result of which was that Leo was restored to the pontificate on imperial condition of raising Charles to the Imperial throne? That is an assertion which has been sometimes made, but it rests on mere conjecture; there is not a shred of contemporary evidence in support of it; and, at any rate in the crude form in which I have here stated it, the assertion lacks probability.

At the same time we may well believe that Leo during these months of his abode at Paderborn perceived, what may have been hidden from him before, that the learned men and the churchmen at Charles's court, with their heads full of the literature and the memories of ancient Rome, true men of the Renaissance as they were, had conceived the idea of reviving the old and genuine dignity of Roman Emperor—something distinct from the spurious imitation of it which passed current at Constantinople—on behalf of their mighty Frankish lord. Four of the capital cities of the old Empire, Milan, Trier, Ravenna, Rome, already recognized Charles as their master, while two only, Constantinople and Nicomedia, remained to the 'Greek' Emperors. The extent of old Imperial territory which owned the sway of the Frank was enormously larger than the dwindled heritage of the East over which Irene ruled, and there were great and fair territories in central Europe which Varus and Drusus had failed to conquer, but which Charles, the enlarger of the Empire had won for civilization. All these arguments were doubtless often urged in the halls of Aachen and by the camp-fires of Paderborn; and Charles probably listened to them, pleased but not convinced by his courtiers' zeal for his exaltation.

We have seen that Angilbert had already used the epithet 'Augustus' of his royal master; but it is in Alcuin's correspondence that the word Empire first clearly emerges. He had received a somewhat languid invitation from Charles to repair to the court and meet the apostolic exile. But, happily for us, the invitation did not appear to him to be a sufficiently direct command to make it necessary for him in his feeble state of health to undertake the journey from Tours into the troublous regions of Saxon-land. To this feeling of slightly offended dignity we probably owe the fact that at this critical period of Charles's career we are able to trace in Alcuin's correspondence the advice given to the king by his chief counsellors.

In one very important letter written by 'Flaccus Albinus' to 'the peaceful king David' immediately after the receipt of the tidings of the outrage in the streets of Rome, Alcuin says :—

"Hitherto there have been three persons in the world higher than all others. One is the Apostolic Sublimity which is accustomed to rule by delegated power the seat of St. Peter,

Prince of Apostles. But what deeds have been done to him who was ruler of that see your worshipful Goodness has deigned to inform me.

“The next is the Imperial Dignity and secular power Emperor, of the Second Rome. How impiously the Governor of that Empire has been deposed, not by strangers, but by his own people and fellow-citizens, universal fame hath abundantly reported.

“The third is the Royal Dignity, in which the providence of our Lord Jesus Christ hath ordained you for the ruler of the Christian people, more excellent in power than the other aforesaid dignities, more illustrious in wisdom, more sublime in the dignity of your kingdom. Lo, now upon you alone reposes the whole salvation of the Churches of Christ. You are the avenger of crime, the guide of the wanderers, the comforter of the mourners, the exaltation of the righteous.

“Have not the most flagrant instances of impiety manifested themselves in that Roman see where formerly religion and piety shone most brightly? These men, blinded in their own hearts, have blinded their own Head. These are the perilous times formerly predicted by the Truth itself, because the love of many is waxing cold.

“On no account must you forego the care of the head. It is a smaller matter that the feet than that the head should be in pain”.

Alcuin proceeds to explain and expand this oracular utterance. Charles during this year (799) was intent on one of his great campaigns against the Saxons, sending his son Charles to harry Bardengau, the old home of the Lombards, calling in the aid of Sclavonic tribes beyond the Elbe, planning extensive transportations of Saxons into Rhine-land and repeoplings of their country by Franks. All this work, even when it is necessary—and here he repeats a previous warning against the exaction of tithes from the Saxons—Alcuin considers to be comparatively unimportant. It is at best healing the pain of the feet, while the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint. The City of Home and the Church of Home are the points to which he thinks that his patron’s attention should be mainly directed.

It may be said that in all this we have no direct mention of the assumption of the Imperial title. This is true, but it is easy to see how arguments like those employed by Alcuin would lead up to that result. If Charles was already above the Emperor in power and wisdom, let him not be afraid to assume at least an equality of rank with him. If Home was to be firmly governed and the repetition of such outrages as that of the 25th of April was to be prevented, let him take some title of more awful import than that anomalous ‘Patriciate of the Romans’ with which for the last quarter of a century he had been presiding over, but hardly guiding, the fortunes of Italy. Above all, if he was to realize his great ideal of a foster-father, guide, and protector of the Church, if he was to be the Constantine of this later age, let him be called, as Constantine was called, *Imperator Romanorum*.

All these speculations and suggestions, however, might have remained mere academical exercises but for the two events which had horrified the world, and which had darkened the atmosphere of the New and the Old Rome. These two events, the deposition and cruel punishment of Constantine VI, and the mutilation of Leo III, concurring as they did in the last years of the eighth century, facilitated, nay necessitated that other great event which fixed the fate of Europe for centuries. That a woman—and such a woman—should pretend to occupy the throne of the Caesars, that the Head of Western Christendom should be attacked and half-murdered in the streets of his own capital, these were two portents which shocked the conscience of the world, and which seemed to show that nothing less than a revolution, which should be also a return to the elementary principles of the great World-Empire of Rome, could cure the deep-seated malady of the age.

After a few months’ residence at Paderborn, Pope Leo set out on his southward journey. He was escorted by a brilliant company, at once a guard of honour for his person on the

journey, and a strong commission to try his case on their arrival in Rome. On this commission rode two archbishops, Hildibald of Cologne and Arno of Salzburg, five bishops, and three counts.

On the 29th of November Leo re-entered Rome, amid vivid manifestations of popular joy. The great ecclesiastics, the nobles, the body (whatever it may have been) which now called itself the Senate of Rome, the little army of the *Ducatus Romae*, the nuns, the deaconesses, all streamed forth to the Ponte Molle, with banners and with psalmody, to meet the returning Shepherd and assure him of the joy of his flock at his reappearance. There too were seen the members of the four great *Scholae* or guilds of foreigners, Franks, Frisians, Saxons (from England), and Lombards, who were now settled in Rome, and had quarters assigned to them between St. Peter's and the castle of S. Angelo. All flocked with the pontiff to the great basilica on the Vatican, where he celebrated mass, and all partook of the holy feast.

Next day, after keeping the festival of St. Andrew, the Pope proceeded in state through the City to the Lateran palace. Here, after an interval the length of which we know not, Charles's ten commissioners took their seats in the great *triclinium*, and for a week or more examined into the charges which Paschalis and Campulus had brought against Leo, declared them to be unfounded, and sent the accusers as criminals into Frank-land, probably in order that the king himself might decide upon their punishment.

About a year was to elapse before the return of Leo was followed by its natural and all-important consequence, Charles's fourth visit to Rome.

In the first place, shortly after Leo's departure there appeared at the Frankish court an ambassador named Daniel, who was sent by Michael, the Patrician of Sicily, and who, having discharged his commission, was dismissed with marks of high honour and favour by the Frankish king. This was in fact the last of three embassies which had come in three successive years from the Byzantine court, or from its representative in Sicily. In 797, a certain Theoctistus had come from Nicetas, governor of Sicily, bringing a letter from Constantine VI, which was perhaps a cry for help from the doomed Emperor. In 798, Michael, Patrician of Phrygia, and Theophilus, a presbyter, brought a letter from Irene, apparently announcing her son's dethronement, on account of the insolence of his manners, and her own possession of the solitary throne. The object of this embassy was evidently to strengthen Irene's position by forming an alliance with the Frank. It appears to have been successful, and a sign of the restored friendship between the two states was the return to Constantinople of Sisinnius, brother of the Patriarch Tarasius, who had apparently been in captivity ever since the war of 788. Lastly came the above-mentioned embassy, probably from this same Michael, now promoted, to the governorship of Sicily. All these indications show that at this time Charles was not unwilling to accept the olive-branch so persistently tendered by the Augusta of Constantinople.

The autumn of this year (799) was saddened for Charles by the tidings of the death of two of his bravest warriors, slain in battle with the barbarians of the Danube. Gerold, duke of Bavaria, brother of the beloved Hildegard, was slain with two of his officers by a troop of insurgent Avars, while he was riding in front of his followers and cheering them on to the encounter; Eric, duke of Friuli, fell at Tersatto, the victim of an ambush laid by the barbarous Croats. The scene of this disaster, together with other indications, shows that Istria now formed part of the Frankish dominions : an important conquest, to which we are unable to assign a date, save that it must have been before the year 791. The death of Eric was an especially heavy blow for his royal master. It was he who had penetrated (795) into the far-famed and mysterious Avar Hring, and carried off its stored-up treasures. He had been a generous benefactor to the Church, a liberal almoner to the poor, and in all things, as far as we can trace his actions, a type of the Christian hero. His friendship for Paulinus, bishop of Aquileia, who composed for him a manual of the Christian life called 'Liber Exhortationis,'

and who lamented him after his death in a dirge which recalls David's lament over Jonathan, is a beautiful incident in an age of violence and bloodshed.

King Charles spent the winter of 799 at Aachen, and the other tidings which were brought to him there were all of a joyful kind. The subjugation—as men fondly hoped the final subjugation—of the turbulent Celts of Brittany, the expulsion of the Moors from Majorca, the surrender of Huesca in Arragon, all these successes were reported to him in the course of that winter. Not less welcome probably was the arrival of a monk from Jerusalem, bringing relics and other offerings 'from the place of the Lord's resurrection', a present from the Patriarch of the Holy City to 'the great King of the West'. It was apparently on Christmas Day itself that the Syrian monk was dismissed in all honour from the palace, escorted by another monk named Zacharias, who was to bear the royal gifts to the Holy Place.

With the approach of spring, Charles left his palace at Aachen, sailed down the Rhine or the Meuse into the German Ocean, coasted along till he came to the mouth of the Somme, and there landed at the monastery of S. Riquier, of which his irregular son-in-law Angilbert was head. The king's business in those regions was to strengthen the defences of the coast, and equip some kind of a fleet to repel the incursions of the Northmen, those terrible incursions which were to stain with blood the pages of the next century and to destroy so much of the infant civilization of the Anglo-Saxon and Frankish lands.

Again putting to sea, he sailed up the Seine to Rouen, and from thence journeyed by land to the shrine of St. Martin at Tours. His avowed object was to perform his devotions at the tomb of Gaul's greatest saint, but it cannot be doubted that he also desired to converse about the affairs of his kingdom with that trusted adviser, Alcuin, who was abbot of St. Martin's monastery. Some months before, Charles had invited him to be his companion in the meditated journey to Rome, but Alcuin had declined, alleging that his feeble body, racked with daily pains, was unfitted for the fatigues of so long and toilsome a journey. "You chide me", he said, "that I prefer the smoke-grimed roofs of Tours to the gilded citadels of the Romans : but I know that your Prudence remembers the saying of Solomon, "It is better to dwell in a corner of the house-top than with a brawling woman in a wide house." And let me say it in all courtesy, iron (the iron of warlike weapons) hurts my eyes more than smoke. Tours, thanks to your bounty, rests in peace, content with her smoky homes. But Rome, which has been once touched by the discord of brethren, still keeps the poison which has been instilled into her veins, and thus compels your venerable Dignity to hasten from your sweet abodes in Germany in order to repress the fury of this pestilence".

Since, then, Alcuin persistently refused to visit Charles, Charles repaired to the monastery of Alcuin. It was indeed time that he should visit the Neustrian portion of his dominions, for he had not seen them for twenty-two years; so persistently Austrasian in his sympathies was this great king, whom Napoleon and his courtiers loved to speak of as a Frenchman.

The king's sojourn at Tours was prolonged by the illness and saddened by the death of his wife, his last wedded wife, the bright and genial Liutgarda. She died on the 4th of June, and was buried near the shrine of the soldier-saint. The widowed husband returned by way of Orleans to Paris and Aachen, held a great *placitum* at Mainz in August, and in the autumn started on his memorable fourth journey to Rome. He went at the head of an army, for the affairs of Benevento wore a threatening aspect, the young prince Grimwald again stirring mutinously against the Frankish yoke. We hear of him first at Ravenna, where he tarried seven days, and then at Ancona, from whence he dispatched his son Pippin on the usual ravaging expedition against the lands of the Beneventans. On the 24th of November he arrived at Rome. On the previous day the Pope had gone to meet him at Mentana, fourteen miles from Rome, and after partaking of supper in his quarters, returned to the City for the night. On the morning of the 24th Charles entered Rome, being received by the citizens, the ecclesiastics, the guilds of

foreigners, with the same display of banners, the same chanting of devout hymns which had welcomed the returning Leo. At the foot of the Vatican hill he dismounted and walked slowly up the steps of St. Peter's (we do not hear, as on a former visit, of his kissing the sacred stairs), while Pope and clergy sang loud their praises.

Seven days after Charles's triumphal entry into Rome a synod of all the great Roman ecclesiastics and Frankish nobles was convened in St. Peter's basilica. The Papal biographer, intent on all that redounds to the glory of his order, bids us note that the King and the Pope, who were seated, called on the archbishops, bishops and abbots to resume their seats, but that all the other priests and nobles remained standing. The King then, with that fluent and majestic eloquence of which he was master, set forth to the assembly the Discussion reasons for this, his fourth visit to Rome, and the charges necessity for a close investigation of the crimes urged against Leo by his enemies. At this point there is a slight divergence between our two sets of witnesses. The Frankish annalists say that the great initial difficulty of the investigation was that no one was found willing to formulate the charges against Pope Leo. Of course that might mean either (which is the more probable supposition) that the charges were wicked fabrications, or that in face of the royal favour manifested towards the Pope no one dared to come forward as his accuser. The Papal biographer, on the other hand, tells us that all the archbishops, bishops and abbots with one accord said, "We do not dare to judge the Apostolic See, which is the head of all the Churches of God. For to it and its Vicar all we are answerable, but the See itself is judged of no man. So has the custom been from of old; but as he, the supreme pontiff, shall ordain, we will canonically obey." Then the venerable chief [Leo] said, "I will follow the footsteps of the Popes my predecessors, and am prepared to purge myself from these false charges which wicked men have blazed abroad against me."'

All our authorities agree that this self-vindicating oath was in fact the sole event of the trial, if trial, it may be called. 'On the next day at St. Peter's all the archbishops, bishops and abbots, and all the Franks in the King's service and all the Romans being present together in that church, the Pope in their presence took the four gospels in his hand, ascended the *ambo*, and with a clear voice said, "It hath been heard, dearest brethren, and spread abroad in many places, how evil men have risen up against me and laid grievous crimes to my charge. In order to try this cause, the most clement and most serene lord, King Charles, together with his bishops and nobles, hath come unto this City. Wherefore I, Leo, pontiff of the Holy Roman Church, being judged by no man and constrained by none, of mine own free will do purify and purge myself in your sight and before God and His angels, who knoweth my conscience, and before the blessed Peter, Prince of Apostles, in whose basilica we stand; as thus : These criminal and wicked deeds which they lay unto my charge, I have neither perpetrated nor ordered to be perpetrated; as God is my witness, before whose judgment-seat we shall appear and in whose sight we stand. And this I do of mine own free will, for the removal of all suspicions; not as if any such procedure were found in the canons, nor as if I would impose this custom or decree [as a precedent] on my successors in Holy Church, or on my brothers and colleagues in the episcopate." This solemn oath of innocence having been sworn, the churchmen sang the litany and gave thanks to God, the Virgin, and St. Peter.'

In order to dismiss this mysterious business of the attack on the Pope's character we may slightly anticipate the order of events. It was probably after the lapse of several weeks that Pasehalis and Campulus and their associates, brought back from their exile in Frank-land, were led into Charles's presence, with the chief nobles of the two nations, Frankish and Roman, standing round them, and bitterly upbraiding them for their evil deeds. The ruffians in their disgrace fell out with one another. Campulus said to Pasehalis, 'In an evil hour did I behold thy face. It is thou who hast brought me into this peril'. And so with all the others : their mutual chidings and upbraidings were a clear confession of guilt. They were condemned to death as

guilty of treason—an important evidence of the sovereign character which the Pope of Rome had now assumed—but on the intercession of the Pope the sentence was commuted into one of banishment.

On the same day on which Pope Leo performed his solemn act of self-exculpation, the presbyter Zacharias returned from Jerusalem with two monks who were commissioned by the Patriarch to bring to Charles the keys of Calvary and of the Holy Sepulchre, together with the banner of Jerusalem. The precise import of this act was perhaps doubtful. Certainly the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid would not have allowed that it conferred on the Frankish king any territorial sovereignty over Jerusalem. Still it was in a certain sense a recognition that the holiest place in Christendom was under the protection of the great monarch of the West, and in so far it helped to prepare men's minds for the impending revolution.

An interval of three weeks followed, undescribed by any of our authorities; but which we may fairly conjecture to have been occupied by those deliberations between Frankish nobles and Roman ecclesiastics which are described by the author of the *Chronicon Moissiacense*, and which prepared the way for the next act in the drama.

At length the fullness of time was come, and Charles, attended probably by all his Frankish courtiers and by a multitude of the citizens of Rome, went to pay his devotions on the morning of Christmas Day in the great basilica of St. Peter. That building has been often named in these pages, but I have not hitherto attempted to describe it. If we would imagine its appearance at the close of the eighth century, or indeed at any period before the beginning of the sixteenth century, the chief requisite is absolutely to exclude from our mental vision the vast Renaissance temple which Julius II and Leo X, which Bramante and Raffaele and Michael Angelo have reared upon the Vatican hill. If we must think of some still existing building, let it be S. Ambrogio at Milan or S. Paolo Fuori at Rome rather than the existing St. Peter's. Let us follow Charles and his nobles in imagination to the great basilica on the morning of Friday, the 25th of December, 800. They mount up from the banks of the Tiber by a long colonnade which stretches all the way from the castle of S. Angelo to the threshold of St. Peter's. They reverentially ascend the thirty-five steps to the platform, on which the Pope and all the great officers of his household stand waiting to receive them. Charles himself,

‘In shape and gesture proudly eminent,’

with his yellow locks tinged with grey and with some furrows ploughed in his cheeks by the toils of twenty Saxon campaigns, towers above the swarthy, shaven ecclesiastics who surround the Pope. All Roman hearts are gladdened by seeing that he wears the Roman dress, the long tunic with the scarf thrown over it, and the low shoes of a Roman noble instead of the high laced-up boots of a Teutonic chieftain.

After the usual courteous salutations, the blended train of nobles and churchmen follow Hadrian and Charles into the basilica. They traverse first the great *atrium*, measuring 320 feet by 225. In the centre of the *atrium* rises the great fountain called Pinea, the water spouting forth from the top and from every bossy protuberance of an enormous fircone. This fountain was placed there by Pope Symmachus, the contemporary of Theodoric, who, like Leo III himself, was well-nigh

‘Done to death by evil tongues.’

Round the fountain have begun to cluster the marble tombs of the Popes of the last four centuries.

They pass on : they enter the basilica proper, consisting of five naves; (the central nave much wider than the rest), divided from one another by four rows of monolith columns. These columns are ninety-six in number², of different materials, granite, Parian marble, African marble; and they have very different histories ; some, it is said, being brought from the Septizonium of Septimius Severus, and others from the various temples of heathen Rome.

They are of unequal height; and not only this inequality, but many signs of rough work, notwithstanding all the splendour of gold and silver plates and the vivid colouring of the mosaics on the walls, give evidence of the haste with which the venerable fabric was originally reared—men say by the order and with the co-operation of Constantine himself—in the days when Christianity could yet scarcely believe in the permanence of its hardily-won victory over heathenism. Between the pillars of the central nave are hung (as it is a feast day) costly veils of purple embroidered with gold, and at the further end of the church the gigantic cross-shaped candelabra, hanging from the silver-plated frame-work of the triumphal arch, with its 1,370 candles, lights up the gloom of the December morning. This triumphal arch, which, with the long colonnade leading up to it, was an essential feature of the early Roman basilica, is doubtless adorned with mosaics of saints and martyrs, and spans the entrance to the apsidal tribune, which is the very Holy of Holies of Rome. For here, before and below the high altar, is the *confessio* or subterranean cave in which the body of St. Peter, rescued from its pagan surroundings, the circus of Nero and the temples of Apollo and Cybele, is believed to repose in the coffin of gilded bronze provided for it by the reverent munificence of the first Christian Emperor. Over the high altar rises a baldacchino supported by four porphyry columns, and by others of white marble twisted into the resemblance of vine-stems. Keeping guard as it were in front of the *confessio* are many statues of saints and angels. Here, as if in bold defiance of all the edicts of iconoclastic Emperors, Gregory III has reared an *iconostasis* covered with silver plates, on which are depicted on one side the likenesses of Christ and His Apostles, on the other those of the Virgin Mary and a train of holy maidens; and following in his footsteps Hadrian has placed near the *iconostasis* six images, made of silver plates covered with gold. At the entrance of the choir stands the image of the Saviour, with the archangels Gabriel and Michael on either side of Him, and behind, in the middle of the choir, is the Virgin Mother, flanked by the Apostles St. Andrew and St. John. All the floor of this part of the basilica is covered with plates of silver. Behind, at the very end of the church, is seen the chair of St. Peter's successor, with seats for the suburbicarian bishops—the cardinal-bishops as they are already beginning to be called—in the curve of the apse on either side of him.

The basilica proper, that is the part within the *atrium*, measured 320 feet by 226. The best idea of its dimensions will be obtained by comparing it with the existing church of S. Paolo fuori le Mura at Home, which is 306 feet long by 222 broad. That church also has its four rows of columns, its triumphal arch adorned with mosaics, its *confessio* with a reputed apostolic tomb surmounted by a baldacchino borne by porphyry columns and guarded by apostolic statues, and behind the triumphal arch it has its round apsidal end. Thus, notwithstanding its own extremely modern date, it may both in size and arrangement be considered as the best representative now available of the basilica of St. Peter at the end of the eighth century.

One thing more we note in passing, that the St. Peter's of Leo III was about a century older than its modern representative, reared by Julius II and Leo X and Paul III, is at the present day.

Such then was the great and venerable building, encrusted with memories of half a thousand Christian years, in which Charles the Frank knelt on the Christmas morning of the year 800 to pay his devotions at the *confessio* of St. Peter. Assuredly if he himself was ignorant of what was about to happen, neither the Roman citizens nor the Frankish courtiers shared his ignorance. Assuredly there was a hush of expectation throughout the dim basilica, and all eyes were directed towards the kneeling figure in Roman garb at the tomb of the Apostle.

Charles rose from his knees. The Pope approached him, and lifting high his hands placed on the head of the giant king a golden crown. Then all the Roman citizens burst into a loud and joyful cry : 'To Carolus Augustus, crowned by God, mighty and pacific Emperor, be life and victory'. Thrice was the fateful acclamation uttered. Then all joined in the 'Laudes,' a long

series of choral invocations to Christ, to angels, to apostles, to martyrs, and to virgins, praying each separately to grant the newly-crowned Emperor heavenly aid to conquer all his foes.

Thus the great revolution towards which for three generations the stream of events had been steadily setting was accomplished. Once more an Emperor of the Romans had been acclaimed in Rome, the first of that long line of Teutonic Augusti, the last of whom laid down the true Imperial diadem in the lifetime of our fathers at the bidding of the son of a Corsican attorney.

Thus far all our authorities are agreed. It is important now to notice the points in which, without contradicting, they nevertheless diverge somewhat from one another.

(1) The Frankish annalists both assure us that after Lauds had been sung, Charles 'was adored by the pontiff after the manner of the ancient princes. The Papal biographer conveniently omits this fact, which the Roman *Curia* did not desire to remember, but there is no reason to doubt that it actually occurred, nor that such reverence as the Patriarch of Constantinople would have paid to Justinian or Heraclius, the Bishop of Rome paid to his now acknowledged lord, Carolus Augustus.

(2) *Theophanes* says that the Pope anointed Charles with oil from his head to his feet, and arrayed him in a royal robe and crown. This thorough anointing, which would have required that Charles should have been stripped naked in the sight of the whole assembly, does not agree with any of the other accounts, and is in itself improbable. It probably arose from some confusion with the next item of information.

(3) The Papal biographer informs us that 'on the same day' (probably at a later hour) 'the Pope anointed with the holy oil his most excellent son Charles (the younger) as king.' This, though not mentioned by the annalists, is quite intelligible. As his predecessor had anointed Pippin king of Italy and Louis king of Aquitaine, so he now anointed their brother Charles as king, probably king of the Franks, that being a title which was perhaps left open for him by his father's promotion to a higher dignity.

(4) His (The same biographer mentions the costly gifts which were presented to the shrine of St. Peter by Charles and his family, after the celebration of Mass which followed the coronation. They were 'a silver table with its feet' (whose weight is not stated), 'a golden crown with jewels to hang over the altar, a golden paten, and three large chalices, one of them set with gems.' The mere gold in these vessels weighed 216 pounds, equivalent in value to more than £10,000 sterling.

(5) A most important statement, and one that has given rise to almost endless discussion, is that made by Einhard in his *Life of Charles*:— 'At this time he received the name of Emperor and Augustus. Which he at first so much disliked, that he declared that he would never have entered the church on that day, though it was a high festival, if he could have fore-known the pontiff's design. He bore, however, with great patience the odium that attached to him on account of his new title through the indignation of the Roman Emperors'. And he vanquished their stubbornness by his own far-surpassing magnanimity, sending to them frequent embassies, and in his letters addressing them as brothers.'

I reserve my comments on this important statement for a later paragraph.

The remainder of Charles's visit to Italy may be described in a few words.

The winter was occupied in settling the affairs of Charles's the State and the Church in the new relations to one in Italy, another which resulted from the re-establishment of the Empire. One of the most important of these was that henceforward the consent of the Frankish Emperor was necessary for the consecration of a newly elected Pope.

As Grimwald was still unsubdued, a second expedition was sent under Pippin to reduce him to obedience, but it does not appear to have achieved any decided success. Probably malaria, as well as the Lombard sword, defended the independence of the Samnite duchy.

On Easter Day (April 4, 801) Charles was again in Rome. Three weeks afterwards he visited Spoleto, where, in the second hour of the night, he witnessed a tremendous earthquake which shook the whole of Italy and brought down in ruin the roof of *S. Paolo fuori at Rome*.

From Spoleto he went to Ravenna, where he spent some of the early days of May; from Ravenna to Pavia, arriving there about the beginning of June. In the old palace of the Lombard kings he received the tidings of the arrival of an embassy from the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid. From Pavia he went to Ivrea, and so over the Great St. Bernard to Switzerland, and down the Rhine to his beloved Aquae Grani, where he spent the remainder of the year.

Now that Charles has recrossed the Alps and sits once more in his palace at Aachen, no longer now as mere *Rex Francorum et Langobardorum* and *Patricius Romanorum*, but as Augustus and Emperor, we may suitably consider what were the causes and what was the significance of the peaceful revolution—for such in fact it was—effected in the basilica of St. Peter on Christmas Day, 800.

It is hardly necessary formally to discuss the theory which prevailed a hundred years ago, that there was in this act an intentional revival of the Western Empire which had lain dormant since the deposition of Romulus Augustulus in 476. Doubtless this was something like the practical result of Charles's coronation. After an interval of suspense, uncertainty and mutual suspicion, the two powers of East and West at last settled down into an attitude, not of partnership, hardly of friendship, but of mutual toleration, and accepted the Adriatic as the dividing line between the two Empires. And yet, near two centuries later, a monk of Salerno writing the history of his city, an Italian city, under the influence of strong anti-Frankish feeling, could say, 'The men about the court of Charles the Great called him Emperor, because he wore a precious crown on his head. But in truth no one should be called Emperor save the man who presides over the Roman, *that is the Constantinopolitan* kingdom. The kings of the Gauls have now usurped to themselves that name, but in ancient times they were never so called.'

In truth the epithet 'one and indivisible' which the French Republic used of itself when threatened by the armies of partitioning invaders, might have been applied to the Roman Empire at any time previous to the ninth century. There were jealousies and heart-burnings (as the readers of this history know right well) between the East and the West, between Arcadius and Honorius, between Leo and Ricimer; and sometimes these quarrels were on the point of bursting into the flame of war. Still the wars thus threatened, like the wars which were actually waged between Constantine and Julian or between Theodosius and Eugenius, would have been regarded as civil wars. The great earth-encompassing *Imperium Romanum* remained, at least in theory, one, and no more convincing proof of its unity, of its indestructible feeling of organic and all-pervading life, could be given than was afforded by the marvellous reconquest of Italy by the generals of Justinian.

We must then recognize the fact that the Pope when he placed the crown on the head of Charles, and the Roman people when they shouted 'Long life to the most pious Augustus, great and pacific Emperor of the Romans,' were, in theory at least, assailing the throne of Irene, and claiming for the great Austrasian monarch dominion over all the lands, from the Pillars of Hercules to the river Euphrates, over which the Roman eagle had flapped its wings.

This fact, that the assumption of the Imperial title was of necessity a challenge to the court of Constantinople, the only Christian state which could for a moment pretend to rival the Frankish kingdom in wealth and power, was doubtless one reason (as Einhard implicitly assures us) for Charles's unwillingness to be hailed as Augustus. For that this unwillingness was a mere pretence, that Charles when he expressed his dissatisfaction with the ceremony was merely copying the *Nolo Episcopari* of eminent ecclesiastics, seems to me both unproved and improbable. He was not a spiritual ruler, nor expected to utter any phrases of conventional

humility. It may be true, it probably is true, that the subject of the change of his title from *Patricius* to *Imperator* had often been discussed in his presence by such men as Alcuin, Angilbert, and Leo himself ; and the proposal had probably found a certain degree of acceptance in a mind such as his, which was always inspired by large and lofty ambitions. But he saw, as perhaps Alcuin did not see, the practical inconveniences of a permanent estrangement from the Byzantine court. He may possibly have already entertained the strange project of acquiring the Imperial crown by a matrimonial alliance with Irene. At all events, he wished to choose his own time and way for the great revolution, and saw with dissatisfaction his hand forced by the officiousness of Leo III and the enthusiasm of the Roman people.

We may perhaps be enabled to understand a little better the state of mind of the Frankish hero if we compare his position with that of Julius Caesar when Marcus Antonius at the festival of the Lupercalia offered him a kingly crown, or with that of Cromwell, when after much deliberation and many swayings of his mind backwards and forwards he finally rejected the title of King offered to him by his Parliament. In both of those cases there was much to be said in favour of the proposed change, and there were strong reasons, quite apart from any motive of mere vanity or ambition, why the foremost man in the state should accept the offered title. In both of those cases the great man's adherents—not in mere flattery and courtiership—were more anxious than he himself for the augmentation of his dignity. There also the statesman felt the obstacles, invisible to the less highly trained perceptions of his followers, which made the change a perilous one. The all-important difference between those cases and this which we are now considering is that in them the negative arguments prevailed, while with Charles the intervention of the sacrosanct chief of Western Christendom, dispelled all doubts, ended all hesitation, and by proclaiming the Teutonic Caesar fixed the form of European polity for centuries to come.

This very intervention of the Pope was, however, in all probability one of those circumstances of the revolution which made it unacceptable to the new Augustus. If the thing had to be done—and probably he had made up his mind to accept its necessity—he would have wished it done in some other way: by the invitation of his Frankish nobles ; by a vote of the shadowy body which called itself the Roman Senate (if such a shadow still haunted the north-western corner of the Forum); by the acclamations of the Roman people; or by all these instrumentalities combined, but not by the touch of the Pontiff's fingers. He foresaw, probably with statesman-like instinct, the mischief which would accrue to future generations from the precedent thus furnished of a Pope appearing by virtue of his ecclesiastical office to bestow the Imperial crown. And certainly he did what in him lay to destroy the force of the precedent. No bishop of Rome or of any other see presided over the ceremony when in 813 he promoted his son Louis to the Imperial dignity. The mischief, however, was incurable. It became the deep-rooted conviction of the Middle Ages that the Emperor, if he would be an Emperor of unchallenged legitimacy, must receive his crown in Rome from the hands of the successor of St. Peter. And not only so, but the absolutely erroneous idea that the Pope had by virtue of his plenary power over states and kingdoms transferred the Imperial dignity from Constantinople to Rome, was adopted by one canonist and monkish historian after another, till it at length found full and loud expression in the Decretal published by Innocent III in 1201, in which he upheld the cause of Otho of Brunswick as candidate for the Imperial crown against Philip of Swabia. The story of the Translation thus passed into the collection of the Decretals, and as part of the canon law of Europe reigned supreme for three centuries, till at the time of the Revival of Learning this fiction, along with the Donation of Constantine, the Decretals of the false Isidore, and others like itself, came tumbling to the ground.

Truly is it said by Professor Dahn, 'All the claims which were ever asserted by the great Popes against the Emperors, their theory of the Two Swords, the whole conception according

to which the Pope as successor of St. Peter, as representative of God upon earth, was entitled to grant or to refuse to grant the Imperial crown as his *beneficium* to the German king (“Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolfo”); all this theory which makes the king the Pope’s vassal in respect of the Imperial crown, rests on that one ceremony in which the first Emperor received the crown from the hand of the Roman Pope.

It is reasonable to infer that so far-seeing a statesman as Charles perceived this cloud on the horizon of the future, and that his perception of it had something to do with that enigmatic saying of his to Einhard, ‘Had I known what Leo was about to do, I would never have entered St. Peter’s on that Christmas morning.’ There is also another consideration, scarcely noticed hitherto, which, as it seems to me, may have rendered Charles averse to the proposed revolution. He had three sons, Charles, Pippin, Louis. He intended Louis to reign after him in Southern Gaul, Pippin in Italy and Bavaria, while Neustria and Austrasia, the proper home of the Franks, with their old and time-honoured capitals, Metz, Soissons, Paris, and the great Rhine-stream itself, dearest of rivers to Charles’s heart, were all to be the portion of his eldest son Charles, likeliest of all his children to himself, who was undoubtedly to hold the predominant place in the royal partnership. Presumably therefore Charles was to be the future Emperor, but the city from which he was to take his title, the city which as Emperor he was to be pre-eminently bound to cherish and protect, would be included in the dominions of a brother, perhaps of a rival. Here was a danger, patent and obviously to be apprehended, though in the actual course of events the lamentable death of both the two young princes, Charles and Pippin, prevented its actual occurrence. We have, I think, no hint of the way in which Charles himself proposed to deal with it, but it may well have been one of the elements in the case which rendered him less eager than Alcuin and Angilbert to hear the joyful acclamations of the Roman people, ‘Long life to Carolus Augustus.’

Of the other chief actors in the scene the motives are not so hard to discover. The Frankish nobles and great churchmen doubtless felt their own dignity exalted by becoming the servants of a Roman Emperor. The Roman people seemed to regain the right, lost for nearly four centuries, of conferring by their acclamations the title which gave to its wearer ‘the lordship of the habitable world.’ And as for the Pope himself, may we not consider that if he renounced for the present his dream of establishing himself as the absolutely independent sovereign of central and southern Italy, he saw his advantage in the restoration of a strong Imperial rule which would make such outrages as those perpetrated upon him by Paschalis and Campulus thereafter impossible? And still the consolidation of the Papal States would go forward, though in theory he would have to hold them as a *beneficium* from the new Augustus. In practice, who could tell, with that magnificent precedent of a Pope-conferred crown, whether the relation might not one day be inverted, and the Pope become, as Boniface VIII claimed to be, lord paramount of the Emperor.

CHAPTER VI

CHARLES AND IRENE.

THE coronation of Charles the Frank as Emperor of the Romans would perhaps have formed the most fitting conclusion, as it would certainly have been the most dramatic close to this history. It seems, however, more satisfactory to continue the narrative till the death of the new Emperor, as we shall thus have an opportunity of tracing the effect of the revolution of 800 on the statesmen and courtiers of Eastern Europe.

To Charles personally the first fourteen years of the ninth century were a time of comparative rest from the toils of war, of legislative activity for the welfare of his Empire, but also of heavy family affliction through the loss of those upon whom he had reckoned to carry on his glorious work into the next generation.

He spent the year 802 at Aachen, chiefly occupied in revising the national codes and reinvigorating the internal administration of his Empire. We hear now for the first time of his great institution of *missi dominici*, men who were, so to speak, the staff-officers of his administration, sent into every province of his Empire to control the actions of the local courts in the interests of peace and righteousness, pre-eminently to maintain the cause of the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and also to see that the ecclesiastical government was conducted in accordance with the canons, and that the old anarchy and licentiousness did not creep back into the Frankish Church. For the office of *missi* Charles chose chiefly, but not exclusively, archbishops, abbots, and other high dignitaries of the Church, men whose character he had tested during their residence at his court, and whom he felt that he could trust to uphold his standard of right against a grasping count or turbulent mark-grave.

One of the chief duties imposed upon these new officers in the great capitulary of Aachen (March, 802) was the administration to his subjects of a new oath of fidelity, not now to the Frankish King, but to the most serene and most Christian Emperor. 'I order,' he says, 'that every man in my whole kingdom, whether ecclesiastic or layman, each one according to his prayer and his purpose, who may have before promised fidelity to me in the king's name, shall now repeat that promise to me in my name as Caesar. And those who may not yet have made that promise shall now all do so, from twelve years old and upwards. And let this be done in public, so that all may understand how many and how great things are contained in that oath, not merely, as many have hitherto supposed, that they shall not conspire against the Emperor's life, nor let his enemies into the realm, nor be privy to any treachery against him. Far greater duties than these are involved in this oath'. The capitulary then enforces the obligation of each man to abide in the service of God and to dedicate to Him all his bodily and intellectual powers; to abstain from perjury and fraud of all kinds; not to filch the lands of the Emperor nor conceal his fugitive slaves; neither by force nor fraud to do any injury to the holy churches of God, to orphans, widows or strangers, 'forasmuch as our Lord the Emperor, under God and His saints, has been appointed protector and defender of all such'; not to lay waste the land which a man holds in fief from the king in order to enrich his own adjoining property; always to follow the king's banner to war; not to hinder the execution of his writ, nor to strive to pervert the course of justice in the provincial assembly. All these duties are implicitly contained in the new *sacramentum* which is to be administered to the subjects of the Emperor.

Two years after the issue of this capitulary, in 804, came the final close of the long, dreary, and desolating war for the subjugation of the Saxons. It was accompanied by the transportation of ten thousand Saxons with their wives and children, from those districts which had ever been foremost in rebellion, to distant and widely separated provinces of Germany and Gaul. At last the spirit of that proud people was broken. The bishops of Bremen, Munster, and Paderborn could enjoy their princely revenues and rule their wide provinces in peace. Christianity was triumphant, and the 'ban' of the Most Serene Emperor commanded unquestioning obedience from the Rhine to the Elbe.

In November of this same year the Emperor heard the tidings of an intended visit of Pope Leo III to his court. The occasion of this visit was a remarkable one. Charles had heard in the previous summer a startling rumour that some of the actual blood of the Saviour had been discovered—presumably by a miracle—in the city of Mantua. He asked the Pope for a report on this wonderful discovery; and Leo, probably not sorry to have an excuse for leaving Rome where he had many enemies, visited Mantua to obey his patron's behest, and then for the second time crossed the Alps. He was met by the young king Charles at St. Maurice and escorted with much reverence to Rheims, near to which city he met the Emperor. Soissons and Quierzy were the chief stages in their joint journey to Aachen, at which place they kept their Christmas together. Unfortunately no record is preserved to us of the conversations which Emperor and Pope held with one another, whether about the Mantuan prodigy or the many important affairs of Church and State which were doubtless discussed between them. Soon after Epiphany (January 6, 805) Leo III took his departure for Rome, and Charles saw his face no more.

Wars with Denmark, fitful but not unimportant, occupied the years from 808 to 810. Götrik (or Godefrid), king of Denmark, an obstinate heathen, seemed likely at one time to hold the same place as chief foe of the Franks and their Christianity which had once been occupied by Widukind the Saxon. But towards the end of the year 810 came tidings that Götrik had been murdered by one of his own body-guard, and Hemming his nephew gladly concluded a peace, which was unbroken during the remainder of the life of Charles.

This year, 810, is one of great importance in the negotiations between Charles and the Eastern Caesar, and to the earlier stages of these we now turn, after this slight sketch of the events which were occurring in Western Europe.

A general view of the question may be obtained by extracting a few sentences from the chief authorities on either side.

Einhard, the trusted minister of Charles's old age, writes (as we have already seen): 'He bore with great patience the odium that attached to him on account of his new title through the indignation of the Roman Emperors. And he vanquished their stubbornness by his own far-surpassing magnanimity, sending to them frequent embassies, and in his letters addressing them as brothers.'

In an earlier chapter the same author writes: 'The Emperors of Constantinople' ['observe that they are not here spoken of as Roman Emperors], 'Nicephorus, Michael, and Leo, of their own accord seeking his friendship and alliance, sent to him many ambassadors. With whom—notwithstanding the strong suspicion caused by his assumption of the Imperial title, as if he were desirous to wrest the Empire from them—he succeeded in establishing a very durable treaty, so that no occasion for offence remained between the two parties. For to the Romans and Greeks the power of the Franks had always been an object of suspicion; wherefore also this proverb is current among the Greeks, "Have the Frank for a friend, do not have him for a neighbour".'

We now turn to Theophanes, the Byzantine noble-man and monk, the enthusiastic champion of 'the most pious Irene', on account of her zeal for the images of the saints. He says

: ‘In this year (800-801), on the 25th of December, Carolus, king of the Franks, was crowned by Pope Leo; and having planned to cross over to Sicily with a fleet, he changed his mind and chose rather to be married to Irene, sending ambassadors for this purpose, who arrived in the following year.’

Next year (801-802) the legates who were sent by Carolus and by Leo the Pope arrived in presence of Irene, praying her to be yoked in marriage with Carolus and so to bring together in one the Eastern and the Western lands. To which proposal she would have agreed had not the Patrician Aetius hindered her, he being at that time the all-powerful minister, and intriguing to obtain the diadem for his own brother’.

This passage of the Byzantine historian gives us some important information.

I. As to Charles’s alleged designs on Sicily. As has been already said, we are told that in the year 799 an ambassador named Daniel came from Michael, prefect of Sicily, to Charles’s court at Paderborn; that he was there at the same time as the fugitive Pope Leo, and was dismissed with great honour by the king. We have no mention of any commands with which this Sicilian ambassador was entrusted by the Empress. Have we here a cry for help and an offer of transferred allegiance on the part of a prefect of Sicily who is revolting from the rule of Byzantium? Again, in the year 801 or 802 we find a certain Leo, a captain of the guard, a Sicilian by nation, fleeing from Sicily and taking refuge at Charles’s court; but as he is also spoken of as an ambassador sent by Irene ‘to confirm the peace between the Franks and Greeks’, it is possible that we are here only dealing with the case of one of Irene’s creatures involved in her downfall (shortly to be described), and fearing to face the anger of her enemies. Still these slight hints, combined with the words of Theophanes, incline us to the belief that the new Emperor may have cherished the very natural ambition to add Sicily to his Italian dominions. The project may have fallen through on account of the insufficiency of his fleet, or may have been laid aside in order not further to embitter his relations with Constantinople. Sicily never formed part of the Frankish Empire, and only a few years after Charles’s death began its long servitude to Saracen conquerors.

II. We note that, according to the narrative of Theophanes, the ambassadors of Charles were accompanied by legates from the Pope. We can well understand that Leo, if he had not originally suggested the matrimonial scheme, would earnestly desire its success. However plainly we can now see that the current of events was setting towards the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches as its inevitable end, no Pope, who believed in the prerogatives which he claimed, can have accepted such a conclusion without a pang. The iconoclastic schism was at an end.

Irene was nearer to the Pope on the question of image-worship than Charles. Why not unite the chiefs of the Eastern and Western world by the bonds of holy matrimony, and through them rule supreme over an undivided Christendom

III. The cunningly-devised scheme, however, came to an untimely end. Charles’s ambassadors were Jesse bishop of Amiens and Helmgau, apparently one of Jesse and the counts of the palace. Perhaps one of the messengers was not very happily chosen, for Bishop Jesse, though Alcuin praises ‘the deep bull-like bellow of his voice, so fitting in one who has to read the scriptures to the people’, was considered by Pope Leo (to whom he was sent on an embassy six years later, with Helmgau again for his companion) to be an unfit person to be employed as the Emperor’s representative and an unsafe depository of state secrets. But success in the mission was not possible whoever had been the messenger. Irene, after she had by a ghastly crime got rid of her son’s rivalry, became a puppet-ruler in the hands of the eunuchs of her palace. The two chiefs, Stauracius and Aetius, fought hard for the mastery, but the duel was ended by the sickness and death of Stauracius in the summer of the year 800. Aetius, hereby left in a position like that of Grand Vizier in Irene’s cabinet, began to plot for

the elevation of his brother Leo to the Imperial throne, and he was not disposed to allow his plans to be thwarted by this wild scheme of the marriage of his mistress to a Western barbarian.

Soon there supervened another and more powerful reason for the failure of the negotiations. While Jesse and Helmgand were still lingering at Constantinople they witnessed a revolution by which Irene herself was hurled from the throne. Possibly the rumour of the marriage negotiations had alarmed the national pride of the Greeks; more probably the arrogance and ambition of the eunuch Aetius had roused the opposition of some powerful Byzantine nobles. Taking advantage of the Empress's sickness and her consequent absence at the suburban palace of Eleutherium, the grand treasurer Nicephorus, accompanied by Nicetas, chief captain of the guard (whom Aetius supposed to be his friend), and by many other great officers of state, presented himself at the fourth hour of the night before the doors of the Brazen Palace, the innermost sanctuary of Imperial grandeur, and obtained admission from the palace guards, who believed, or pretended to believe, that the intruders came by command of Irene, wearied of the ascendancy of Aetius, to proclaim Nicephorus as her colleague. The palace gained, all the rest was easy. Soldiers were sent at dawn to arrest Irene at the Eleutherium, and Nicephorus with his adherents Emperor, went in procession to the 'Great Church' of St. Sophia, where he was crowned by the patriarch Tarasius, once Irene's own supple minister. Theophanes, who abhors Nicephorus and cannot forgive the wrong done to the 'most pious Irene, the lover of God,' declares that the common people cursed both the crowner and the crowned, but that the nobles of Irene's party, who had received so many benefits at her hands, either turned traitors, or were stricken with a sort of numb despair, and felt as if they were dreaming when they saw 'that wise and noble lady, who had striven so gloriously for the faith, pushed off her throne by a swine-herd like Nicephorus'. Even the heavens, he suggests, shared the sullen indignation of the citizens. The face of the sky was dark, and the cold, unusual for an autumn day at Constantinople, foreboded the chill suspiciousness of the new Emperor and the griping penury to which he would reduce his people.

On the next day Nicephorus went alone and unattended, with no Imperial state, to the room in the palace where Irene was imprisoned. He pointed to his sandals, not purple like those of an Emperor, but black like those of an ordinary subject : he assured her that he had been reluctantly compelled to assume the diadem, and cursed the turbulent ambition of his supporters. Then in gentle tones he tried to soothe her fears, he gave a little homily on the evils of avarice, and conjured her to deal frankly with him and tell him where all the Imperial treasure was deposited. With more dignity than might have been expected from a woman who had loved empire so passionately, Irene said that she had recognized the hand of God in her unexpected elevation to the throne, and now recognized the same hand, chastising her for her sins, in her deposition. She had been often warned, she said, of the ambitious designs of Nicephorus, but had rejected what she believed to be the calumnious aspersions on his loyalty, and had preserved his life. Too late she learned that those calumnies were true. However, he was now her Emperor, and she as his subject would pay him reverence. She only asked to be allowed to retire to the palace of Eleutherium which she had herself built, and there spend the rest of her days in privacy. Her request, said Nicephorus, should be granted if she would swear to reveal to him the place of deposit of the Imperial treasure. She swore on the honourable and life-giving wood of the cross that she would show him everything, to the last obol: and straightway fulfilled her promise. He, having obtained what he desired, transported her, not to the palace of Eleutherium, but, first, to a convent on Princes' Island in the Sea of Marmora. Then fearing that the hearts of the people were again turning towards her, he removed her, on a bitterly cold day of November, to the island of Lemnos, where she was kept under strictest guard. She died on the 9th of August in the following year (803), and her body was removed to Princes' Island, and buried in the convent which she had founded there.

Theophanes relates—surely with a slight touch of malice—that the deportation of Irene took place under the very eyes of the legates of ‘Carulus’ who were still abiding in the city. There does not seem to have been any rumour of an expedition by the Frankish Emperor to deliver or to avenge the lady of his choice. The days of knight-errantry were not yet, and there was no touch of romance in Charles’s offer of marriage. It was only a cold-blooded piece of political calculation, and that calculation had failed, as it was assuredly bound to fail in any event. Had Charles succeeded, had he broken up the happiness of his home by introducing into the gay and brilliant circle of his sons and daughters at the waters of Granius, this grim and sanctimonious Medea of Byzantium, he would have found after all that the Eastern diadem was not to be purchased, even by such a sacrifice. It was in the nature of things impossible that the Rhine could be ruled from the Bosphorus or the Bosphorus from the Rhine. The proposed alliance between Constantine VI and Hrotrud, had it taken place before 800, might have changed the face of Europe; but now, after the challenge had been given to Byzantium by Charles’s coronation as Emperor at Rome, no makeshift scheme of marriage could heal the fatal schism. East and West must remain divided for evermore

CHAPTER VII

VENICE.

THE new Emperor Nicephorus who had won the diadem from Irene belonged neither to the best nor to the worst class of Byzantine sovereigns. His office before he mounted the throne had been that of Grand Logothete or Arch-treasurer, and a Grand Logothete he remained to the end of his career. He was intent on finding out new sources of taxation, and re-imposed some duties on imports which Irene had perhaps unwisely remitted for the sake of popularity. In pursuance of the same end he deprived the convent and church lands of the exemption from the hearth-tax which they had hitherto enjoyed. At the same time, though not reverting to the iconoclastic policy of the Isaurian Emperors, he showed himself languid in his defence of orthodoxy, and refused to persecute the Paulician dissenters from the Catholic Church. He thus came into collision with that fierce defender of the faith, Theodore of Studium, and his name is therefore loaded with abuse by the bigoted Theophanes. This abuse, as he did not redeem his heresy by military talent, like Leo III and Constantine V, as he fought feebly against the Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid, and as his life and reign ended in a terrible disaster, inflicted by the Bulgarian ravagers, has clung perhaps too persistently to his memory. Clio may always safely scold an unsuccessful sovereign.

On his first assumption of the diadem, Nicephorus, perhaps feeling the need of some strong external support, showed himself willing to enter into diplomatic relations with Charles, though the title of the Frankish Augustus challenged his Imperial claims even more directly than those of a female sovereign like Irene. Overlooking this fact, however, Nicephorus commissioned three ambassadors, a bishop named Michael, an abbot, Peter, and a white-uniformed officer of the guards named Callistus, to accompany Charles's legates, Jesse and Helmgand, on their return to the Frankish court. They found the Emperor July (?), at Salz on the Franconian Saale, were courteously received by him, and carried back with them what we should call a draft treaty of peace between the two monarchs, bearing Charles's signature. There can be little doubt that this document contained some stipulation for the recognition by the Eastern Caesar of the Frank's imperial dignity: but it is equally plain that this recognition was withheld. The answer from Constantinople, though eagerly expected, did not arrive: there was for eight years a suspension of diplomatic relations between the two courts, and the Empires drifted from a position first of sullen isolation and at last of active and declared hostility.

What may have been the motive of Nicephorus for thus uncourteously closing negotiations which he himself had opened we are not informed. Possibly he saw that his own subjects would not tolerate a recognition which seemed like a dethronement of the New Rome in favour of the Old. The relations between the two Churches also were becoming more and more embittered, and the two disputes, ecclesiastical and political, acted and reacted upon one another. On the one hand, we have (in 809) the piteous complaint of the monks on Mount Olivet to the Pope that the abbot of S. Saba called them heretics and cast them rudely out of the cave of the Nativity at Bethlehem, because they sang the Nicene Creed with the added words concerning the Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son.' 'Pray inform our Lord Charles the Emperor,' they say, 'that we heard these words, which we are accounted heretics for using, sung in his own chapel'. They evidently hoped that the long arm of the mighty Frank, the rival of Nicephorus and the ally of Caliph Haroun and his son, would be

stretched forth to protect them from the arrogant Greeks'. On the other hand, Nicephorus the patriarch of Constantinople (who was raised to that dignity in February, 806, on the death of Tarasius) was, throughout the lifetime of his Imperial namesake, forbidden to hold any communication with the see of Rome, evidently because Leo was supposed to be devoted to the interests of Charles.

The quarrel thus commenced between the two Empires was fought out in the Waters of the Adriatic, and we must therefore turn our attention to the little cities of maritime Venetia which have hitherto (save for one passing allusion in the letters of Hadrian) been unnoticed since the year 740, when they took part in the recapture of Ravenna from Liutprand

At the period of that recapture we found the Venetian islanders trying abortive changes in their constitution, substituting *Magistri Militiae* for Dukes, and then finally settling down again under the rule of their old chief magistrate, the *Dux Venetiarum*.

The title of *Doge*—the form which this Latin word assumed in the Venetian dialect—has been made famous over the wide world by the exploits and the disasters, the virtues and the vices of the statesmen who for 'a thousand years of glory' presided over the fortunes of the Venetian state. But for that very reason I prefer not to use it at the present early period of their history. Too many and too proud associations are connected with that form of the name. In the eighth century the Duke of Venice differed little from the Duke of Naples or any other duke of a city under the Byzantine rule, save that perhaps already the people had a larger share in his election than in most of those other cities. Therefore the first man in the Venetian state shall still be to us a Duke and not a Doge.

After the restoration of the ducal dignity, three dukes, *Deusdedit*, *Galla*, and *Domenicus* (surnamed *Monegarius*), followed one another in somewhat rapid succession. Each precarious reign came to a violent end. Deusdedit (742-755) was supplanted by the traitor Galla; Galla (755-756) was upset by a popular revolution; Monegarius (756-764) was the victim of a conspiracy; and each duke as he fell from power was subjected to the cruel punishment of the plucking out of his eyes, a punishment which the Venetians had perhaps adopted from their Byzantine overlords.

The only point in the history of these shadowy dukes which seems worthy of notice is the limitation which the Venetians imposed on the power of Monegarius. Joannes Diaconus informs us that the Venetians when they had raised this duke to power, 'after the fashion of the vulgar herd, who never remain long in one fixed purpose, but with superstitious folly are always looking out for one political nostrum after another, in the first year of Monegarius' duchy set over themselves two tribunes, who were to hold office under the ducal decree; an expedient which they tried' [but apparently tried vainly] 'to repeat, for each successive year of his tenure of the duchy'. We surely behold in this abortive attempt to limit the power of the sovereign the promptings of the same spirit which in the fourteenth century devised the Council of Ten and in the fifteenth gave birth to the awful tribunal of the Invisible Three.

On the deposition of the unpopular Monegarius a citizen of Heraclea named Mauritius was elected duke, a grave and statesmanlike man, who seems to have governed the islands well for twenty-three years (764-787). It was perhaps a sign of his statesman-like prudence that he accepted the long low island of Malamocco (which had been the seat of government since the accession of Deusdedit) as his residence, and did not attempt to make his native city Heraclea once more the capital. For still the Genius of the Venetian Republic had not found its destined home. It was to be found at Malamocco, on the Lido, at Torcello; anywhere but on the hundred islands of the Deep Stream. However, the day was drawing near. In the eleventh year of Duke Mauritius' reign (775) the little island of Olivolo, the easternmost of the cluster on which Venice now stands, was by Papal authority erected into a new bishopric; an indication that inhabitants were beginning to settle in that neighbourhood.

Party spirit, as we can see from the annals of that stormy time, ran high in the Venetian islands. The old rivalry between Heraclea and Equilium may probably have been still smouldering. It is also clear that there were two parties in the confederacy, one of which looked towards the sea and was in favour of loyal submission to the Byzantine Emperor, while the other looked landward and was ready to accept patronage (not perhaps domination), first from the Lombard and then from the Frankish rulers of the Terra Firma of Italy. It was indeed inherent in the nature of things that this should be so. Venice's only chance of obtaining or preserving freedom or self-government lay in the balanced strength of these two Empires, either of which could crush her if it stood alone. And moreover the course of her trade required that she should be on fairly good terms with both these powers, each of which was a customer, while each supplied her with some part of the staple of her trade. From Charles's dominions she received the Frisian wool which she wove into cloth, and exported in the shape of rugs and mantles to the Saracens of Bagdad. On the other hand, from all the countries of 'the gorgeous East' she was beginning to import the costly fabrics of silk and velvet, the mantles trimmed with peacock and ostrich feathers, the furs of sable and ermine which she was sending over the passes of the Alps for sale to the splendour-loving nobles of Rhineland and Burgundy.

Along with this legitimate trading, however, the Venetian islanders appear to have carried on a traffic in slaves, of a kind which was condemned by the conscience of Christian Europe. In the days of Pope Zacharias, as we learn from the *Liber Pontificalis*, Venetian merchants were wont to visit Rome, and in the markets of that city (such markets as that wherein Gregory the Great saw the boys from Deira exposed for sale) they bought a multitude of slaves, both male and female, whom they shipped off to Africa to be sold to the subjects of the Abbasside or Aglabite Caliphs. Though slavery was not yet a forbidden institution, this selling of Italian peasants, baptized Christians, into bondage to the Moors, shocked the feelings of Christendom. Zacharias redeemed the captives whom the Venetians had bought, and prohibited that trade for the future in the markets of Rome : but it is not probable that he had the power to prevent it in other cities of Italy. It seems likely that the slave trade for which Charles rebuked the subjects of Hadrian and the shame of which the Pope threw back upon the 'Greek' traders, may have been, in part at least, carried on by the enterprising merchants of Heraclea and Malamocco.

The only blot on the wise administration of Duke Mauritius, so far as it has been recorded, was his attempt to make the ducal dignity hereditary in his family. Nine years before his death he persuaded the Venetians, 'eager to give him pleasure', to associate with him in the duchy his son Joannes, who after his death reigned for some time alone, and in the seventh year (787-804) of, his reign associated with himself his son Mauritius II. Neither son nor grandson seems to have been a worthy ruler of the Venetian state. Of Joannes, the chronicler writes, 'Neither by written document nor by oral tradition can I find that he handled affairs well for the advantage of his country'. He remarks in passing that in the time of the joint government of these two men, Joannes and Mauritius, 'the sea overflowed so much that it unreasonably covered all the islands'.

During all this time, and in fact for nearly seven centuries longer, the ecclesiastical head of the Venetian state was to be found at the little city of Grado, fifty miles away from Venice, wearing the proud title of patriarch, and often disputing with his neighbour and old rival the patriarch of Aquileia. At the beginning of the ninth century, John, patriarch of Grado, had in some way incurred the displeasure of the duke of Venice, who sent his son, the young Mauritius, with a fleet to execute his vengeance. The patriarch was captured and was thrown headlong from the loftiest turret of his palace. 'His death,' says the chronicler, 'caused great grief to his fellow-citizens, for he was slain as an innocent man, and he had governed the Church of Grado for thirty-six years'. He was buried near the tombs of the martyrs, and for generations the stain of his blood upon the stones was shown to wondering visitors.

The successor of the slain patriarch was his kinsman, Fortunatus of Trieste. A restless and intriguing politician rather than a churchman, Fortunatus devoted all his energies to avenging the murder of his relative with perhaps the additional object of wresting the ecclesiastical province of Istria from his rival of Aquileia and subduing it to his own jurisdiction. Some years after the time which we have now reached, Pope Leo, even while pleading for the bestowal of some ecclesiastical preferment on Fortunatus, added a postscript begging the Emperor Charles to care for his soul and admonish him as to the discharge of his spiritual duties. 'For I hear such things concerning him as are not seemly in an archbishop, neither in his own country nor in those districts of Frank-land where you have given him preferment.'

The intrigues of the new patriarch against the dukes of Venetia having been detected, he was compelled to take refuge in Charles's dominions. He crossed the Alps, and at last reached the Emperor's court, which was still being held at Franconian Salz. In order to conciliate Charles's favour, he brought with him as a present two ivory doors carved with marvellous workmanship. These doors perhaps resembled the curious ivory plaques, representing scenes from the life of the Saviour, which still adorn the episcopal throne of Maximian at Ravenna. At the same time two Venetian tribunes, Obelerius of Malamocco and Felix, together with some others of the chief men in the islands, fled to the mainland, but did not go further than the city of Treviso. Whether or not their flight was the result of a discovered plan of rebellion in which Fortunatus was their accomplice we are not clearly informed, but so it was that the Trevisan refugees, in correspondence with their partisans in Venetia, succeeded in effecting a revolution. Obelerius was chosen duke; Joannes and Mauritius, who evidently had lost all hold on the affections of the people, fled to the mainland, Mauritius across the Alps into Frank-land, Joannes to Mantua, and neither of them ever returned to the island-duchy.

Obelerius (whom the Frankish annalists call Willeri or Wilharenus) held the ducal office for six years; and with him were associated two of his brothers, first Beatus and then Valentinus. This period is one of the most important but also one of the most obscure in the early history of Venice. There was evidently a sharp struggle for supremacy between the Byzantine and the Frankish parties in Venetia, but on which side the ducal influence was thrown it is not easy to say. Later tradition assigned to Obelerius a Frankish wife (whom one chronicler, in defiance of all known facts, even called a daughter of Charles), and declared that under her influence he played the traitor to the true interests of his country and made himself the pliant instrument of the Frankish court. On the other hand, we find him accepting at the hands of the Greek general Nicetas the dignity of Spatharius, and his brother Beatus going with the same Nicetas to Constantinople and returning decorated with the honour of a consulship. Probably the fact was that the Venetian dukes were in their heart true to neither power, but trimmed their sails adroitly, as the breeze seemed blowing most steadily from the East or from the West, and thus made themselves suspected by both.

However, one fact vouched for by the Frankish annalist stands out clear and incontestable. In the 806, Venetia with the opposite coast of Dalmatia became for the time a recognised part of the Western Empire. In the Christmas of that year, Charles was holding his court at the villa of Theodo on the Moselle, and 'thither came [the so-called] Willeri and Beatus, dukes of Venetia, together with Paulus duke of Zara, and Donatus bishop of the same city, ambassadors of the Dalmatians, with great gifts, into the presence of the Emperor. And there the Emperor made an ordinance concerning the dukes and their subjects, as well of Venetia as of Dalmatia.' This is the first mention that we have had of Dalmatia, the first hint that Charles's empire was extending down the eastern shore of the Adriatic; and it is perhaps accounted for by the fact (recorded by Joannes Diaconus) that the two Venetian dukes soon after their accession had 'sent forth a naval armament to lay waste the province of Dalmatia'. That is to say, that Obelerius and Beatus having decided, for the time, to accept the protection

of Charles rather than that of Nicephorus, constrained their Dalmatian neighbours to follow their example.

The subjection of Venetia and Dalmatia to the Frankish power, although but temporary, seems to have been the exciting cause which changed the smouldering ill-will of the Byzantine ruler into active hostility. In the latter part of the year 806 a fleet was sent from Constantinople into the Adriatic under the command of the patrician Nicetas. Dalmatia appears to have been first subdued, and then the fleet came into Venetian waters. Fortunatus the patriarch, that stormy petrel of Venetian politics, who had not long returned to his see of Grado, quitted it in haste when the ships of Nicetas were seen in the distance, and fled again to his Frankish patron. The operations of Nicetas seem to have been completely and speedily successful, and through the greater part of the year 807 he remained with his fleet in the Venetian waters, wielding probably the same kind of authority which an exarch of Ravenna had possessed while exarchs still remained. It was at this time that Obelerius received from Nicetas the dignity of Spatharius, and consented that his brother Beatus should go, virtually as a hostage, to Constantinople. The young Frankish king Pippin had evidently at this time no fleet with which he could pretend to meet the Imperial squadron, and he was fain to consent to a suspension of hostilities till August, 808, which gave Nicetas time to return to Constantinople. He took with him not only the ducal hostage Beatus, but two prisoners, Christopher, bishop of Olivolo (a young Greek who had become a vehement partisan of Fortunatus and had thus probably been drawn into anti-Byzantine courses), and the tribune Felix, who had taken a leading part in the revolution of 804, and had perhaps thus incurred the displeasure of Constantinople. Both these captives appeared in the presence of 'Augustus' (Nicephorus), and were by him sentenced to perpetual banishment.

To this period is referred one of the most mysterious events in the early history of Venetia—the partial destruction of the city which had once been her capital, the proud and turbulent Heraclea. That the destruction was the work of Venetian hands is clear, but the motive which prompted it is not manifest. We have not heard for some time of the old feuds between Heraclea and Equilium, but it is probable that they had broken out afresh. There are some indications that Equilium herself shared the fate of her rival—Dandolo records at great length the names of the families belonging to both cities which were transported thence to Rialto—and it seems possible that the other islanders came to the conclusion that this sempiternal quarrel would only be appeased when the waters of the lagunes flowed over the burnt ruins of both the rivals. Possibly, too, the party which looked seawards and eastwards for the future of Venetian politics, deemed it desirable to destroy such of the cities as were situated on Terra Firma, lest they should be used hereafter as hostages by the Frankish lords of Italy and hinder the free and unshackled growth of the city of the Lagunes.

At the end of the truce the Byzantine fleet returned first to Dalmatia and then to the Venetian waters, where it abode during the winter. Its commander was now not Nicetas but an officer named Paulus, and he early in 809 made an attack on Comacchio, the city which, as we have seen, marked the extreme northern limit of the Papal territory. The attack was successfully repelled by the garrison—we have no indication whether its commander was in the Papal or the Frankish service—and after this failure Paulus opened negotiations for peace with the young king of Italy. It is possible that herein he somewhat exceeded his commission: but, however that may be, the negotiations came to nothing, being frustrated, as the Franks believed, by the tricks and devices of the dukes of Venetia, whose interest required that the two Empires should continue hostile. The Byzantine admiral, discovering their treachery, and having reason to believe that they were even plotting his assassination, weighed anchor and sailed away from the lagunes, leaving the ungrateful islanders to their fate.

Now, in the year 810, followed that great invasion of Venetia by Pippin which is the first conspicuous event in the history of the island-state, an event glorified by painting and by song, but as to the real history of which we are still profoundly ignorant. It is a hopeless task to attempt to combine the various accounts of this campaign into one consistent narrative, and they must therefore be reproduced separately with all their mutual divergences. We have (1) the Frankish account of the affair, (2) the early, and fairly trustworthy, Venetian account of it, (3) the Byzantine version, and (4) the legends which passed current concerning it in the thirteenth century, and which may contain some precious grains of historic truth, or may be absolute romance.

I. The Frankish narrative: ‘Meanwhile King Pippin, roused by the perfidy of the Venetian dukes, ordered [his generals] to make war on Venetia both by sea and land, and having subjected that region and received the surrender of its dukes, he sent the same fleet to lay waste the shores of Dalmatia. But when Paulus the prefect of Cephalonia came with the Eastern fleet to the help of the Dalmatians the royal [Frankish] fleet returned to its own quarters’.

II. The early Venetian narrative: ‘Meanwhile the treaty which the peoples of the Venetian [islands] had of old with the Italian king was at this time broken by the action of King Pippin. For that king moved forward an immense army of the Lombards in order to capture the province of the Venetians; and when with great difficulty he had passed through the harbours which divide the shores of the islands, he at last came to a certain place which is called Albiola, but he was by no means able to penetrate further in, and there the dukes, begirt by a great array of the Venetians, boldly attacked the same king, and by the grace of God a triumph was given to the Venetians over their enemies, and thus the aforesaid king retired in confusion.’

III. The narrative of the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus : ‘Many years after the departure of Attila there came [against Venetia] Pippin the king, who then ruled over Pavia and other kingdoms, for this Pippin had three brothers who ruled over all the Franks and Sclavonians. Now when King Pippin had come against the Venetians with great power and a multitude of people, he encamped on the mainland on the other side of the channel between the Venetian islands, at a place which is called Aeibolae. The Venetians then, seeing King Pippin with his power coming against them and intending to disembark with his cavalry at the island of Madamaucus, for that is the island nearest to the mainland, by throwing masts [across] blocked up the whole of the passage. Pippin’s followers being thus defeated in their design, since there was no other available passage, took up their quarters for six months on the mainland, and made war every day on the Venetians. The latter went on board their ships and stationed themselves behind the masts which they had placed there, while King Pippin stood with his people on the shore. The Venetians fought with bows and missile weapons, not suffering them to cross over to the island. Then King Pippin, being at his wits’ end, said to the Venetians, ‘Come under my hand and sovereignty, since you belong to my country and sphere of rule’. But the Venetians answered, ‘We are servants of the Emperor of the Romans, and not of thee’. But [at last] being overcome by the harassment which he caused them, they made a treaty of peace with King Pippin on condition of paying a large tribute. But from that day the tribute has been continually diminished, yet it subsists even till the present time : for the Venetians pay to him who holds the kingdom of Italy or of Pavia every year thirty-six pounds of uncoined silver’.

IV. The legendary story : ‘Belenger (Obelerius), duke of Venice, was a traitor, and went to France with the priest Fortunatus and his wife, and persuaded Charles, son of lord Pippin, and Emperor, to invade Venetia. He came to Methamaucus (Malamocco), which was at that time a very fair city of the Venetians, and when the inhabitants saw King Charles approaching with his great array, they all fled, both great and small, into the capital city of the Venetians

which is called Rialto, and there remained in Methamaucus only one old lady. Then when Charles was in seizing of that city, he began the siege of the capital, and was there for six months, his men living in tents along the sea-shore, and making prisoners of the Venetians who passed that way in their ships. But one day when the Venetians came to the melée with the Franks, having great quantity of bread in their ships they hurled some of it against the Franks. This disheartened Charles, who hoped to reduce the enemy by famine. Then he sent to seek for the one old lady who was left behind in Methamaucus. When she was brought into his presence his retainers treated her discourteously, but he said to her, "Tell me, dost thou know of any device by which I may enter yonder city?" The old lady said, "They were bad men who fled away, taking all the city's treasure with them, and left me here to perish miserably. But if you will give me two squires who will conduct me into that city, I know many poor men there who, if you will give them some of your money, will make such a contrivance as shall bring you and your men into the city." The Emperor hearing this believed the old lady, gave her some of his money, and caused her to be rowed across into the city, where she spoke to the duke and revealed to him all that the king had said to her. Hereupon the duke gave her a hundred artisans, with whom she returned to the king, and said, "Sire, give of your substance to these men that they may make a bridge of osier wood across the water by which your horsemen may enter the city." Then King Charles gave of his substance to these artisans, and they bought boats and wood and ropes, and made the bridge over the water and bound it fast to the ropes. And when King Charles saw the bridge he believed right well that his men might mount upon it and go into the city. And the old lady said to him, "Sire, let your men cross over this bridge by night and they will find the Venetians in their beds and you will have the city without fail."

'When the night came, the Franks went with their horses on to the bridge, and the artisans who had made it began to sail towards the city. But when the horses smelt the water they began to fall this way and that, and broke their legs, and knocked their heads against the sides, and thus they broke the bridge, and the riders fell into the water and were drowned therein.

The old lady and the Venetian workmen fled into the city, and the Venetians went on board their ships and surrounded Methamaucus and found there King Charles the Emperor, who was in a great rage and cursed grievously when he saw the loss of so many of his men and horses, and the sea covered with their dead bodies and the wreckage of the bridge scattered hither and thither. And when the Emperor saw the Venetians with their navy all well-armed, he said, "Where is the Duke?". Then they prayed him to come on shore, and my lord duke Beatus met him there, and Charles and all his knights dismounted, and the Emperor asked Beatus for news of his brother, duke Belenger, and said before all the Venetian nobles that Belenger had counselled him to come and take Venice, to which Beatus and the other Venetians said nothing, because they were determined to take vengeance of Belenger. Then they prayed King Charles to come and see the chief city of the Venetians. And the king kissed the duke and all the other noble Venetians who were there, and then he went on board the duke's vessel. And while they were sailing along lord Charles held a mighty great spear in his hand, and when he saw the greenest and deepest water, he threw his spear into the sea with all his force and said, "As surely as that spear which I have thrown into the sea shall never be seen again by me, nor by you, nor by any other creature, so surely shall no man in the world ever have power to hurt the kingdom of Venice, and he who shall desire to hurt her, on him let fall the' wrath and the vengeance of our Lady, as it has fallen on me and on my people." All the clergy and people of Venice were assembled to meet King Charles when he landed, and on his return from the church to which he at first repaired they gave him a great banquet, and then escorted him to Ferrara'. The chronicler then goes on to describe the measures taken with reference to the traitorous duke 'Belenger,' but we need not further follow his untrustworthy recital.

It has seemed better to quote this romance at length in order that the reader may see the whole absurdity of it at once. It cannot be necessary to point out its utterly unhistorical character. Charles the Great probably never visited Venice : he was certainly not south of the Alps in the year 810. Nor is the story made credible by substituting Pippin's name for that of his father. The loaves of bread discharged from the Venetian catapults; the old dame of Malamocco with her hundred working men from Venice; the bridge (more than a mile long) from Malamocco to Rialto made by the Venetian artisans and broken to pieces by the stumbling horses,—all these incidents evidently belong to the domain of mere fiction and are inspired by the wildest spirit of medieval mythology. But the historian of Venice will never be able entirely to disregard even this preposterous legend, since, pruned of some of its more obvious absurdities, it has found a place in the classic pages of Andrea Dandolo, and it is portrayed in two large pictures by Vicentino on the walls of the *Sala dello Scrutinio* in the Ducal Palace. For generations to come, visitors to Venice will no doubt gaze upon those painted romances and believe that they record actual events in the earliest history of the great Republic.

When we come to discuss the small residuum of historic fact at the bottom of all this foam and froth of patriotic imaginings, all that we can safely say is that the young king Pippin instituted a strict blockade of the Venetian islands, which may have lasted for half a year; that he possibly made an unsuccessful attempt to penetrate to the inner group of islands, which was, however, of the less importance because Malamocco not Rialto was still the chief seat of the Venetian state; but that the injury which his blockade did to the commerce of the islanders was so considerable that in the end, seeing themselves abandoned by their Byzantine protectors, they consented to accept Charles as their overlord, and to pay him a certain yearly tribute.

That this was in fact the result of Pippin's expedition, that it was not a failure in the end, whatever partial reverses he may have met with, is sufficiently shown by the words of the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, whose account of Pippin's Venetian campaign seems on the whole the most worthy of credence. He had no motive to magnify, but rather strong motives to minimize, the degree of the Venetian subjugation to the Western ruler: yet he evidently implies that Pippin's operations, though by no means brilliant, were on the whole successful.

We shall find, however, that Frankish domination over Venetia was short-lived. The real world-historical importance of Pippin's invasion lay in the fact that it opened the eyes of the Venetians to the insecurity of their position at Malamocco and the other islands of the outer barrier of the lagunes. One of their first acts after the restoration of peace was formally to remove the capital of their state to the place named the Deep Channel (*Rivus Altus*). There, in that little cluster of islands, sheltered from attack by land or sea, in a spot whose narrow and winding channels were accessible to commerce but inaccessible to war, they reared that wonderful city which has made the name of Rialto for ever memorable in the literature of the world.

This was the true foundation of Venice, the true beginning of her proud history. All that had gone before was but a prologue, spoken on some one or other of the outlying islands, to the mighty drama of the *Bride of the Sea*. It interests us Englishmen to remember that only eight years before the foundation of the new Venice, Egbert the West-Saxon, having been long an exile at the court of Charles the Great, returned to his own country, and assumed, first of all his race, the title of King of England. The two ocean queens were born, as it were, on the same day.

After receiving the submission of Venice, Pippin sailed to the coast of Dalmatia, but here he was met by a Byzantine navy under the command of Paulus, Prefect of Cephalaria, and was compelled to retire without having achieved any conquest. Very soon after his return he died,

on the 8th of July, 810, and was buried at Milan, where his tombstone, a slab of white marble, was discovered not many years ago in the church of St. Ambrose. What was the nature of the disease which carried off the young, brave, and ‘beautiful king of Italy in the 33rd year of his age’, we are not informed. It is an obvious conjecture that it was connected in some way with his Venetian and Dalmatian campaign, and that either chagrin at his partial failure or a fever caught during his encampment by the lagunes winged the arrow of death: but this is only a conjecture unsupported by any sentence in our authorities.

Pippin left five daughters, who after his death were educated at their grandfather’s court, and a son, Bernard, whose story is one of the saddest pages in the family history of the Carolingians. Two years after his father’s death he was proclaimed king of Italy (or perhaps rather in official style, king of the Lombards), and was sent to govern his father’s realm, which had during the interval been ruled by *missi dominici*, chief among them Charles’s cousin Adalhard, abbot of Corbie, the generous defender of the divorced Desiderata². Bernard was probably at this time about fifteen years of age. His revolt against his uncle Louis the Pious, his cruel death, and the depressing influence of remorse for that crime on his uncle’s character, all lie outside the range of this history.

Before the news of the death of Pippin had reached the Byzantine court, Nicephorus had despatched to Italy a messenger, Arsafius the *Spatharius*, to see if he could arrange terms of peace between the two great Adriatic powers. There was this advantage in directing the embassy to Pippin, king of the Lombards, that the difficult question of the recognition of Charles as Emperor of the Romans was thereby evaded, but that advantage was of course lost when the ambassador, arriving at Milan or Pavia, found the palace empty and Pippin in his grave. However the old Emperor, who had long been waiting for some such tender of the olive-branch from Constantinople, succeeded in inducing Arsafius to cross the Alps and take up with himself at Aachen the web of diplomacy which was to have been woven with his son. A few sentences from Charles’s letter to Nicephorus, written in the early part of 811, will best explain the then existing posture of affairs :—

‘We have received with all honour the ambassador Arsafius, whom you sent with a verbal message and with letters to our son Pippin, of blessed memory. And though he was not accredited directly to us, yet perceiving him to be a prudent man, we have held discourse with him and given diligent heed to the things which he had to relate. And with good reason, for his messages, both written and verbal, were so full of the desire for peace and mutual charity that only a fool would have found them uninteresting. Wherefore, as soon as we heard that he had come to the borders of our realm, a happy instinct moved us to desire that he should be brought into our presence; and now since he to whom he was sent, our dear son, by God’s providence has been removed from human affairs, we resolved that he should not return empty-handed nor with the disappointment of a mission unperformed.

‘And not only so: but looking back to the time when, in the first year of your reign, you sent the metropolitan Michael, and the abbot Peter, and the life-guardsman Callistus to settle the terms of peace with us and to federate and unite these two realms in the love of Christ, we remained like one standing on a watch-tower, waiting for the appearance of the messenger or the letter which should bring back to us the reply of your amiable Brotherhood. But now—such is the natural weakness of the human mind—hope in this matter had well-nigh given place to despair. Still we trusted in Him who never deserts those who put their confidence in Him, and believed that, as the Apostle says, He would not suffer our labour to be in vain in the Lord. Therefore we greatly rejoiced when we heard of the arrival of your messenger the glorious Spatharius Arsafius, believing that we should arrive at the much desired certainty concerning the things which were left uncertain, and that we should receive your answer to the letters which we gave to your aforesaid messengers. And so in fact it has proved, for we look upon

the words and letters which have thus been addressed to our son as substantially containing the desired reply. Wherefore with thanks to Almighty God who has thus breathed into your heart the desire for peace, we at once without doubt or delay have prepared our embassy to your amiable Brotherhood’.

This letter is important as a comment on Einhard’s words, ‘Charles bore with patience the indignation of the Roman emperors and vanquished their stubbornness by his frequent embassies and fraternal letters’. It explains the strained relations which undoubtedly for eight years (803-811) existed between the two empires. And it entirely disposes of the erroneous statement made by Dandolo, and on his authority largely adopted even by accurate historians, that the arrangement for fixing the boundaries of the two empires, which I am now about to describe, was concluded in 803 instead of eight years later.

It was a striking illustration of the wide-reaching character of Charles’s statesmanship that the ambassadors from Constantinople met at Aachen the ambassadors from Cordova who had come to negotiate a peace on behalf of the Emir El Hakem, the tyrannical sovereign of Moorish Spain.

The ambassadors whom Charles now despatched to Constantinople were three, Haido bishop of Basle, Hugo count of Tours, and Aio a Lombard of Friuli. The terms of the treaty of peace which they were authorized to conclude were on Charles’s part the surrender of the Venetian islands and of the maritime cities of Dalmatia, that is practically of the whole coast-line of the Northern and Eastern Adriatic. On the part of Nicephorus there can be no doubt, though it is nowhere distinctly stated in our authorities, that the essential condition was the recognition of Charles as Emperor, that is virtually the admission that the Empire was now no longer one, but two.

Charles’s abandonment of Venice involved the abandonment of the duke Obelerius, who had certainly been disloyal to the Byzantine, if not too faithful to the Frank. The ambassadors who were sent to Constantinople took him with them in their train and handed him over to the Eastern Caesar, along with the Sicilian Leo who, as we have seen, ten years before had fled for refuge to Charles’s court. Obelerius was probably condemned to perpetual exile, certainly not put to death, since twenty years later he returned to Venice and attempted a counter-revolution which cost him his life.

As the claim of the Eastern Emperor to the overlordship of Venice was now undisputed, the election of a successor to Obelerius and his brothers—all now deposed—was held under the presidency of Arsafius, and the choice fell upon Agnellus who, according to the lately introduced expedient, had two tribunes assigned to him yearly as his assessors. Agnellus, who figures in the later histories of Venice as Angelo Participazio or Badoer, seems to have been a wise and prudent ruler. His son Joannes was for a time associated with him in the sovereignty, and men of the lineage of Agnellus were generally to be found on the list of the dukes of Venice for nearly a century and a half from his elevation.

This duke is a figure of especial interest for all lovers of art, as he was the first founder of the great Ducal Palace. The building raised by him was still standing at the end of the tenth century when Joannes Diaconus, chaplain of the Doge of Venice, wrote his history.

As we are here leaving the story of the Venetian to commonwealth it should be mentioned that the fortunes of the patriarch Fortunatus appear not to have been neglected by his Frankish patron. As a result of the negotiations at Aachen this refugee bishop seems to have been permitted to return to his see of Grado, to which by Charles’s permission he was probably allowed to subject the dioceses of Istria.

The fact that in this severance between the Eastern and Western Empires, Venice was allotted to the former, was of transcendent importance in the history of the Queen of the Adriatic. It is true that her subjection to the Augustus at Constantinople was of the gentlest

kind and transformed itself with little difficulty, in the course of the ninth and tenth centuries, from subjection to alliance. Still that subjection, or connection, did exist and always enabled Venetian statesmen to plead that they were de jure as well as de facto independent of the Western Empire, thus preventing them from being swallowed up in that morass of feudal anarchy into which the Carolingian Empire sank so soon after the death of its founder. Had it not been for the treaty of Aachen it is possible that instead of the gorgeous city of the Rialto the world would have seen a petty town with insignificant commerce, taxed and tolled, and judged or misjudged without mercy at the caprice of some turbulent little baron, her feudal superior.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FINAL RECOGNITION.

THOUGH the treaty of Aachen was virtually concluded with Nicephorus, its final ratification did not fall within that Emperor's reign. When Charles's ambassadors arrived in Constantinople, they probably heard the terrible tidings of the overthrow of Nicephorus by the Bulgarians. The Logothete-Emperor had collected a fine army and had led it, confident of success, against his turbulent neighbour Crum, king of the Bulgarians. The campaign opened brightly : he took and plundered Crum's palace, and received an embassy from that barbarian suing almost abjectly for peace. Puffed up with success, Nicephorus refused to grant it and thereupon the Bulgarian king, driven to despair, drew a line of circumvallation round the camp of the invaders, harassed and terrified them by 'alarums and excursions,' and finally at nightfall stormed their camp and slew Nicephorus himself, nearly all his officers, and private soldiers more than could be numbered. The disaster must have been as signal as the defeat of Valens by the Visigoths, and like that defeat, it was the result of a combination of arrogance and bad generalship. The head of Nicephorus, severed from his body and fixed on a pole, was for days exhibited by the victor in savage scorn to the officers of the barbarous tribes who served under his banner. After this he caused the flesh to be removed, mounted the skull in silver, and was wont to invite the Sclavic chiefs who visited his palace to drink to him out of the skull of a Roman Emperor.

The son of Nicephorus severely wounded in the great battle, reigned but for a few months, and was then removed into a monastery to die. On the second of October (811), Michael the grand chamberlain, son-in-law of Nicephorus, was acclaimed as Emperor. The new Emperor, who reigned but for two years, was one of the most insignificant monarchs who ever received the homage of the servile courtiers of Constantinople.

Chosen apparently for no other reason than his reputation for orthodoxy, he reversed in all things the policy of Nicephorus, scattered in lavish gifts to the Church and to the populace the treasures which his father-in-law had accumulated, persecuted some of the heretics whom his father-in-law had protected, and ruled during his brief span of royalty as the passive instrument of the monkish fraternity. Being obliged at last to go forth to battle with the Bulgarians, and being ignominiously defeated, he resigned the throne without a struggle to a popular general, Leo the Armenian, and retired to a monastery, where he droned away thirty-two years of life unfeared and therefore unmolested.

To this insignificant ruler, however, before his deposition fell the duty of ratifying the treaty with the Frankish prince, and thus establishing that duality of Empire in the Christian world which endured for six centuries and a half, till the fall of Constantinople. He despatched an embassy to Charles, consisting of Michael, Metropolitan of Philadelphia the life-guardsmen Arsafius and his comrade Theognostus, to ratify the peace which had been all but concluded with his predecessor. Michael and Arsafius had made the journey before, the former in 803, the latter in 810. Theognostus, as far as we know, was strange to diplomacy. The new Emperor, trembling on his uneasy throne and possibly thinking of the possibility of enlisting Charles as his helper against the terrible Bulgarians, eagerly consented to an alliance on the terms previously arranged, and begged that it might be made to include his son Theophylact

whom he was about to associate with him as a colleague, and whom he vainly hoped that the people would hail as his successor. The same ambassadors were charged to renew the friendly relations with the Pope, interrupted during the reign of Nicephorus. The Metropolitan and the two *Spatharii*, accompanied by the returning ambassadors of Charles, made their appearance at Aachen in the early days of January, 812. Having displayed the rich gifts which they brought from the lavish Michael, they were admitted to a public audience in the great church of the Virgin Mary. Written instruments setting forth the terms of the peace—doubtless as settled by the embassy of 811—were exchanged between the Emperor and the Eastern ambassadors in the presence of the great nobles of the Frankish realm, and this transaction being ended, the ambassadors, who had probably brought a trained choir along with them, burst forth into sacred song praising God for His mercy vouchsafed to the great Basileus, Charles. Basileus in the official language of the Empire was now the technical word expressive of the sublime Imperial dignity, while Rex was reserved for the lesser herd of barbarian potentates. The recognition was thus complete. The accredited representatives of the Augustus of Constantinople had greeted the Frankish chieftain as Emperor.

This fact was in itself irreversible. Henceforth no one could deny that there was both an Eastern and a Western Empire, and Charles could with confidence thus describe the two realms in a letter which he addressed a year later to his beloved and honourable brother, the glorious Emperor Michael.

After they had fulfilled their commission at Aachen, the Eastern ambassadors journeyed to Rome, and there, while bringing the Patriarch's greetings to the Pope, and thus resuming the interrupted communication between the Churches, they at the same time solemnly handed to the Pope in St. Peter's the treaty of peace between the two Emperors, and received it back from him stamped in some unexplained way with the seal of his approval.

How far the Emperor's relations with the still unsubdued portions of Italy may have been affected by these changing relations with the Eastern Empire we are not informed. We hear nothing of help previously given by Constantinople to Benevento, but the state of affairs between the Frankish king and the Samnite duchy had been for some years about as bad as it could possibly be. Partly, this was due to the personal antagonism between the two rulers. On the one side (I am speaking of a time previous to 810) stood Pippin, young, brave, and headstrong, eager to distinguish himself in war and indignant that there should be any power in Italy independent of him and his father. On the other stood Grimwald, last hope of Lombard rule in Italy, some years older than Pippin, but still young, mindful of his father's wrongs and his own captivity, determined to escape from the odious necessity of professing himself Charles's 'man,' and of proclaiming—by the date of his charters, by the effigy on his coins, by his very garb and the manner of trimming his hair, that the Lombard was subject to the Frank.

The mutual attitude of the two princes is well expressed by a tradition which is embalmed in the pages of Erchempert. 'Pippin spoke thus by his ambassadors to Grimwald, "I wish, and am determined with the strong hand to enforce my wish, that like as his father Arichis was subject to Desiderius, king of Italy, so Grimwald shall be subject to me". To whom Grimwald thus replied :—

"Free was I born and noble my forbears on either side,
So by the help of my God, free will I ever abide."

Gladly would we know whether the Lombard prince uttered his defiance in the correct Latin elegiacs in which the chronicler has couched it, or whether he could still speak in the Lombard tongue words not quite unintelligible to the men of the Rhineland.

The war between the two states resolved itself into a long duel between Spoleto and Benevento, in which, though with some vicissitudes, the fortune of war was on the whole favourable to the Franks. In 801 Teate (Chieti) was taken and burnt by them and its governor

Roselm was made prisoner. In 802 Ortona on the Adriatic surrendered, and the Spoletan border was thus pushed forward from the Pescara to the Sangro.

In the same year a more important capture was made. Lucera, that upland city looking towards Mount Garganus which seems destined by nature for a fortress, and where long after in Hohenstaufen days Frederick II stationed his military colony of Saracens, was taken after repeated sieges and a Frankish garrison was placed therein. In a few months, however, the fortune of war turned. Grimwald marched to the attack. Winichis, the Frankish duke of Spoleto, victor many years before in the battle with the Greeks, now lay sick (probably of malarial fever) within the walls of Lucera. The defence languished, and at last Winichis was obliged to surrender the city and his own person into the hands of the besiegers. He was honourably treated by the knightly Grimwald, and the next year was set at liberty, apparently unransomed.

The long duel, in the course of which Benevento had suffered much from the ravages of the Frankish troops, was at last brought to an end by the death of the two chief combatants. In 806 Grimwald died and was succeeded by another prince of the same name, who is said to have previously distinguished himself by his personal bravery in the first great war with Pippin. The new prince, who is called sometimes Grimwald II and sometimes Grimwald IV, was perhaps himself more peaceably inclined than his predecessor, and Pippin may have had enough in Venetian affairs to occupy his attention. In 810, as we have seen, Pippin himself died, and two years later, immediately after the dismissal of the Byzantine ambassadors, his son, the young Bernard, at a general assembly held at Aachen was, as has been said, solemnly declared king of Italy, and sent to govern his new kingdom with the help of the counsels of his cousins, older by two generations than himself, Wala and Adalhard. The influence of the latter counsellor seems to have been especially exerted in the cause of peace, and in the same year (812) an arrangement was concluded whereby the prince of Benevento agreed to pay a sum of 25,000 solidi down, and a further sum of 7,000 solidi annually. The payment was distinctly spoken of as tribute, and there seems to be no doubt that the prince of Benevento, though keeping the reins of government in his hands, fully acknowledged his dependence on the Frankish king and his Imperial grandfather. So ended the last glimmer of Lombard independence in Italy.

The connection with the Eastern Empire, chiefly maintained by two cities, Naples and Otranto, may some perhaps have died out in some other parts of Italy more slowly than we suppose. There is a curious entry in *Annales Einhardi* for the year 809, that 'Populonia in Tuscany, a maritime city, was plundered by the Greeks who are called Orobiothae' (Mountain dwellers). Who are these highlanders, so wedded to the Byzantine sovereignty that their very name is Greek, who plunder 'the sea-girt Populonia' on its promontory just opposite the isle of Elba? Possibly they may have been corsairs from the other side of the Adriatic, like the Dalmatian pirates who were so long the plague of Venice, but if they were highlanders of the Apennines or of the mountains of Massa or Carrara, we have here a hint of a strange unwritten chapter of Italian history.

During all this early part of the ninth century the thundercloud of Saracen piracy and conquest, which was to break so terribly over its central years, was growing darker and darker. The chronicler mentions six invasions of Corsica by the Moors of Spain between 806 and 813, repelled with various fortune by the Frankish admirals. The great peace with Cordova, concluded in 810, does not seem to have had any effect in staying these piratical raids. One of the invasions is described immediately after the mention of that peace, and in 813 we find the Moors not only attacking Corsica and Sardinia, but, in order to revenge a defeat which they had sustained from a Frankish general, invading Nice in the Narbonese Gaul and Civita Vecchia in Tuscany. The Saracen had thus indeed drawn very near to Rome. Even in Charles's lifetime the

City which gave him his Imperial title was obviously in danger from the Islamite rovers of the sea.

CHAPTER IX

CAROLUS MORTUUS.

The last years of the great Emperor were in the main years of peace. Rivals and enemies, Eastern Caesars, Saracen Caliphs, Italian dukes, were all courting the friendship of the triumphant Frank : but as has been already said, they were years of heavy family affliction and years also of increasing sickness and infirmity. In 806 he summoned a general assembly at the Villa of Theodo, and there declared to the chief nobles and ecclesiastics of his realm his scheme for the partition of his Empire after, his death. Only the three sons of Hildegarde were to inherit his power, the unhappy rebel, Pippin the Hunchback, though still alive, being of course excluded from the succession. The details of this intended division are preserved for us in a Capitulary issued from Nimwegen on the 6th of February, 806.

According to its provisions, Louis was to have Aquitaine, nearly the whole of Burgundy, Septimania, Provence, and the Frankish conquests in Spain. Pippin was to have Italy, the greater part of Bavaria, Alamannia south of the Danube, and the lands conquered from the Avars and Croatsians. All the rest of Charles's dominions, that is the kernel of the old Frankish monarchy, Neustria and Austrasia, parts of Burgundy, Alamannia and Bavaria, Frisia and the newly conquered Saxonia with Thuringia, in fact the whole of Northern Gaul and Northern Germany, was to fall to the lot of Charles, who, as the eldest son, was certainly thus to receive the lion's share of the inheritance. It was provided that each of the two other brothers was to have access to the dominions of Pippin, Charles by way of Aosta and Louis by way of Susa, in order that they might go to his help in case of his being attacked, probably by the Byzantines. Elaborate arrangements were made for the division of any lapsed share between the two surviving brothers in case the brother who died first left no children of his own. As none of these provisions ever took effect it is not necessary here to describe them in detail, except to observe that in the event of Pippin's dominions having to be divided between Charles and Louis it was arranged that Charles should receive certain regions 'up to the limits of Saint Peter.' This provision seems to show that in 806 the Pope was recognized as temporal ruler at least of the Exarchate and Pentapolis. In this important document Charles earnestly exhorted his sons to dwell in peace and harmony with one another, and he did his utmost to prevent the up-springing of any such roots of bitterness as the attempt to seduce a brother's vassals from their allegiance, the refusal to keep in safe custody a brother's hostages, and other similar evidences of ill-will. He doubtless was aware of the feud which had for some time existed between Charles and Pippin, and which, allayed for the time by the inspiring influence of the tomb of St. Goar, might possibly break out afresh when his own controlling presence should have vanished from their midst.

But all these schemes and all these fears dissolved into nothingness at the breath of the universal Conqueror. In July, 810, as we have already seen, Pippin, king of Italy, breathed his last. On the 4th of December, 811, the younger Charles himself, the son who most faithfully reproduced the lineaments of his father's character—brave, strong, devout—died in the flower of his age. He died unmarried, the project once entertained of marrying him to the daughter of the English king, Offa of Mercia, having failed of fulfillment. It was in the same year (811) that Pippin the Hunchback ended his life of melancholy failure; and the year before (810) the princess Hrotrud, who was to have sat upon the throne of Byzantium, died also, she too only on

the threshold of middle life. Of the friends who stood round Charles's throne, and who had once lightened the cares of state by their wise counsels or made bright the hours of leisure by their jokes and their repartees, how many had now left him for the silent land! The faithful Fulrad had died long ago; Angilram of Metz, who succeeded him as virtual prime minister, was dead also. His successor, Hildibald of Cologne, still lived : hut Alcuin had died amid the smoke-begrimed dwellings of Tours six years before the death of Pippin; and Paulus Diaconus, who had never returned from his retreat on Monte Cassino, he too had died at the close of the old century. So many of the lesser trees of the forest had fallen, but of the one goodliest tree of all it might still be said—

‘With singed top its stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath.’

The terrible bereavements which Charles had endured left him but one son to inherit his vast dominions, and that son not only the least efficient of all the three, but the least efficient whom the strong Arnulfing stem had yet produced : a man who might have passed through life creditably as abbot of an Aquitanian convent, but who was doomed to disastrous failure when the time should come for him to try to bend the bow of Ulysses. Louis the Pious, Louis the Debonnair, Louis the Monk or Louis the Gentle, by whatever name he might be called, though ‘most zealous of all the Emperors on behalf of the Christian religion’, was, by the confession of one of his admirers, ‘apt to give undue heed to the advice of his counsellors, while he gave himself up to psalmody and diligent reading.’ Not such was the man to keep in their appointed orbits all those mighty planets that now revolved round the re-erected throne of the Emperor of Rome.

In the late summer of 813 Louis, who had just conducted a successful campaign against his father's old enemies the Basques, was summoned to Aachen, where, in accordance apparently with the decision of a select council held at the same city in the spring he was to be associated with his father in the Imperial dignity. It is a noteworthy fact that in Charles's scheme for the division of his dominions, previously described, no mention was made of this, the most splendid jewel in the whole treasury of his titles. Doubtless in his secret heart Carolus Augustus in the year 806 hoped that his eldest son, the heir of his name, would also be the heir of his proud surname, but partly perhaps from fear of arousing the jealousy of Pippin (sovereign of the land in which Rome lay) and partly from some remembrance of the old tradition that the dignity of Roman Emperor was elective, not hereditary, Charles, while partitioning all his other sovereignties, left this his Imperial title undisposed of. But though an Emperor could not directly bequeath the diadem, he could share with one of his sons in his own lifetime the right to wear it; and this was what Charles, ‘by divine inspiration’ (as was said by his biographer), now resolved to accomplish. After the arrival of Louis a great assembly of the nobles of the realm, ‘bishops, abbots, dukes, counts and lieutenant-governors was held in the palace on Saturday the 10th of September (813). Here the aged Emperor asked each man, from the highest to the lowest, if it was his pleasure that the title of Emperor should be handed on by him to his son Louis. All with exultation answered, ‘Yes : it is God's counsel in this thing’. On the next day, therefore (Sunday, 11 September), the old Emperor, dressed in splendid regal attire, with the crown on his head and accompanied by his son, proceeded to the great church which he had built and decorated after the manner of S. Vitale at Ravenna. On a high altar dedicated to the Saviour lay a golden crown. Father and son prayed long before it, and then Charles, addressing Louis, admonished him first of all to love and fear Almighty God, to keep His precepts, to govern His Church, and guard it from evil men. Then he bade him show unflinching kindness to his sisters, to his younger brothers, his nephews and his other kinsmen. Then, to reverence the bishops as his fathers, to love the people as his sons, to repress the proud, to be a comforter of the monks, and a father to the poor; to choose for his ministers

faithful and God-fearing men who would abhor unjust gains; to eject no man from his office except for good and sufficient cause, and to show himself devoid of blame before God and all the people. In the presence of the multitude Charles said, 'Wilt thou obey all these my precepts?'. Louis answered, "Most willingly, with the help of God". Charles then lifted the crown from the altar and placed it on the head of his son. Mass having been sung, they all returned together to the palace, the father, both in going and returning, leaning on the arm of his son. After many days Louis, having received magnificent gifts, was dismissed, to return to his own kingdom of Aquitaine. Father and son embraced and kissed each other at parting, till they began to weep, but for joy, not for sorrow.

In the narrative of this great ceremony we observe one notable omission. The rite was solemnized in a church and was connected with the worship of the Most High, but the central act, the placing of the crown on the young Emperor's head, was not performed by the Pope of Rome or by any other ecclesiastic. There was surely a meaning in this exclusion of the priestly element. Pippin had been crowned by Boniface and anointed by Stephen II; Charles as Emperor by Leo III, and even Louis himself as king of Aquitaine had been crowned by Hadrian. But Charles by his own solemn coronation of his son in sight of all the spiritual and temporal lords of Francia, seemed emphatically to indicate to future generations that no intervention either of the Roman Pontiff or of any archbishop or bishop in his dominions was necessary in order to create a Roman Emperor. Much trouble and many bewildering debates would have been spared to his successors had this principle been clearly comprehended by them and their subjects.

At the same *generalis conventus* at Aachen, the young Bernard, who possibly had previously held but a delegated authority over Italy, was formally proclaimed king of that land.

The coronation of Louis was the last of a series of acts by which the great Emperor showed that he knew he was near the end of his career. The abortive partition of 806 of course pointed in that direction. Since then his health had more visibly failed, and for four years, from 810 onwards, he had suffered grievously from gout. In 811 he drew up an instrument, solemnly attested in the presence of certain of his friends, by which he directed the manner in which the money, jewels, fine raiment, and other chattels in his treasury were to be disposed of after his death. The whole treasure was to be divided into three parts, and two of these thirds were to be distributed among the churches of the twenty-one metropolitan cities of his Empire. The remaining third was to be divided between (1) his children and grandchildren, (2) the poor, and (3) his household servants.

To the anxious hearts of his counsellors and his people many signs seemed to indicate the impending calamity. Eclipses were frequent in the last three years of his life, and men remembered that in 807 the planet Mercury had appeared like a little black spot on the surface of the sun, and had remained there for eight days. Then in 810, when he went forth to his last campaign against his stubborn foe Göttrik of Denmark, rising one day before dawn, and riding forth from his camp, he beheld a brilliant meteor fall from right to left across the cloudless sky. The bright light startled his horse, which threw the Emperor to the ground. His sword-belt and the clasp of his mantle were both broken; the spear which he always carried in his right hand flew forth and fell twenty feet beyond him. When the attendants came to raise him therefore, they found him unarmed and without his regal mantle—an evident sign that he would soon be unclothed of his dignity by death. In addition to these portents, there were earthquakes at Aachen which shook down the stately portico erected between his palace and the church. In the inscription which ran round the interior of the church separating the upper from the lower arcades, the word *PRINCEPS* disappeared from its proper place after the name *KAROLUS*. To the excited and alarmed minds of men even the catastrophe that befell the great bridge over the Rhine at Mainz which had been built by Charles's command, a catastrophe in which the labour

of ten years was destroyed by three hours' conflagration, was reckoned as another omen of impending doom.

In January, 814, all these gloomy portents found their fulfillment. Charles was attacked by fever, which he hoped, as on previous occasions, to vanquish by abstinence from solid food. But to the fever was added pleurisy, with which his weakened body was unable to cope. On the seventh day of his sickness he received the sacrament from the hands of his friend and counsellor Hildibald, Archbishop of Cologne. He lay in great weakness all that day and the following night. On the morrow at dawn, still fully conscious, he raised his right hand and marked the sign of the Cross on his head and breast. Then gathering up his feet into the bed, crossing his arms over his chest, and closing his eyes, he gently chanted the words, 'Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,' and soon after expired'.

The great Emperor had left no orders as to his place of burial, and to wait for the funeral ceremony till his son should arrive from Aquitaine seemed undesirable. Long ago, in 779, he had expressed a wish to be buried by the side of his father in the abbey of S. Denis, but that charge seems to have been forgotten by the new generation of courtiers that had since grown up, perhaps even by Charles himself. Since then had arisen the lordly pleasure-house which he had reared at Aquae Grani, and in the holy fane beside it, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, men deemed that it was most fitting that his body should await the general resurrection. Having been washed and reverently tended, the corpse was carried amidst the lamentations of the people to the great basilica, and there interred on the very day of his death. A gilded arch was raised over the tomb bearing his image and this inscription :

'Under this tombstone is laid the body of Charles, the great and orthodox Emperor, who gloriously enlarged the kingdom of the Franks, and prosperously governed it for forty-seven years. He died a septuagenarian in the year of our Lord 814, the seventh Indiction, 28th of January'.

The lamentations of the people of Aachen over the dead hero were assuredly no mere conventional tribute dispeople, to his kingly state. His great personality had filled the minds of all his subjects in Central Europe, and already, even during his lifetime, Poetry, which was to be so busy with his name in after-ages, had begun to throw her glamour over his career. But as the Trojan women round the grave of Hector, so the subjects of Charles mourned their own coming misfortunes in mourning him. The horizon was growing dark around them; the warships of the Northmen and the Saracens were beginning those piratical raids which were to make the ninth and tenth centuries one long agony, and men's hearts failed them for fear when they thought of monastic Louis standing in the breach instead of his heroic father. The grief and forebodings of the people probably found utterance in many mournful effusions similar to one which has been preserved to us, written by a monk of Bobbio, and which is called

Planctus de Obitu Karoli.

From the sun-rising to the sea-girt West
Is nought but tears and beatings of the breast.

Woe's me! my misery!

Romans and Franks, and all of Christ's belief,
Pale with dismay, declare their mighty grief.

Infants and old men, chiefs of glorious state,
Maidens and matrons, mourn our Caesar's fate.

Father he was of all the fatherless:
Widows and aliens his name did bless.

O Christ! who rulest from on high the blest!
Give, in Thy realm, to Carolus thy rest.

This prayer do all the faithful urge today:
For this the widows and the virgins pray.

Now the calm Emperor, ended all his toil,
Lies underneath the cross-surmounted soil.

Woe to thee, Rome! and to thy people woe!
Thy greatest and most glorious one lies low.

Woe to thee, Italy! fair land and wide,
And woe to all the cities of thy pride!

Land of the Franks! in all thy bygone days
Such grief did never thy free soul amaze,

As when King Charles, august and eloquent,
'Neath Aachen's sods his stately stature bent.

O Columbanus, let thy tears be poured,
And with thy prayers for him entreat the Lord.

Father of all! omnipotent in grace,
Grant him on high a radiant resting-place.

Yea, in Thine inmost holiest oracle,
Let him, O Christ, with Thine Apostles dwell.
Woe's me! my misery!

As might be expected from a monk, the author of this complaint dwells more on the religious than on the political or military side of Charles's great life-work. This view obtained general assent as the centuries rolled on. While medieval dukes and barons delighted to trace up their lineage even to illegitimate descendants of the great Emperor, while minstrels and troubadours found their best inspiration in the luxuriant growth of romance which sprang up around his tomb, the Church remembered with gratitude the great victories which he had won for her against the Lombard, the Saxon, and the Saracen, and at last in solemn council placed the stalwart and free-living hero on Charles, high amid her list of saints. It is true that the canonization, having been decreed by the anti-pope Paschal III, did not meet with universal acceptance, and in Italy especially seems never to have found willing worshippers, but in Germany and in France the office composed in honour of St. Charles was widely popular, and to this day the exhibition of his relics, which is made every seven years in the great cathedral at Aachen, attracts a multitude of votaries, and is not a mere antiquarian spectacle, but a religious function reverently witnessed by thousands of the devout peasants of Westphalia.

CHAPTER X

THE LIFE OF THE PEOPLE.

THE story has now been told of the external events in the history of Italy during the seventy years which followed the death of Liutprand. We have read the letters of Popes, and witnessed the coronation of an Emperor, but have we drawn any nearer to the beating heart of the nation? Can we at the end of the story form any clearer idea than we possessed at the beginning as to the manner of life which men led in Italy during those dim chaotic years? Can we with any persuasion of its truth paint the picture of a Roman, a Lombard, or a Frankish home in the Italy of the eighth century? Do we know what men were thinking as they dressed their olives and their vines, or can we catch even a syllable of the gossip of the market-place, during those two generations while Italy was cutting the cables which bound her to Constantinople and accepting the dominion of the Frankish Augustus?

I fear it must be confessed that we have not the requisite materials for conducting any such enquiry into the social state of Italy in the eighth century. Literature altogether fails us. We have no Sidonius and no Claudian to disclose to us by letters or poems what was passing in the minds of men. The fountain of Paulus's story-telling has run dry, and even the Lives of the Saints, which often give such quaintly interesting anecdotes of social life, seem to fail us here. Our only resource must be to reap such scanty harvest as we may from the laws of the latest Lombard kings and the Capitularies of their mighty successor.

Speaking generally, we may say that in the laws of Later Ratchis and Aistulf (no laws of Desiderius have come down to us) we see something of that tendency towards gentler manners and more liberal views which we found in the laws of Liutprand when compared with those of Rothari. In the prologue to the laws of Ratchis a claim is expressly made on behalf of progress in the art of legislation. 'The lofty Rothari,' says the king, 'drew up his code under Divine inspiration, for the benefit of the God-preserved nation of the Lombards. His successor Grimwald, that most excellent king, after careful consideration of the hard cases which were brought before him, relaxed some rules and tightened others. Then by God's mercy our own foster-father, that most wise prince Liutprand, adorned as he was with all modesty and sobriety, after long and anxious vigils, expressed his desires in an edict which, with the consent of his faithful Lombards and their magistrates (*Judices*), received his solemn confirmation. Now, by the help of the same Divine Redeemer, I Ratchis, after taking counsel with the magistrates of the Lombards, that is of those who dwell within the borders of Austria, Neustria, and Tuscia, find some things to be just and right in the statutes of my predecessors, and other things to have need of amendment,'—which amendments are accordingly made in the pages that follow.

We observe in these laws, and also in those of the next king, Aistulf, a tendency to exact fewer oaths of compurgation and attestation, 'which', as Ratchis remarks, 'through love of gain often lead men into perjury', and to rely more on the written deed, which, we may presume, more of the Lombard warriors could now decipher than in the first century after their great migration.

There is also a disposition to look more favourably on the claims of women to a share in the inheritance of a deceased ancestor. Thus in the case of a Lombard dying intestate and without male issue his maiden aunts are let in to a share of his estate, from which, before, they were excluded. Thus also a Lombard's widow was no longer strictly limited to the meta and

morgincap, which alone she might inherit under the laws of Liutprand. Her husband might now leave her a life-interest in the half of his other property, BK. ix. a power which was, however, subject to certain limitations if she were a second wife, in order to guard the interests of the step-children.

The emancipation of slaves seems to have been going steadily forward, and was, on the whole, favoured by the legislator. Probably the cause of freedom was helped even by an apparently restrictive law of Aistulf's (dated March 1, 754), which recited that 'some perverse men, when they had received their freedom, slighted their benefactors, and many masters, fearing to be thus treated, shrank from enfranchising their slaves.' It was therefore enacted that if a Lombard chose to emancipate his slave by the most solemn process, but at the same time to insert in the deed of enfranchisement a clause retaining the right to the freedman's services during his own lifetime, he might do so, thus virtually turning the gift of freedom into a bequest.

Sometimes a Lombard would for the good of his soul leave a certain part of his property to 'venerable places' (churches or convents), and would direct that the slaves who cultivated it should receive their freedom and a small allotment of land for their support. It often happened, however, that the dead man's heirs disregarded his will, removed the landmarks which protected the allotment, and brought back the cultivators into slavery. This injustice was repressed by another law of Aistulf's, and the 'venerable places' were charged with the duty of seeing that the testator's intentions were not disregarded. Even if the testator were too near his end to comply with the regular form of manumission 'round the altar' and if he only indicated to the priest who ministered at his deathbed the name of the slave whom he desired to enfranchise, such dying request was to be held valid and the man was to receive his freedom, 'for it seems to us,' said Aistulf, 'the greatest possible benefit that slaves should be brought out of bondage into freedom, seeing that our Redeemer condescended to become a slave that He might set us free.' Noble words surely, even though uttered by the 'quite unspeakable' Aistulf.

In the case of a deed of emancipation a question might be raised, 'What consideration should be stated in the deed?'. The king answers without hesitation, 'The slave's past services : they are the consideration for his freedom, for you cannot expect a slave to have anything else to offer.'

But notwithstanding all these indications of lessened weakness barbarism, the laws of these two Lombard king's show how chaotic was still the social condition of their subjects. First and foremost among the causes of unrest was that besetting sin of barbarous monarchies of barbarous republics, a corrupt and cowardly judicature. King Ratchis, who had a soul above the savagery of his nation and who evidently had some real yearnings after righteousness, says in one of his laws, 'I call God to witness that I cannot go anywhere to listen to a sermon, nor ride abroad (with any comfort), because of the cries for justice of so many of the poor'.

In order to redress these wrongs King Ratchis directs that every judge shall sit daily on the judgment-seat in his city, and not intrigue for his own advancement, nor give his mind to the vanities of the world, but dwell by himself, keeping open and unbribed justice for all. 'If at any time he shall neglect to do justice to his *ariman* [free Lombard neighbour], whether the man be rich or poor, he shall lose his judgeship and pay his guidrigild, half to the king and half to the man to whom he has denied justice'. And the judge was moreover to exact from his own subordinate magistrates the same oath of incorrupt judgment and the same observance of that oath which he was ordered to render to the king.

When the courts of law fail, for any cause, to give forth such decisions as correspond with men's natural sense of justice, a semi-civilised people is apt to take the law into its own hands and to substitute the 'wild justice of revenge' for the halting logic of the law-courts. Such seems to have been the case in Lombard Italy. 'In every city,' Ratchis complains, 'evil men are

forming *zabae* or combinations against the magistrates.’ The slight hints which the law gives us as to the nature of these ‘*zabae*’ remind us sometimes of an Irish land-league, sometimes of a Neapolitan ‘*camorra*’ or a Sicilian ‘*mafia*.’ If any man unites himself with only as many as four or five others in order to defy the authority of a judge, to prevent people resorting to him for justice, or to oppose the execution of his decree after trial of a cause, he is to undergo the penalty imposed on the crime of sedition. But the same law repeats and enforces the penalties against idle and unjust judges, evidently showing that, in the king’s opinion, combinations against the law were the result of unrighteous judgments.

A curious illustration of the lawless character of the times is afforded us by a law of King Aistulf’s. ‘It has come to our ears that when certain men were going with a bridegroom, to escort the bride to his house and were making their procession with paranymp and bridesmaids, some perverse men threw over them dung and filthy water. As we have heard that this outrage has been perpetrated in other places, and as we foresee that tumults and even murders are likely to be the result, we order that every free man who is guilty of such an offence shall pay 900 *solidi*, half to the king and half to the bride’s legal representative’. If the deed has been done by slaves, their master must purge himself of all complicity in their guilt, or else pay the appointed fine of 900 *solidi*. In any case the slaves shall be handed over to the bride’s representative, to be dealt with according to his pleasure’.

It seems probable that we have in this incident something more than the unmannerly horse-play of Lombard villagers. The successful bridegroom has probably won his bride from an envious neighbour, whose disappointment and rage are expressed in this filthy outrage, which as the king perceives, unless promptly and severely punished, may easily blossom into an interminable blood-feud. Even so from Buondelmonte’s marriage with the daughter of the Donati sprang the long agony of the civil wars of Florence.

Jealousy of all foreigners, including the dwellers in Roman Italy, and suspicions born of the Lombard’s precarious tenure of dominion, are clearly shown in the laws of both the kings. Thus Ratchis says, ‘We have been informed that certain evil men creep into our palace, desiring to find out our secrets from our favourites, or to worm out from our porters or other servants what we are doing, that they may then go and trade upon their knowledge in alien provinces. Now it appears to us that he who presumes to pry into such matters as these is not true in his faith towards us, but incurs grave suspicion [of treason] ; wherefore we decide that whenever any one is discovered thus offending, both he who reveals the secret and he to whom it is revealed shall incur the risk of a capital sentence, and shall suffer the confiscation of his goods. For, as the Scripture saith, “It is a good thing to hide the secret of the king, but to reveal the works of God is honourable”’.

It is in accordance with this suspicious—shall we say Chinese—policy of self-seclusion that we read in another law of King Ratchis, ‘ If any magistrate or any other person shall presume to direct his envoy to Rome, Ravenna, Spoleto, Benevento, Frank-land, Bavaria, Alamannia, Greece, or Avar-land without the king’s order, he shall run the risk of his life, and his property shall be confiscated’.

So too Aistulf orders the passes to be guarded, ‘that our men may not pass over nor foreigners enter into our country without the king’s command.’ ‘Concerning navigation or commerce by land. No one ought to undertake a journey on business or for any other cause without a letter from the king or the consent of his magistrate : and if he transgresses he must pay his *guidrigild*’. Another even more interesting law makes direct mention of ‘Romans’ (that is no doubt the dwellers of the *Ducatus Romae* and other fragments of Imperial Italy), as the persons with whom intercourse was forbidden. ‘This also we wish concerning those men who without the king’s permission trade with Roman men. If he be a magistrate who presumes to do this, he shall pay his *guidrigild* and lose his rank. But if he be a simple freeman (*arimannus*),

he shall lose all his property and go with shorn head [through the streets], crying aloud, ‘So let all men suffer who, contrary to the will of their lord the king, engage in trade with Roman men, when we have a controversy with them’

The close-cropped head of the unpatriotic trader was probably a satire on the ‘Roman style’ of wearing the hair of which we have so often heard. The royal legislator in the pride of his national conservatism says to his rebellious subject, ‘Since you are ashamed of the flowing locks of your forefathers and will trade with those well-trimmed, dainty citizens of Rome, we will shear away all the hair that Nature has given you, and send you bald-pated, a derision to all men, to cry aloud your ignominy through the city.’

Evidently whatever possibilities of advancement and culture slumbered in the Lombard’s soul he had still in him much of the stolid barbarism of his forefathers. He was not yet nearly so ready to amalgamate with his Latin neighbours as the Visigoth and Ostrogoth had been three centuries before him. And he too must therefore in all fairness bear his share of the blame for having delayed the unification of Italy.

We have now to consider what effect the Frankish conquest produced on the social condition of Italy. The conjecture may be hazarded that at any rate for some time no very obvious change resulted from that conquest. As has been already pointed out, the policy of Charles the Great was to put himself at the head of the Lombard nation, and we have no sign that his rule was generally felt as an insult or humiliation by the people of Alboin. Something of the old Teutonic kinship may still have bound the two nations together. Their languages—in so far as either nation still used the old German speech and had not changed it for the Latin *volgare*—may have been not wholly unintelligible to one another. We have not, moreover, any evidence of a design on Charles’s part to reverse the conditions which had prevailed in Italy for two centuries or to put the descendant of the Lombard conqueror under the heel of his Roman serf.

One great change Charles certainly seems to have made, though probably not on the very morrow of the conquest. The Lombard dukes, with their undefined and dangerous power, were replaced by Frankish counts—one probably to every considerable city—directly responsible to their Frankish sovereign. It is suggested with some likelihood that this change was brought about during Charles’s long visit to Italy in 781, after the revolt of Hrodgaud of Friuli had shown him the danger of leaving too much power in the hands of the old dukes of the Lombards.

Doubtless one result of the conquest was to make of the all the inhabitants feel that the power of the Catholic Church, and pre-eminently of the See of Rome, was more firmly rooted than before, though even under the Lombards the long list of grants of land, of slaves, and of houses to ecclesiastical persons gives us a vivid idea of the hold which the Church, notwithstanding her quarrels with the kings, had upon the minds of the people. One change doubtless took place, to the material enrichment of the Church, namely the more uniform and systematic collection of tithes, the punctual payment of which is frequently insisted upon in Charles’s edicts. In each city also the power and prestige of the bishop were greatly augmented. In many important matters he had virtually a concurrent jurisdiction with the count. These two great functionaries were exhorted to act in harmony with each other, but probably the bishop would be encouraged to report to his sovereign if he deemed that there was anything in the proceedings of the count deserving of censure.

Our best information as to the social condition not only of Italy but of all other portions of the Frankish Empire is to be derived from a study of the Capitularies, those marvellous monuments of the energy and far-reaching, all-embracing statesmanship of the great Emperor. Doubtless any one who expects to find in these documents a scientific system of legislation will rise from their perusal disappointed. The Capitularies are not and do not pretend to be a

code. They are far more concerned with administration than with legislation properly so called, and if they must be compared at all, it should rather be with the minutes or memoranda of the English Privy Council than with the codes of Justinian or Napoleon.

To the mind of a modern legislator, probably a disproportionate part of these edicts will seem to be devoted to the affairs of the Church; but Charles truly perceived that in the Church lay the one best hope of civilizing and humanizing the chaotic populations of his Empire, and that with a corrupt, a profligate, and an ignorant clergy the task would be hopeless. Therefore, though not himself a stern moralist, he insisted with almost passionate earnestness on a reformation of the manners of the clergy: though not himself a man of high literary culture, he pressed upon the churchmen, his subjects, the duty of acquiring for themselves and imparting to others at least an elementary knowledge of science and literature.

‘Diligently enquire’ he says to his commissioners, ‘how every priest has behaved himself in his office after his ordination: because some, who were poor before they took orders, have grown rich out of the property wherewith they ought to have served the Church, and have bought themselves allodia and slaves and other property, and have neither made any advance in their own reading, nor collected books, nor increased the vessels belonging to the Divine service, but have lived in luxury, oppression, and rapine.’

‘Let the priests’, according to the Apostle’s advice, withdraw themselves from revellings and drunkenness : for some of them are accustomed to sit up till midnight or later, boozing with their neighbours : and then these men, who ought to be of a religious and holy deportment, return to their churches drunken and gorged with food, and unable to perform the daily and nightly office of praise to God, while others sink down in a drunken sleep in the place of their revels.’

‘Let there be schools in which boys may learn to Schools read. In every monastery and bishop’s palace let there be copies of the Psalms, arithmetic-books and grammars, with Catholic books well-edited: since often when men desire to pray aright to God they ask amiss owing to the bad editing of their books. Do not allow your boys to corrupt the text either in writing or reading. And if you need to have a Gospel or Psalter or Missal copied, let it be done by men of full age, with all diligence’.

‘Enquire how the priests are wont to instruct catechumens in the Christian faith, and whether, when they are saying special masses either for the dead or the living, they know how to make the required grammatical changes, in order to turn the singular into the plural number or the masculine into the feminine gender’

‘Let the churches and altars be better built. Let no priest presume to store provisions or hay in the church.’

‘Let all the people, in a reverent, prayerful and humble manner, without the adornment of costly raiment, or enticing song, or worldly games, go forward with their litanies, and let them learn to cry aloud the Kyrie Eleison, not in such a rustic manner as hitherto, but in better style’

‘Let not the scribes write badly: and let every bishop, abbot, and count keep his own notary’

Some of the passages which have been here quoted do not apply specially to Italy, but there can be no doubt from the general tenour of Charles’s administration that he strove to raise the standard of literary cultivation in Italy as well as in other parts of his dominions. The need was at least as great in Rome as in the cities by the Rhine : it was probably greater. In reading through the Capitularies one is struck by the extremely barbarous character of the Latin in the ‘Lombard Capitularies’ as compared with those published at Aachen. The fault is probably that of the Italian secretaries by whom they have been transcribed, and we thus reach a similar conclusion to that which is forced upon us by a perusal of the *Liber Pontificalis* and the papal letters. At the close of the eighth century Rome was the last place in which to look for correct

Latinity, or even a moderate acquaintance with the classical authors. Scholarship, which had died out on the banks of the Tiber, was born anew by the Ouse and the Tyne, in the archiepiscopal school at York, and the monastery of Jarrow.

But important as was Charles's work in guarding the morality of the Church and raising the standard of literary culture, he himself would doubtless have declared that the most important of his duties as supreme ruler of the state was the defence of the rights of the weak and helpless, and the repression of tyranny and corruption on the part of the rich and the powerful. Over and over again, Charles repeats that it is his sacred duty to protect the widow and the orphan. For this he pledges his 'ban', that mysterious word which was in after years to bear so awful a meaning when offenders were put to the ban of the Empire.

The eight-fold 'ban', the eight crimes which were considered to be especially against the peace of 'our lord the king' and which were punishable with a fine of 60 *solidi*, were :—

1. Dishonouring holy Church.
2. Injustice towards widows.
3. The like towards orphans.
4. The like towards the poor man who cannot defend himself.
5. Rape or abduction of a freeborn woman.
6. Fire-raising ; the burning of another man's house or stables.
7. *Harizhut*, the forcible breaking down of another man's hedge or cottage.
8. Refusal to go forth with the host

Two important administrative changes were made by Charles in order to guard the poorer class of his subjects at one end of the social system and his own sovereign authority at the other from the injustices and encroachments of the functionaries whom he was compelled to employ, yet who were in a certain sense the common enemies of both.

I. The first of these changes was the introduction of *scabini*, or, as we should call them, jurymen, into the courts of justice. It is admitted that in the earlier stages of Frankish and probably also of Lombard society the free men had been in a certain way associated with the king's officer in the courts of justice, but the procedure was apparently fitful and irregular: the frequent attendance of a large body of free men at the courts became a burden to themselves, and the whole custom of popular cooperation in the administration of the law was in danger of falling into disuse. Charles accordingly directed that out of the body of free men in each district there should be chosen seven men, untainted by crime, whose duty it should be to decide, not only as our jurors do, on questions of fact, but also on questions of law, in the presence of the count, *centenarius*, or other judicial officers. To these men was given the name *scabini*; they were chosen sometimes by the count and people jointly, sometimes by the king's commissioners (*missi*), but once chosen they probably held their office for life. That office was evidently an honourable one, and, at least during the ninth century, they probably acted as an important check on the lawless proceedings of a corrupt or arrogant governor. One interesting passage in a late capitulary, issued from Charles's court at Aachen, shows that their duty consisted quite as much in courageous condemnation of the guilty as in protection of the innocent. 'Let not the *vicarii* suffer to be brought before them those robbers who have been previously condemned to death by the count. If they dare to do this, let them suffer the same punishment as the robber himself, because after the *scabini* have judged and condemned a man it is not permitted to either count or *vicarius* to give him back his life'. It is important to observe that in this and other passages the actual decision is recognized as being the work of the *scabini* alone. The count has to give effect to the verdict (as we call it), but he has nothing to do with pronouncing it, nor is he allowed to set it aside. In the law itself we seem to have an indication of a state of things like that which has sometimes existed in the back- settlements of

America and has led to the 'wild justice' of lynch-law; cases in which the moral sense of the community calls for the execution of a criminal, who through fear or favour is shielded by the governor of the State. An especial interest for us in this institution of the *scabini* is furnished by the fact that, though it came into Italy from over the Alps, the most numerous proofs of its existence, at least throughout the ninth century, are furnished by Italian documents.

II. The second expedient to which Charles resorted in order to secure justice for the humblest of his subjects and keep his provincial governors in order, was that of *missi dominici*, or, as we might translate the words, 'royal commissioners'.

We have in the recent course of this history made acquaintance with many *missi* or envoys of Pippin and Charles speeding southwards with messages from their master, sometimes to the king of the Lombards, sometimes to the Emperor at Constantinople, most frequently of all to the Pope. But the *missi* whom we are now considering, and who are generally known by the addition *dominici*, have a different office from these. They are not ambassadors, but are more like the staff-officers of an army, sent from head-quarters in order to see that every regiment is in a state of efficiency. They were generally sent forth two and two, a layman being joined with a distinguished ecclesiastic in each commission. Their duties were so manifold that it is hard to give a succinct description of them; but they were undoubtedly ordered to watch with jealous vigilance the proceedings of all functionaries acting in the king's name, and to see that neither the rights of the crown nor the liberties of the subject suffered either through their lethargy or their rapacity. In the province to which they were accredited they had to review the *heriban*, or national militia, and exact the fines payable by all liable to military service who failed to attend the levy. They were to see to the exaction of tithes and the due observance of the Lord's Day; to defend the rights of churches, widows, orphans, and all who had special need of their protection; to see that the landowners who held *beneficia* from the king or the church were not impoverishing the *beneficium* in order to enrich their own adjoining properties; to choose *scabini*, advocates, and notaries in the several places visited by them, and to hand in, on their return to head-quarters, a list of the persons so nominated. Finally—and this seems to have been one of their most important functions—they were to conduct enquiries as to the legal status of such alleged slaves as claimed to be free men. We know from a certain capitulary of Charles, which describes in pessimistic tone the disorders of the land, that great ecclesiastics as well as secular nobles were at this time forcibly reducing the poorer free men to beggary and slavery. So keen in some cases was the slave's desire for freedom that he was believed to have actually murdered a relative, father, mother or uncle, who being incontestably a slave might have disproved his claim to be born free and so have dragged him back into servitude.

There can be little doubt that the control exercised by the *missi dominici* in the king's name was cordially detested by the counts and other permanent officers of the state. Even where the governor was not actively rapacious and unjust, he was apt to procrastinate in the performance of his duties. For a day's hunting or some similar diversion he was too ready to shorten or altogether omit the holding of his *placitum*. Now came the two Imperial *missi*, the very note of whose character was strenuousness, who held their office only for a year, and were intent on showing to their master at the year's end a good report of work done in his name. These men listened to the complaints of disappointed suitors for justice, tore to shreds the official excuses for procrastination and delay, tested the venal evidence of the great man's dependants, and in short made the corrupt or lethargic count feel that life was not worth living till the backs of the *missi* were turned and they were once more safely on their road. In a capitulary which three of the Imperial *missi* put forth on their own account (probably about the year 806), at the commencement of their tour, they hint a consciousness of their own

unpopularity. ‘Moreover,’ say they, ‘take good heed lest you or any one in your service (as far as you can prevent it) be found guilty of any such trickery as to say, “Be quiet! be quiet! till these *missi* have passed this way; and after that we can settle these cases comfortably with one another”; and so either avoid or at any rate postpone the giving of justice. Strive rather that all may have been duly settled before we come to you.’

It has been well said by a German commentator on the functions assigned to the *missi dominici*, that in order to form a right estimate of the value of this institution we must ask ourselves what would have been the state of the Empire without it. ‘We have abundant evidence of the grasping character of the Frankish [and probably also of the Lombard] grandees. We see their unceasing attempts to aggrandize themselves at the expense either of the Emperor or of the still existing remains of the free commonalty. We observe how these selfish endeavours, if not strenuously resisted, must have injured trade and commerce and the general well-being of the people. It was the *missi* who alone could battle against these tendencies, armed as they were with yet greater and more wide-reaching powers than those of the counts, but with powers which, on account of the shortness of their duration (generally not more than a year or two) and the peculiar way in which they were entrusted to them, were less liable to selfish abuse. Thus we have perhaps to thank the institution of the *missi* for the fact that the poor independent freeholder did not disappear even sooner than was actually the case, that the Emperors, Charles’s successors, were not earlier stripped of their power for the benefit of those who had once been only the Emperor’s officers.’ Still even in Charles’s time, notwithstanding all his efforts for the protection of his people, the residuum of official tyranny which he could not succeed in suppressing was working great evil in the land. We seem to be reading over again the well-known lines in Goldsmith’s *Deserted Village* when we read the *Capitulare Langobardicum* issued by Pippin (of course with his father’s approval) from his palace at Pavia, probably in the spring of 803 :—

‘We hear that the officers of the counts and some of their more powerful vassals are collecting rents and insisting on forced labours, harvesting, ploughing, sowing, stubbing up trees, loading waggons and the like, not only from the Church’s servants [probably on *beneficia* granted by the Church], but from the rest of the people; all which practices must, if you please, be put a stop to by us and by all the people, because in some places the people have been in these ways so grievously oppressed, that many, unable to bear their lot, have escaped by flight from their masters or patrons, and the lands are relapsing into wilderness.’

Some years later, in the *Capitulare de Expeditione Exercitali*, published at Aachen in 811, the old Emperor utters a doleful lamentation over the general reign of violence and lawlessness throughout his dominions, an anarchic tyranny which prevents him from getting a proper supply of free and well-fed soldiers for the national militia.

‘ 1. The bishops and abbots,’ he says, ‘have no proper control over their tonsured clergy and the rest of their “men”; nor have the counts over their retainers.

‘ 2. The poor complain that they are being thrust out from their property, and that, quite as much by the bishops and abbots and their *advocati*, as by the counts and their *centenarii*.

‘ 3. They say that if a poor man will not give up his property to the bishop, abbot, or count, these great men make some excuse for getting him into trouble with the courts, or else are continually ordering him on military service till the wretched man, quite ruined, *volens nolens* has to surrender or sell his property. At the same time his neighbour who has surrendered his property [and thus become a serf instead of a free man] is allowed to remain at home unmolested.

‘ 4. They say that bishops and abbots as well as counts are sending their free men home [instead of causing them to serve in the army] under the name of household servants. The like

is done also by abbesses. These are falconers, huntsmen, tax-gatherers, overseers, *tithing-men*, and others who entertain the missi and their followers.

‘ 5. At the same time they constrain poorer men to go against the enemy, while they allow men of means to return to their homes.’

The rest of the complaints deal chiefly with the diminished authority of the counts over their own *pagenses*, and with cases of flat refusal to answer to the ban of the Emperor summoning them to the field. The whole Capitulary gives an idea of tendencies towards disorganization and disruption, hardly kept in check even during the lifetime of the mighty Emperor himself, strong set For this was in truth the question which presented current itself for solution at the beginning of the ninth century, feudalism. Was Western Europe to escape from feudalism or to undergo it? Was she to be welded together by the strong hands of a series of monarchs like Charles into a well-compacted Empire, such as the old Roman Empire had been at its best estate, governed by a highly trained, well-organized class of administrators, going forth from the seat of empire to enforce the will of their sovereign in distant provinces and returning thereto at regular periods, with rhythmic movement like the pulsation of the heart? Or was the right to govern, with all its privileges and all its temptations, to be grasped by those representatives of the sovereign as their own private property, used for their own aggrandizement in wealth and power, and transmitted from father to son like a hereditary estate? The Roman proconsul or the feudal baron which was it to be for the next seven centuries? The answer is well known. Whatever may have been the wise and noble designs of the great Austrasian king, his assumption of the title of Augustus did not lead up to the formation of a state like that which was ruled by Hadrian or Antoninus, but led instead to the Feudal Anarchy, which history has called, with unintended irony, the Feudal System.

The reader may perhaps have noticed that I have refrained from using the technical terms of feudalism in describing the political relations of Charles and his subjects; that ‘suzerain,’ ‘vassal,’ ‘homage’ have been generally avoided in these pages. This has been done because the feudal relation had not yet in the time of Charles the Great acquired that definiteness and precision which it possessed in later centuries. Yet the potent germs of feudalism were undoubtedly working in the body politic. There was the practice of ‘commendation’; *beneficia* were held of the Church or the king on the condition of performing certain services; the lord (senior) had his dependent followers (*homines*); even the word *vassus* is of frequent appearance in the Capitularies. The political solution was already crystallising into feudalism, and possibly no king or emperor could have arrested the development of the process. Charles himself in his Capitularies recognises and defends the feudal obligation. ‘Let no man,’ he says, ‘renounce his lord after he has received from him so much as the value of one solidus, with these exceptions; if the lord desires to kill him, or to beat him with a stick, or to defile his wife or daughter, or to take from him his inheritance. . . . And if any lord summon his retainers to assist him in doing battle with an adversary, and one of the compeers shall refuse to obey the summons and shall remain negligently at home, let that *beneficium* which he possessed be taken away from him and given to the man who abides true to his fealty.’

Here we have not only a full recognition of the right of the lord to his vassal’s military service, but also (which is more extraordinary in so great a statesman as Charles) we have imperial sanction given to that most anti-social of all feudal practices, the levying of private war. Herein we see how different after all was the Roman Empire remodelled by Charles the Great, from the Roman Empire of the Caesars. Imagine the astonishment of Augustus or Hadrian at finding such a sentence among the edicts of a successor.

In this brief and imperfect sketch of the internal organization of Charles’s Empire I have necessarily hinted at some of the causes which were to frustrate many of his noble and far-reaching plans. We all know that, as a matter of fact, the disruptive agencies that were at work

throughout his vast dominions were too mighty for his feeble successors to contend against; that the diverse races which had seemed to be welded together into one commonwealth by the labours of himself and his ancestors, sprang apart in one generation after his death, and that the treaty of Verdun signed by his grandsons practically constituted France, Germany, and Italy into three separate countries with something like their present boundaries. We know too that feudalism triumphed over all the attempts of the central power to check its progress, that duke and marquis and count and baron made their titles hereditary, and became virtually, each one, sovereign in his own domain ; that thus ten thousand disintegrating influences destroyed the unity not only of the Empire, but even of each of the three kingdoms into which it was divided.

But all this belongs to another chapter of history from that which is closing before us. In the course of my now completed work I have attempted to follow the fortunes of Italy and the successive races of her conquerors during nearly five hundred years. The story opened by the death-bed of Julian in a tent on the Assyrian plain; it closes by the tomb of Austrasian Charles, with the notes of the *Planctus de Obitu Karoli* ringing in our ears. In that space of half a millennium, kingdoms have risen and fallen; the one great universal Empire has crumbled into hopeless ruin; the Teuton, the Sclave and the Hun have seated themselves in the cities of the old Latin civilization; the religions of Jupiter and of Woden have faded away before the spreading light of Christianity, and the religion of Mohammed has overspread three continents; the whole outlook of the world has been changed. Now in 814 the Debateable Land is traversed. It is true that the waters of Chaos will still for centuries continue to roll over Europe, but the old classical world has finally passed away, and we see fully installed before us those two great figures, the German Emperor and the sovereign Roman Pope, whose noisy quarrels and precarious reconciliations will be the central events of European history during the Middle Ages.

The end

