

A
HISTORY OF THE
LATER ROMAN EMPIRE
FROM
ARCADIUS TO IRENE
(395 - 800 AD)



J. B. BURY

PREFACE

There is no period of history which has been so much obscured by incorrect and misleading titles as the period of the later Roman Empire. It is, I believe, more due to improper names than one might at first be disposed to admit, that the import of that period is so constantly misunderstood and its character so often misrepresented. For the first step towards grasping the history of those centuries through which the ancient evolved into the modern world is the comprehension of the fact that the old roman empire did not cease to exist until de year 1453. The line of roman emperors continued in unbroken succession from Octavius Augustus to Constantine Paleologus.

Now this essential fact is obscured as far as language is able to obscure it by applying the name "Byzantine" or the name "Greek" to the Empire in its later stages. Historians who use the phrase "Byzantine Emperor" are not very consistent or very precise as to the date at which the "Roman Empire" ends and the "Byzantine Empire" begins. Sometimes the line is drawn to the foundation of Constantinople by Constantine the Great, sometimes at the death of Theodosius the Great, sometimes at the reign of Justinian, sometimes (as by Finlay) at the accession of Leo the Isaurian; and the historian who adopts one line of division cannot assert that the historian who adopts a different line is wrong. For all such lines are purely arbitrary. No "Byzantine Empire" ever began to exist; the Roman Empire did not come to an end until 1453.

But, it may be objected, it is not true that the Roman Empire in the days of Constantine VII, who reigned in the tenth century, was completely different from what it was in the days of Constantine I, who reigned in the fourth century? and having in view this great difference in character, is it not permissible for historians, as a mere matter of convenience, to distinguish the later period by some confessedly appropriate word like "Byzantine" or "Graeco-Roman"? Such a use may be of course convenient and harmless in conversation among those who are fully aware that it is only a phrase of convenience; and there is no objection to "Byzantine art" or "Graeco-Roman law". But in writing or lecturing, such expressions as Byzantine, Greek, or Romaic Empire are highly objectionable, because they tend to obscure an important fact and perpetuate a serious error.

It seems especially unfortunate to adopt one of these names as the title of a book, and thus help to stereotype as a separate unity what is really a part of a continuous series. Every century of the Roman Empire differed from the preceding and from the succeeding, but the development was continuous; the Empire was still the Roman Empire, and I am not aware that it is usual to give a man a new name when he enters upon a new decade of life. We designate a man as young and old; and so we may speak of the earlier and later ages of a kingdom or an empire. But Byzantine is a proper adjective, and is too apparently precise not to be misleading. Gibbon perhaps is almost the only modern historian who, in treating this subject, has not done injustice to the continuity of history by the title of his work; but unfortunately in reading the later chapters one is apt to forget what that title is.

Moved by these considerations, I have avoided speaking of a Byzantine, a Greek, or a Graeco-Roman Empire, and have carefully restricted myself to the only correct appellation. For the sake of distinction the word "later" has been added on the title-page; and no further distinction is required, at least till the year 800, which marks the termination of my work.

This brings us to another unfortunate use of words, which similarly tends to perpetuate an erroneous impression. A rival Roman Empire was founded in the West by the coronation of Charles the Great in 800; and it is evidently very convenient to distinguish the rival Empires by prefixing the adjectives Western and Eastern. And this nomenclature is not only convenient, but quite justifiable; for it suggest no historical error, while it express succinctly the European situation.

But unhappily the phrase Eastern Roman Empire is not confined to this legitimate use. We hear of a Western and a Eastern Roman Empire in the fifth century; we hear of a Fall of the Western Empire n the 476. Such language, though it has the sanction of high names, is both incorrect in itself and leads to a further confusion. In the first place, it is incorrect. The Roman Empire was one and undivided in the fifth century; though there were generally more emperors than one, there were never two empires. To speak of two empires in the fifth century--and if such applies also to the fourth--is to misrepresent in the grossest manner the theory of the imperial constitution. No one talks about two empires in the days of Constantius and Constans; yet the relation of Arcadius and Honorius, the relation of Theodosius II and Valentinian III, the relation of Leo I and Anthemius, were exactly the same as the political relation which existed between the sons of Constantine. However independent one of another, or even hostile, the rulers from time to time may have been, theoretically the unity of the Empire which they ruled were unaffected. No Empire fell on 476; that year only marks a stage, and not even the most important stage, in the process of disintegration which was going on during the whole century. The resignation of Romulus Augustulus did not even shake the Roman Empire, far less did it cause an Empire to fall. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Gibbon spoke of the Fall of the Western Empire, and that many modern writers have given their sanction to the phrase. Notwithstanding all that Mr freeman has said on the matter on sundry places, it will be probably a long time before the inveterate error of assigning a wrong importance to the year 476 AD has been finally eradicated.

In the second place this nomenclature leads to a further confusion. For it the erroneous expression Eastern Roman Empire be admitted into use for the fifth century, the inevitable tendency is identify this false abstraction with the Eastern Roman Empire, rightly so called, of the later days. And this identification unavoidably leads to the idea that a state called the Eastern Roman Empire came into being after the death of Theodosius the Great, in 395 AD, and continued until 1453 AD.

The simplicity of history is thus obscured. Nothing can be easier than to apprehend that the Roman Empire endured, one and undivided, however changed and dismembered, from the first century BC to the fifteenth century AD; and that from the year 800 forward we distinguish it as Eastern, on account of the foundation of a rival Empire, which also called itself Roman, in the West.

I have now explained my title, and I may add that by discarding the word Byzantine an additional advantage has been gained. So many prejudicial associations have grown up round this inauspicious word that it almost involves a *petitio principii*, like the phrase *Bas-Empire* in French. This is due to the unhistorical manner in which many eminent authors have treated the later Roman Empire. These writers knew very little about it, and they regarded it as a safe subject for derision. Voltaire, for instance, speaks of Byzantine history “as a worthless repertory of declamation and miracles, disgraceful to the human mind”. “With this remark”, says Finlay, “the records of an empire, which witnessed the rise and fall of the Caliphs and Carolingians, are dismissed by one who exclaimed: *J’ôterai aux nations le bandeau de l’erreur*”. Gibbon hurried over the history of the Emperors later than the seventh century with contemptuous celerity, and his great authority has much to answer for. The remarks of Hegel in his *Philosophie der Geschichte* amount to much the same as the remark of Voltaire.

The sins of M. Guizot are of omission rather than of commission. His well-known *Histoire de la civilization en Europe* is open to two criticisms. In the first place, it is not what it professes to be,—a history of European civilization,—for it only deals with western Europe. But, waiving this, the author entirely ignores one of the most important and essential factors in the development of civilization in western Europe—the influence of the later Roman Empire and New Rome. On this subject I may refer the reader to the concluding chapter of my second volume; I mention it here because M. Guizot’s extraordinary omission was clearly due to the inveterate prejudice that the Byzantine Empire’ and all things appertaining thereto, may be safely neglected.

In his *History of European Morals* Mr. Lecky writes: “Of that Byzantine Empire the universal verdict of history is that it constitutes, with scarcely an exception the most thoroughly base and despicable form that civilization has yet assumed”. I am not sure what Mr. Lecky means by “the universal verdict of history”; in recent years, certainly, the Younger Rome has found some staunch and eminent champions. But I am sure that the statement fairly represents the notions generally prevalent on the subject.

All this shows that Byzantine is a dangerous word, when it is used in a political sense. It is convenient and harmless to talk about Byzantine art or even *la vie byzantine*, but it is dangerous to talk about a Byzantine Empire; for if we do so we run the risk of provoking universal verdicts of history. It might therefore be advisable, even if this were the only ground for doing so, to abandon the name and elude hard sentences by leading the accused forth under a different appellation. But it is not the only or the most important ground; as we have already seen, the name is improper, and it is therefore not only advisable but necessary to discard it.

I have been obliged to dwell at some length on a matter of nomenclature. I must add a few words on the scope of these two volumes, which, I venture to hope, may have some value as a very modest contribution to the study of a period which is too little known. They cover the four centuries during which the transition from the ancient world to the medieval world may be said to have taken place. Ancient and medieval are vague terms, but, whatever latitude we give them, we can hardly apply the term medieval to the fourth century or the term ancient to the eighth. In the year 395 AD the Empire was intact, but with the fifth century its dismemberment began; and 395 AD is consequently a convenient date to adopt as a starting-point. I propose to trace briefly the history of its dismemberment by the Germans, then more fully its recovery under Justinian, its decline after Justinian, and its reintegration in the eighth century; making the fall of Irene in 802 AD my point of termination, because it happens to be conveniently close in time to the foundation of the rival Roman Empire in 800 AD. The coronation of Charles the Great marks a new departure in European history, and it therefore forms, as Arnold recognized, a suitable end as well as a suitable beginning. After 800 there are two Roman Empires; and the history of the successors of Irene would naturally occupy a separate book, entitled A History of the Eastern Roman Empire.

The history of the fifth century is better known, and has been more thoroughly worked up than that of its successors. I have therefore treated it with comparative brevity, and omitted many of the details, which the reader may find in the works of Gibbon and Mr. Hodgkin. In fact, I originally intended to treat the dismemberment of the Empire by the Germans and the fortunes of the houses of Theodosius and Leo I as a mere introduction to a history of the subsequent period. But I was carried further than I intended, and the result considerably exceeds the limits of an introduction, while it is something less than a co-ordinate part of the work. The dismemberment of the Empire by the Germans brings us into contact with the nations who dismembered it, and tempts a writer to stray into the domains which have been so fully surveyed by Dahn in his *Konige der Germanen*. I have been careful not to yield to this temptation; I have avoided episodes and digressions; and have not concerned myself with tracing the doubtful antecedents of the various nations who settled in the Roman provinces. In fact, I have tried to trespass as little as possible on the field occupied by Dahn in Germany and by Mr. Hodgkin in England.

Coming to the sixth century, my account of the reconquest of Italy by Belisarius and Narses is compressed; while I have narrated fully the Persian wars on the Euphrates and in Colchis. As far as I am aware, no complete account of the latter has ever been published in an English form, Gibbon’s treatment being nothing more than a sketch; while as to the former, after the brilliant fourth volume of Mr. Hodgkin’s *Italy and her Invaders*, one could not think of rewriting all the details. But, notwithstanding, a critic may charge me with want of proportion, and ask why I occupy considerable space with the details of wars, which, even for special historians, have been almost buried in oblivion, and at the same time content myself with only a general account of the famous Italian campaigns of Belisarius. My reply is that I am concerned with the history of the Roman Empire, and not with the history of Italy or of the West; and the events on the Persian frontier were of vital consequence for the very existence of the Roman Empire, while the events in Italy were, for it, of only secondary importance. Of course Italy was a part of the Empire; but it was outlying—its loss or recovery affected the Roman Republic (strange to say!) in a far less degree than other losses or gains. And just as the historian of modern England may leave the details of Indian affairs to the special historian of India, so a general historian of the Roman Empire may, after

the fifth century, leave the details of Italian affairs to the special historian of Italy. It seemed to me that the real want of proportion would have been to reproduce at length the *Gothica* of Procopius and neglect his *Persica*.

On the same principle I have given a detailed narrative (I believe for the first time) of the somewhat tedious wars in the Balkan peninsula at the end of the sixth century, described by Theophylactus. Ranke deplored the want of an essay concerning the invasions of Avars and Slaves in the reign of Maurice; the learned and patient Hopf went hopelessly astray over the curious sentences of an "Attic" euphuist; and these facts induce me to hope that some future historian, repelled equally by an ancient language and an affected style, may applaud a predecessor for having reproduced most of the details in bald English.

The Church was so closely connected with the State that the ecclesiastical element cannot be ignored in histories that are not ecclesiastical; but I have endeavoured to encroach on this ground as little as possible. As time went on, the influence of the Greek Church became stronger, and consequently, with each succeeding century, church affairs claim a larger measure of a historian's attention. Hence in the latter part of this work the reader may expect to find more information on ecclesiastical matters than in the earlier.

The short chapters on life and manners consist of jottings, which could not be conveniently introduced into the narrative, and were too characteristic to be omitted; they do not aim at any standard of completeness.

Both historians and classical scholars are divided on the question of the transliteration of Greek names. To be thoroughly consistent in the "new" spelling, one would have to speak not only of *Athenai*, but of *Konstantinupolis* and *Rhodos*. Such apparitions on the pages of a book are intolerable to plain readers; and special difficulties arise in the case of Roman names of Greek-speaking individuals. I determined finally to be consistently Roman rather than either consistently or inconsistently Greek, and use, except in a few cases, the Latin forms, which, justified by the custom of many centuries, are more familiar to the eye. In some obvious cases, of course, it would be pedantic not to use forms which are neither Greek nor Latin, such as Constantine, Rhodes, or Rome. I confess that I was at first tempted to adopt the plausible compromise of Mr. Freeman; but an admirable article in the *Fortnightly Review* for January 1888, by Mr. E. Y. Tyrrell, confirmed me in the course which I have pursued. On the other hand, I have adopted Mr. Freeman's way of spelling Slave (for Slav). Speaking of Mr. Freeman, I am impelled to add that his brilliant and stimulating essays first taught me in all its bearings the truth that the Roman Empire is the key to European history.

In conclusion, I have to record my thanks to my wife, who contributes a chapter on "Byzantine Art", and to Professor Mahaffy for his assistance in revising the proof-sheets and for valuable suggestions and corrections.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BOOK I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM

CHAPTER II INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON SOCIETY

CHAPTER III ELEMENTS OF DISINTEGRATION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER IV THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EMPIRE

CHAPTER V CONSTANTINOPLE

BOOK II

THE HOUSE OF THEODOSIUS

CHAPTER I RUFINUS AND EUTROPIUS

CHAPTER II THE GERMANS IN THE EAST

CHAPTER VIII JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

CHAPTER IV STILICHO AND ALARIC

CHAPTER V THEODOSIUS II AND MARCIAN

CHAPTER VI BEGINNINGS OF THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE EMPIRE

CHAPTER VII INVASIONS OF THE HUNS

CHAPTER VIII THE PATRICIAN AETIUS

CHAPTER IX THE CHURCH IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

CHAPTER X LIFE AND MANNERS IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

CHAPTER XI A GLIMPSE OF HUN LIFE

BOOK III

THE HOUSE OF LEO THE GREAT

CHAPTER I LEO I

CHAPTER II RICIMER THE PATRICIAN

CHAPTER III ZENO

CHAPTER IV THE OSTROGOTHS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

CHAPTER V ODOVACAR THE PATRICIAN AND THEODORIC THE PATRICIAN

CHAPTER VI ANASTASIUS

CHAPTER VII THE PERSIAN WAR

CHAPTER VIII GREEK LITERATURE OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

BOOK IV

THE HOUSE OF JUSTIN

PART I

THE AGE OF JUSTINIAN

CHAPTER I THE REIGN OF JUSTIN I AND THE EARLIER YEARS OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

CHAPTER II JUSTINIAN AND THEODORA

CHAPTER III THE LEGAL WORKS OF JUSTINIAN

CHAPTER IV FIRST PERSIAN WAR

CHAPTER V THE RECONQUEST OF AFRICA AND ITALY

CHAPTER VI THE GREAT PLAGUE

CHAPTER VII THE FINAL CONQUEST OF ITALY AND THE CONQUEST OF SOUTH-EASTERN SPAIN

CHAPTER VIII SECOND PERSIAN WAR (540-545 A.D.)

CHAPTER IX THE LAZIC WAR

CHAPTER X THE LATER YEARS OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

CHAPTER XI JUSTINIAN'S CAESAROPAPISM

CHAPTER XII THE SLAVES

CHAPTER XIII CHANGES IN THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER XIV THE GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE AT THE END OF JUSTINIAN'S

CHAPTER XV BYZANTINE ART

CHAPTER XVI NOTES ON THE MANNERS, INDUSTRIES, AND COMMERCE IN THE AGE OF JUSTINIAN

PART II

THE COLLAPSE OF JUSTINIAN'S SYSTEM

CHAPTER I JUSTIN II AND TIBERIUS II

CHAPTER II MAURICE

CHAPTER III THE PERSIAN WAR (572-591 A.D.)

CHAPTER IV SLAVS AND AVARS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

CHAPTER V THE LOMBARDS IN ITALY

CHAPTER VI THE EMPIRE AND THE FRANKS

CHAPTER VII THE LANGUAGE OF THE ROMANS IN THE SIXTH CENTURY

CHAPTER VIII LITERATURE OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

BOOK V

THE HOUSE OF HERACLIUS

CHAPTER I PHOCAS

CHAPTER II HERACLIUS (610-622 A.D.)

CHAPTER III THE PERSIAN WAR

CHAPTER IV MONOTHELETISM

CHAPTER V LITERATURE IN THE REIGN OF HERACLIUS

CHAPTER VI DISMEMBERMENT OF THE EMPIRE BY THE SARACENS

CHAPTER VII THE SLAVONIC SETTLEMENTS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

CHAPTER VIII CONSTANS II

CHAPTER IX CONSTANTINE IV

CHAPTER X JUSTINIAN II

CHAPTER XI FOUNDATION OF THE BULGARIAN KINGDOM

CHAPTER XII ORIGIN OF THE SYSTEM OF THEMES

CHAPTER XIII TWENTY YEARS OF ANARCHY

CHAPTER XIV SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DECAY IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

BOOK VI

THE HOUSE OF LEO THE ISAURIAN

CHAPTER I THE REPULSE OF THE SARACENS

CHAPTER II THE ADMINISTRATION OF LEO III

CHAPTER III THE ICONOCLASTIC MOVEMENT

CHAPTER IV IMPERIAL ITALY IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

CHAPTER V CONSTANTINE V

CHAPTER VI ICONOCLASTIC POLICY OF CONSTANTINE

CHAPTER VII BULGARIA

CHAPTER VIII LEO IV

CHAPTER IX CONSTANTINE VI AND IRENE

CHAPTER X THE REACTION AGAINST ICONOCLASM

CHAPTER XI THE POPES, THE LOMBARDS AND THE FRANKS

CHAPTER XII THE GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECT OF EUROPE AT THE END OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY

CHAPTER XIII SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

CHAPTER XIV CONCLUSION

BOOK ONE

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

CHRISTIANITY AND PAGANISM

In the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. a great change came over the face of Europe; the political order of things was broken up. This movement ushered in the Middle Ages, and it presents a noteworthy parallel to that other great European movement which ushered out the Middle Ages, the movement of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by which the spiritual order of things was broken up. The atmosphere of the age in which the Empire of Rome was dismembered was the Christian religion; the atmosphere of the age in which the Church of Rome was ruptured was the Renaissance of culture. The formation of independent Teutonic kingdoms in the earlier period corresponds to the Reformation in the later; in both cases the German spirit produced a mighty revolution, and in both cases the result was a compromise or division between the old and the new. The Roman Empire lived on in south-eastern Europe, even as the Catholic Church lived on, confined to a limited extent of territory; and there was a remarkable revival of strength, or reaction, in the fifth and sixth centuries at Constantinople, which, following out the parallel, we may compare to the Counter-reformation. And this analogy is not a mere superficial or fanciful resemblance; the same historical principle is involved. Christianity and the Renaissance performed the same functions; each meant the transformation of the spirit of the European world, and such a transformation was a necessary precursor of the disintegration of European unity, whether political or ecclesiastical. In the strength of ancient ideas lay the strength of the Roman Empire; Christianity was the solvent of these ideas, and so dissolved also the political unity of Europe. In the strength of medieval ideas lay the strength of the Roman Church; the spirit of the Renaissance was the solvent of medieval ideas, and therefore it dissolved the ecclesiastical unity of western and northern Europe.

For the philosopher who looks upon the march of ideas over the heads of men the view of history is calm, unlike that of the troubled waters of events below, in which the mystic procession is often but dimly discerned. For him the spirit of old paganism departs before the approach of Christianity as quietly as the sun sinks before the sweeping train of night; and the dark glimmerings of the medieval world yield to the approach of the modern spirit as the stars "touched to death by diviner eyes" pass away before the rising sun. But to the historian who investigates the details of the process a spectacle is presented of contrast, struggle, and confusion; and its contemplation has a peculiar pleasure. For both the great periods, of which we have been speaking, were long seasons of twilight—the evening twilight and the morning twilight,—during which light and darkness mingled, and thus each period may be viewed in two aspects, as the end of an old, or as the beginning of a new, world. Now this doublesidedness produces a variety of contrasts, which lends to the study of such a period a peculiar interest, or we might say an aesthetic pleasure. We see a number of heterogeneous elements struggling to adjust themselves into a new order—ingredients of divers perfumes and colours turning swiftly round and blending in the cup of the disturbed spirit. The grand contrast of the old and the new in the fourth and fifth centuries stands out vividly; old and new nations as well as old and new religions are brought face to face. We see civilized Greeks and Romans, semi-civilized or wholly civilized Germans, Germans uncivilized but possessing potentialities for civilization, Huns and Alans totally beyond the pale, moving to and fro in contact with one another. In the lives of individuals too we see the multiplicity of colours curiously reflected. St. Helena, the mother of an Emperor, makes a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, since Hadrian's time usually called Aelia Capitolina, and finds the relics of the true cross with a thrill of overpowering delight, something like the delight that was felt by Renaissance scholars when an old Roman corpse was disinterred. Or we see Julian, a pagan philosopher, a noble man and an enlightened Emperor, trying to dislodge Christianity from the position it had won, and yet unable to avoid borrowing hints from it for his own system; just as in the writings of his friend, the anti-christian professor Libanius, we occasionally find an unconscious echo of the new religion. While the pagan Neoplatonist Hypatia is lecturing in the Museum at Alexandria, her semi-pagan pupil Synesius is a bishop at Cyrene. At Athens, now a fossilized provincial town, but still the headquarters of learning, paganism has its last stronghold; and even from this camp of heathenism the most Christian Emperor, Theodosius II, obtains the daughter of a philosopher as his consort, and she, after her conversion to Christianity, writes religious poems composed of scraps of Homeric lines. St. Augustine, the poet Sidonius Apollinaris, and the poet Nonnus were, like Synesius, remarkable examples of persons who, born and reared pagans, turned in later life to the new faith; and the writings of these men illustrate the contrasts of the age.

The Christian Church itself, it may be added, was full of contrasts just then; for the Christian doctrine had not yet sunk, or risen, to the monotony of a formula. There were still many open questions, even for orthodox Athanasians; there was still room for the play of individuality. It has been noticed how heterogeneous in spirit were the writings of the Greek Church; we have the zealous dogmatism of Epiphanius, the poetic speculation of Synesius, the philosophy of religion of Aeneas of Gaza and Nemesius, the sobriety of Theodoret, the mysticism of Pseudo-Dionysios. Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus had been fellow-students of the pagan Julian at Athens; Chrysostom was a pupil of Libanius.

Thus the general impression we receive is one of contrast, and it is in the battle of conflicting elements that the keenness and quickness of life consist. But the conflict was carried on, and the quick life breathed in a grey, often murky, atmosphere, different from the brightness that lit up those other conflicts in Athens during the fifth century BC, and in Italy during the fifteenth century AD. There was a general feeling of misfortune; the world-sadness pressed on the souls of all; and books were written to account for the woes that had come upon the human race. Nature too seemed to have prepared a dark background for the enactment of the miseries involved in the break-up of society and the incursions of the barbarians; plagues and earthquakes seemed to be signs of the times—like the tempest in King Lear, a suitable setting for the tragedy. The pagans of course were fain to attribute the misfortunes of the time to the new religion, and the "pale cast" of the spirit to the victory of the "pale Galilean". But in history what men superficially connect as cause and effect are really both effects of some deeper cause. The

world had grown grey independently of Christianity, and if it had not grown grey, Christianity would hardly have been possible—would not have had much meaning; it met the need of the world at the time.

For there are two ways in which we may intuit the world and avoid quarrelling with life. We can regard our experience as *destiny*—fortune and misfortune as alike determined for us by conditions beyond our control. It was in this objective way that the old Greeks regarded their experience, and in this way they were content; for it never occurred to them to exalt subjective wishes of their own in opposition to the course of destiny, and grieve because such wishes remained unachievable.

Otherwise we may feel our own subjective aims more keenly, and be unable to see them sacrificed without experiencing sorrow or even despair. In this case we shall need something in their stead to make us contented with life, we shall require a *consolation*. If circumstances render a man's life joyless and hopeless, it becomes endurable for him through the belief that another existence awaits him; the world is thereby rendered less unintelligible, or there is a hope of understanding it in due time; the heavy and weary weight seems less weary and heavy to bear; his belief is a consolation. The old Greeks needed no repentance and no consolation. The centuries from Alexander the Great to Marcus Aurelius were the time in which the thorns were penetrating. The ancient Greek spirit could indeed exclaim, "Oh, how full of briars is the working-day world!" but they were only burs thrown upon it in holiday foolery, burs upon the coat that could be shaken off. The spirit of the later ages said, "These burs are in my heart". When Anaxagoras was informed that his son had died, he said, "I never supposed him to be immortal"; but a Christian hermit, on receiving similar news in regard to his father, rebuked the messenger, "Blaspheme not, my father is immortal". The Christian had a compensation for death which the heathen did not require.

Christianity provided the needed *consolation*. But we must apprehend clearly the fact that the need had at one time not existed, and also the fact that it had come into existence in the regular course of the spiritual development of man. We are hereby reminded that if in one respect Christianity forms a new start in history, from another aspect it stands in close historical connection with the old Greek and Roman worlds; its philosophical doctrines are the logical end of the ancient Greek philosophy and the direct continuation of Stoicism and Epicureanism.

We may then first consider the connection of the new religion with the past, and its points of resemblance and contrast with the last form of pagan philosophy; and then, in another chapter, glance at the new departure made by Christianity and its most obvious influences on society.

The post-Aristotelian individualistic philosophies of Zeno, Epicurus, and the Sceptics were all characterized by the same motive. Their object was, not to understand the universe, but to secure for the individual the *summum bonum*; the end of philosophy was personal, no longer objective. It is from a similar cause that *philosophizer* and *philosophical* in colloquial English are used in a degraded sense; we talk of "bearing pain like a philosopher". We may contrast the apathy of Zeno, the freedom from affections which make us dependent on external things, with the metriopathy of Aristotle, who therein reflected the general spirit of the ancient Greeks. Epicurus placed the highest good in a deep haven of rest, where no waves wash and no sound is heard; his ideal too was mainly negative, freedom from bodily pain and mental trouble. These philosophies were over against the world rather than above it; the note of them was dissatisfaction with life and estrangement from the world.

This spirit, which set in as old Greek life was falling asunder, increased and became universal under the cold hand of Roman rule, which assorted well with the cold Stoic idea of coverts, nature. It has been said that the early Empire, up to the middle of the second century at least, was a golden age of felicity, and we may admit that in some respects it did approach more than other ages to the ideal of utilitarians; but for thinkers it was not an age of felicity or brightness, heaviness was hanging over the spirit and canker was beginning to gnaw. The heavy cloud soon burst, and after the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Europe was a scene of general misfortune.

The philosophical attitude of the Stoics, whose tenets were more widely spread than those of any other school, could not be final; it naturally led to an absolute philosophy. For it disparaged the world and isolated the soul; but the world thus disparaged was a fact which had to be explained, and reason was constrained to complete its dialectic by advancing to repose itself in the Absolute or the One, just as in the eighteenth century the system of Kant necessitated the absolute philosophies of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

Or, to put it from a religious point of view, the individual's own soul was not found a sufficiently strong refuge. Some stronger and surer resting-place was needed, something above the world and not over against it. And so the spirit endeavoured to grasp itself anew. The new idea was the Logos; the new world was the kingdom of the Son. A need was felt for mediation—for a place or mansion as it were for the soul to be near God. This was the positive idea that animated the age of the Roman Empire and tended to supersede Stoicism; it was common to the system of Philo, to Gnosticism, to Christianity, and to Neoplatonism. And in Christianity, especially, approach to God seemed a sort of refuge, and the negative tendency, derived from the apathy of the Stoics and the unsociability of the Cynics, to flee from the environments of life, was very strong, and found its expression in monastic ideals.

Thus these philosophies of the Infinite were the sphere to which the Stoic, Epicurean, and Pyrrhonic systems naturally led, by their own inherent defect. But we must now turn to the historical side and see how these late Greek thinkers prepared the way for the reception and spread of Christianity. It may be pointed out in a few words. In the first place, Epicureanism and Scepticism were atheistic and tended to discredit the popular beliefs in the pagan gods. In the second place, Epicureanism discredited devotion to one's country, and so, by uprooting patriotism, made the ground ready for the theory of universal brotherhood. In the third place, Stoicism, by its positive pantheistic theory and the surrender of the individual to the pulse of the universe, made a step towards the dependence of man on God's will or the doctrine of obedience, which is so cardinal in Christianity. And in the

fourth place, the Stoic cosmopolitanism, combined with the Stoic theory of the law of nature, supplemented the non-patriotic sentiments of the Epicureans, and thus anticipated the Christian embrace of all humanity. The fact that this Stoic theory affected the theory and practice of the Roman lawyers, and transformed the meaning of the phrase *jus gentium*, was an advance of the greatest importance in the same direction.

The resemblance between Christianity and Stoicism, which is in many points so striking, is sometimes unduly dwelt on. For if the Stoic and the Epicurean systems correspond to two different types of human nature, if some men are naturally stoical and others naturally epicurean, Christianity contained elements which attracted men of both these natures; as well as a stoical it had an epicurean side, and the second side should not be lost sight of.

For one of the most important elements in Christianity was the weight it gave to the tender affections, and one of the most attractive incidents in a Christian life was the formation of a spiritual friendship or brotherhood. Now friendship and comradeship were regarded as most important elements in life by the Epicureans, beginning with the founder of the sect, who collected around himself a friendly society, while his disciples used to meet solemnly every month, and once a year in commemoration of his birth, in a manner which reminds us of the Christian apostles meeting to commemorate their master. Friendship was a feature among the Epicureans as it was among the Christians, but not so in the system of the independent and lonely Stoics.

And then we may say that the joint life of brethren in a monastery, which, in the western lands of the Empire, ultimately acquired in many cases a certain brightness and cheerfulness, corresponded to the Epicurean spirit; while the solitary life of hermits who fled from their fellows and mortified their bodies was derived from the spirit of Stoicism, tintured with oriental asceticism, and sometimes degenerating into the life of Cynics, who were a sort of caricature of the Stoics.

A noteworthy difference between the two philosophies was that the Stoics looked back, while the Epicureans looked forward. The great poem of Lucretius is permeated with optimism, not indeed with the optimism which holds that there is more pleasure than pain in the world, but with an optimistic belief in human progress. The human race is represented as progressing, gradually freeing itself from the fetters of superstition and opening its eyes to a clearer view of truth. The Stoics, on the other hand, prefer to dwell on the glories and the heroes of the past, and care little to look forward; their pantheism did not lead them to an idea of progress. Now Christianity involved optimism in two ways. It not only involved happiness for believers in another life; it also involved the theory that the course of history had been one of progress, designed and directed by the Deity, and that the revelation of Christ had introduced a new era of advance for the world, just as the teaching of Epicurus was hailed by followers like Lucretius as ushering in a new age. It was believed indeed that at any time the end of the world might come, and that a great change might take place; but, allowing for all differences, we cannot help perceiving that in the idea of the world's progress Christianity approaches more nigh to Epicureanism than to Stoicism.

And, in general, the heroism of the Stoics, even of the later and milder Stoics, was not a Christian virtue; and man's dignity, which for Christians depended on his having a soul, was reduced by the feeling of his abasement before God. On the other hand, Christianity exalted the feminine un-Roman side of man's nature, the side that naturally loves pleasure and shrinks from pain and feels quick sympathy,—in fact, the Epicurean side; and thus Mr. Walter Pater makes Marius, a natural Epicurean, or rather a refined Cyrenaic, turn by the force of that very nature, *anima naturaliter Christiana* in Tertullian's words, to the new religion. This is the human, and to most men attractive, side of Christianity; it had another, an inhuman, side, of which I shall have to speak hereafter.

After the victory of Christianity, paganism was dying out, but even in the sixth century it was not yet dead. Towards the end of the fourth century Gratian gave up the title of Pontifex Maximus; the altar of Victory in the Senate House at Rome was removed, though Symmachus and the senators made an affecting appeal to spare it; the Olympic games were abolished, and the oracle of Apollo became silent. The effort of Julian, the last effort of the benighted faith, lured the exiled gods of Greece back for a moment to their ancient habitations. But the verses in which the Hellenic spirit uttered its latest breath, expressed the consciousness that the old things had passed away,—the laurel, the spring, and the emblems of paganism. "Tell the king, on earth has fallen the glorious dwelling"—the words have a dying fall; and with the song of Greece the gods of Greece also retreated down the vast and dreary edges of the world, which was no longer a meet habitation for the deities of Olympus. But the schools at Athens still flourished in the fifth century, and the pagans who taught there—as Leontius, Plutarch the philosopher, Proclus—were in no danger of suffering the fate of Hypatia at Alexandria. They were quietistic; they did not attempt to oppose the new faith, and the government wisely left them in peace.

The Christians themselves were not quite emancipated from the charm, or, as some thought, the evil glamour, of classical antiquity. The pagan rhetoric, with all its ornaments, was not dispensed with by the most learned Christian divines. It was as dear to the heart of Chrysostom as to that of Libanius, and Eusebius, the historian of Constantine, succeeded by its means in producing some effective passages. Similarly, Latin divines like Augustine and Salvian did not despise the science of style. But the art of the ancients had more than this external influence. Christians who had really a taste for art were, by embracing the new religion, placed in a spiritual difficulty. The new religion created a repugnance to the old fabulous mythology, as a sort of emanation from Tartarean powers, and to the old philosophies and modes of thought. There were not many like Synesius who could be both a Platonist and a Christian. There were not many even like Tertullian, who would admit that the best of the ancients possessed "a soul naturally Christian." And yet in spite of themselves they could not put away a hankering after the classical art whose subject-matter was pagan myth and pagan history, now to be replaced by the truths of the Old Testament. St. Augustine felt a thrill, and deemed the thrill wicked, at such lines as—

infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae.

Jerome could not resist the fascination of Cicero. One Germanus, a friend of Cassian, had to confess with many tears that often, while he was engaged in prayer, the old heroes and heroines would pass into his soul, and the remembrance of the ancient gods disarrange his thoughts of God. Such asceticism as this was more common in the West than among the Greek-speaking Christians. It may be added that pagan symbols and mottoes were used on Christian tombs, and pagan ideas adapted in Christian art.

There is a legend which made its appearance about the fourth century, remarkable both in itself and as having been versified by the Empress Eudocia, the legend of Cyprian and Justina. It illustrates the thaumaturgy and the asceticism of the age as well as the conflict of Christianity and paganism, and is also interesting as presenting us with a prototype of Faust. Justina was a beautiful Christian maiden of Antioch, passionately loved by a pagan youth Aglaides, who, unable to win her affections which were given to Christ, determined to move Acheron. For this purpose he engaged the services of Cyprian, a powerful magician, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and in the magic of the Chaldeans. But the demons of temptation that the wizard's art raised against Justina were repulsed by the sign of the cross. Whereupon Cyprian, moved by the firmness and power of her faith, became enamoured of her, abjured his magic arts, and was baptized a Christian. Both he and Justina suffered martyrdom in the persecution of Diocletian. The vanity of all his arts and lore is described by Cyprian in a manner which reminds us of the opening lines of Faust's soliloquy in Goethe's drama. Pagan learning is associated with magic and powers of evil, and opposed to the light of Christianity. Another point in the contrast is the conception of a purified spiritual love opposed to the love of the carnal man which enlists the powers of darkness.

Regarding the dealings of holy men with demons, a curious tale is told of St. Macarius of Alexandria. He conceived the idea of visiting the garden and sepulchre of Jannes and Jambros, magicians who had lived in the time of Pharaoh, that he might meet and make inquiries of the demons who had been lodged there by the art of the magicians. They had planted the garden with all sorts of trees, and surrounded it with a wall of square stones; they had built a tomb in it, wherein they placed rich treasure of gold, and had dug a great well—in hopes that after death they might luxuriate in this paradise. Macarius made his way, like a mariner at sea, by the guidance of the stars, and as he traversed the desert he stuck reeds in the ground at certain intervals to mark the way home. For nine days he crossed the desert, and as it was night when he reached the garden, he lay clown and slept. But meanwhile the “wild demon” collected all the reeds, and when the saint awoke he found them lying in a bundle at his head. As he approached the garden seventy demons met him, shouting and gesticulating, leaping, and gnashing with their teeth: flying like crows in his face they asked him, “What want you, Macarius? why have you come to us?”. He replied that he merely wished to see the garden and would leave it when he had seen it; whereupon the demons vanished. In the garden there was little to see; a bronze cask hung in the well by an iron chain worn by time, and a few dry pomegranates. Having satisfied his curiosity, Macarius returned to his cell.

As there were two sides to the old Greek religion—the ridiculous side which Lucian brought out so humorously, and the ideal but human side which made it lovely—there were two sides also to the Christian religion. There was the ugly, inhuman side, from which the humanism of the fourteenth and fifteenth century revolted, manifested in extreme and grotesque asceticism, a sort of war with the instincts of humanity; and there was the consolatory side, the hopes which it offered to mankind, at that time almost weary of living. But in spite of the dismalness, as far as the world is concerned, of the Christianity of the time, when men even looked forward to a very speedy end of a universe which seemed a theatre of misery, we can see traces of cheerfulness and traits of human feeling in the Church, which had now outgrown the hopeful freshness that gave it such a charm in the first and second centuries. Christian women with gracious faces move before us, Olympias, Melania, Eudocia, though a lighter atmosphere seems to linger round the pagan ladies, Hypatia, Asclepigeneia, and Athenais.

It might be asked, was no middle course open? could not the attractions of paganism be combined with the attractions of Christianity, and a new theory of life, combining the requisite consolation with the antique grace, be constructed? Neoplatonism might seem at first something of this kind. With a theology generically similar to the Christian theology, it taught a high ideal of ethics, the practical aim being to purify the soul from the thralldom of matter by an ascending series of cleansing processes, so that it might finally, by a sort of *henosis* or *at-onement*, become conscious of the Absolute. But it is clear that Neoplatonism involved the same essential opposition which was involved in Christianity, the opposition of soul and body, and therefore must logically lead to the same cast of inhumanity, tintured with cynicism. Theoretically, indeed, soul and body were two terms in a descending series, but practically they were opposed. And so, although the new philosophers, who studied Plato and Pythagoras and Aristotle and old Orphic mysteries, might invest their doctrine with an antique borrowed charm, they were really as much children of the grey time they lived in as the Christians. But they were recognized opponents; in such a spirit Augustine speaks of Plotinus and Porphyrius, and the massacre of Hypatia at Alexandria was a manifestation of the antagonism.

Proclus, the last original Greek philosopher, lived at Athens throughout the greater part of the fifth century (410-485). Born in Lycia, he was dedicated by his parents to Apollo, for it behoved (as we are told by his biographer Marinus, whose work is full of interesting incidents and traits) that one who was to lead all sciences should be reared and educated under the sod who leads the Muses. He studied rhetoric at Alexandria and philosophy at Athens, where, under the guidance of the old philosopher Plutarchus and his daughter Asclepigeneia, he was initiated in the mysteries of Platonism. We must glance at the system of Proclus, the last term in the history or chain of Greek philosophy. In a general history we cannot go into its difficult details, but we must take note of its leading features; for a historian of any particular state of the world is concerned with the way in which a thinker placed therein approaches metaphysical problems. It might even be said that we must go to the philosophers, as to mystics, in order to understand the real forces that underlie the history of a time, and determine even events like a war or a revolution. The men who act in history, the men who “make history”, have only to do with this treasure, or this kingdom, or this woman; the philosopher has not to do with this and that, but has to become a witness of the processes of the spirit in which this and that are nothing more than this and that. So in reading a philosophy we are getting at the secret of the age, and learning the manner in which the spirit contemplated itself at the time.

Proclus understood Plato more thoroughly and worked more in his spirit than his great predecessor Plotinus, on whom he made a marked advance in many respects. If Plotinus is the Schelling of Neoplatonism, Proclus is its Hegel. There was an unreduced surd in Plotinus and a certain cloudiness in his system, a sediment as it were in the bottom of the cup which clouded the liquid to a certain degree. The sediment disappears in Proclus, the wine is strained and clarified; he presents us with a thoroughly articulated system, that bears a distinct resemblance in its method to Hegel's Logic.

Proclus, like Plotinus, started with the One or the Absolute, that which cannot be called Being, for it is beyond Being, and cannot be called intelligent, for intelligence is too low a category to assert of it. It is the source of all things, and yet it would be improper to assert cause of it; it is a cause and yet not cause. Now from the One, according to Plotinus, emanates an image which, through and in the act of turning towards the One from which it emanates, is Nous or Thought. This is the point at which Proclus makes a new departure. The immediate procession of the Nous from the One rests on a confusion, a middle term is required, and Proclus interposed the *henads* between them— a plurality of ones, whereby alone there can be participation in the One. The doctrine of the *henads* is the philosophical analogue of the famous *filioque* clause in the Latin creed; as the holy Spirit proceeds not from the Father alone, but from the Father and Son, so the Nous or Spirit proceeds not from the One directly, but from the One and the company of *henads*. The *henads* he terms Gods. Next to them, and third in the descending line, comes the sphere of Nous, differentiated into numerous categories arranged in triads. It is this triadic arrangement, of which we find the origin in Plato, that reminds us of the Hegelian system. From the intellectual world emanates the fourth term, Soul; and here he repeats his triple division, assuming three kinds of souls, divine, human, and demonic. Fifth and last in the scale comes Matter.

This process of development is one of descent from higher to lower. There is a reverse process, the epistrophe or turning back; and this process is performed by the soul, when in the study of philosophy it turns to the intellect from which it came forth, and in whose nature it shares. Thus it is the aim of the “musical” or cultured soul to retrace the world-process in which it is involved.

In the hymns of Proclus, which he wrote under the inspiration of older Orphic hymns, and in which he celebrated all kinds of strange deities—for he used to say that a philosopher should not confine himself to the religious ideas of one people, but be “a hierophant of the world”,—he emits some of that mystic emotion with which the philosophical writings of Plotinus are suffused, but of which we can find little in his own severe treatises. For Plotinus, like Empedocles or Spinoza, often seems in a sort of divine intoxication, and the severity which attends undisturbed contemplation was lighted up, shall we say, or shadowed, by his enthusiasm as a combatant against the new religion. In his time, before Christianity attained its dominant position, no thinker with native enthusiasm could fail to be drawn into the vortex of the contending theories of the world. But in the fifth century the only thing left for non-Christian philosophers was quietism. Out of the world, “a solitary worker in the vast loneliness of the Absolute”, Proclus was able to develop the timeless and spaceless triads, and study the works of Plato with a leisure and severity that Plotinus could hardly realize. Most of his works assume the modest form of commentaries on Plato.

The practical end of the Neoplatonists was, like that of the Stoics, *ataraxia*, freedom from disturbance; and this they thought was obtained by contemplation, herein agreeing with the Aristotelian ideal of the “theoretic life”. Thus they differed from both Stoics and Christians. For the Stoic and the Christian, theorizing—the study of pure metaphysics—is valuable only as a means to right conduct, a sort of canonic for ethics; but for the Neoplatonist the practice of the ethical virtues is subsidiary to the contemplation of the metaphysical truth which is the end. And thus, although it had an atmosphere of religion about it, Neoplatonism was and could be strictly no more and no less than a philosophy. Stoicism had perhaps a larger number of the elements of a religion, and yet it too was only for the sage.

There is a certain contrast and there is also a certain analogy between the course of development of Christianity and that of Neoplatonism. As Christians had been divided into Athanasians and Arians, so Neoplatonism may be said to have fallen asunder into two divergent schools. There were the soberer and truer followers of Plotinus, among whom Hypatia may be mentioned, and there were the wilder mystical speculators like Iamblichus and the writer on Egyptian Mysteries. Thus the divergency from orthodox Neoplatonism was into the realm of the imagination; the divergency from orthodox Christianity was into the realm of the understanding. Among the new Platonists there were no rationalists like the Arians; and we may be sure that men of a cold logical temper, on whose faith the creed of Nicaea laid too heavy a burden, were more inclined to embrace the modified form of Christianity than any form of the new pagan philosophy.

Again, the minute determination of the nature of Christ in the fifth century, through the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies, was almost the last period in the development of Christian doctrine, just as the minute determination of the higher categories by Proclus was the final stage of the development of Neoplatonic thought. The first great inspiration, which in its ardour could not tolerate, or rather did not think of, precise analysis of ideas, had passed away, and men were able to reason things out more calmly and realize the subtler difficulties.

What, it may be asked, was the historical result for mankind of the new philosophy and the new religion? The presence of the Infinite, whether to an individual or a race, is bought at a great cost. Humanity seeks a deliverer; it obtains a deliverer and a tyrant. For the Infinite, having freed the human mind from the bonds of the finite, enslaves it unto itself, like a true tyrant; we may say, and the paradox is only apparent, that the human mind was cabined by the Infinite. Thought was rendered sterile and unproductive for centuries under the withering pressure of an omnipresent and monotonous idea. But through this *selva oscura* lay the path from ancient to modern civilization, and few will be disposed to assert with Rousseau and Gibbon that the cost was greater than the gain.

CHAPTER II

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON SOCIETY

Having seen how closely Christianity was connected with the past ages of civilized Europe, whose beliefs it superseded, we must glance at its other historical aspect, in which it appears as a new departure. It has been said that the function of the German nations was to be the bearers of Christianity. The growth of the new religion was indeed contemporary with the spread of the new races in the Empire, but at this time in the external events of history, so far from being closely attached to the Germans, Christianity is identified with the Roman Empire. It is long afterwards that we see the mission fulfilled. The connection rests on a psychological basis; the German character was essentially subjective. The Teutons were gifted with that susceptibility which we call heart, and it was to the needs of the heart that Christianity possessed endless potentialities of adaptation. From the very first German princesses often embraced Christianity and adorned it, but it required many centuries for those nations to be regenerated by its influence. Yet even in the exclamation of the rude barbarian Chlodwig, when he heard the story of Christ's passion, "If I had been there with my Franks, I would have revenged his injuries!" we feel the presence of this heart, in its wild state, which Christianity was destined to tame. To an old Roman, like Aurelian or Constantine, such an exclamation would have been impossible. Christianity and Teutonism were both solvents of the ancient world, and as the German nations became afterwards entirely Christian, we see that they were historically adapted to one another.

This aspect of Christianity as the religion of the future has brought us to consider it as a religion rather than as a theology, in which light its connection with the past naturally exhibited it. As a religion it was a complete novelty, and was bound to displace Stoicism and Neoplatonism. Stoicism was indeed practical, but it could only be accepted by a man of more than average intellect, while Christianity descended to the dull and the uneducated. Stoicism aimed at stifling the emotions and repressing the affections; Christianity cherished the amiable affections, and was particularly suited to be understood and embraced by women and children who, according to Aristotle, are creatures of passion, as opposed to men who are capable of living by reason. We must now point out some of the leading changes which Christianity produced in society, having first considered why Roman society adopted it.

What induced the civilized world to be converted to Christianity is a question that naturally suggests itself. Mr. Lecky tells us that it was not from conviction after careful sifting of evidence that men believed it; it was rather because they wanted to believe something, and Christianity was the best they found. It was consoling; it had an oriental flavour, and yet was not wrapped in such an envelope of mystic theosophy as to preclude it from acceptance by European minds. But it was, above all, I think, the cheerful virtue of the Christian life that exercised a fascination on the cultured, and a passage in the *Confessions* of Augustine seems worthy of special remark. Having stated that the Christian life attracted him, he says:

"In the direction where I had set my face, and whither I was hastening to cross over, there was exposed to my view a chaste and dignified temper of self-restraint, serene and cheerful but never dissolute, honourably enticing me to come without hesitation, and holding out to embrace and receive me affectionate hands, full of good examples".

But beside this ideal of a calm and cheerful social life there was the ideal of the ascetic and unsocial life of the hermit, which exercised a sort of maddening fascination over countless men of high faculties. The object of the hermit was to free himself from temptations to sensuality; and thus the men who embraced such a life were probably, in most cases, men of strongly-developed physical passions, seized with a profound conviction of the deadliness of impurity. They were therefore generally men of robust frame, and this may explain how they could live so long under privations and endurances which seem sufficient to bring the life of an ordinary man to a speedy end. A rage for the spiritual life, far from the world, seized on individuals of all classes. In the sixth century an Ethiopian king, Elesbaa, abdicated his throne to retire to fast and pray in the desert, where he lived as a saint of no ordinary sanctity and power. In the reign of Theodosius the Great, a beautiful young man, who attained to the highest political offices, suddenly bade good-bye to his family and departed to Mount Sinai, stricken with a passion for the desert. But we need not enumerate here the countless disciples of St. Antony and St. Pachomius; they meet us at every page of history.

In the same way among women the horror of unchastity—of desecration of the body, the temple of the soul—which had taken possession of the age with a sort of morbid excess, led to vows of perpetual virginity, and even children were dedicated in their infancy with a cruel kindness to a life of monasticism. When we regard the effects of these habits, we observe, in the first place, that the great value set by the triumphant Church on the unmarried life must have led to depopulation; and in the second place, that the refusal of the most spiritually-minded in the community to assist reproduction must have contributed to a decrease in really spiritually-minded persons, on the principle of heredity. If the best refuse to have children, the race must decline. It would be an error, of course, to insist too much on the distant effects of celibacy, but it cannot be overlooked that these were its natural tendencies. When Jerome remarked that in one respect marriage was laudable, because it brought virgins into the world, he did not see that the observation was really a retort upon his own position.

This unsocial passion invaded family life, and must have caused a considerable amount of suffering. Among the most pathetic incidents in the history of the growth of Christianity were those of the great gulf fixed between husbands and wives by the conversion of the latter. And after Christianity had prevailed, parents of average notions have been often filled with despair when a divine longing for the lonely life came upon their children.

The position of women was considerably changed by Christianity. Their possession of immortal souls equalized them with the other sex, and an emancipation began, which has since indeed progressed but slowly, by the recognition that they had functions beyond those of maternity and housewifery. In fact, those Christians who did not approve unreservedly of celibacy considered that the chief end of marriage was not production of children, but rather to be a type of the primitive union of human society. This theory set women and men on an equal footing. St. Chrysostom expressed himself strongly on this subject. In a letter to a Roman lady he said that nature had assigned domestic duties to women and external duties to men, but that the Christian life extended woman's sphere, and gave her a part to play in the struggles of the Church. This part was that of the consoler and "ministering angel". And thus, to use a cant phrase of the present day, woman was admitted to have a "mission". Olympias, the friend of Chrysostom, was a lady of the new type.

As in the present day, the admiration of enthusiastic women for saints and priests was unbounded. Jerome had a spiritual circle of women about him in Old Rome, and Chrysostom was the centre of similar attentions from ladies in New Rome. The name *auriscalpius*, or ear-picker, was given to a priest who was noted for his successes in making such spiritual conquests. The new view of women's position must have tended to make them more independent, just as does nowadays the spread of more liberal theories on women's education; and old-fashioned people probably looked with horror on the life of deaconesses as implying an immodest surrender of female retirement. That many of these religious sisters did become really "fast" in dress and behaviour we know from the letters of Chrysostom.

One of the most far-reaching changes introduced by Christianity into the conduct of life was the idea that human life as such was sacred; an idea distinctly opposed to the actual practice of the pagans, if not quite novel to them. This idea, in the first place, altered the attitude to the gladiatorial shows, and although they were not immediately abolished on the triumph of Christianity, they became gradually discredited and were put down before the end of the fourth century. As these amusements were one of the chief obstacles to the refining and softening influences of Roman advanced civilization, we can hardly rate too highly the importance of this step. Again, the attitude towards suicide, which the pagans, if they did not recommend it, at least considered venal, was quite changed by the new feeling, and became a heinous crime, which was hardly condoned even to heroic Christian maidens, though it were the only means of preserving them from dishonour. Another corollary from the respect for inviolability of life was the uncompromising reprobation of all forms of removing unwelcome children by exposition, infanticide, or even abortion.

Along with this negatively working idea of the sanctity of life was the other idea which succeeded and elevated Stoic cosmopolitanism, the idea that all men are brothers bound by a common humanity. Besides softening to some extent the relation between the Roman world and the barbarians, this idea had a considerable effect within the Empire itself on the position of slaves, who as men and members of the Christian Church were the brothers of their masters and on an equality with them. This both improved the condition of slaves and promoted to some degree a decrease of slavery and an increase in the frequency of emancipation. Beyond this, it penetrated and quickened all the emotions of life and furthered the cultivation of the amiable side of human nature.

Yet we can hardly say that there was much altruism in early Christian society, in spite of the altruistic tendencies of Christ's teaching. There were abundant instances of self-sacrifice for others, but they were not dictated by the motive of altruism; they were dictated by the motive of a transfigured selfishness which looked to a reward hereafter, by the desire of ennobling and benefiting one's own soul. The impossible and, as Herbert Spencer has shown, undesirable aim of loving one's neighbour as oneself, in the literal sense of the words, was not attained or even approached by the saints. Many people in modern England come far nearer to the realization of the idea than they did. Alms, for example, were not given merely out of pure and heartfelt sympathy for the poor: they were given for the benefit of the giver's soul, and to obtain the prayers of the recipients who, just because they happened to be poor, were supposed to be not far from the kingdom of heaven.

The ideas of sin and future punishment, enforced by an elaborate legislature regulating degrees of sin and the corresponding penances, were another great novelty of Christianity, raising as it were the elaborate ritual of pagan ceremonies of purification into the spiritual sphere, where evil thoughts were wellnigh as black as evil acts. The tortures of hell gave a dark tint to the new religion, which to natures of melancholy cast made it a sort of haunting terror; while the claims of Christianity to dominate the most trifling deed and smallest thought, leaving almost no margin for neutral actions, tended to make the dread of sin constant and morbid.

And here we have touched on a side of Christianity which was distinctly unreasonable and would have revolted the clear intellect of a healthy Greek. The idea that God's omniscience takes account of the smallest and meanest details of our lives, and keeps, as it were, a written record of such nugatory sins against us, would have appeared utterly absurd, as well as a degradation of the Deity, to an old Greek possessed of the most elementary culture. It is an idea that cannot well be accepted by the reason of the natural man; and, like that other idea of extreme asceticism which led to a solitary life, equally repugnant to Hellenic reason, it was carried to excess by the Christians. For like all true lovers, the true lovers of God "run into strange capers". And while to many this idea was welcome, as bringing them into close and constant relation with the Deity, as making them feel his presence, to some Christians the divine supervision of trifles must have been felt as an oppressive tyranny. And the Church was able to enforce its moral laws by fear of the ultimate and dreaded penalty of excommunication which made the criminal an outcast from society, avoided and abhorred.

In forming an idea of the Christian society and sentiments of the early ages, we must not forget that the believers of those days realized far more vividly than the believers of our days the realities of their religion. While the conceptions of the saints were confined to a smaller sphere of observed facts, their imaginations had a wider range and a greater intensity. The realm of scientific knowledge was limited; and therefore the field of fancy which they inherited, the field of divine or automaton intimations, was all the more spacious. They were ever contending or consorting with the demons or angels of imagination, now uplifted and rejoicing in the radiant

raptures of heaven, now labouring and heavy laden in the lurid horrors of hell. This variation between two extreme poles—between a dread of God's wrath and a consciousness of his approval— which produced the opposing virtues of Christian pride and Christian humility, was alien to the Hellenic instinct which clung to the mean. The “humble man” of the Christians would have been considered a vicious and contemptible person by Aristotle, who put forward the “man of great spirit” as a man of virtue.

This chapter may be concluded with the remark that a considerable change had come over Christianity itself since its first appearance. It had lost the charm that attended the novelty of the first revelation; the flower of its youth had faded. The Christian temperament could not be unaffected by the cold winter waves that washed over the world in the fourth and fifth centuries; and although the religious consolation remained, the early cheerfulness — cheerfulness even under persecution — and the freshness which contrasted pleasantly with the weary pagan society were no longer there.

CHAPTER III

ELEMENTS OF DISINTEGRATION IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The most obvious element of weakness in the Roman Empire was the increasing depopulation. The vitality of a state depends ultimately on the people, and from the time of Augustus, who was obliged to make special laws to encourage reproduction, to the time of Marcus Aurelius the population steadily decreased. In the reign of Aurelius the great plague inflicted a blow which the Empire was never able to recover, as it was involved in a continuous series of evils, the wars of the third century, until the time of Constantine. The original cause of depopulation in Italy was the slave system, which ruined the middle class of small proprietors and created a proletariat. A similar tendency manifested itself in the East under Roman rule, though in a lesser degree; and the financial policy of the later Empire, which maintained oppressive taxation by means of the “curial system”, effectually hindered the population from recovering itself. Thus to the social cause which had operated for a long time was added in the fourth century a political cause, and just as the first was an indispensable element of Roman society, the second soon became indispensable to the Roman administration.

Moreover, the only remedy which the government could apply to meet the evil was itself an active element of disintegration. This was the introduction of barbarians as soldiers or agriculturists (*coloni*) into the Roman provinces.

Thus slavery and oppressive taxation, the causes of depopulation, and the importation of barbarians, the remedy of depopulation, may be looked on as three main elements of disintegration in the Empire. A fourth element was the Christian religion which, while it was entirely opposed to the Roman spirit which it was destined to dissolve, nevertheless was not theoretically opposed to the Empire and the imperial administration. We may take these four points in order:

(1) It was a consequence of the slave system that those great estates which, according to an ancient writer, ruined Italy were formed, and swallowed up the small proprietors. It is important to note precisely how this effect took place. In time of war all free proprietors, rich and poor alike, were obliged to take the field; but while the land of the rich, who employed slaves to cultivate it, was not affected by this circumstance, the lands of the small farmers, who had no staff of slaves, remained uncultivated during their absence. This fact, in a time when wars were frequent, tended directly to reduce the petty proprietors to beggary and add to the wealth of the rich capitalists. Another effect of wars, which conduced to the same result, was that the ranks of the small farmers were decimated, while the numbers of the slaves, who did not serve in the army, multiplied. We must also remember that a bad harvest raised prices then to an extent that appears now quite enormous; so that the small farmer was obliged to buy corn at an exorbitant price, and, if the harvest of the following year turned out very successful, prices descended so low that he was unable even to reimburse himself.

Besides destroying the middle class, the slave system facilitated and encouraged the unproductive unions of concubinage, and these to the self-indulgent were more agreeable than marriage, which entails duties as well as pleasures. This convenient system naturally confirmed and increased the spirit of self-indulgence, and also increased its psychological concomitant, cruelty or indifference, which tended to keep up the practice of exposing infants, a direct check on population.

Under the Empire even the number of the slaves decreased. For to purchase slaves in the markets of the East the precious metals were requisite, since the produce of the West did not readily find a sale in the East, and the supply of gold and silver was declining, especially after the time of Caracalla, as is proved by the great depreciations of coinage. This diminution in the number of slaves led to the rehabilitation of free labour; but the freemen were soon involved in the meshes of the caste system which reduced them not to slavery, but to serfdom.

(2) It was in the times of Diocletian and Constantine that the municipal institutions of the Empire were impressed with the fiscal stamp which characterized them henceforward. During the three preceding centuries the provinces had gone through much tribulation, of which Juvenal, for example, gives us a picture; but this oppression was at least mitigated by the fact that it was not legal, and it was always open to the provincials to take

legal proceedings. Nor was extortion always countenanced by the Emperors; it is recorded that Tiberius found fault with the prefect of Egypt for transmitting to Rome an unduly large amount.

But at the beginning of the fourth century the old municipal curia or senate was metamorphosed into a machine for grinding down the provincial proprietors by a most unmerciful and injudicious system of taxation. The curia of a town consisted of a certain number of the richest landowners who were responsible to the treasury for a definite sum, which it was their business to collect from all the proprietors in the district. It followed that if one proprietor became bankrupt the load on all the others was increased. The provincials had two alleviations. The first was that a revision of taxes took place every fifteen years, the so-called *indiction*, which became a measure of time, and thus there was a prospect that an excessive burden might be reduced. The second consisted in the institution of the *defensores*, persons nominated to watch over the interests of the provincials and interfere in behalf of their rights against illegal oppression. On the other hand we must remember that, as Finlay noticed, the interests of the *curia* were not identical with those of the municipality, as the *curiales* were only a select number of the most wealthy.

This system tended to reduce the free provincial gentlemen to the state of serfs. They were enclosed in a cage from which there was almost no exit, for laws were passed which forbade them to enlist in the army, to enter the church, or go to the bar. They were not allowed to quit their municipality without permission from the governor, and travelling was in every way discouraged. Moreover, the obligations of the *decurionate* were hereditary, and exclusion from all other careers rigidly enforced. Thus a caste system was instituted, in which the individual life must have been often a hopeless monotony of misery.

The kindred institutions of serfdom and the *colonatus* gradually arose by a double process of levelling up and levelling down; slaves were elevated and freemen were degraded to the condition of laborers attached to the soil. The slave proprietors were called *ascripticii*; while the free farmers were known as *coloni*. Economic necessities naturally brought about this state of things, and then it was recognized and stereotyped by law. An account of the *colonatus* which, while it is concise, loses sight of no essential fact, has been given by Dr. Ingram in his essay on "Slavery", from which the following passage may be conveniently quoted: "The class of *coloni* appears to have been composed partly of tenants by contract who had incurred large arrears of rent and were detained on the estates as debtors, partly of foreign captives or immigrants who were settled in this condition on the land, and partly of small proprietors and other poor men who voluntarily adopted the status as an improvement in their position. They paid a fixed proportion of the produce to the owner of the estate, and gave a determinate amount of labour on the portion of the domain which he kept in his own hands. The law for a long time took no notice of these customary tenures, and did not systematically constitute them until the fourth century. It was indeed the requirements of the *fiscus* and the conscription which impelled the imperial government to regulate the system".

The caste system was carried out not only in the class of landed proprietors, to secure the land tax, but in all trades and professions whose members were liable to the capitation tax. Two other taxes were introduced at the same period, the *chrysargyron*, a tax on receipts which fell very heavily on poor people, and was afterwards abolished by Anastasius amidst general rejoicings; and a class tax on senators.

The uses to which a large part of the fiscal income was put gave the system an additional sting. The idle populaces of the great cities were supplied with corn—the drones fed on the labours of the bees. But this was only the unavoidable consequence of the economic relations of the ancient world, which led necessarily to pauperism on a tremendous scale. A more real grievance was the system of court ceremonial and *aulic splendour*, introduced by Aurelian, confirmed by Diocletian, and elaborated by Constantine, which consumed a vast quantity of money, and was ever increasing in luxury and unnecessary extravagance. As Hallam said, in speaking of the oppression under Charles VI of France, "the sting of taxation is wastefulness".

The principle of this system was to transfer to the imperial treasury as much as possible of the wealth circulating in the Empire. Want of capital in the provinces was a necessary result; there were no means to repair the damages of time, fire, or earthquakes save by an application to the central authority, which entailed delay and uncertainty, especially in distant provinces. A decrease in the means of life was soon produced, and thereby a decrease in the population.

The western suffered more than the eastern provinces, a fact which we must attribute primarily to a different economic condition, resulting from a different history. The distribution of property was less uneven in the East, and the social character of the people was different. For while the East was under the more genial and enlightened rule of Alexander's successors, the West was held by the cold hand of Rome. After the division of the Empire, 395 AD, the state of the West seems to have become rapidly worse, while the East gradually revived under a government inclined to reform. Of the misery to which the Occident was reduced by the middle of the fifth century we have a piece of incontestable evidence in the constitutions of the Emperor Majorian, who seems to have been inspired by the example of the government of Constantinople, and desired to alleviate the miseries that were produced by the curial institutions. He was perhaps animated by some faint reflection of the spirit of ancient Rome, if we may judge from the enunciation of his policy in the letter which he addressed to the senate on his accession. His short reign impresses us with a peculiar melancholy, a feeling of ineffectuality, and brings home to us perhaps more than anything else in the fifth century how fruitless it was to struggle against the doom which was implied in the circumstances of the Empire and therefore impended inevitably over it, and how impracticable any reformation was when the decay had advanced so far.

The language used in Majorian's constitutions of the state of the provincial subjects is very strong. Their fortunes are described as "wearing out by the exaction of diverse and manifold taxes". The municipal bodies of *decurions*, which should be regarded as the "sinews of the republic", have been reduced to such a condition by "the injustice of judges and venality of tax-collectors" that they have taken refuge in obscure hiding-places. Majorian bids them return, guaranteeing that such abuses will be suppressed. It is particularly to be noted that

he abolished the arrangement by which the corporation was responsible for the whole amount of the land tax fixed at the last *indiction*; henceforward the *curia* was to be responsible only for what it was able to collect from the tax-payers. He further discharged the accumulated arrears and re-established the office of *defensor provinciae*, which was falling into disuse.

We need not dwell on the extortions and oppressions of the officials—the governors of the provinces, the vicars of the dioceses, the praetorian prefects—which made the cup of misery run over. It is enough to call attention to a flagrant defect in the Roman imperial system—the fact that the administration of justice was in the hands of the government officials; the civil governors were also the judges. By a constitution of Constantine there was no appeal to the Emperor from the sentence of the praetorian prefect. Thus there was no protection against an unjust governor, as the offender was also the judge.

It follows from this that the interests of the government and the governed were in direct opposition; and it is evident that the sad condition of the provinces, depopulated and miserable, was a most serious element of disintegration, the full effects of which were produced in the West, while in the East it was partially cancelled by the operation of other tendencies of an opposite kind.

(3) The introduction of barbarians from Central Europe into the Empire was due to two general causes. They were admitted to replenish the declining population, or they were admitted from the policy that they would be less dangerous as subjects within than as strangers without. Even in the time of the Republic there had been instances of hiring barbarian mercenaries; under the Empire it became a common practice. Marcus Aurelius made settlements of barbarians in Pannonia and Moesia. It is probable that the barbarization of the army progressed surely and continuously, but this plan of settling barbarians as *coloni* within Roman territory was not carried out on a large scale until the latter half of the third century. Gallienus settled Germans in Pannonia, and Claudius, after his Gothic victory, recruited his troops with the flower of the Gothic youth; but Probus introduced multitudes of Franks, Vandals, Alans, Bastarnae; in fact, the policy of settling barbarians on Roman ground was the most important feature of Probus' reign. Thrace, for example, received 100,000 Bastarnae. Moreover, he compelled the conquered nations to supply the army with 16,000 men, whom he judiciously dispersed in small companies among Roman regiments. The marklands of the Rhine and Danube were systematically settled with Teutons. Constantius Chlorus continued the policy of Probus; his allocations of Franks in the neighbourhood of Troyes and in the neighbourhood of Amiens deserve special notice, for these colonists succeeded in Germanizing the north of France, so that they have been called "the pioneers of the German nations". The Carpi (perhaps Slaves), subdued by Diocletian and Galerius, were transported in masses to Pannonia. Constantine is said to have allotted lands to 300,000 Sarmatae, and he seems to have adopted a policy, perhaps received from his father, of treating the barbarians with great consideration. Ammianus says that Julian reproached his memory for having been the first to advance barbarians to the consulate. From the time of Constantine the importance of the Germans in the Empire increased rapidly. It became apparent in the revolt of Magnentius, which Julian regarded as a "sacred war in behalf of the laws and constitution". Magnentius himself was an "unfortunate relic of booty won from the Germans", and his standard was joined by the Franks and Saxons, "who were most zealous allies on account of kindred race". In the days of Constantius "a multitude of Franks flourished in the palace". When Theodosius I subdued the Alemanni he sent all the captives to Italy, where they received fruitful farms on the Po as *tributarii*. Valens followed the same principle in 376, when he admitted the fugitive bands of West Goths into Thrace, an act which, owing to the avarice and rapacity of the Roman officials, had such disastrous consequences. The favour shown to Germans, especially to the influential Merobaudes, at the court of Gratian, led to the revolt of Maximus, which was a movement of old Roman discontent against the advances which the Germans were making.

The facts instanced are sufficient to show that a new element, the German nationality, was gradually fusing itself in the fourth century throughout the Roman world, especially in the West. It was plainly an element of disintegration. For, by the incorporation of barbarian elements, the wall of partition between the Empire and the external nations was lowered; it made the opposition between Rome and the barbarians somewhat less sharp; in particular, the bonds of a common nationality did not fail to assert themselves between the Germans in Roman service and the independent tribes; the Germans within had a friendly leaning to the Germans without. The rising of Magnentius exhibits this relation; and we shall see it repeated in the fifth century in the careers of Stilicho, Aetius, and Ricimer, of whom the first was a Vandal and the last a Sueve; Aetius was of barbarian descent, and, although a Roman environment for some generations back had served to identify him more thoroughly with Roman interests, he is always quite at home with the barbarians. Throughout the fifth century we can observe, in the dealings of Romans and Teutons in the West, that the line of demarcation is growing less fixed, and the process of assimilation advancing. We may remark the case of the Patrician Syagrius, who reigned as a sort of king in northern Gaul, and spoke German perfectly.

Jerome uses the word semi-barbarus of Stilicho, and we may conveniently adopt the word semi-barbarian to denote the whole class of Germans in Roman service. The significance of these semi-barbarians is that they smoothed the way, as we have already mentioned, for the invaders who dismembered the Empire; not being attached by hereditary tradition to Roman ideas and the Roman name, but having within them the Teutonic spirit of individual freedom, directly opposed to the Roman spirit of tyrannical universal law, they were not prejudiced sufficiently strongly in favour of the Roman Empire to preserve it, although they admired and partook of its superior civilization.

(4) Christianity emphasized the privileges, hopes, and fears of the individual; Christ died for each man. It was thus opposed to the universality of the Roman world, in which the individual and his personal interests were of little account, and had in this respect a point of community with the individualistic instinct of the Germans—the attachment to personal freedom of life, which always struck the Romans as the peculiar German characteristic. In two ways especially the opposition of Christianity to the Roman Empire manifested itself—by the doctrine of a divine law independent of and superior to temporal law, and by the dissociation of spiritual from secular authority. For the spirit of Christianity was really alien to the spirit of Rome, though it appeared to blend

with it for a while; and this alien nature was manifested in the position of the Church as an independent, self-constituted body existing within the Empire. But in the process of the dissolution of the Empire in the West the Church supported the falling State against the barbarians, who were Christians, indeed, but tainted with Arian heresy. And when we remember that in the East the Church allied itself closely with the imperial constitution, and that this union survived for many centuries, we must conclude that Christianity did not contribute to produce what is loosely called the Fall of the Western Empire. Its spirit revolutionized the condition of the whole Roman world; the Roman spirit was undergoing a change; but yet, as far as Christianity itself is concerned, there seems no reason why the Roman Empire should not have continued to exist in the West just as it continued to exist in the East. Christianity made the prevailing misery and oppression more tolerable by holding out the hopes of a future world. But thereby it tended to confirm the growing feeling of indifference; the political and social environment seemed an alien, unhomelike world; and this indifference, a natural outcome of the senility of the Empire, was as fatal in its effects as the actual risings of peasants. In a certain direct way, too, Christianity contributed to depopulation in the fourth and fifth centuries, namely, by the high value set on personal chastity and the ascetic spirit of monasticism, which discouraged marriage and caused large numbers to die without progeny.

These four elements undermined the Roman world, partly by weakening it, partly by impairing its Roman character and changing the view of life which determined the atmosphere of Roman society. Other less capital elements of disintegration might be mentioned, such as the depreciation of coinage; and elsewhere we shall have to notice the dislocating effects of geographical separation and national difference on the Empire.

We may close this chapter by considering the political situation of the Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. We see at the first glance that there coexisted in it three separate organizations, representing the three ideas which were mixing and striving with each other, engaged in the process of producing a new world; and these were therefore the fundamental political forces of the age. The first of these was the civil service which was organized by Diocletian and Constantine in the form of a staircase or hierarchy, descending by successive grades from the highest ministers to the lowest clerks. With it the idea of the *Roman Imperium* was closely bound up, and it was the depository of the great product of the Roman spirit, the system of Roman law. Secondly, there was the army, which was Roman in its organization and traditions, but was the chief opening by which the Germans were able to gain influence and political power in the Empire; at this time it really represented the semi-barbarians. It has been often remarked that the old Roman spirit seemed to preserve itself best in the army, a result of observation which at first sight might seem to be curiously at variance with the most obvious fact that the army was recruited with Germans. And yet on looking deeper we see that these facts have a causal connection; it was just the fresh German spirit which was able to give some new life to the old forms and throw some enthusiasm into the task of maintaining the Roman name of which they were really proud. And it was this coalition of Roman and German elements in the army which made the dismemberment of the Empire in the West less violent than it might have been.

The army and the civil service were institutions produced by Rome herself, subject to the Emperor as the supreme head expressing the unity of the State. The third organization, the Christian Church, was in a different position, within the Empire and yet not of it, but in the fourth and fifth centuries closely connected with it.

The manner in which these three forces, the Roman system, the semi-barbarians, and the Christian Church, interacted and produced a new world was conditioned by two essential facts: (1) the presence of the German nations outside the Empire pressing on it as its strength declined; and (2) the heterogeneity of the parts of which the Roman world consisted. For the Roman world was a complex of different nations and languages, without a really deep-reaching unity, held together so long by the mere brute strength of tyrannical Roman universality, expressed in one law, one official language, and one Emperor—a merely external union. Naturally it fell into two worlds, the Greek (once the dominion of Alexander) and the Roman; and this natural division finally asserted itself and broke the artificial globe of the Roman universe.

But the globe was not burst asunder suddenly; it cracked, and the crack enlarged by degrees and the pieces fell apart gently. The separation of the eastern and western worlds took place gradually, and the actual territorial division between the sons of Theodosius did not theoretically constitute two Roman Empires. The remarkable circumstance is that the name and traditions of Rome clung to the Greek more closely than to the Roman part of the Empire; and that the work of fusion wrought there by Alexander and his successors may be said truly to have contributed as much to the long duration of the *Roman Imperium* as the work of the Caesars themselves.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE EMPIRE

The reader will remember that the new system instituted by Diocletian and developed by Constantine divided the Empire into a number of dioceses, each of which consisted of a group of adjacent provinces. The governor of a province was accordingly under the control of the governor of the diocese to which his province belonged; and in his turn the governor of the diocese was under the control of that praetorian prefect under whose

jurisdiction the diocese happened to be. A hierarchy of officials was thus formed. The number of the prefects and the extent of the jurisdiction of each varied during the fourth century with the various partitions that were made by coregent sovereigns; but from the time of Constantine there was always a prefect of the Gauls, including Spain and Britain, and always a prefect of the East, while Italy and the Balkan lands were sometimes united under one prefect, and sometimes severed under two. But the final partition between the sons of Theodosius in 395 determined that there were to be four praetorian prefects, two in the East and two in the West; so that after that elate we may consider the Empire as definitely divided into four prefectures, each prefecture consisting of a certain number of dioceses, and each diocese of a certain number of provinces.

But to understand what the Roman Empire really was, we must penetrate behind these administrative divisions, and find in its origin the secret of its essence. It was mainly an aggregate of cities which were originally independent states, and which still were allowed to retain enough of independence and of their municipal government to stand in their old relation of exclusiveness towards one another. In England a resident of Leeds is at home in Manchester, and has judicially the same position as a citizen of Manchester, whereas in the Roman Empire a citizen of Thessalonica was an alien in Dyrrachium, a citizen of Corinth was an alien in Patras. Thus the citizens of different provincial towns stood in a double relation to one another; they were all Roman citizens, subject to the same central authority, and herein they were united; but they were also severally citizens of some particular city, and herein they were politically severed from the rest of the Roman world. The Empire has been therefore compared to a federation of Swiss cantons, governed by an emperor and senate.

But there was one important sphere from which this double-sidedness was excluded, namely, the sphere of senatorial rank. When the member of a municipality, for example, became elevated to the senate, he was thereby withdrawn from the duties which devolved on him in his native place to participate in the privileges and obligations of a senator. The senatorial world was thus the undiluted atmosphere of pure Roman imperialism, in which the unity of the Empire is reflected. From this point of view we may regard the Empire as consisting of three parts, the Emperor, the senators, and the mass of Roman citizens. The personages of senatorial position formed a homogeneous society which, in the political structure, may be looked on as a mean between the unity of the imperial person and the heterogeneity of the general body of citizens.

It is of great importance to understand what the senate and the senatorial rank really meant. We must carefully distinguish senators in general from those senators who actually sat in the conclaves which were held in the "senate house of Julian" at Constantinople. To be a senator in the first sense meant merely a distinction of social rank which involved certain taxes and burdens, but implied no political action as a senator. On the other hand, this social distinction was determined by political position, and the aristocracy of the Roman Empire in the fifth century was an aristocracy of officials. This is a fact to be borne in mind, that social rank ultimately depended upon a public career, and to render it intelligible it is necessary to explain the constitution of the senate.

In the time of Constantine only those who had held the highest official rank, consuls, proconsuls, or prefects, were members of the senate. The new forms of court ceremony, which were instituted by Aurelian and Diocletian and elaborated by their successors, gave to such personages precedence over lesser dignitaries, and they were distinguished by the title of *clarissimi*, "most renowned". Social rank depended on precedence at court, and precedence at court depended on official position. Thus, under Constantine and his immediate successors, *clarissimi* and senators denoted the same class of persons, though regarded under different aspects. Officers of lower rank were grouped into two classes, the *perfectissimi* and the *egregii*, who were not members of the senate; these included the governors of dioceses and provinces, dukes, *correctores*, and others.

But in the course of time the senatorial rank was extended beyond these narrower limits and conferred upon the provincial governors and many subordinate officials. This involved the elevation of the *perfectissimi* and *egregii* into the class of the "most renowned". And this elevation necessitated a further change; for it would have been plainly incongruous to give to the governor of Helenopontus or Palestine the same title of honour as to the praetorian prefect of the East. Accordingly, while the class of "the most perfect" and the class of "the excellent" fell away because their members had become "most renowned", two new ranks of higher honour than the "most renowned" were created, namely the *illustres* and the *spectabiles*. Those who had been before *clarissimi* or *perfectissimi* were raised to a higher degree.

Thus in the reign of Constantine and at the beginning of the fifth century there were different sets of titles. *Clarissimus*, which was the greatest title at the earlier period, was the least title at the later period. The praetorian prefects, the prefects of Old Rome and New Rome, the masters of foot and horse, the quaestors, the masters of offices, the count of the exchequer and the count of the privy purse, were all addressed as "illustrious"; the vicars of the dioceses and others were known as "respectable", while the provincial governors were "most renowned".

Three important changes, then, took place between the reigns of Constantine and Arcadius. (1) The great mass of the civil and military officials were incorporated in the senatorial aristocracy; (2) as a consequence of this, there were formed three grades of senatorial rank, instead of three grades of official rank of which the highest alone was senatorial; (3) the highest class, the *illustres*, became larger than that of the *clarissimi* used to be, by the elevation of a number of officers to an equality with the prefects and consuls, namely the quaestor, the master of offices, the *comes sacrarum largitionum*, and the *comes rei privatae*.

The extension of the senatorial rank was probably made in the interests of the treasury. We have already remarked that this rank did not imply a seat in the senate house of New Rome or of Old Rome. The majority of the senatorial classes probably lived in the provinces,—not only the provincial governors whose duty compelled them to do so, but also a large number of retired officials, who were known by the name of *honorati*. All, except those who were specially excused in consideration of past services, were obliged by their nobility to heavy burdens and expenses. Like all others, they were liable to the property tax and to the burden of supplying recruits for the army and relays of horses in the imperial service; besides this they had three other sources of expense, a regular

tax, an irregular tax, and an indirect burden. The regular tax was the *foliis* or *gleba*, a tax on property, which the Emperor himself, as a senator, paid. The irregular tax was the *aurum oblativum*, an offering in money, which senators were obliged to present to the Emperor on the fifth, tenth, and such anniversaries of his accession, or on occasion of a victory. The indirect burden consisted in the fact that any senator might be compelled to discharge the functions of a praetor, and expend large sums on the exhibition of games and shows; and thus a man of senatorial standing, living in the provinces, was sometimes compelled to reside temporarily in the capital in order to discharge this unwelcome duty.³ The praetors in Constantinople were at first two, but gradually reached the number of eight, but as the games and spectacles did not call the fortunes of all into requisition, some of them were compelled to contribute to the erection of public buildings. From this burden it was customary to exempt retired civil servants, and this exemption was called *allectio*.

This explanation of the position of the senators or aristocrats of the later Roman Empire will show how utterly mistaken was a celebrated German historian, when he characterized the aristocracy as resting on the principle of hereditary immunity from taxes. He misinterpreted the word *immunitas*, which is applied to the senators, and means merely *freedom from municipal taxes*. Only a certain number were admitted to the privileges and condoned the obligations of the class, namely the retired civil servants; curials who, having discharged their municipal burdens for many years, were in advanced age raised to senatorial standing; and professional men, such as court physicians and public professors and teachers licensed by the government.

From all this we may deduce with tolerable clearness the general social relations that existed in the fifth century. Between the Emperor and the mass of the subjects there existed an aristocracy, based on public service and consisting of three grades of nobility, the higher, the middle, and the lower aristocracy. In it were included some who would nowadays belong to the middle classes, statesmen, professors, physicians of distinction, such as in England might be honoured by knighthood, or exceptionally by a peerage. Between the aristocracy and the lower class of artisans and peasants may be reckoned a sort of middle class, including the *decurions* or provincial magnates who might look forward to elevation to the aristocracy if they lived long enough, and who in social position may be roughly compared to "county people" in England; rich merchants; young lawyers beginning their political career, who might look forward to winning a high position in the aristocracy. Hovering between this middle class and the lower strata were probably the physicians not patronized by the Emperor, and unlicensed teachers and rhetoricians, who depended on the patronage of the rich.

In this conspectus of society nothing has been said of the clergy. They formed a hierarchy by themselves, and their social position would correspond to their place in the hierarchy; although it must not be forgotten that the sanctity attaching to his office gave the humblest monk or deacon in those early days of piety an honourable position such as is hardly enjoyed by a curate of the English Church at present. The Patriarch of Constantinople was a peer of the Emperor, the bishops and archbishops may perhaps be considered peers of the aristocracy, while the mass of the clergy may be reckoned in the middle class.

Turning now from the social to the official side, we may briefly consider the position of the most important officers in the Roman system of administration, confining ourselves to the eastern half of the Empire. Highest in the first class of the aristocracy, "the illustrious", stood the four praetorian prefects, of whom each exercised authority over about a quarter of the Empire. Under the praetorian prefect of the East were all the Asiatic provinces, as well as six European provinces in Thrace. This dominion was divided into five dioceses—Asia, Pontus, the East, Thrace, and Egypt; the governor of Egypt, however, was practically independent of the prefect of the East. Under the prefect of Illyricum, who resided at Thessalonica, were all the lands of the Balkan peninsula, except Thrace and the islands of the Aegean. These lands were divided into two dioceses, Dacia and Macedonia.

The functions of the praetorian prefect embraced a wide sphere; they were administrative, financial, judicial, and even legislative. In the first place, the vicars of the dioceses were responsible to him for their actions, and completely under his control. With him rested their deposition, as well as the deposition of the provincial governors; and it was at his recommendation that the Emperor appointed men to fill these posts. In the second place, he had an exchequer of his own, and the revenue accruing to the treasury from his prefecture passed through his hands; it was through him that the Emperor made known and carried into execution his financial measures, and it rested perhaps more with the prefect than with the Emperor whether the subjects were oppressed by taxation. In the third place, he was, as well as the Emperor himself, a supreme judge of appeal. An appeal from the decision of a vicar or a dux might be addressed either to the praetorian prefect or to the Emperor, but if it were addressed to the former there was no further appeal to the latter. In the fourth place, he was empowered to issue praetorian edicts, but they probably concerned only smaller matters of administration or judicial detail.

The exalted position of these ministers was marked by their purple robe, or *mandye*, which differed from that of the sovereign only in being shorter, reaching to the knees instead of to the feet. His large silver inkstand, his pincase of gold weighing 100 lbs., his lofty chariot, are mentioned as three official symbols of his office. On his entry all military officers were expected to bend the knee, a survival of the fact that his office was originally not civil but military. The importance of this minister is illustrated by Eusebius, who compares the relation of God the Son to God the Father with that of the praetorian prefect to the Emperor, and by the remark of Johannes Lydus that "the office of praetorian prefect is like the ocean, encircling all other offices, and ministering to all their needs".

There was no prefect of the city of Constantinople until the close of the reign of Constantius (359 AD), and this fact alone shows that the equalization of New Rome and Old Rome, with which Constantine is credited, has been often exaggerated. On the illustrious prefect of the city devolved the superintendence of all matters connected with the city, the maintenance of order, the care of the aqueducts, the supervision of the markets, the census, the control of the metropolitan police, the responsibility of supplying the city with provisions. He was the supreme judge in the metropolitan courts.

The grand chamberlain, *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, was a functionary rendered necessary by the oriental tincture given to the imperial surroundings by the policy of Diocletian. He issued commands to all the officers connected with the palace and the Emperor's person, including the count of the wardrobe (*comes sacrae vestis*), the count of the residence (*comes domorum*), the officer of the bedroom (*primicerius cubiculorum*), and also to the officers of the palace bodyguard, called *silentiarii*. His constant attendance on the person of the Emperor gave this minister an opportunity of exercising a vast influence for good or evil, especially if the Emperor happened, like Arcadius, to be of a weak and pliable disposition.

We now come to the ministers of finance, the count of the sacred bounties (*sacrarum largitionum*), and the count of the private estates (*rerum privatarum*).

The count of the sacred bounties was the lord treasurer or chancellor of the exchequer, for the public treasury and the imperial fisc had come to be identical; while the count of the private estates managed the imperial demesnes and the privy purse. Thus in the fifth century the "sacred bounties" corresponded to the *aerarium* of the early Empire, while the *res privatae* represented the fisc.

The duties of the illustrious master of the offices, *magister officiorum*, were somewhat nondescript. He had control over the bureaux of imperial correspondence, over messengers dispatched on imperial orders, over the soldiers on guard at the palace, over manufactories of arms. He introduced foreign ambassadors to the imperial presence, and arranged for their entertainment. He superintended court ceremonies (*officium ammissionum*). Arcadius transferred to him the control of the imperial post or *cursus publicus*, which had been a function of the praetorian prefects; and if it were the policy of an Emperor to diminish the sphere of the prefects, it was the master of offices who was ready to take upon him new duties.

The second rank of the *spectabiles*, "respectables", embraced all the governors of dioceses, whatever their titles; the count of the East, the augustal prefect of Egypt, the vicars of Asiana, Pontica, the Thraces, and Macedonia. It also included the governors of two provinces who had the privilege of not being subject to any vicar or prefect, the proconsuls of Asia and Achaia. The military counts and dukes were all of "respectable" rank, as well as some high officers in the palace.

To the third degree of the "most renowned" belonged all the governors of provinces who bore the title of *praeses*, *corrector*, or *consularis*, as well as a large number of subordinate officers in the imperial bureaux.

When we turn from the ministers and governors themselves to their staffs, we find that there was a great difference between the *palatini*, or servants of the higher bureaux, and the *cohortalini*, as the staffs of the provincial governors were called, this name being one of the many survivals of the military origin of the civil service. The chief officials in the bureau of the count of the sacred bounties or of the master of offices regarded the honours of their rank as privileges which they were glad to transmit to their children; and the same remark applies to the subordinates of the praetorian prefect or of the master of soldiers, although they were not palatine. On the other hand, the *cohortalini* considered it a great hardship that they were obliged to follow their fathers' profession. They were not allowed to obtain promotion into the higher civil service.

Promotion was strictly regular; and no one could reach the highest posts until he had filled in order all the inferior grades. This excluded the interference of influential friends to a considerable extent. At the same time every promotion depended on the Emperor, in whose hands all appointments rested; though in the majority of cases he was of course determined by the recommendation of the heads of the bureaux.

In many departments the officials were able to increase the fixed income which they received from the State by fees which were paid them for supplying copies of documents or signing bills. The highest official in a department was a general superintendent or chief, often more than one, under whom came the chiefs of special divisions. Thus, in the office of the praetorian prefect there were three chiefs, the *princeps*, the *cornicularius*, and the *adjutor*, whose duties were of a general character; and in the second grade the *abactis*, who presided over the civil department, the *commentariensis*, who, as a sort of chief of police or under-home-secretary, presided over the criminal jurisdiction, and the *numerarius*, who was a chief accountant. No one could hope for promotion to higher posts who had not the advantage of a good general education, but there were subordinate offices of a mechanical nature which could be filled by persons who had received only a primary education.

The support of higher education by the State deserves to be mentioned here, not only because some of the chief teachers were admitted to the ranks of the aristocracy, but because the schools of the sophists and rhetors were the nurseries of the statesmen. Hadrian had established an academy at Rome, called the Athenaeum, in imitation of the Museum at Alexandria, and Marcus Aurelius founded chairs (political and sophistic) at Athens, endowed with salaries paid by the State. But it was not only in large towns like Rome, Athens, or Alexandria, that there were licensed teachers publicly paid; in all provincial towns of any size there were a certain number of such schoolmasters. In small towns there were three sophists; in towns of medium size there were four sophists and four grammarians; in capital cities there were five rhetors and five grammarians. It is to be observed that the grammarians were not merely teachers of grammar; they were rather what we call philologists—they read and interpreted ancient authors. A distinction between sophists and rhetors is also to be observed; while both taught the art of style and oratory, the sophists only taught, while the rhetors also practiced publicly in law courts. Alexandria and Athens were in many ways privileged; for example, the philosophers (metaphysicians, not to be confounded with sophists) in those cities were exempted from public burdens, while in other towns they did not participate in the privileges of the rhetoricians and philologists. It is to be remarked that during the fifth century the study of rhetoric was probably declining, and that the law schools of Rome and Berytus were far more fully attended than the lecture-rooms of the sophists.

There were two great divisions of the Roman army in the fourth century, corresponding to two different kinds of military service. There were the soldiers who continually kept guard on the frontiers, and the soldiers

who were stationed in the interior and were transported to the frontiers in case of a war. (1) The former were called *limitanei*, "borderers," or *riparienses*, "soldiers of the river bank". The latter term, which was originally applied to the men who guarded the Danube or the Rhine, was afterwards used in as general a sense as *limitanei*. (2) The latter were the soldiers of the line (*numeri*), and consisted of *comitatenses* and *palatini*. They correspond to the legionary soldiers of early times, who were drawn altogether from Italy, in contrast with the *auxilia*, who were supplied by the rest of the Empire, until the edict of Caracalla cast down the wall of privilege that encompassed Italy and thereby admitted non-Italian citizens to the legions.

The *palatini* were properly those regiments which protected the imperial palace, and were under the command of the *illustrious magister militum in praesenti*; while other regiments were called *comitatenses*, a term derived from the retinue (*comitatus*) of a general. These soldiers were obliged to serve for twenty years, whereas the less favoured border troops were obliged to serve for twenty-four years. The position of the latter in respect to the *comitatenses* and *palatini* may be compared to the position of the *auxilia* in respect to the legions of the early Empire. The troops located in the East were commanded by the *magister militum per orientem*, those in Thrace by the *magister militum per Thracias*, and those in Illyricum by the *magister militum per Illyricum*. In all these armies the barbarian element was large during the fourth century and was continually increasing.

The *limitanei* were not only soldiers; they were tillers of the soil, who were settled on the limes or frontier territory, which they were allowed to cultivate for their own support and bound to defend. The warfare against the barbarians chiefly consisted in defending the forts, *castra*, which were built along the *limes*, whence they received the name *castriani*. This sort of life is an anticipation of the Middle Ages. Veteran soldiers used to receive lands, if they chose, on the *limes*; but care was taken that they should really cultivate their farms, as old soldiers were likely to bully their neighbours and levy blackmail if they were not looked after.

The separation of the civil from the military power by Diocletian, and the restriction of the praetorian prefect's functions to civil matters were attended by the disappearance of the praetorian guards, and the substitution of a new body of guards called *scholares*, who were under the supervision of the *magister officiorum*. This fact indicates that the *magister officiorum* corresponds to a considerable degree to the *praetorian prefect* of the third century; he was commander of the guards, and combined civil with military functions. The number of the *scholarians* in the fourth and fifth centuries was 3500. They received higher pay than the troops of the line, and had, of course, the prestige that is naturally attached to guardsmen. They were entitled to receive *annonae civicae*, which they could bequeath or sell.

There were also other guardsmen named *domestici*, of whom certain corps were called *protectores*, and these appear to have been superior in rank to the *scholarians*.

CHAPTER V

CONSTANTINOPLE

At the beginning of the fourth century it would have entered into the dream of no Roman, whether Christian or pagan, that the city of Byzantium, which, he chiefly associated with the commerce of the Euxine, was in a few years to receive a new name and become the rival of Rome. Still less could one have imagined that the city, which was almost immediately to overshadow Alexandria and Antioch, was soon to overshadow Rome also, and that two centuries and a half thence the city on the Tiber would be desolate and the city on the Bosphorus the mistress of Europe and Asia.

Constantine thought of other sites for his new city before he fixed on the idea of enlarging and enriching Byzantium. Both Antioch and Alexandria were eminently and obviously unsuitable for his purpose. The great objection to both of those cities was that they were not sufficiently central; another grave objection was that the temper of the inhabitants of those once royal capitals would not easily endure the moulding and remodelling which the founder of a new imperial residence must wish to carry out.

The idea seems to have flashed across the mind of Constantine of choosing some Illyrian town, Sardica or his favourite Naissus; but, notwithstanding the prepossessions which as a native he naturally felt for those regions, he could hardly entertain the idea seriously. Their distance from the sea, their situation not readily approachable, even with good roads, put Sardica and Naissus at once away from the number of possible capitals; but it is interesting that there was just a chance that the capital of modern Bulgaria—Sofia is the old Sardica—might have been made the capital of the Roman Empire, and called Constantinople. Other places that might have claimed the honour were Thessalonica and Corinth; the city of the Isthmus especially would have been an excellent centre between East and West.

But Constantine did not desire a centre for the whole Empire; he rather desired a centre for the eastern half. As a centre for the whole Empire, the most suitable city would obviously have been Aquileia. But he did not desire to depress the dignity of Old Rome; his New Rome was to occupy the same position in the East as Old

Borne occupied in the West. If the situation of Old Rome had been more central, it is probable that New Rome would never have been founded. This, too, formed a vital objection to Naissus, and even to Sardica; neither which nor Corinth nor Thessalonica were close enough to Asia. The same objection that told against allowing Rome to remain the sole centre of the whole Empire, told equally against choosing any city in Illyricum or Greece as the new capital. If there was any reason for a new capital at all, it must be geographically central for the eastern half of the Empire; in other words, it must be on the borders of the Illyrian peninsula and Asia Minor. Therefore neither Antioch nor Alexandria on the one hand, nor Sardica, Naissus, Thessalonica, or Corinth on the other hand, could become Constantinople.

It remained, then, for Constantine to choose some city close to the Propontis. The first name that would naturally offer itself was Nicomedia, the residence of Diocletian when he administered the eastern provinces. But the idea of Nicomedia could not be entertained long when its situation was compared with the city which dominates the Bosphorus. Constantine, however, seems to have hesitated for a time between Byzantium, Chalcedon, and the site of ancient Ilium. But it is obvious that Chalcedon could never have been a serious rival of the city on the hills which looked down upon it; and in spite of Homeric memories, associated with the example of Alexander the Great, the idea of a new Mysian city was soon abandoned for the place which commands the entrance to the Euxine and seems adapted by nature to be the key of Europe and the mistress of Asia Minor. And so it came to pass that the city which looks down upon the Chalcedonian sands became the rival of Rome,

urbs etiam magnae quae dicitur aemula Romae
et Chalcedonias contra despectat arenas

Constantine, in the words of a chronicler, “decorated it, as if it were his native city, with great adornment, and desired that it should be made equal to Rome; and then, having sought citizens for it from all parts, he lavished great riches, so that he exhausted on it almost all the treasures and royal resources. There, too, he established a senate of second rank”. In two respects, especially, the new city was not coordinate with the old city; the senate had not equal rights, and there was no *praefectus urbis*, but these differences were soon obliterated, the two capitals became politically peers before the death of Julian, though ecclesiastically Old Rome maintained the primacy. It was more, apparently, to have been called the city of St. Peter, than to have been the city of the Caesars.

The shape of Constantinople is triangular; it is bounded on two sides by water and on one side by land. At the east corner and on the south side it is washed by the Bosphorus, which flows at first almost from north to south and then takes a south-western course; on the north by the inlet of the Bosphorus, which was called the Golden Horn; and on the west by the wall of Constantine, protecting the enlarged city.

The eastern angle formed by the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, was dominated by the acropolis, on whose summit were situated the palace of the Emperors, the hippodrome, and the church of St. Sophia. The northern angle, formed by the Golden Horn and the land wall, was marked by the church and gate of Blachernae. In the south-western corner was the Golden Gate, by which triumphal processions used to enter Constantinople, and hard by was the Julian Harbour. If the relative positions of the Golden Gate, the region of Blachernae, and the imperial palace are remembered, it is easy to find one’s way in the topography of Constantinople, as far as it concerns general history. The city was divided into fourteen regions, and, like Rome, was a city of seven hills; but it is unnecessary for us here, as we are not concerned with the topography for its own sake, to take account of these divisions. It is the great square on the acropolis, with the surrounding buildings, which demands our attention, as it was in that region that the political life of Constantinople was carried on.

A traveller coming (let us suppose about 600 AD) from Old Rome to New Rome, by Brundisium and Dyrrachium, would proceed overland along the Via Egnatia, and, passing through the towns of Heraclea and Selymbria on the propontis, would enter Constantinople by the Golden Gate, which was erected by Theodosius the Great. A long street, with covered colonnades —suggesting an eastern town—on either side, would lead him in a due easterly direction to the great Milion, the milestone from which all distances were measured. For since Constantinople had become the capital all roads tended thither; and the most recent explorers in Asia Minor are struck by the fact that, whereas in the early Empire all the roads led to Ephesus, at the time of Constantine this system was revolutionized and all tended to the new capital. But before he saw the Milion the traveller would be struck by the imposing mass and great dome of St. Sophia, the eternal monument of Justinian and his architect Anthemius. As he stood in front of the west entrance of the great church, the northern side of the hippodrome would be on his right hand.

Then passing on a few steps farther and standing with his back to the south side of St. Sophia, he would see stretching before him southward a long rectangular place, bounded on one side by the eastern wall of the hippodrome and on the other by the western wall of the imperial palace. This place was called the Augusteum or Augusteon, that is, “the Place of Augustus” or “the Imperial Place”. It is not clear, however, whether the name was chosen as a sort of renovation of *Gusteon*, “vegetable market”, the place having been used for that purpose in old Byzantium; or whether *Gusteon* was a corruption of *Augusteon*, and this gave rise to the derivation. The magnificence of Justinian had paved this piazza with marble, and the southern part was distinguished as the “Marble Place”, while the northern part, near St. Sophia, was called Milion, from the building of that name, which the traveler, looking southward, would see on his right hand, close to the wall of the hippodrome.

The Milion was not a mere pillar; it was a roofed building, open at the sides, supported by seven pillars, and within were to be seen the statues of Constantine the Great and his mother St. Helena, those of Justin the Younger and his wife Sophia, those of Arabia, Justin’s daughter, and of another Helena of less renown, a niece of Justin. The Milion was an important station in the public processions of the Emperors. Walking from the south, and still keeping to the west side of the Augusteum, our traveller would have seen the great pillar surmounted by the statue of Justinian, and the other great pillar surmounted by the statue of the Empress Eudoxia, of which the stylobate still exists. Having passed some mansions of private individuals, he reaches the southern limit of the

Augusteum and returns along the eastern side, which is occupied with more important edifices. Of these buildings, which are separated from the walls of the palace by a long portico called the "Passage of Achilles", the most southerly was the baths of Zeuxippus. Originally built by Severus, these baths were enriched with splendid statues, chiefly of great men, Homer and Hesiod, Plato and Aristotle, Demosthenes and Aeschines, Julius Caesar, Virgil. But these valuable works perished in the flames which consumed the whole building in the great Nika revolt of 532. Justinian rebuilt it, but he could not restore the labours of antiquity.

North of the Zeuxippus was the senate house (*Buleuterion*), originally built by Julian and adorned with even more precious monuments of Hellenic sculpture than the baths of Severus. But it too did not escape fire; like St. Sophia it had to be twice rebuilt, first in the reign of Arcadius, on the occasion of Chrysostom's arrest, and afterwards in the Nika sedition, which was fatal to so many public buildings.

After the senate house he comes to the residence of the Patriarch (*Patriarcheion*), which probably faced the Milion on the opposite side. The Patriarch's house contained a splendid hall, called the Thomaites, and also halls of justice for the hearing of ecclesiastical cases. A visitor to Byzantium, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, mentions that an excellent garden was attached to the patriarchal palace, and perhaps it lay between the house itself and the senate house.

Our imaginary traveller, having now reached the north side of the Augusteum again will notice a small church between the palace wall and the south-east corner of St. Sophia. This is the church of our Lady of the Chalkoprateia, so called because originally this region was a quarter of Jewish bronzesmiths. Hard by a gate will be observed in the wall of the palace, the gate of Meletius, from which the Emperor used to issue when he visited St. Sophia; entering the church of the Chalkoprateia, he used to proceed into the great church by a private covered staircase, called the "Wooden Scala", which spanned the distance between the two churches.

North of St. Sophia stood two important buildings, the hospice of Sampson and the church of St. Irene. Both of these were burned down in the Nika revolt, and newly erected.

The hippodrome, constructed by Septimius Severus, improved and adorned by Constantine, was the scene of many important political movements and transactions at Constantinople. Its length from north to south was 639 cubits, its breadth about 158. Its southern end was of crescent shape, like a sigma, the northern end was occupied by a small two-storied palace, and the Emperor beheld the games from a box or *cathisma*, which he entered through the palace by a winding stair. Under the palace were porticoes (like the Roman *carceres*), in which horses and chariots were kept, called the "Mangana". The same name was applied to the great storehouse of arms at Constantinople. The hippodrome had at least four gates; one on the right of the *cathisma*, through which the Blue faction was wont to enter; a second corresponding on the left, which was appropriated to the Greens; a third, "the Gate of Decimus", close to the second; a fourth, called the "Dead Gate", through which the corpses of the slain were carried away, in the east wall. There was probably another gate opposite to the Dead Gate in the west wall, for when the Emperors visited the church of Sergius and Bacchus, which lay south-west of the hippodrome, they passed through the hippodrome.

As for the interior of the imperial palace, new light has been thrown upon the intricate details, which puzzle the student of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, by the researches of M. Paspatis, who has discovered new topographical marks for its reconstruction. In the first place, he was able to determine the direction of the old walls of the palace, the building of the Thracian railways having opened up the ground; and in the second place, the identification of the Pharos provided a starting point for tracing the situation of the buildings and chambers of the palace mentioned by historians, with the help of some other data derived from his studies on the spot. Into this reconstruction it is not necessary for us to enter here, for the internal arrangement of the palace concerns the history with which we have now to do very slightly. If we were dealing with the history of the Eastern Empire, and had to tell of the court of Theophilus or the court of Constantine VII, we could not afford to neglect the reconstruction of M. Paspatis; but the historians of the period from 395 to 800 AD seldom trouble us with perplexing details about the palace.

Constantinople had two suburbs over the water, to both of which the word *peratic* might be applied. There was the *suburb of Scutari*, on the other side of the Bosphorus; and there was the *suburb of Sycae* on the other side of the Golden Horn. Sycae had two regions, Galata and Pera, both of which names are still in use. When we read of the *peratic demes* in Byzantine historians, members of the demes who lived on the north side of the Golden Horn "across the water" seem to have been meant; but when we read of the *peratic themes*, the troops quartered in Asia Minor are meant. Galata, I conjecture, is a very old name, dating from the third century BC, when it was usual for kings and towns to hire the Celts as mercenaries. The Byzantines probably hired bands of Celts, and, afraid of admitting them into the city, allotted them a Celtic or "Galatian" quarter on the other side of the Golden Horn; and the name Galata clung to the place when the Galatae had been long forgotten.

BOOK II

THE

HOUSE OF THEODOSIUS

CHAPTER I

RUFINUS AND EUTROPIUS

One of the few men in history who have won the title of great, the Emperor Theodosius I, who had by his policy, at once friendly and firm, pacified the Goths, who had confirmed the triumph of Athanasian over Arian Christianity, who had stamped out the last flames of refractory paganism represented by the tyrant Eugenius, died on the 17th of January 395 AD. His wishes were that his younger son Honorius, then a boy of ten years, should reign in the West, where he had already installed him, and that his eldest son Arcadius, whom he had left as regent at Constantinople when he set out against Eugenius, should continue to reign in the East. But he was not willing to leave his youthful heirs (Arcadius was only eighteen) without a protector, and the most natural protector was one bound to them by ties of relationship. Accordingly on his deathbed he commended them to the care of the Vandal Stilicho, whom he had raised for his military and other talents to the rank of commander-in-chief, and deeming him worthy of an alliance with his own family, had united to his favourite niece Serena. We can hardly doubt that it was in this capacity, as the husband of his niece and a trusted friend, not as a general, that Stilicho received Theodosius' dying wishes; it was as an elder member of the same family that the husband of their cousin could claim to exert an influence over Arcadius and Honorius, of whom, however, the latter, it would appear, was more especially committed to his care, not only as the younger, but because Stilicho, being *magister militum* of the armies of Italy, would come more directly into contact with him than with his brother.

Arcadius, with whom we are especially concerned, was about eighteen at the time of his father's death. He was of short stature, of dark complexion, thin and inactive, and the dullness of his wit was betrayed by his speech, and by his eyes, which always seemed as if they were about to close in sleep. His smallness of intellect and his weakness of character made it inevitable that he should come under the influence, good or bad, of commanding personalities, with which he might be brought in contact. Such a potent personality was the praetorian prefect Rufinus, a native of Aquitaine, who in almost every respect presented a contrast to his sovereign. He was tall and manly, and the restless movements of his keen eyes and the readiness of his speech signified his intellectual powers. He was a strong worldly man, ambitious of power, and sufficiently unprincipled; avaricious, too, like most ministers of the age. He had made many enemies by acts which were perhaps somewhat more than usually unscrupulous, but we cannot justly assume that in the overthrow of certain rivals he was entirely guilty, and they entirely innocent, as is sometimes represented. It is almost certain that he formed the scheme and cherished the hope of becoming joint Emperor with Arcadius.

This ambition of Rufinus placed him at once in an attitude of opposition to Stilicho, who was himself not above the suspicion of entertaining similar schemes, not however in the interest of his own person, but for his son Eucherius. The position of the Vandal, who was connected by marriage with the imperial family, gave him an advantage over Rufinus, which was strengthened by the generally known fact that Theodosius had given him his last instructions. Stilicho, moreover, was popular with the army, and for the present the great bulk of the forces of the Empire was at his disposal; for the regiments united to suppress Eugenius had not yet been sent back to their various stations. Thus a struggle was imminent between the ambitious minister who had the ear of Arcadius, and the strong general who held the command and enjoyed the favour of the army. Before the end of the year this struggle began and concluded in an extremely curious way; but we must first relate how a certain scheme of Rufinus had been checkmated by an obscurer but wiler rival nearer at hand.

It was the cherished project of Rufinus to unite Arcadius with his only daughter; once the Emperor's father-in-law he might hope to become speedily an Emperor himself. But he imprudently made a journey to Antioch, in order to execute vengeance personally on the count of the East, who had offended him; and during his absence from Byzantium an adversary stole a march on him. This adversary was the eunuch Eutropius, the lord chamberlain, a bald old man, who with oriental craftiness had won his way up from the meanest services and employments. Determining that the future Empress should be bound to himself and not to Rufinus, he chose Eudoxia, a girl of singular beauty, the daughter of a distinguished Frank, but herself of Roman education. Her father Bauto was dead, and she lived in the house of the widow and sons of one of the victims of Rufinus. Eutropius showed a picture of the Frank maiden to the Emperor, and engaged his affections for her; the nuptials were arranged by the time Rufinus returned to Constantinople, and were speedily celebrated (27th April 395). This was a blow to Rufinus, but he was still the most powerful man in the East.

The event which at length brought him into contact with Stilicho was the rising of the Visigoths, who had been settled by Theodosius in Moesia and Thrace, and were bound in return for their lands to serve in the army as *foederati*. They had accompanied the Emperor to Italy against Eugenius, and had returned to their habitations sooner than the rest of the army. The causes of discontent which led to their revolt are not quite clear; but it seems that Arcadius refused to give them certain grants of money which had been allowed them by his father, and, as has been suggested, they probably expected that favour would wane and influence decrease, now that the "friend of the Goths" was dead, and consequently determined to make themselves heard and felt. To this must be added that their most influential chieftain, Alaric, called Baltha (the bold), desired to be made a commander-in-chief, *magister militum*, and was offended that he had been passed over.

However this may be, the historical essence of the matter is, that an immense body of restless uncivilized Germans could not abide permanently in the centre of Roman provinces in a semi-dependent, ill-defined relation to the Roman government: the West Goths had not yet found their permanent home. Under the leadership of

Alaric they raised the ensign of revolt, and spread desolation in the fields and homesteads of Macedonia, Moesia, and Thrace, even advancing close to the walls of Constantinople. They carefully spared certain estates outside the city, belonging to the prefect Rufinus; but this policy does not seem to have been adopted with the same motive that caused Archidamus to spare the lands of Pericles. Alaric may have wished not to render Rufinus suspected but to conciliate his friendship and obtain thereby more favourable terms. Rufinus actually went to Alaric's camp, dressed as a Goth, but the interview led to nothing.

It was impossible to take the field against the Goths because there were no forces available, as the eastern armies were still with Stilicho in the West. Arcadius therefore was obliged to summon Stilicho to send or bring them back immediately, to protect his throne. This summons gave that general the desired opportunity to interfere in the politics of Constantinople; and having, with energetic celerity, arranged matters on the Gallic frontier, he marched overland through Illyricum, and confronted Alaric in Thessaly, whither the Goth had traced his devastating path from the Propontis.

It appears that Stilicho's behaviour is quite as open to the charges of ambition and artfulness as the behaviour of Rufinus, for I do not perceive how we can strictly justify his detention of the forces, which ought to have been sent back to defend the provinces of Arcadius at the very beginning of the year. Stilicho's march to Thessaly can scarcely have taken place before October, and it is hard to interpret this long delay in sending back the troops, over which he had no rightful authority, if it were not dictated by a wish to implicate the government of New Rome in difficulties and render his own intervention necessary. We are told, too, that he selected the best soldiers from the eastern regiments and enrolled them in the western corps. If we adopted the Cassian maxim, *cui bono fuerit*, we should be inclined to accuse Stilicho of having been privy to the revolt of Alaric; such a supposition would at least be far more plausible than the calumny which was circulated charging Rufinus with having stirred up the Visigoths. For such a supposition, too, we might find support in the circumstance that the estates of Rufinus were spared by the soldiers of Alaric; it would be intelligible that Stilicho suggested the plan in order to bring odium upon Rufinus. To such a conjecture, finally, certain other circumstances, soon to be related, point; but it remains nothing more than a suspicion.

It seems that before Stilicho arrived, Alaric had experienced a defeat at the hands of garrison soldiers in Thessaly; at all events he shut himself up in a fortified camp and declined to engage with the Roman general. In the meantime Rufinus induced Arcadius to send a peremptory order to Stilicho to dispatch the eastern troops to Constantinople and depart himself whence he had come; the Emperor resented or pretended to resent the presence of his cousin as an officious interference. Stilicho yielded so readily that his willingness seems almost suspicious; but we shall probably never know whether he was responsible for the events that followed. He consigned the eastern soldiers to the command of a Gothic captain, Gainas, and himself departed to Salona, allowing Alaric to proceed on his wasting way into the lands of Hellas.

Gainas and his soldiers marched by the Via Egnatia to Constantinople, and it was arranged that, according to a usual custom, the Emperor and his court should come forth from the city to meet the army in the Campus Martins, which extended on the west side of the city near the Golden Gate. We cannot trust the statement of a hostile writer that Rufinus actually expected to be created Augustus on this occasion, and appeared at the Emperor's side prouder and more sumptuously arrayed than ever; we only know that he accompanied Arcadius to meet the army. It is said that, when the Emperor had saluted the troops, Rufinus advanced and displayed a studied affability and solicitude to please towards even individual soldiers. They closed in round him as he smiled and talked, anxious to secure their goodwill for his elevation to the throne, but just as he felt himself very nigh to supreme success, the swords of the nearest were drawn, and his body, pierced with wounds, fell to the ground. His head, carried through the streets, was mocked by the people, and his right hand, severed from the trunk, was presented at the doors of houses with the request "Give to the insatiable!".

We can hardly suppose that the lynching of Rufinus was the fatal inspiration of a moment, but whether it was proposed or approved of by Stilicho, or was a plan hatched among the soldiers on their way to Constantinople, is uncertain. One might even conjecture that the whole affair was the result of a prearrangement between Stilicho and the party in Byzantium, which was adverse to Rufinus, and led by the eunuch Eutropius; but there is no evidence.

Our knowledge of this scene unfortunately depends on a partial and untrustworthy writer, who, moreover, wrote in verse—the poet Claudian. He enjoyed the patronage of Stilicho, and his poems "Against Rufinus", "Against Eutropius", and "On the Gothic War" are a glorification of his patron's splendid virtues. Stilicho and Rufinus he paints as two opposite forces, the force of good and the force of evil, like the principles of the Manichaeans. Rufinus is the terrible Pytho, the scourge of the world; Stilicho is the radiant Apollo, the deliverer of mankind. Rufinus is a power of darkness, whose tartarean wickedness surpasses even the wickedness of the Furies of hell; Stilicho is an angel of light. In the works of a poet whose leading idea was so extravagant, we can hardly expect to find much fair historical truth; it is, as a rule, only accidental references and allusions that we can accept, unless other authorities confirm his statements. Yet even modern writers, who know well how cautiously Claudian must be used, have been unconsciously prejudiced in favour of Stilicho and against Rufinus.

We must return to the movements of Alaric, who had entered the regions of classical Greece, for which he showed scant respect. Gerontius, the commander of the garrison at Thermopylae, and Antiochus, the proconsul of Achaia, offered no resistance, and the West Goths entered Boeotia, where Thebes alone escaped their devastation. They occupied the Piraeus, but Athens itself was spared, and Alaric was entertained as a guest in the city of Athene. But the great temple of the mystic goddesses Demeter and Persephone, at Eleusis, was burnt down by the irreverent barbarians; Megara, the next place on their southward route, fell; then Corinth, Argos, and Sparta. But when they reached Elis they were confronted by an unexpected opponent. Stilicho had returned from Italy, by way of Salona, which he reached by sea, to stay the hand of the invader. He blockaded him in the plain

of Pholoe, but for some reason, not easily comprehensible, he did not press his advantage, and set free the hordes of the Visigothic land-pirates to resume their career of devastation. He went back to Italy, and Alaric returned, plundering as he went, to Illyricum and Thrace, where he made terms with the government of New Rome, and received the desired title of *magister militum per Illyricum*.

No one will suppose that Stilicho went all the way from Italy to the Peloponnesus, and then, although he had Alaric practically at his mercy, retreated, leaving matters just as they were, without some excellent reason. If he had genuinely wished to deliver the distressed countries and assist the Emperor Arcadius, he would not have acted in this ineffectual manner. And it is difficult to see that his conduct is explained by assuming that he was not willing, by a complete extermination of the Goths, to enable Arcadius to dispense with his help in future. In that case, what did he gain by going to the Peloponnesus at all? Or we might ask, if he wished Arcadius to summon his assistance from year to year, is it likely that he would have adopted the method of rendering no assistance whatever? But, above all, the question occurs, what pleasure would it have been to the general to look forward to being called upon again and again to take the field against the Visigoths?

It seems evident that Stilicho and Alaric made at Pholoe some secret and definite arrangement, which conditioned Stilicho's departure, and that this arrangement was conducive to the interests of Stilicho, who was in the position of advantage, and at the same time not contrary to the interests of Alaric, for otherwise Stilicho could not have been sure that the agreement would be carried out. What this secret compact was can only be a matter of conjecture; but I would suggest that Stilicho had already formed the plan of creating his son Eucherius Emperor, and that he designed the Balkan peninsula to be the dominion over which Eucherius should hold sway. His conduct becomes perfectly explicable if we assume that by a secret agreement he secured Alaric's assistance for the execution of this scheme, which the preponderance of Gothic power in Illyricum and Thrace would facilitate. It is subsequent events, to be related in another chapter, that suggest this theory.

It was not only the European parts of Arcadius' dominions that were ravaged, in 395, by the fire and sword of barbarians. In the same year hordes of trans-Caucasian Huns poured through the Caspian gates (*per Caspia claustra*), and, rushing southwards through the provinces of Mesopotamia, carried desolation into Syria. St. Jerome was in Palestine at this time, and in two of his letters we have the account of an eyewitness. "As I was searching for an abode worthy of such a lady (Fabiola, his friend), behold, suddenly messengers rush hither and thither, and the whole East trembles with the news, that from the far Maeotis, from the land of the ice-bound Don and the savage Massagetae, where the strong works of Alexander on the Caucasian cliffs keep back the wild nations, swarms of Huns had burst forth, and, flying hither and thither, were scattering slaughter and terror everywhere. The Roman army was at that time absent in consequence of the civil wars in Italy ... May Jesus protect the Roman world in future from such beasts! They were everywhere, when they were least expected, and their speed outstripped the rumour of their approach; they spared neither religion nor dignity nor age; they showed no pity to the cry of infancy. Babes, who had not yet begun to live, were forced to die; and, ignorant of the evil that was upon them, as they were held in the hands and threatened by the swords of the enemy, there was a smile upon their lips. There was a consistent and universal report that Jerusalem was the goal of the foes, and that on account of their insatiable lust for gold they were hastening to this city. The walls, neglected by the carelessness of peace, were repaired. Antioch was enduring a blockade. Tyre, fain to break off from the dry land, sought its ancient island. Then we too were constrained to provide ships, to stay on the seashore, to take precautions against the arrival of the enemy, and, though the winds were wild, to fear a shipwreck less than the barbarians—making provision not for our own safety so much as for the chastity of our virgins". In another letter, speaking of these "wolves of the north", he says: "How many monasteries were captured? the waters of how many rivers were stained with human gore? Antioch was besieged and the other cities, past which the Halys, the Cydnus, the Orontes, the Euphrates flow. Herds of captives were dragged away; Arabia, Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt were led captive by fear".

The Huns, however, were not the only depredators at whose hands the provinces of Asia Minor and Syria suffered. There were other enemies within, whose ravages were constant, while the expedition of the Huns from without occurred only once. These enemies were the freebooters who dwelled in the Isaurian mountains, wild and untamed in their secure fastnesses. Ammianus Marcellinus describes picturesquely the habits of these sturdy robbers. They used to descend from the difficult mountain slopes like a whirlwind to places on the seashore, where in hidden ways and glens they lurked till the fall of night, and in the light of the crescent moon, watched until the mariners riding at anchor slept; then they boarded the vessels, killed and plundered the crews. Thus the coast of Isauria was like a deadly shore of Sciron; it was avoided by sailors, who made a practice of putting in at the safer ports of Cyprus. The Isaurians did not always confine their land expeditions to the surrounding provinces of Cilicia and Pamphylia; they penetrated in 403 AD northwards to Cappadocia and Pontus, or southwards to Syria and Palestine; and the whole range of the Taurus as far as the confines of Syria seems to have been their spacious habitation. An officer named Arbacazius was entrusted by Arcadius with an office similar in object to that which, four and a half centuries ago, had been assigned to Pompeius; but, though he quelled the spirits of the freebooters for a moment, Arbacazius did not succeed in eradicating the lawless element, in the same way as Pompeius had succeeded in exterminating the piracy which in his day infested the same regions. In the years 404 and 405 Cappadocia was overrun by the robber bands.

Meanwhile after the death of Rufinus, the weak Emperor Arcadius passed under the influence of the eunuch Eutropius, who in unscrupulous greed of money resembled Rufinus and many other officials of the time, and, like Rufinus, has been painted far blacker than he really was. All the evil things that were said by his enemies of Rufinus were said of Eutropius by his enemies; but in reading of the enormities of the latter we must make great allowance for the general prejudice existing against a person with Eutropius' physical disqualifications.

Eutropius naturally looked on the praetorian prefects, the most powerful men in the administration next to the Emperor, with jealousy and suspicion, as dangerous rivals. It was his interest to reduce their power and to raise the dignity of his own office to an equality with theirs. To his influence, then, we are probably justified in ascribing two innovations which were made by Arcadius. The administration of the *cursus publicus*, or office of

postmaster general, was transferred from the praetorian prefects to the master of offices, and the same transference was made in regard to the manufactories of arms. On the other hand, the grand chamberlain, *praepositus sacri cubiculi*, was made an *illustris*, equal in rank to the praetorian prefects. Both these innovations were afterwards altered.

The general historical import of the position of Eutropius, is that the Empire was falling into a danger, by which it had been threatened from the outset, and which it had been ever trying to avoid. We may say that there were two dangers which constantly impended over the Roman Empire from its inauguration by Augustus to its reintegration by Diocletian—a Scylla and Charybdis, between which it had to steer. The one was a cabinet of imperial freedmen, the other was a military despotism. The former danger called forth, and was counteracted by, the creation of a civil service system, to which Hadrian perhaps made the most important contributions, and which was finally elaborated by Diocletian, who at the same time averted the other danger by separating the military and civil administrations. But both dangers revived in a new form. The danger from the army became danger from the Germans, who preponderated in it; and the institution of court ceremonial tended to create a cabinet of chamberlains and imperial dependants. This oriental ceremonial, so marked a feature of late Byzantinism, involved, as one of its principles, difficulty of access to the Emperor, who, living in the retirement of his palace, was tempted to trust less to his eyes than his ears, and saw too little of public affairs. Diocletian appreciated this disadvantage himself, and remarked that the sovereign, shut up in his palace, cannot know the truth, but must rely on what his attendants and officers tell him. We may also remark that absolute monarchy, by its very nature, tends in this direction; for absolute monarchy naturally tends to a dynasty, and a dynasty implies that there must sooner or later come to the throne weak men, inexperienced in public affairs, reared up in an atmosphere of flattery and illusion, easily guided by intriguing chamberlains and eunuchs. Under such conditions, then, aulic cabals and chamber cabinets are sure to become dominant sometimes. Diocletian, whose political insight and ingenuity were remarkable, tried to avoid the dangers of a dynasty by his artificial system, but artifice could not contend with success against nature.

The greatest blot on the ministry of Eutropius (for, as he was the most trusted adviser of the Emperor, we may use the word ministry), was the sale of offices, of which Claudian gives a vivid and exaggerated account. This was a blot, however, that stained other men of those days as well as Eutropius, and we must view it rather as a feature of the times than as a personal enormity. Of course, the eunuch's spies were ubiquitous; of course, informers of all sorts were encouraged and rewarded. All the usual stratagems for grasping and plundering were put into practice. The strong measures that a determined minister was ready to take for the mere sake of vengeance, may be exemplified by the treatment which the whole Lycian province received at the hands of Rufinus. On account of a single individual, Tatian, who had offended that minister, all the provincials were excluded from public offices. After the death of Rufinus, the Lycians were relieved from these disabilities; but the fact that the edict of emancipation expressly enjoins "that no one henceforward venture to wound a Lycian citizen with a name of scorn" shows what a serious misfortune their degradation was.

The eunuch won considerable odium in the first year of his power (396) by bringing about the fall of two men of distinction—Abundantius, to whose patronage he owed his rise in the world, and Timasius, who had been the commander-general in the East. An account of the manner in which the ruin of the latter was wrought will illustrate the sort of intrigues that were spun at the Byzantine court.

Timasius had brought with him from Sardis a Syrian sausage-seller, named Bargas, who, with native address, had insinuated himself into his good graces, and obtained a subordinate command in the army. The prying omniscience of Eutropius discovered that, years before, this same Bargas had been forbidden to enter Constantinople for some misdemeanour, and by means of this knowledge he gained an ascendancy over the Syrian, and compelled him to accuse his benefactor Timasius of a treasonable conspiracy, supporting the charge by forgeries. The accused was tried, condemned, and banished to the Libyan oasis, a punishment equivalent to death; he was never heard of more. Eutropius, foreseeing that the continued existence of Bargas might at some time compromise himself, suborned his wife to lodge very serious charges against her husband, in consequence of which he was put to death. Whether Eutropius then got rid of the wife we are not informed.

Among the adherents of Eutropius, who were equally numerous and insincere, two were of especial importance—Osius, who had risen from the post of a cook to be *count of the sacred largesses*, and finally master of the offices, and Leo, a soldier, corpulent and good-humoured, who was known by the sobriquet of Ajax, a man of great body and little mind, fond of boasting, fond of eating, fond of drinking, and fond of women.

On the other hand, Eutropius had many enemies, and enemies in two different quarters. Romans of the stamp of Timasius and Aurelian were naturally opposed to the supremacy of an emasculated chamberlain; while, as we shall see subsequently, the German element in the Empire, represented by Gainas, was also inimical. It seems certain that a serious confederacy was formed in the year 397, aiming at the overthrow of Eutropius. Though this is not stated by any writer, it seems an inevitable conclusion from the law which was passed in the autumn of that year, assessing the penalty of death to anyone who had conspired "with soldiers or private persons, including barbarians", against the lives of "*illustres* who belong to our consistory or assist at our counsels", or other senators, such a conspiracy being considered equivalent to treason. Intent was to be regarded as equivalent to crime, and not only did the individual concerned incur capital punishment, but his descendants were visited with disfranchisement. It is generally recognized that this law was an express palladium for chamberlains; but surely it must have been suggested by some actually formed conspiracy, of which Eutropius discovered the threads, before it was carried out. The particular mention of soldiers and barbarians points to a particular danger, and we may suspect that Gainas, who afterwards brought about the fall of Eutropius, had some connection with it.

While the eunuch was sailing in the full current of success at Byzantium, the Vandal Stilicho was enjoying an uninterrupted course of prosperity in the somewhat less stifling air of Italy. The poet Claudian, who acted as a sort of poet-laureate to Honorius, was really an apologist for Stilicho, who patronized and paid him. Almost

every public poem he produced is an extravagant panegyric on that general, and we cannot but suspect that many of his utterances were direct manifestoes suggested by his patron. In the panegyric in honour of the third consulate of Honorius (396), which, composed soon after the death of Rufinus, breathes a spirit of concord between East and West, the writer calls upon Stilicho to protect with his right hand the two brothers. In the panegyric in honour of the fourth consulate of Honorius (398), he gives an absolutely false and misleading account of Stilicho's expedition to Greece two years before, an account which no allowance for poetical exaggeration can defend. At the same time he extols Honorius with the most absurd eulogiums, and overwhelms him with the most extravagant adulations, making out the boy of fourteen to be greater than his father and grandfather. If Claudian were not a poet, we should say that he was a most outrageous liar. We are therefore unable to accord him the smallest credit when he boasts that the subjects in the western provinces are not oppressed by heavy taxes, and that the treasury is not replenished by extortion.

Stilicho and Eutropius had shaken hands over the death of Rufinus, but the good understanding was not destined to last longer than the song of triumph. We cannot justly blame Eutropius for this. No minister of Arcadius could regard with goodwill or indifference the desire of Stilicho to interfere in the affairs of New Rome; for this desire cannot be denied, even if one do not accept the theory that the scheme of detaching Illyricum from Arcadius' dominion was entertained by him at as early a date as 396. His position as master of soldiers in Italy gave him no power in other parts of the Empire; and the attitude which he assumed as an elderly relative, solicitously concerned for the welfare of his wife's young cousin, in obedience to the wishes of that cousin's father, was untenable, when it led him to exceed the acts of a strictly private friendship.

We can then well understand the indignation felt at New Rome, not only by Eutropius, but probably also by men of a quite different faction, when the news arrived that Stilicho purposed to visit Constantinople to set things in order and arrange matters for Arcadius. Such officiousness was intolerable, and it was plain that the strongest protest must be made against it. The senate accordingly passed a resolution declaring Stilicho a public enemy. This action of the senate is very remarkable, and its signification is not generally perceived. If the act had been altogether due to Eutropius, it would surely have taken the form of an imperial decree. Eutropius would not have resorted to the troublesome method of bribing or threatening the whole senate even if he had been able to do so. We must conclude, then, that the general feeling against Stilicho was strong, and we must confess naturally strong.

The situation was now complicated by a revolt in Africa, which eventually proved highly fortunate for the glory and influence of Stilicho.

Eighteen years before, the Moor Firmus had made an attempt to create a kingdom for himself in the African provinces (379 AD), and had been quelled by the arms of Theodosius, who received important assistance from Gildo, the brother and enemy of Firmus. Gildo was duly rewarded. He was finally appointed military commander, or count, of Africa, and his daughter Salvina was united in marriage to a nephew of the Empress Aelia Flaccilla. But the faith of the Moors was as the faith of Carthaginians. Gildo refused to send aid to Theodosius in his expedition against Eugenius. After Theodosius' death he prepared to take a more positive attitude, and he engaged numerous African nomad tribes to support him in his revolt. The strained relations between Old and New Rome, which did not escape his notice, suggested to him that his rebellion might assume the form of a transition from the sovereignty of Honorius to the sovereignty of Arcadius. He knew that if he were dependent only on New Rome, he would be practically independent. He entered accordingly into communication with the government of Arcadius, but the negotiations came to nothing. It appears that Gildo demanded that Libya should be consigned to his rule, and he certainly took possession of it. It also appears that embassies on the subject passed between Italy and Constantinople, and that Symmachus the orator was one of the ambassadors. But it is certain that Arcadius did not in any way assist Gildo, and the comparatively slight and moderate references which the hostile Claudian makes to the hesitating attitude of New Rome indicate that the government of Arcadius did not behave very badly after all.

We need not go into the details of the Gildonic war, through which Stilicho won well-deserved laurels, although he did not take the field himself. What made the revolt of the count of Africa of such great moment was the fact that the African provinces were the granary of Old Rome, as Egypt was the granary of New Rome. By stopping the supplies of corn, Gildo might hope to starve out Italy. The prompt action and efficient management of Stilicho, however, prevented any catastrophe; for ships from Gaul and from Spain, laden with corn, appeared in the Tiber, and Rome was supplied during the winter months. Early in 398 a fleet sailed against the tyrant, whose hideous cruelties and oppressions were worthy of his Moorish blood; and it is a curious fact that this fleet was under the command of Mascezel, Gildo's brother, who was now playing the same part towards Gildo that Gildo had played towards his brother Firmus. The undisciplined nomadic army of the rebel was scattered without labour at Ardalion, and Africa was delivered from the Moor's reign of ruin and terror, to which Roman rule, with all its fiscal sternness, was peace and prosperity. This subjugation of the man whom the senate of Old Rome had pronounced a public enemy redounded far and wide to the glory of the man whom the senate of New Rome had proclaimed a public enemy. And in the meantime Stilicho's position had become still more splendid and secure by the marriage of his daughter Maria with the Emperor Honorius (Spring 398), for which an epithalamium was written by Claudian, who, as we might expect, celebrates the father-in-law as expressly as the bridal pair. The Gildonic war also supplied, we need hardly remark, a grateful material for his favourite theme; and the year 400, to which Stilicho gave his name as consul, inspired an enthusiastic effusion.

It may seem strange that now, almost at the zenith of his fame, the father-in-law of the Emperor and the hero of the Gildonic war did not make some attempt to carry out his favourite project of interference with the government of the eastern provinces. But there are two considerations which may help to explain this. In the first place, Stilicho himself was not the man of indomitable will who forms a project and carries it through; he was a man rather of that ambitious but hesitating character which Mommsen attributes to Pompey. He was half a Roman and half a barbarian; he was half-strong and half-weak; he was half-patriotic and half-selfish. His intentions were unscrupulous, but he was almost afraid of them. Besides this, his wife Serena probably

endeavoured to check his policy of discord and maintain unity in the Theodosian house. In the second place, it is sufficiently probable that he was in constant communication with Gainas, the German general of the eastern armies and chief representative of the German interests in the realm of Arcadius, and that Gainas was awaiting his time for an outbreak, by which Stilicho hoped to profit and execute his designs. He had no excuse for interference, and he was willing to wait. His inactive policy of the next few years must not be taken to indicate that he cherished no ambitious projects.

The Germans looked up to Stilicho as the most important German in the Empire, their natural protector and friend, while there was a large Roman faction opposed to him as a foreigner. But as yet this faction was not strong enough to overpower him. It is remarkable that his fall was finally brought about by the influence of a palace official (408 AD) while the fall of his rival Eutropius, which occurred far sooner (399 AD), was brought about by the compulsion of a German general. These facts indicate that the two dangers to which I already called attention—the preponderating influence of German soldiers and the preponderating influence of chamberlains and eunuchs—were mutually checks on each other. I must reserve for the next chapter an account of the danger from the Germans which threatened New Rome, but was fortunately weathered—a danger whose aversion was of really critical importance for the maintenance of the Roman Empire in the East, and whose gravity has not always been sufficiently accentuated.

CHAPTER II

THE GERMANS IN THE EAST

There were at this time three political parties at Constantinople. There was the German party, of which the chief representative was Gainas, the commander of the Eastern army, and which counted not only barbarians but Romans among its members. It is probable that this party was in constant communication with Stilicho in the West, and it is possible that the Frankish Empress Eudoxia may have looked upon it with a certain amount of favour. But I think we must reject the assumption of any very close bond between her and the Goths, because she was an orthodox Catholic and they were Arians. It must never be forgotten that the difference in religion which marked off the German nations was an important element in the situation. Secondly, there was the party of Eutropius, consisting entirely of time-serving hangers-on, bound together by no principle or common purpose—an ephemeral clique, clustering round the eunuch to receive his favours as long as he was in favour himself. These two factions, the faction of Eutropius and the faction of Gainas, were opposed.

There was a third party, opposed to both of these, consisting of those senators and ministers who entertained a Roman abhorrence of the increase of German influence in the Empire, and a strong Roman detestation of the bedchamber administration of eunuchs; men who were equally scandalized by the fact that three commanders-in-chief in the Roman Empire were Germans (Stilicho in Italy, Alaric in Illyricum, and Gainas in the East), and by the appointment of Eutropius to the consulship in the year 399, an honour which was soon followed by his elevation to the rank of Patrician, which, after the imperial, was the highest title in the State. We may call this party the party of Aurelian, for Aurelian was its most important and respected member. He was the son of a distinguished praetorian prefect named Taurus, and he had himself filled the offices of quaestor and prefect of the city.

I have said that the Germans had friends among the Romans. The most distinguished of their Roman supporters was an enigmatical figure, whose real name we shall probably never know, the brother of Aurelian, but in character diametrically opposed to him. This shadowy person, who played a leading part at this period, is one of the riddles of history, like the Man of the Iron Mask. We derive all that we know about him from a historical sketch, written in the form of an allegory, by Synesius, bishop of Cyrene, entitled *Concerning Providence, or the Egyptians*. Its subject is the contest for the Egyptian kingdom between the two sons of Taurus, Osiris and Typhos. Osiris, by whom is meant Aurelian, is the type of everything that is good and laudable; while Typhos, a sort of nature's byblow, differing from Osiris as Edmund differed from Edgar in *King Lear*, is "left-handed" and perverse, gross and ignorant. It will be most convenient to call this unknown person by his allegorical name.

We are told that Typhos at one time held a financial post, but was soon obliged to abdicate it on account of malversation. He then obtained some other office, and performed its duties equally badly.

He allied himself closely with the German party, who saw in him, as a Roman of good family and position, an important supporter. In private life he is represented as a profligate, and Synesius tells stories to illustrate his indecent and frivolous habits. He mentions, as the climax of indecency, that Typhos used to snore on purpose when awake, and take delight in hearing others producing the same noise, as if it were marvellously fine music; and he used to praise and honour him who uttered most tunefully the licentious sound, and evolved the finest and roundest snort. We must remember that these are the allegations of an opponent, but at the same time it is just to observe that the prose allegory of Synesius has a truer ring than the poetical histories of Claudian.

The sketch which Synesius gives of the wife of Typhos, an ambitious and fashionable lady, is valuable and interesting, even if it be considerably overdrawn, as the picture of a type of contemporary society. She was, in the

first place, her own tirewoman, a reproach which seems to imply that she was inordinately attentive to the details of her toilet. She liked to be seen, and constantly showed herself in the marketplace and the theatre, thinking that the eyes of all were turned towards her. This desire of notoriety prevented her from being too nice in her choice of society; she liked to have her house and drawing-room filled, and her doors were not closed against professional courtesans. It may be supposed that select Byzantine society refused to know her. Synesius contrasts with her the wife of Aurelian, who never left the house, and asserts the great virtue of a woman to be that neither her body nor her name should ever cross the threshold. Such an extreme idea, however, was almost obsolete; and if Synesius really believed in it he cannot have approved of the behaviour of his friend and teacher Hypatia. But I believe this is a mere rhetorical flourish, in imitation of the celebrated dictum of Thucydides.

The great struggle between the alien and the native element in the East, which was to decide that the eastern provinces were not to be dismembered by the Teutonic nations, began at the end of the year 398. It took the form of a contest between the two brothers, Aurelian and Typhos, for the office of praetorian prefect. The former was successful in obtaining the nomination, which was a great triumph for the anti-German party. Synesius was at this time at Constantinople, and lived on very intimate terms with Aurelian and his friends, so that he had an excellent opportunity of observing all that went on. Penetrated with the spirit of old Hellenedom, especially Platonism, and feeling a Hellenic antagonism to barbarians, he sympathized fully with the aspirations and purposes of the Roman party at Byzantium. Aurelian seems to have been a man of culture and learning, and was surrounded with men of letters, such as Troilus the poet and Polyaeon the rhetor.

The success of Aurelian was a great blow to Typhos and his wife and his friends. His wife had been looking forward eagerly to the prefecture for the sake of the social advantages which it would confer. Synesius gives a curious account of the measures which Typhos took to console himself and his friends for their disappointment. He constructed a large pond, in which he made artificial islands, provided with warm baths; and in these islands he and his friends, in the company of women, used to indulge in licentious pleasures.

But this was only the prologue to the drama proper. It was a movement on the part of Ostrogoths, who had been settled in Phrygia by Theodosius, that brought on the main struggle; and this movement was hardly independent of the German faction in the capital, though we have no distinct evidence to show that it was instigated by Gainas or Typhos. The Count Tribigild, who commanded the troops in Phrygia, bore a personal grudge against Eutropius, and this drove him to excite to revolt the Teutonic *laeti*, or colons, consisting of Ostrogoths and Gruthungi, whom Theodosius, the friend of the Goths, had established in the fertile regions of Phrygia in 386. The revolt broke out in spring, as Arcadius and his court were preparing to start for Ancyra in Galatia, whither the Emperor was fond of resorting in summer on account of its pleasant and salubrious climate. The barbarians, recruited by runaway slaves, spread destruction throughout many provinces, Galatia and Pisidia and Bithynia.

At this moment Synesius presented a crown to Arcadius on behalf of his native town, Cyrene, and delivered his celebrated speech *Concerning the Office of King*. This may be regarded, as has been well pointed out, the anti-German manifesto of the Roman party of Aurelian. It urged the policy of imposing disabilities on barbarians, and thereby eradicating the German element in the State. The argument depends on the by no means Christian assumption that the Roman and the barbarian are different in kind, and that therefore their union is unnatural. The soldiers of a state should be like watchdogs, as Plato says, but our armies are full of wolves in the guise of dogs; moreover, our homes are full of German servants. The lawgiver cannot wisely give arms to any who are not born and reared in his laws; the shepherd cannot expect to tame wolves' cubs. The German soldiers are a stone of Tantalus suspended over the State. The only salvation is to remove the alien element... This speech was not calculated to induce Gainas to take energetic measures against his fellow-Germans, whom he was sent to reduce.

For there seem to have been only two generals of any account at this time—Gainas, the Goth, and Leo, the Falstaff of that age. Both were sent with armies against Tribigild. The rebels, seeking to avoid an engagement with Leo, turned their steps to Pisidia and thence proceeded to Pamphylia, where they met with a brave and unexpected resistance. While Gainas was purposely inactive, and writing in his letters to Constantinople that Tribigild was very formidable, a land proprietor of the town of Selge, named Valentinus, formed a corps of peasants and slaves and laid an ambush hard by a winding narrow pass in the mountains leading from Pisidia to Pamphylia. The advancing enemy was surprised by showers of stones from the heights above them, and there was no means of escape, as they were hemmed in by a treacherous marsh. After a great loss of life, Tribigild bribed the commander, Florentius, who held the pass, and thus succeeded in effecting his escape. But he had no sooner escaped than he was shut in between two rivers, the Melas and the Eurymedon, by the warlike inhabitants of those regions, who were well used to warfare from their experience of Isaurian freebooters. Leo meanwhile was advancing, and the insurrection might have been utterly and easily crushed, but that Gainas secretly replenished the forces of Tribigild with detachments from his own army. Thus Leo had really two enemies in the field against him, one in the disguise of a friend. He found Tribigild at the head of a large army, with which he could not attempt to cope; but this was not all. The German regiments in his own army preponderated, and they suddenly attacked the minority of Roman soldiers, and easily overpowered them. Leo lost his life in attempting to escape, so that Gainas and Tribigild were left masters of the situation.

Gainas, who still posed as a loyal general foiled by the superior ability and power of Tribigild, despatched a message to the Emperor, misrepresenting the defeat of Leo, dwelling on the superiority of the rebel, and urging Arcadius to yield to his demands—the chief demand being that Eutropius should be surrendered. The Emperor hesitated, for he was probably attached to his chamberlain, but, in addition to the pressure of the Germans, another influence was brought to bear which secured the fall of the eunuch. The Empress Eudoxia, who had owed her position to the machinations of Eutropius, became jealous of his power with her husband; dissension and antagonism were born between them; and one day Eudoxia appeared in the presence of the Emperor, leading her two little daughters, Flaccilla and Pulcheria, by the hand, and complained bitterly of the eunuch's insulting behaviour.

When Eutropius heard of the demand of Gainas, he did not disguise from himself his extreme peril, but fled to the refuge of the sanctuary of St. Sophia. There he might not only trust in the protection of the holy place, but might expect that the Patriarch of Constantinople, Johannes Chrysostomus, would stand by him in his extremity, when he was abandoned by his noonday friends. For it was through his influence that Johannes, a Syrian presbyter of Antioch, had been nominated to the episcopal chair (398 AD). And the personal interference of Johannes was actually necessary; he had to stand between the cowering eunuch and those who would have dragged him from beneath the altar. This incident seems to have taken place on Saturday, and on the following day, Sunday, the service must have been curiously impressive, and the feelings of the congregation strange. Hidden under the altar, overwhelmed with fear and shame, lay the old chamberlain, whose will had been almost supreme a few days before, and in the pulpit the eloquent archbishop delivered a sermon “on the fallen eunuch”, beginning with the words, “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity”. In this discourse he dwelled without mercy on the frivolity and irreligion of the party of Eutropius; but at the same time he sought to excite the sympathy of the audience.

When the church had been again surrounded and entered by soldiers, and Johannes had again personally interposed, Eutropius allowed himself to be taken away, on condition that his life should be spared. He was banished to Cyprus. Gainas, however, was not content with anything less than his death; and availing himself of the quibble that security of life had been granted to him only in Constantinople, Arcadius caused him to be brought back and tried at Chalcedon, where he was condemned on trivial, probably false, charges, and executed (autumn 399 AD).

The edict concerning Eutropius which was issued by Arcadius is a curious document, and deserves to be quoted. It will serve also as a specimen of imperial edicts in general.

“The Emperors Arcadius and Honorius, Augusti, to Aurelian, Praetorian Prefect.

“We have added to our treasury all the property of Eutropius, who was formerly the *Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi*, having stripped him of his splendour, and delivered the consulate from the foul stain of his tenure, and from the recollection of his name and the base filth thereof; so that, all his acts having been repealed, all time may be dumb concerning him; and that the blot of our age may not appear by the mention of him; and that those who by their valour and wounds extend the Roman borders or guard the same by equity in the maintenance of law, may not groan over the fact that the divine guerdon of consulship has been befouled and defiled by a filthy monster. Let him learn that he has been deprived of the rank of the patriciate and all lower dignities that he stained with the perversity of his character. That all the statues, all the images—whether of bronze or marble, or painted in colours, or of any other material used in art—we command to be abolished in all cities, towns, private and public places, that they may not, as a brand of infamy on our age, pollute the gaze of beholders. Accordingly under the conduct of faithful guards let him be taken to the island of Cyprus, whither let your sublimity know that he has been banished; so that therein guarded with most watchful diligence he may be unable to work confusion with his mad designs.

“Dated ... at Constantinople in the Consulship of Theodorus, *vir clarissimus*”

The quaestor in drawing up this document did not spare vigorous language, and it seems strange that Arcadius should have allowed an edict to go forth which reflects so seriously on himself, by provoking immediately the question why the Emperor countenanced the “filth” so long. The weakness of the Emperor was proportional to the force of the language.

It was after the fall of Eutropius that Gainas seems to have declared his real colours openly, and acted no longer as a mediator for Tribigild, but as an adversary, bargaining for terms. He and Tribigild had met at Thyatira and proceeded to the Hellespont, plundering as they went. At Chalcedon, Gainas demanded and obtained an interview with Arcadius, and an agreement was made that Gainas should continue to hold the post of *magister militum per orientem*, and that he and Tribigild might cross over with impunity to Europe. As a security, three hostages were to be handed over to Gainas—namely, Aurelian, the praetorian prefect; Saturninus, one of the chief men of Aurelian’s party; and Johannes, the friend (report said the lover) of Eudoxia.

The surrender of Aurelian as a hostage to the German general was a triumph for his brother Typhos, who appears to have succeeded him in the prefecture. Synesius attributes the combination against Aurelian to a drawing-room cabal—a plot brewed for his destruction by the wife of Typhos and the wife of Gainas. It is evident at least that both city and camp were full of intrigues at this time, and that during the first half of the year 400 AD Typhos was the most important minister in the Empire. He did not however prevail upon the cautious Gainas to sacrifice his brother Aurelian; the three hostages underwent a sham execution, the sword grazing their necks, and were banished for a short time. We may probably attribute this unexpected clemency partly to the intercession of the Patriarch Johannes, who crossed over to Chalcedon in order to plead for them.

This event took place towards the end of 399 AD, and soon afterwards Gainas crossed the Bosphorus with his Goths, and took up his quarters in the capital. Of Tribigild we hear no more; his historical importance is that he was a tool in the hands of Gainas. What events took place during the next six months, what were the designs of Gainas, what were the details of the administration of Typhos—all these, and many other questions, history leaves unanswered. Above all, we desire to know what circumstances checked and almost paralyzed the action of Gainas and his Goths in Constantinople. It certainly seems that there were somewhere in the vicinity Roman troops (over and above the bodyguard of the Emperor), of which our authorities have left no record; for (1) Fravitta had troops at his command to oppose Gainas when he left the city; and (2) what is the meaning of Gainas’ bargain with the Emperor for a safe-conduct to Europe, if he had not some hostile force to fear? (3) All that we hear of the conduct of Gainas in the city demands such a supposition.

One great object of the combination of Typhos and Gainas was to relieve the Arians of their disabilities and establish the full freedom of Arian worship in the city. We might almost conjecture that it was their common religious belief that united originally the interests of Typhos and the Germans. This policy, however, was defeated by the firmness and courage of the Patriarch, who opposed Gainas face to face. The Emperor refused to yield to the demands of the Goths, and here we may suspect that the influence of Eudoxia was also operative.

About midsummer Gainas formed the resolve to leave the city, which he and Typhos together had kept in a ferment for six months. In two clandestine attempts—one to seize the imperial palace, the other to sack the bureaux of the moneychangers—he had been frustrated; and combining this with his resolution to quit the capital with his large army, we must conclude that some material danger threatened or checked him. We know not what his wishes or designs were, but we can hardly see why he could not have carried them through, if Constantinople was as entirely unprotected by military forces as historians generally represent it to have been.

At length, feeling that his position in the city was not agreeable, Gainas resolved to leave it. Making an excuse of illness, he went to perform devotions in a church of St. John, about seven miles distant, and he ordered the Gothic forces to follow him in relays. The preparations made by the foreigners for departure frightened the citizens, who did not understand their intentions, and the city was in such a state of excitement that any accident might lead to serious consequences. It so happened that a beggar-woman standing at the gate of the city early in the morning to receive alms, and seeing the Goths depart, thought the end of the world was coming, and prayed aloud. Her prayer offended a Goth who had just approached, and as he was about to cut her down, a Roman intervened and slew him. This occurrence brought about a general tumult, in which the citizens proved superior, and gave full vent to their rancour against the barbarians. Many of the Goths fled from the city. Then the gates were closed, and more than seven thousand remained, unable to communicate with their friends without, at the mercy of the infuriated mob. They fled to their church, which was near the imperial palace, but the sanctity of the building was not respected. The Romans obtained permission from the Emperor to resort to extremities, and the Gothic soldiers suffered a fate similar to that which befell the oligarchs at Corcyra during the Peloponnesian war. The roof of the building was removed, and the detested barbarians were crushed under showers of stones and burning brands [12th July 400].

Soon afterwards the conduct of Typhos was subjected to an investigation, his treasonable collusion with Gainas was abundantly exposed, and he was condemned preliminarily to imprisonment. He was afterwards rescued from the vengeance of the mob by his brother Aurelian, who had returned from banishment: but what further befell him we do not hear. Gainas meanwhile, as a declared enemy, proceeded through Thrace, seeking what he and his Goths might plunder. But his expedition was disappointing, for the inhabitants had in good time retreated into the strong places, and he was unable to take them. No resource remained but to pass over into Asia, and he marched to the Hellespont. But when he arrived at the coast near Abydos, he found that the opposite shore was occupied by an army, ready to dispute his passage, under the loyal pagan Goth Fravitta, who had once rescued Theodosius I from his own countrymen, and was now, in advanced years, to perform a similar service for Arcadius. Gainas tarried on the shore until his provisions were exhausted, and then, constrained to essay the passage for which he was unprovided with ships, constructed rude rafts, which he committed to the current. Fravitta's ships easily sank these unwieldy contrivances, and Gainas, who remained on shore and saw his troops exterminated before his eyes, hastened northward through Thrace, beyond Mount Haemus, even beyond the Ister, expecting to be pursued by the victor. Fravitta made no attempt to capture him, but he fell into the hands of Uldes, king of the Huns, who cut off his head and sent it as a grateful offering to Arcadius.

The Gothic discomfiter of the Goths enjoyed a triumph for his decisive success, and the Christian Emperor granted to the old pagan the only favour he requested—to be allowed to worship God after the fashion of his fathers.

Thus the great danger which was hanging over the Empire was warded off from the eastern provinces at the very beginning of the fifth century, and it was decided that it was not in the east that the Empire was to be dismembered by the Germans. Alaric, indeed, was still commander-in-chief in Illyricum, but his eyes were bent westward, and within a few years the Illyrian lands were to be delivered for ever from the Visigoths. It was indeed an important episode in Roman history, and although modern writers have often treated it more casually than it deserves, it attracted appropriate attention in the fifth century, and was celebrated in two epic poems as well as in the myth of Synesius of Cyrene.

It is worthy of observation that it was this German movement that brought about the fall of the eunuch Eutropius. Eight years later it was the machinations of the palace official Olympius that brought about the fall of the German Stilicho. Thus, as I remarked before, the chamberlains in the palace and the Germans in the camp—the representatives of the Orientalising and Germanizing tendencies that were eating into the Roman spirit—were each a check upon the other; and the antagonism between these forces of corrosion was a temporary safeguard for the Roman party. With the Roman party, moreover, the Church was thoroughly in sympathy, for a defeat of the Germans was equivalent to a defeat of Arianism.

CHAPTER III

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

The strange drama of Gainas, which decided the relation of the Empire to its German subjects in the East, was followed by another drama, equally strange, wherein the power of the Patriarch of Constantinople appeared in conflict with the imperial authority. A collision had not taken place before. With the exception of Valens, no Emperor had resided for any length of time in the capital until Arcadius, who never left it except to take a summer holiday at Ancyra. Hitherto the Emperors had been military commanders, who flew from frontier to frontier and city to city to direct campaigns or arrange administrative innovations. Moreover, the see of Constantinople had not attained to the first rank in the eastern half of the Empire until the council of 381. Hence in the reign of Arcadius it was inevitable that a mutual adjustment of the relations between the court and the patriarchal palace should take place. To this adjustment the characters of the persons concerned gave a peculiar complexion. If it had depended solely on Arcadius, who was pious and weak, the struggle perhaps would not have come to pass so soon, but would have been reserved for a stronger Emperor, of the temper of his father. But he had a worldly queen, who exerted great influence over him, and she drew him into collision with the bishop. On the other hand, if the mild old Nectarius had lived ten years longer, there would hardly have been room for discord, and in this case, too, the adjustment would have been reserved for the advent of a more decided and independent hierarch. But he died, and a man thoroughly independent and thoroughly in earnest, of rough and uncourtly ways, one who was not afraid to hear his own voice crying in a wilderness of worldliness, and who, if he did not desire to fight, was perfectly ready for the fray, was appointed to the episcopal throne.

And thus we have a spectacle of more than usual interest, the asceticism of the Church, represented by John Chrysostom, ranged against a superb court led by the Empress Eudoxia, who made herself, as it were, the champion and example of the pride of life and the pomps and vanities of the world. And on the other hand, the course of the conflict brings out the worldliness, the enmities, the unscrupulousness, the abuses that grew rank within the Church itself. Side issues disguised the real import of this war of four years; but though it appeared merely to concern Chrysostom personally, it really decided that in future the Patriarch of Constantinople was to be dependent on the Emperor.

We must first become acquainted with some of the actors in this drama, which began in social circles before it acquired a political significance.

The Empress Eudoxia herself, on whose worldliness and ambition we have dwelt, naturally gave the tone to the ladies of her court, and to the more frivolous portion of the gentlemen. Whether she was guilty of adultery or not, the mere fact of the rumour prevailing that Count John was the father of her son Theodosius is evidence as to the character she bore; and we can imagine what the society was like over which this ambitious and beautiful woman, not above the suspicion of criminal intrigues, presided. One curious trait of manners indicates clearly enough the tone of the court. It was the custom of Christian ladies to wear veils or bands on their foreheads, so as to conceal their hair. Women of meretricious life were distinguished by the way they wore their hair cut and combed over their brows, just like modern fringes. The ladies of Eudoxia's court were so immodest, and had such bad taste, as to adopt this fashion from the courtesans. The next step probably was that the example of the court influenced respectable Christian matrons to wear the obnoxious fringe. In this fast aristocratic society three ladies were prominent—Marsa, the widow of Promotus, a distant relation of the Empress; Castricia, the widow of Saturninus; and Eugraphia, who had also lost her husband. These widows were all rich, and if they were not young in years they made themselves young in appearance. Eugraphia used rouge and white lead to maintain her complexion—a habit which was a serious scandal to pious Christians, and which Chrysostom condemned especially on the ground that it was a waste of money which should be given to the poor.

Such a court was revolting to the austere and earnest spirit of Chrysostom, who was far too sincere to make any compromise with Mammon. He used, as a matter of duty, to pay pastoral visits to these great ladies, and we may be sure that he did not hesitate, through any scruples of politeness, to tell them unpleasant truths and urge them to amend their ways. His unbending austerity and uncompromising candour made him an unwelcome visitor. But his campaign against luxury and worldliness did not cease here. He not only preached publicly on the subject in St. Sophia, but made such open and unmistakable allusions, which he could make the more pointed by turning his eyes towards the Empress and her ladies, who sat in a prominent place in the gallery, that he gave great umbrage, and was hated as the mother of Herodias hated John the Baptist. The climax came when he preached a sermon in which Eudoxia was openly called Jezebel, and it was partly from this allusion that the unfounded tale got abroad that Eudoxia had actually robbed a widow of her vineyard, as Ahab robbed Naboth.

The aristocratic ladies, indignant at being insulted and outraged, as they considered it, before the mob, determined to work the ruin of Chrysostom, and formed a league against him, of which the centre was the house of Eugraphia. Although it was evident enough, and all probably knew in their hearts that Chrysostom was a single-hearted man, thoroughly in earnest and austere moral, yet it was easy to find pretexts against him; and his ascetic mode of life and certain peculiar theories which he held made it all the easier. Moreover, he had a great many enemies within the Church—priests, monks, and nuns, who had revolted against the strict discipline of their Patriarch, and eagerly embraced the opportunity to place themselves at the service of the great persons who wished to undo him. For it was not only against the corruption of the court that the reformer had to contend, but against the corruption of the clergy and monks. Their sensuality, their gluttony, their avarice, were matters of public scandal; and John's austerity was to them, in the words of Palladius, "as a lamp burning before sore eyes". Women were introduced into the monasteries, or shared the houses of priests as spiritual sisters; and this was always a "snare" even if it were often innocent. But still more scandalous was the conduct of the deaconesses, who, if they could not adopt the meretricious apparel that had become the mode, arranged their coarse dresses

with an immodest coquetry which made them more piquant than an ordinary courtesan. Another class of religious persons hostile to Chrysostom were the begging tramps, drones whom he had endeavoured to suppress.

But the Patriarch was also the centre of a society of admirers. Of these, the most attached and most distinguished was Olympias, the daughter of a woman who had been betrothed in her youth to the Emperor Constans, had afterwards married a king of Armenia, and after his death married a Roman noble. Her bounty to the poor, her untiring devotion to Chrysostom in his misfortunes, her delicacy and unselfishness, have earned for her a high place among the "good", as distinguished from the great, women who appear in history. Another friend of Chrysostom was the Moorish princess Salvina, daughter of Gildo, whom Theodosius had taken as a hostage and given in marriage to Nebridius, his wife's nephew. She led a calm life in Constantinople; and in a "letter to a young widow", Chrysostom contrasts this peaceful happiness with the turbulent and unrestful life of her father. The deacon Serapion must also be mentioned here as a person devoted to John, but one whose influence was exerted in the wrong way. He was a man without judgment or moderation, and instead of trying to calm the hot temper of the bishop, he used to incite him to rash acts, with thoroughly honest intentions. It is interesting to note that Cassian, who afterwards founded the monastery of St. Victor at Marseilles, was in Byzantium at this period and a warm friend of Chrysostom.

But the great strength of John's position lay in his popularity. It was not merely that he possessed the Christian virtues of charity and sympathy with the poor, or even that he was no respecter of persons; he actually held theories of socialism—a sort of Ebionistic socialism—which might have been very dangerous to the established order of things if he had carried them to any length. He rejected not political but social inequality, in fact he held a sort of social socialism. It might seem that such a theory, if it gained ground, would necessarily lead to a political revolution, an overthrow of the Empire; but there was no danger of such a catastrophe. The idea of the Empire was almost a necessity of thought to the Romans of that time; it would not have been possible for them to conceive the world without the Empire; the end of the Empire would have seemed to them the Deluge. But Chrysostom's spirit attracted the lower classes, and his tirades against the rich delighted the poor. On the occasion of an earthquake he said publicly that "the vices of the rich had caused it, and the prayers of the poor had averted the worst consequences".

It was easy for his enemies to fasten on such utterances as these, and accuse Chrysostom of "seducing the people". His intimate relations of friendship with Olympias and other women, whom he used to receive alone, perhaps unwisely, supplied matter for another charge. Having a weak digestion, and obliged to restrict himself to the most lenten fare, he made a practice of never dining out; and this anchoretic habit, combined with the reception of women alone in his house, was converted into the charge that he used to celebrate Cyclopean orgies under the cover of unsocial habits.

The expedition which he made in the year 400 to regulate the affairs of the Ephesian and other churches in Asia Minor, where abuses had crept in, not only made many new enemies, but furnished another ground of accusation. He seems to have acted here with more zeal than wariness; he deposed and appointed bishops like an autocrat, not only going beyond his proper jurisdiction, but neglecting to give a fair hearing to the cases. On some occasions, it is said, he had been himself accuser, witness, and judge.

In another way also this visit to Asia Minor was disadvantageous to him. His enemies had time and room to arrange their machinations against him, and the man whom he had left at Byzantium to fill his place, Severian of Gabala, wishing to oust and succeed Chrysostom, flattered the court and joined the league of his enemies. When Chrysostom returned and found his church disorganized by the unbecoming conduct of Severian, of which the deacon Serapion had no few complaints to make, he preached a sermon in which he made allusion to the timeserving relations of Severian to the Empress. Severian, feeling himself sure of support in high quarters, would not yield, and Chrysostom, with the people on his side, excommunicated the ambitious Syrian. He fled to Chalcedon, and the Emperor and Empress begged the Patriarch to allow him to return to the fold. Their intervention prevailed, but the enthusiasm of the populace for their beloved bishop was not satisfied, and in order to quiet them and remove peaceably the ban of excommunication, he had to exert all his powers of eloquence in a pacific sermon, which ended with the words, "Receive our brother Severian the bishop". The next day Severian preached a sermon, of which the note was likewise peace.

It was crying peace where there was no peace. After a short lull, the storm burst louder than ever over the Patriarch, but came from a new quarter. Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, was a worldly man, whose ambition and avidity have been painted in the blackest colours. He had hoped, on the death of Nectarius, to place a candidate of his own on the pontifical chair of Constantinople, and he owed Chrysostom a grudge for his disappointment, so that he willingly seized an opportunity to assist in compassing his ruin. His power in Egypt was very great, and he exercised considerable influence in Syria and Palestine. It was he who had excited the people to dismantle the great temple of Serapis in Alexandria, in the days of Theodosius.

Now at Nitria in Upper Egypt there was a monastic settlement over which the four so-called "Tall Brothers" presided. Theophilus desired to gain over the monks to his interests and make them bishops, but they refused positively, and the vengeance of the Patriarch pursued them. He brought against them the charge of Origenism, and obtained troops from the augustal prefect to arrest them. Warned in time, they concealed themselves, but their monastery was sacked, and they made their way slowly and with great difficulty to Constantinople, to place themselves under the protection of John Chrysostom. In their journey through Syria they had no rest for the soles of their feet, as the authority of Theophilus induced the bishops of those parts to refuse them shelter.

Chrysostom was rightly weary in his dealings with the suppliants. He would not communicate with them, although he promised them his protection, and he lodged them in the cloisters of the church of Anastasia, where their wants were ministered to by religious women. The astuteness and unscrupulousness of Theophilus made him a dangerous foe, and he wrote to Arcadius in regard to the Tall Brothers, accusing them of practicing magic. The envoys whom he sent to Constantinople spread such calumnious reports about the Tall Brothers that they

were unable to stir from their lodgings, and at length in despair they drew up, contrary to the wishes of Chrysostom, a manifesto, accusing Theophilus as well as the envoys, without any reserve, of the grossest iniquities, so that Chrysostom recoiled in horror. This document must have been extremely curious, for Palladius declines to give a full account of its contents, as they would appear quite incredible.

Chrysostom's disavowal was fortunate for the Tall Brothers and unfortunate for himself. A reaction set in in their favour; Eudoxia espoused their cause, and it became a matter for fashionable interest. Theophilus was cited to appear and answer for his conduct.

It was some time before the bishop of Alexandria arrived on the scene himself, but he sent one to prepare the way before him. In the selection of an ally he manifested his craft for intrigue. He wrote to Epiphanius, the aged bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, and, representing to him that the Tall Brothers held the heretical opinions of Origen, and that Chrysostom also shared them, asked him to proceed to Constantinople as the champion of orthodoxy and the accuser of the Patriarch. Theophilus knew how much prestige the high character of the veteran churchman would lend to his cause, and he also knew how to touch his weak side. Epiphanius was an upright and single-hearted old man, but extremely vain of his theological learning. He fancied himself a sort of infallible oracle on questions of doctrine, and thought his own *ipse dixit* of paramount importance. We have examples of old men, in all ages and all departments, trading on a reputation acquired in the prime of their manhood. Theophilus judiciously anointed the old bishop with flattery, and made him harbour the agreeable fancy that a vital crisis in the Church depended on his interference. Epiphanius was like an old war-horse, eager for battle; he sailed to Constantinople, but he soon found himself out of place amid the intrigues, the enmities, the calumnies and violences which filled that city; and he discovered that the questions of doctrine were a mere pretext to cloak unworthy motives. He became acquainted with the Tall Brothers, and saw that there was no guile in them. Disgusted and dejected, he set sail for home, but the fatigue and excitement had overtaken his failing strength and he died on the voyage. There is something melancholy in this visit of Epiphanius to Constantinople before his death, and the somewhat humorous conceit of the old man enhances the pathos.

At length Theophilus appeared, with the unconcealed object of deposing John Chrysostom. The affair of the Tall Brothers was now a secondary consideration to him. In the meantime the relations between Eudoxia and Chrysostom, who did not cease his *ex cathedra* attacks upon her, were as hostile as ever; so that on Theophilus' arrival there were two hostile camps—the camp of aristocrats in the house of Eugraphia, and the camp of the Alexandrian party in the palace of Placidia, where Theophilus had taken up his quarters, refusing to accept of Chrysostom's proffered hospitality. The city was a scene of uproar and excitement. It was divided into two parts, the adherents of Chrysostom and the Alexandrians. So high ran the popular feeling that the opposition party were afraid to hold the council, which was to decide on Chrysostom's conduct, within the precincts of Constantinople; it was held on the other side of the Bosphorus at Chalcedon, and was called the Synod of the Oak. Three different points were discussed at this council: (1) the affair of the Tall Brothers; (2) the complaints of Asiatic ecclesiastics against Chrysostom for his proceedings in 400; (3) various charges preferred against Chrysostom, among the rest that of fornication. The Patriarch refused to appear at this synod or to acknowledge it; he and his party held a counter-synod in the reception room (*triclinium*) of the patriarchal palace. He was condemned in his absence and formally deposed, but so far was he from being intimidated that in the few days which intervened between the condemnation and the execution of the sentence he preached a sermon, in which he played with pointed sarcasm on the name of the Empress, using the word *adoxia*. But the matter could not rest here; the people would not lightly submit to the removal of their idol. At this period of history, one notices, it was in church matters that the spirit of the people revealed itself, it was for church matters chiefly that they cared. Loud clamours were raised for a general council. The condemnation of a small packed assembly like that of the Oak would not be accepted. The city was in an uproar, distracted with scenes of riot and violence between the small but united body of the Alexandrians, who had come to support their bishop, and the followers of the man of the people. Theophilus fled to Egypt, and there was a revolt in Constantinople. In addition to all this, an earthquake took place, which frightened the Empress, who, if she had few scruples, was, like her husband, very superstitious. Chrysostom, who had gone to Bithynia, was allowed to return and resume the duties of his office. If he had at this time assumed a more conciliatory tone towards the court, or even adopted a policy of quietism and abstained from open attacks on the Empress, he might have continued to hold the episcopal chair till his death. But he was not the man to compromise or to turn back on his way; and if we consider him often obstinate and devoid of ordinary tact, we cannot but yield respect to the unswerving man who chose the difficult road and followed it to the end.

In September 403 a silver statue on a porphyry column was erected to Eudoxia in the Augusteum by Simplicius, the prefect of the city. The erection of public statues usually took place on Sunday, and was accompanied by certain old pagan customs which lingered on, like formulae which have lost their meaning; overlooked and even countenanced in the Christian world. The dances and merriment of the festivity, probably innocent enough, were so loud that they interrupted the services of St. Sophia. What course was taken by Chrysostom we cannot say, as we have no reliable testimony, but he must have manifested his disapproval and indignation in some way which outraged the pride of the Empress, for after this event the breach became so wide that the mild Emperor Arcadius refused to communicate with the Patriarch.

A new synod was summoned early in 404. Theophilus did not venture to be present, but Chrysostom was again condemned. Arcadius hesitated until Easter to enforce the sentence, which the Patriarch declined to obey; but at length, on the night of Easter Eve, he sent a corps of soldiers into the great church, in which at that moment male and female catechumens of riper years were receiving the rite of baptism. The congregation was scattered by the soldiers, who showed little reverence for the sanctity of the place. On the following day the people would not attend the services in St. Sophia, and, leaving the city, celebrated Easter under trees in the country; it was a sort of church secession, and the seceders were called Johannites. Meanwhile Johannes had not been arrested, and things continued as they were until Whitsuntide, owing to the timorous indecision of the Emperor, who perhaps felt some compunction. But on the 20th of June the final blow was struck, and Chrysostom, submitting to the inevitable, quietly allowed himself to be conducted stealthily to the shore and conveyed in a boat to the Asiatic coast.

On the same night a memorable event took place, the conflagration of St. Sophia. Late in the evening the people had crowded into the church, expecting Chrysostom. He did not come, and as they were leaving it the fire broke out. It began at the episcopal chair, and flaming upwards caught the roof and twined round the building "like a serpent". A short time previously a high wind had arisen, and the flames were blown southwards in the direction of the senate house, which was involved in the conflagration. The destruction of the senate house was a greater misfortune than that of the church, for the former was a museum of the most precious antique works of art. The statues of the nine Muses were burnt, and here the pagan historian Zosimus observes that the conflagration betokened "estrangement from the Muses"; it was some consolation to him, however, as a sign of the providence of the Olympians, that the Zeus of Dodona and the Athene of Lindus escaped.

The cause of this misfortune was made a matter of judicial investigation. Some actually attributed it to Chrysostom himself; others to his followers. The superstitious said it was miraculous; while the bigoted, who had infidelity on the brain, said it was the work of a pagan. A modern writer suggests that some fanatical admirer of Chrysostom wished to light a farewell bonfire in his honour. It was at all events made an excuse for persecuting the friends of John, and we hear of all sorts of cruelties perpetrated; for example, of tortures inflicted on a young lad named Eutropius, "pure as a virgin", who had been a lector of the Patriarch. Olympias was condemned to exile, as well as many others. Among those who anticipated the sentence by flight was an old maid named Nicarete, who deserves mention as a curious figure of the time. She was a philanthropist who devoted her means to works of charity, and always went about with a chest of drugs, which she used to dispense gratis, and which pious rumour said were always effectual. She reminds us of charitable ladies of modern times who distribute tracts, have a craze for homoeopathy, and hang on the lips of some favourite clergyman. Many were exiled for refusing to communicate with Arsacius, the new Patriarch. Partaking of the communion with him was made a sort of test for discovering who was a Johannite.

Meanwhile John was being transported to Cucusus, a place where the mountain chains of Cappadocia and Armenia meet, hardly consoling himself with the reflection that Barabbas was preferred to Christ. We cannot follow out the details of his experiences in that cold climate, of all the hardships he underwent, of the various projects he still entered into with Jerome, of his correspondence with Olympias. Such details are for the biographer or the ecclesiastical historian. But we may note here a refined trait of the spiritual woman in Olympias; she did not mention in her letter to Chrysostom the persecution which she had undergone for his sake. But she was seized by a deep melancholy, that had a flavour of distrust in God, in spite of her own convictions; and all the arguments of Chrysostom to prevent her from feeling scandalized at the triumph of the unjust cause seem to have hardly consoled her. A legend was current in later times that her encoffined body had, by her own directions, been cast into the sea at Nicomedia, that it had been carried to Constantinople and thence to Brochthi, where it was placed in the church of St. Thomas. The sea voyages of sainted bodies were a favourite subject of Christian legend, and reappear in the legends of the Round Table.

About a year after John's exile earthquakes took place, which terrified the superstitious nature of the Emperor. He sent to consult a certain St. Nilus, who lived on Mount Sinai. Nilus had been once a brilliant figure in the world; a handsome and elegant man at the court of Theodosius, he had attained to the highest political office, the praetorian prefecture of the East; he had contracted a happy marriage with a woman whom he loved, and he had two sons. Quite suddenly he said goodbye to them all, except one of his sons, with whom he departed and took up his abode on Mount Sinai. A sudden desire had come upon him to save his soul, a sudden craving for the spiritual life. He enjoyed a great and widespread reputation for sanctity, and was consulted as a sort of oracle. In answer to Arcadius' queries he replied by blaming him for the exile of John, whom he called "the lamp of truth and the trumpet of God", saying that when he heard of what had happened he was "lightning struck with the fire of grief". But the oracle had no effect; the earthquake ceased, and then Arcadius, like Pharaoh, hardened his heart.

In 407 it was determined to change the place of Chrysostom's exile. At Cucusus he had kept up a large correspondence, and his life, if dreary, was tolerable. His enemies wished that he should be quite out of the world, and Pityus, a desolate place on the south-eastern coast of the Euxine, was fixed on as his future abode. But on the way thither he died from exhaustion (14th September).

Besides the fact that they decided the relation of the patriarchate to the imperial power in Constantinople, the events narrated in this chapter present other points worthy of remark. Never after Chrysostom have we the spectacle of a Byzantine Patriarch standing out against the corruption or frivolity of the court, and inveighing against those who are arrayed in purple and fine linen and fare sumptuously every day. We meet many Patriarchs ready to defy the Emperor and endure persecution for a comparatively nugatory title of doctrine, but few who threw all their soul into the spirit of the religion, as distinct from the theology of Christianity, and none who would have had the boldness or ill-breeding to criticize the dress or censure the habits of the Empress and her ladies. The Patriarchs after Chrysostom were, if not mere theologians, either austere quietists like John the Faster under Maurice, or ambitious men of the world. It was the distinguishing mark of John Chrysostom, that he cared more for religion and less for theology. It is further interesting to reflect that, at the very beginning of the long period of the queenship of New Rome, where some of the leading traits of Byzantinism, especially the oriental style of the court, had already been fully developed, a great protest was raised against it—the voice of one crying in the midst of it, denouncing the luxury and the pomp. It was as if the spirit of early Christianity, which was now extinct—smothered by its contact with empire and the things of this world—were, through Chrysostom, raising its voice from the grave and protesting against the worldliness, the splendour, and the lusts of the new Christian Empire.

The treatment of John Chrysostom led to an estrangement between the courts of Constantinople and Ravenna, or rather to an exacerbation of an estrangement that already existed. Two important elements enter into these transactions—the reference of ecclesiastical affairs in the East to the bishop of Rome as to a court of appeal, and the influence exercised by the bishop of Rome on the Emperor Honorius.

Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, now triumphant, first apprised Innocent that John had been deposed from his office; letters from John himself and his Byzantine clergy, delivered three days afterwards by four "Johannite" bishops, probably convinced the pontiff that the condemnation of Chrysostom was unjust; and this conviction was confirmed, when he received a copy of the acts of the synod *ad quercum*, for which his signature was required. He determined that it was necessary to summon a general council, and in the meantime refused to desist from communion with the Patriarch, to whom he indited a letter of consolation. A preliminary synod, held in Italy, declared the condemnation of Chrysostom invalid, and demanded that a general council should be held at Thessalonica.

Meanwhile the Emperor Honorius, under the influence of Innocent, wrote a severe letter of admonition to his elder brother, deploring the tumults and conflagrations that had disgraced and disfigured Constantinople in the recent affair, and censuring the inconvenient haste with which the sentence against the condemned had been carried out, before the decision of the head of the Church had been ascertained.

The important and striking point in this letter of Honorius is that it contains the declaration *by an Emperor* of a principle which had before been asserted *by a Bishop*, that "the interpretation of divine things concerns churchmen, the observation of religion concerns us (the Emperors)"—a principle directly opposed to that tendency of the princes who ruled at New Rome, which was to result in the Caesaropapism of Justinian.

Arcadius vouchsafed not to notice his brother's communications, whose candid censure offended him, and took no steps towards summoning a general council. At length four bishops, including Aemilius of Beneventum, and two priests, were sent from Italy with imperial letters to Arcadius. They had reason to repent of their expedition. Their treatment was such that if it had been practiced by an oriental despot, it would have been considered outrageous and exceptional. Escorted by soldiers from Athens to Constantinople, they were not allowed to land in that city, but were thrown into a Thracian fortress, forcibly deprived of the letters which they bore, and then hardly permitted to return to Italy (406 AD)

The estrangement which ensued between the two halves of the Empire, in consequence of this imbecile barbarity on the part of the eastern government, continued until the death of Arcadius on 1st May 408, after which event friendly relations were renewed between "the twin worlds" which constituted the Empire.

CHAPTER IV

STILICHO AND ALARIC

The fourth century has a dull and murky atmosphere about it, an atmosphere which hangs over the pages of Ammianus; the storm was brewing that was to change the face of Europe. The usurpation of Magnentius, the battle of Hadrianople, the consulate of Merobaudes were foreshadows of the storm that was to come, but it did not actually come until after the death of Theodosius the Great. We may perhaps say that it began with Alaric's invasion of Greece.

But we must not exaggerate the storm and conceive it as greater than it really was. The idea of the "wandering of the nations" and unproven speculations as to its connection with tremendous movements in the heart of Asia—an hypothesis which is as superfluous as it is indemonstrable—have led to unhistorical notions as to the nature of the breakup of the Empire. The facts do not warrant us in looking at the German movements in the fourth and fifth centuries as anything more than a continuation of the old war on the frontiers (*limites*).

We must understand clearly the form which the danger from the Germanic nations assumed. Three kinds of Germans must be distinguished—(1) the nations and tribes outside the Empire; (2) those settled within the Empire, such as the Visigoths settled by Theodosius I. in Illyricum and Thrace, and the Ostrogoths settled in Phrygia; (3) the Germans distributed throughout the Empire as soldiers or serfs, half or wholly Romanized, but with German sympathies, whom we already named semi-barbarians. All three classes of Germans contributed to the dislocation of the Empire and the Germanization of occidental Europe, and there is no greater mistake than to imagine that the Empire was suddenly overwhelmed by foreign hordes. In the third century it had been in imminent danger from the nations who bordered on the Rhine and the Danube, and it was again harassed in the fourth century, especially in the reign of Constantius. At the same time the dangers latent in the position of Germans in the Roman army became apparent in the revolt of Magnentius (350 AD.) It has been remarked that the battle of Mursa, in which Constantius quelled that revolt, is a sort of anticipation of the battles of the fifth century. The danger arising from the settlements of German *foederati* displayed itself in a manner still more unequivocal by the disaster of Hadrianople in 378. The policy of Theodosius I, who was called the friend of the Goths, maintained the integrity of the Empire during his own reign, but on his death, the dangers which were only averted by his personal ability, immediately appeared. Through these dangers, as we have seen, the eastern half of the Empire was safely steered; on the other hand, the provinces of the western dynasty were dismembered,

and developed into German kingdoms. It is not my purpose to go into all the details of this process of dismemberment or of the history of the Emperors who reigned at Ravenna and Rome, but an outline of the chief facts is indispensable. Through all these facts a double process is observable. On the one hand, provinces are cut off from the Empire by Germans from without, who invade and take possession; on the other hand, the Empire is undermined within by the influence of half-Roman Germans or half-German Romans, like Stilicho, Aetius, and Ricimer.

The career of Stilicho and Alaric's invasions of Italy present themselves first to our view. Stilicho was absent in Rhaetia in the latter months of 401 AD, when Alaric, who occupied the double position—characteristic of this ambiguous epoch—of king of the West Goths and master of the soldiers in Illyricum, suddenly advanced with a large army to the Julian Alps and entered Italy. The causes which led him to take this step are sufficiently clear, though they are not categorically asserted. His relations to the government of New Rome, lately elated with having subdued a Germanic revolt, were not of an agreeable kind; to attempt to make himself an independent king of the Balkan peninsula would have been impracticable, for he could not have maintained such a position in the heart of the Roman Empire; and he became weary of a monotonous life, destitute of enterprise, in a land exhausted by plunder. With the Teutonic instinct to turn the face westwards, he determined to invade Italy. There was, however, I believe, another element in the situation—the relation of Alaric to Stilicho. If my conjectures were right respecting an understanding between the two generals at Pholoe in 396 AD, Alaric was continually expecting Stilicho to carry out the execution of his design, while Stilicho was prevented by the revolt of Gildo and other affairs which demanded his attention. This will explain what may seem surprising, that Alaric waited so long (five years) inactive in Illyricum. At length—willing to wait no longer, and indignant at the delays of Stilicho, who was not sufficiently imbued with the illness that should have attended his ambition, and was probably also influenced by his wife Serena, who did not approve of his projects—he marched into Italy, and thus placed himself in a position of hostility to his confederate. Stilicho hastened to protect the throne and kingdom of Honorius; the legions of Gaul and Britain were summoned to defend Italy. The Emperor, who was at Milan, proceeded, on Alaric's approach, to Asti, and Alaric followed him into Liguria. At Pollentia, on the river Tanarus, a battle was fought on Easter Day (6th April 402), and Alaric, although perhaps he did not experience an absolute defeat, thought it prudent to make a truce and retire. But as he returned he attempted to surprise Verona, and Stilicho was obliged to attack him again. The army of the Goths was decimated by a noxious disease, and was entirely at Stilicho's mercy, but he acted as he had acted before in the Peloponnesus, making a compact with Alaric and allowing him to withdraw to his Illyric provinces.

It was in the course of the year 402 that Honorius, influenced perhaps by the invasion of Alaric, established his home and court at Ravenna, and discarded the former imperial residences of Rome and Milan. This step was decisive for the history of Ravenna, which, but for the choice of Honorius, would probably never have been the capital of the Ostrogothic sovereigns or the seat of the Exarchs.

The years 403 and 404 passed peacefully enough away, but in 405 Stilicho was called upon to defend Italy against a vast invasion of German hordes, which had combined to plunder the land. The invaders, who were perhaps half a million in number—East Goths, Alans, Vandals, and Quadi—overran northern Italy. After some time they divided into three companies, of which one under Radagaisus besieged Florence. Stilicho seized the favourable moment and enclosed him in an inextricable position at Fiesole, where the Romans were able to massacre the barbarians at their pleasure. It is strange that we are not told what became of the other two companies.

In 407 Stilicho at length made up his mind to strike the blow and occupy Illyricum. The unfriendly feeling which had arisen between the eastern and western courts on the subject of the treatment of John Chrysostom offered a ready pretext for a hostile movement. An edict was issued, at the instance of Stilicho, closing the ports of Italy to the ships of Arcadius' subjects, and breaking off all intercourse between the two halves of the Empire. Stilicho and Alaric formed a plan to seize Illyricum and transfer it from the rule of Arcadius to that of Honorius; but it is hinted that the real purpose was to establish a separate dominion under Stilicho's son, Eucherius. Stilicho was at Ravenna making preparations to join Alaric on the other side of the Adriatic, when a letter arrived from Honorius that Constantine, the general of Britain, had crossed over to Gaul and raised the standard of rebellion. A report also spread that Alaric was dead, and Stilicho's design was thwarted when it seemed on the point of fulfilment. He was obliged to desist from the enterprise that had been so long deferred, and to repair to the presence of the Emperor at Rome to consult as to the measures to be taken against the tyrant Constantine.

Of the tyrant Constantine I shall have more to say in another chapter, but we must observe here that this rebellion of the Britannic army signified an opposition to the influence of the foreigner Stilicho, and was specially directed against him, just as the revolt of Maximus had been aimed against Merobaudes. During the year 406 two tyrants had been elevated in Britain, but both, proving incompetent, were slain; Constantine was their successor. What measures in the meantime, one naturally asks, was Stilicho taking against these movements in Britain, which must soon spread to Gaul? They must have been known to him, and their significance apprehended long before the passage of Constantine across the English Channel. The answer seems to be contained in a notice of Orosius and a notice of Prosper Tiro, which state that Stilicho solicited a mixed host of barbarians to cross the Rhine and enter Gaul at the end of the year 406. Both these writers affirm as his motive that he wished to force the Emperor to bestow imperial rank upon his son Eucherius; but that can hardly have been the direct, though it may have been the indirect, cause. It seems probable that Stilicho wished to have his hands free for operations in Illyricum, and that he called the barbarians into Gaul that they might oppose the progress of the Britannic legions. He thought that once the barbarians had accomplished what he wished them to accomplish, he would easily be able to crush them and drive them out, as he had crushed the army of Radagaisus.

But Alaric, who was not dead, was deeply disappointed, and disdained to wait meekly for the convenience of Stilicho. He advanced to the frontiers of Italy at the Julian Alps, and loudly demanded compensation for the time he had wasted by waiting in Epirus and for the expenses of his march. Stilicho's influence induced the Roman senate, which assembled to decide the matter (408 AD), to agree to Alaric's demand, and pay compensation

money to the amount of £180,000; but many were dissatisfied with Stilicho's Germanizing policy, and one senator bolder than the rest exclaimed, "That is not a peace, it is a compact of thralldom". Such, however, was the almost imperial power of the Emperor's father-in-law, and such the awe in which he was held, that the rash speaker after the dissolution of the assembly deemed it prudent to seek refuge in a church.

Stilicho was not destined either to carry out his designs against the Balkan provinces of New Rome or to win the glory of suppressing the new Constantine, the Emperor whom Gaul had accepted. There was a strong though secret opposition to Stilicho in Italy; at any time a favourable moment might be seized to poison the ears or enlighten the eyes of Honorius respecting the designs of his father-in-law, on which an ugly interpretation might be placed. Even among the soldiers Stilicho's popularity was by no means so established as to be secure. From an obscure passage in one of our authorities we can gather this at least, that a forensic friend of Stilicho, even while he and Honorius were yet at Rome in the early months of 408, foresaw the danger that awaited the general, and connected it—rightly as the event proved—with the spirit of the soldiers stationed at Ticinum.

Honorius was at Bononia, on his way from Ravenna to Ticinum, when the news reached him of his brother's death (May 408). He entertained the idea of proceeding himself to Constantinople to set in order the affairs of the realm, which now devolved on a child of seven years; and he summoned Stilicho from Ravenna for consultation. Stilicho dissuaded him from this purpose, and undertook to proceed himself to New Rome, while he proposed to employ Alaric against the usurper Constantine, who ruled in Gaul. The death of Arcadius seemed to present to Stilicho an opportunity for accomplishing his purposes without Alaric's aid. But meanwhile a minister named Olympius was winning the ear of Honorius. The Romans who hated Germans and Arians were weaving a web of destruction for the Vandal father-in-law of the Emperor; they accused him of treason; and on 23d August Stilicho was put to death at Ravenna. Many ministers were executed at the same time, as members of his party and privy to his treasonable designs. His son Eucherius was slain soon afterwards, while his wife Serena was spared; but she was destined to be strangled a year later, by order of the Roman senate, for pagan impiety, while Alaric was besieging Rome. Thermantia, the wife of the Emperor, was put away because she was the daughter of Stilicho. It was stated definitely by Stilicho's opponents that he aimed at winning the imperial purple for his son Eucherius, and the poet Claudian had hinted at a possible marriage between the Emperor's half-sister Galia Placidia and the son of Stilicho. I have already stated my opinion that this charge was in the main true, nor does it seem confuted by the mere fact—which may have been actually intended to disarm suspicion—that Eucherius was entrusted with insignificant posts by his father.

The relations between the eastern half and the western half of the Empire had been strained and often positively hostile during the reign of Arcadius; or, I think, we should rather say during the lifetime of Stilicho. The death of the great general changed the relations of the courts; concord and friendly co-operation succeeded coldness and enmity; and the law which excluded eastern commerce from western ports, passed by the influence of the "public enemy" Stilicho, was rescinded. It is a mistake to attribute this to the death of Arcadius. If Arcadius had lived many years longer, the death of Stilicho would have been followed by the same result. This is evident if we reflect on the elements of the situation. In the realm of Arcadius the Roman spirit had triumphed and won the upper hand by the suppression of Gainas and Tribigild. In the realm of Honorius, on the contrary, the German interest predominated as long as Stilicho lived. Hence the two courts were discordant. But the fall of Stilicho was a triumph for the Roman party in Italy, and a cause of rejoicing for the court of Byzantium; he who was the obstacle to unity, he whose private ambition threatened an integral portion of the provinces ruled from New Borne, was removed, and the Empire was again for a time really as well as nominally one.

After Stilicho's death, the new government, led by Olympius, who was appointed master of offices, had two problems to face. How was Alaric, still threatening in Noricum, to be dealt with? and what measures were to be taken in regard to Constantine, the Emperor or tyrant of Gaul? Alaric promised to withdraw from Noricum to Pannonia if the balance of the sum of money promised by the senate, and as yet only partly paid, were delivered to him. With an unwise audacity the Emperor's new advisers refused the proposal, and at the same time took no measures for defense. It would have been best to pay the money, but if they were determined to defy the Goth they should have taken steps to resist him, and (as a historian of that century suggested) they might have enlisted a Goth named Sarus, an excellent warrior and a rival of Alaric, to oppose the entry of the latter into Italy.

The king of the West Goths invaded Italy for the second time and marched straight to Rome, without turning aside to besiege Ravenna, where Honorius resided sufficiently secure. It is related that a monk warned the invader not to turn his arms against the capital of the world, and that Alaric replied that he was irresistibly led thither, not by his own will but by a divine impulse; and the story is suitable to the solemnity of the moment. The German king laid siege to the eternal city. Reduced to extremities by famine, and even plague, the inhabitants of Rome, where there was still a strong pagan element, essayed the efficacy of heathen sacrifices; but they were at length compelled to make a hard peace with Alaric. Honorius and Olympius, however, still persisted in adopting the strange policy of defying the invader and not resisting him. But Olympius soon fell, through the hostility of a cabal of eunuchs, and the praetorian prefect and Patrician, Jovius, succeeded to his influence. Other changes in the civil service and the military commands were made about the same time; after the death of Stilicho ministers rose and fell in rapid succession. Jovius was anxious to bring about a peace with Alaric, and was ready to make reasonable concessions; and for this purpose he appointed an interview with the Gothic king at Ariminum. Alaric demanded that the provinces of Venetia, Noricum, and Dalmatia should be ceded to himself and his people as a permanent abode, and that a certain annual supply of corn and money should be granted by the Emperor. In his letter to Honorius Jovius suggested that Alaric might relax the severity of these demands, if the rank of *magister utriusque militiae*, which Stilicho had held, were conferred on him. But Honorius could not rise to the idea of granting to the barbarian Visigoth the post which had been held by the semi-barbarian Vandal; he decidedly refused either to confer the title or to grant the lands. It is interesting to note, however, that there was for a moment the possibility that a West Gothic kingdom might have been established to the north-east, instead of to the west of Italy.

Jovius opened the answer of Honorius in the presence of Alaric and read it aloud. The German looked upon the refusal of the military command as a contumely to himself, and “rising up in anger, ordered his barbarians to march to Rome to avenge the insult which was offered to himself and all his kin”.

Here we have the Roman exclusiveness, manifested by the son of Theodosius, and the ambition of the German to win a place and recognition in the Empire, as the main elements of the situation; and the remarkable circumstance is that Alaric did not desire war, and that Honorius had no adequate forces to support his resistance.

Once more Alaric attempted to induce the Emperor to accept his proposals, and even offered more moderate terms. The bishop of Rome, which the Goths once more threatened, was, with other bishops, sent as an envoy to Ravenna, if even yet the Emperor might pause ere he exposed the city which had ruled over the world for more than four hundred years to the ravages of barbarians, and allowed the magnificent edifices to be consumed by the fire of the foe. All that Alaric asked now was the province of Noricum on the Danube; he did not ask for Venetia nor yet for Dalmatia. Let Honorius assign the Goths Noricum, and grant them a certain sum of money and supplies of corn annually; Italy would then be delivered from the invader. It is hard to see why Honorius and his ministers declined to accept these terms, which, considering the situation, were moderate; but on this occasion Jovius, instead of advising peace, which he had desired before, advised a firm refusal. It appears that Honorius had taken him to task for his disposition to yield to Alaric at Ariminum, and that, fearing for his personal safety, he had rushed to the other extreme, and sworn, and made others swear, by the head of Honorius, to war to the death with Alaric.

Having met with this new refusal, and perceiving that it was a hopeless aim to extort anything from the obstinacy and prejudice of the son of him “who pacified the Goths”, Alaric marched to the walls of Rome, and called upon the citizens to side with him against the Emperor. When this invitation was refused, he seized the port and blockaded the eternal city for the second time. The corn stores of the city lay in the harbour, and Alaric threatened that if the Romans did not comply with his demand he would use them for his own army. The senate met, and, with the fear of famine before their eyes, yielded.

Alaric’s purpose was to elect a new Emperor who should be more pliable than Honorius. He had selected the prefect of the city, Attalus, to play this somewhat undignified part; and Attalus was invested with the purple and crowned with the diadem. Alaric received the post of master of soldiers, which the legitimate Emperor had disdained to bestow on him; and Athaulf, his brother-in-law, was created count of the domestics.

Nor was it merely to the Goths that a new Emperor was acceptable; he was also welcome to the pagans and the Arians, who were numerous in the city on the Tiber and had suffered from the severe laws of the orthodox Honorius. One might say that the elevation of Attalus involved a twofold reaction against the established order of things; a reaction on the one hand against Catholicism, an opposition on the other hand of the Teutonic to the Roman spirit. In fact the coalition of Alaric and Attalus was a repetition in a new form of the coalition of Arbogast and Eugenius. What saved the throne of Honorius was that the two factors of the coalition fell asunder, because they too were divided by the opposition of Roman to Teuton.

It is worthy of remark that the situation in Gaul—which will be described in another chapter—was determined by the same three elements as the situation in Italy, but these elements were not adjusted in the same relations. In both countries the imperial authority was represented; in both countries there were tyrants or usurpers; and in both countries there were barbarians hostile to the imperial government. But in Gaul it was the tyrant against whom the legitimate Emperor prepared to contend; in Italy it was the Emperor against whom the tyrant prepared to contend. In Gaul the tyrant and the barbarians, Vandals, Suevians, and Alans, had originally been in opposition, and had come to terms, which left them independent of each other; in Italy the tyrant was the creation of the barbarian, and an opposition developed itself afterwards. The watchword of the new Augustus who came from Britain had been opposition to German influence; the watchword of the new Augustus who arose at Rome was opposition to catholic intolerance. Constantine was the successor of Maximus; Attalus was the successor of Eugenius.

Attalus created Lampadius, probably the same senator who had once exclaimed bravely in the senate house against the “compact of servitude” with Alaric, praetorian prefect of Italy, and a certain Marcian prefect of the city; Tertullus was elected as consul for the year 410. We are told that the inhabitants of Rome were in high spirits, because the new officers were well versed in the art of administration; only the rich house of the Anicii was vexed at the new order of things.

The first problem which presented itself to Attalus and Alaric was how they were to act in regard to Africa, which was held by Count Heraclian, an officer loyal to Honorius. They were not safe as long as they did not possess the African provinces, on which Rome depended for her supplies of corn. Alaric advised that troops should be sent to seize the power in Africa by force; but Attalus would not consent, confident that he could win Carthage without fighting a battle. He appointed a certain Constans commander of the soldiers in Libya, and sent him thither with a small company of guards, while he prepared himself to march against Ravenna.

Honorius was overwhelmed with terror at the tidings that a usurper had arisen in Italy, and that Rome had given her adhesion. He made ready ships in Classis, which, if it came to the worst, might bear him to the shelter of New Rome, and sent messages to Attalus, proposing a division of the Empire. But Attalus had such high hopes that he would not consent to a compromise; he agreed to allow the legitimate Caesar to retire to an island and end his days as a private individual. So probable did it seem that the tottering throne of Honorius would fall, and so bright the prospects of his rival, that the praetorian prefect Jovius or Jovian, who had sworn eternal enmity to Alaric, went over to the camp or the palace of the usurper. The policy of Jovius was ever, when he adopted a new cause, to carry it to a further extreme than anyone else. From wishing to make large concessions to Alaric, he had rebounded to the position of refusing to make even small concessions; and now, when he joined the side of Attalus, he went further than Attalus in hostility to Honorius, and recommended that the Emperor, when he was

dethroned, should be deformed by bodily mutilation. But for this proposal Attalus is said to have chidden him; Attalus knew not then that it was to be his own fate hereafter.

Attalus and his master of soldiers advanced upon Ravenna, and it seemed probable that Honorius would flee. But at this juncture the eastern came to the assistance of the western government, and Anthemius, the praetorian prefect of the East, sent about four thousand soldiers to Ravenna. With these Honorius was able to secure the city of the marshes against the hostile army, and await the result of the operations of Constans, Attalus' emissary in Africa. If Heraclian maintained the province loyally against the usurper, the war might be prosecuted in Italy against Alaric and Attalus; if, on the other hand, Africa accepted a change of rule, Honorius determined to abandon the position.

The news soon arrived that Constans had been slain. At this point, the latent opposition between the ideas of Attalus and the ideas of Alaric began to assert itself. Alaric wished to send an army to Africa; and Jovius supported the policy in a speech to the Roman senate. But neither the senate nor Attalus were disposed to send an army of barbarians against a Roman province; such a course seemed *indecent*—unworthy of Rome. Jovius, the shifty Patrician, seems to have decided, on account of the failure in Africa, to desert his allegiance to Attalus, and return to his allegiance to Honorius; and he attempted to turn Alaric away from his league with the Emperor whom he had created. But Alaric would not yet throw off his allegiance. He had said that he was resolved to persist in the blockade of Ravenna until he had taken it, but the new strength which Honorius had obtained from Byzantium seems to have convinced him that it would be futile to continue the siege. He marched through the Aemilia, receiving or extorting from the cities acknowledgment of the Empire of Attalus, and failing to take Bononia, which held out for Honorius, passed on to Liguria, to force that province also to accept the tyrant.

Attalus meanwhile returned to Rome, which he found in a sad plight. Count Heraclian had stopped the transport of corn and oil from the granary of Italy, and Rome was reduced to such extremities of starvation, that some one cried in the circus, "Set a price on human flesh". The senate was now desirous to carry out the plan which it had rejected with Roman dignity before, and send an army of barbarians to Africa; but the Princeps again refused to consent to such a step, as he had formerly refused when it was proposed by Alaric.

Accordingly Alaric determined to pull down the tyrant whom he had set up; he had found that in Attalus, as well as in Honorius, the Roman temper was firm, and that he too was keenly conscious that the Visigoths were only barbarians. Near Ariminum Attalus was discrowned and divested of the purple robe with ceremonious solemnity; but Alaric provided for his safety, and retained him in his own camp.

It now seemed that Alaric might approach Honorius again with better chance of a satisfactory adjustment; and he marched in the direction of Ravenna. At this juncture the Goth Sarus, a brave warrior, appears upon the scene. With three hundred men he had stationed himself in the Picentine territory, and held aloof from the two contending parties. According to one writer, he now attacked the Goths of Alaric or Athaulf, because he wished to prevent the conclusion of peace; according to another writer, he was not the attacker, but the attacked. Whichever of the two accounts be true, his accession to the side of the Emperor seems to have induced Honorius to continue in his implacable hostility to Alaric.

It was in August 410 that Alaric marched upon Rome for the third time, but now he occupied it without resistance. It is not clear how far this occupation was due to an unfriendly attitude on the part of Honorius; events may have intervened between the battle with Sarus and the march on Rome of which we are ignorant. The eternal city was surrendered to the pillage of the soldiers; but it was confessed that respect was shown for churches, and that the "immunity" of the barbarians was softened by the veneration which Christian things inspired. Alaric then proceeded to southern Italy with the purpose of crossing to Africa, and relieving Italy from the pressure of famine. If Alaric had succeeded in this enterprise and returned to Italy, that peninsula might have been the seat of a West Gothic kingdom, almost a hundred years before it became the seat of an East Gothic kingdom. But Alaric died in Bruttii, before the year was over, at Consentia, and the Goths laid his body in the bed of the river Bucentus. His work had been accomplished; he had not himself entered in to possess, but he had prepared the way for a Visigothic kingdom, which was to arise, not in Illyricum, where he had sojourned so long, not in Italy, nor yet in Africa, but in a country where Alaric had never trodden. Alaric might be called the Moses of the Visigoths; he guided them on their wanderings until they came in sight of the promised land which he was not destined to enjoy himself.

CHAPTER V

THEODOSIUS II AND MARCIAN

When Arcadius died in 408, his son Theodosius was only eight years old. Anthemius acted as protector of the Empire, and apparently also as guardian of the young prince until 414, and the measures which were passed during these six years exhibit an intelligent and sincere solicitude for the welfare of the people and the correction of abuses. At the same time a better understanding subsisted between the court of New Rome and the court of Ravenna, due partly to the death of Arcadius and partly to that of Stilicho, who was executed in the same year. As a result of the new mode of palatial life, the influence of women as well as the influence of eunuchs made itself felt. The keynote of this new departure was struck by Eudoxia, the first wife of a Roman Emperor who received

the title Augusta, a novelty to which the court of Honorius objected; and throughout the whole space of the fifth and sixth centuries we meet remarkable ladies of the imperial house playing a prominent part. The daughters of Eudoxia formed a great contrast to their mother, and the court of Theodosius I was very different from that of Arcadius. The princesses Pulcheria, Arcadia, and Marina, and the young Emperor, inherited the religious temperament of their father, with which Pulcheria combined her grandfather's strength of character. The court, as a contemporary says, assumed the character of a cloister. The singing of hymns, pious practices, and charitable works were the order of the day, and the Patriarch Atticus acted as a spiritual adviser. But religion was accompanied with culture; Theodosius was a student of natural science, and from his skill in writing received the name of Kalligraphos.

In 414 Pulcheria was created Augusta, and assumed the regency in the name of her brother, who was two years younger than herself. She superintended and assisted in his education; she supported by her countenance the reforming spirit of the senate, and protected her brother from falling under the influence of intriguing court officials, to which his weak character would easily have rendered him a prey. This was the import of Pulcheria's political position. She resolved to remain a virgin, and influenced her sisters to form the same determination, in which they were confirmed by their friend Atticus, who is said to have written a book for them on the subject of virginity.

In 421 a new element was introduced into the monastic court life by the marriage of the Emperor with Athenais. The story of the Athenian girl who became the Empress Eudocia is well known. She was the daughter of Leontius, a philosopher and a pagan, and was by him instructed in all pagan learning. After the death of her father she sought refuge in Constantinople (418) from her brothers, who were less than kind, and the beauty and learning of the girl, dedicated to Athene, won the patronage of Pulcheria, who chose her as a suitable bride for her brother. The marriage was followed by the birth of a daughter, Eudoxia (named after the late Empress), who afterwards became the wife of Valentinian III, and in 423 Eudocia was proclaimed Augusta. She had embraced Christianity before her marriage, and she wrote religious poetry; but she always retained some pagan leanings, and we may be sure that, when her influence began to assert itself, the strict monastic character of the court was considerably modified, and that breaches with Pulcheria were not infrequent, as both ladies had decided characters. The early undivided allegiance of Theodosius to his sister was gone; by degrees it was felt that there were two not necessarily united powers in the palace; and of this feeling intriguing courtiers or churchmen would not be slow to take advantage. The dissension showed itself clearly in the Nestorian controversy.

When we read the chronicles of the reign of Theodosius II, we at first receive the impression that it was a period of few important events, though set with curious stories. The invasions of Attila and the general council of Ephesus are the only facts which seem to stand out prominently in the chronicles, while they are full of stories and interesting traits which attract the imagination, such as the life of Athenais, the martyrdom of Hypatia, the monastic life of the imperial votaries Pulcheria and her sisters, the story of the waking of the seven sleepers—the young saints who in the reign of Decius had fallen asleep in a cave. But on further study we come to the conclusion that it was a period of capital importance,—a period in which the Empire was passing a vital crisis.

To an unprejudiced observer in the reign of Arcadius it might have seemed that the Empire in its eastern parts was doomed to a speedy decline. One possessed of the insight of Synesius might have thought it impossible that it could last for eight hundred years more when he considered the threatening masses of barbarians who environed it, the corruption and divisions of the imperial court, the oppression of the subjects, and all the evils which Synesius actually pointed out. For with the beginning of the fifth century a critical time approached for the whole Empire. At the end of the same century we find that while the western half had been found wanting in the day of its trial, the eastern half had passed the crisis and all the clangers successfully; we find strong and prudent Emperors ruling at New Rome, disposed to alleviate the burdens of the subjects, and in the court a different atmosphere from that of the days of Arcadius.

Now the significance of the reign of Theodosius II is that it was the transition from the court of Arcadius to the court of the steady reforming Emperors in the latter half of the century, and it partook of both characters. This double-sidedness is its peculiarity. Theodosius was weak, like his father, but he was not so weak, and he seems to have profited more by his education. The senate struggles with effect against irresponsible officialism, and although we hear that there was venality and corruption in the days of Pulcheria, a great improvement is in progress. In the chronicles we do not hear much about the senate, everything is attributed to Pulcheria or Theodosius; but the words of Socrates that the Emperor was much beloved “by the senate and people are significant, and there is no doubt that the much-lauded wisdom of Pulcheria's regency consisted in the wisdom of the senate which she supported. And although towards the close of the reign eunuchs had power, the ground gained by the senate was not lost; the spirit of its administration and the lines of its policy were followed by the succeeding Emperors, and it guided the State safely through a most momentous period which proved fatal to the integrity of the western provinces.

As has been already stated, the guidance of the State through this critical period following the death of Arcadius devolved upon the praetorian prefect Anthemius, and was successfully performed by him. A new treaty was made which secured peace on the Persian frontier; it was agreed that Roman merchants were not to travel farther east than Artaxata and Nisibis, nor Persian merchants farther west than Callinicum. An invasion of Lower Moesia by Uldes, the king of the Huns who had executed Gainas, seemed at first serious and menacing, but was successfully tided over. In words worthy of his successor Attila, Uldes boasted that he could subdue the whole earth or even the sun. He captured Castra Martis, but as he advanced against Thrace he was deserted by a large multitude of his followers, who joined the Romans in driving their king beyond the Danube. An immense horde of Scyri were in Uldes' host, and so many were taken prisoners that the government had some trouble in disposing of them. They were given to large landowners to be employed as serfs (*coloni*) in Asia, not in Thrace or Illyricum. In order to prevent future invasions of Huns or other barbarians, Anthemius provided for the improvement of the fleet stationed on the Danube; a large number of new ships were built to protect the borders of Moesia and Scythia, and the old crafts were repaired.

Of the other acts of “the great Anthemius” we may mention that he strengthened the capital, which tended to stretch beyond the wall of Constantine, by a new wall (413), and that he made provision for the more efficient transportation of the corn supplies from Alexandria to Constantinople. He also took measures to revive the prostrate condition of the Illyrian provinces, which through the protracted presence of Alaric and his Visigoths had been reduced to a state of defencelessness and misery.

One of the men who held a distinguished position in this reign, and was highly characteristic of the epoch in many ways, was Cyrus of Panopolis. A poet, like his fellow-townsmen Nonnus, a student of art and architecture, a Greek in faith, he was penetrated with thoroughly Hellenic instincts; and when it is remarked that the Empire was beginning to assume in the East a Greek complexion in the reign of Theodosius II, the first Greek Emperor, it is often forgotten that Cyrus had a great deal to do with this, and was in fact the chief leader of the movement. He was prefect of the city for many years, and he used to issue decrees in Greek, an innovation for which a writer of the following century expressly blames him. His prefecture was very popular and long remembered at Constantinople, for he built or restored many buildings and improved the illumination of the town, so that the people enthusiastically cried on one occasion in the circus, “Constantine built the city but Cyrus renewed it”. This popularity made the prefect an object of suspicion, and his fall soon followed, his paganism furnishing a convenient ground for accusation. By a sort of irony he was compelled to take orders and made bishop of Cotyaeum in Phrygia. His first sermon, which his malicious congregation forced him to preach against his will on Christmas Day, is delectable, and shows the readiness of the man:

“Brethren, let the birth of God, our Saviour, Jesus Christ be honoured by silence, because he was conceived in the holy virgin through hearing only. To the Word itself be glory for ever and ever, Amen”.

The two most important acts of Theodosius were the foundation of a university at Constantinople and the compilation of the code called after his name. The inauguration of the university was an important measure for Byzantine life, and indicates the enlightenment of Theodosius’ reign. It was intended to supersede the university of Athens, the headquarters of paganism—with which, however, the government preferred not to interfere directly—and thereby to further the cause of Christianity. This negative effect was expected, and did to a certain extent follow. The Latin language was represented by ten grammarians or philologists and three rhetors, the Greek likewise by ten grammarians, but by five rhetors or sophists; one chair of philosophy was endowed and two chairs of jurisprudence. Thus the Greek language had two more chairs than the Latin, and this fact may be cited as marking a stage in the Graecisation of the eastern half of the Roman Empire.

In the year 429 Theodosius determined to form a collection of all the constitutions issued by the “renowned Constantine, the divine Emperors who succeeded him, and ourselves”. The new code was to be drawn up on the model of the Gregorian and Hermogenian codes, and the execution of the work was entrusted to a commission of nine persons, among whom was Apelles, professor of law at the new university. In 438 the work was completed and published, but during the intervening years the members of the commission had changed; of the eight who are mentioned in the edict which accompanied the final publication only two, Antiochus and Theodoras, were among the original workers, and a constitution of 435, which conferred full powers on the committee for the consummation of the work, mentions sixteen compilers, *contexores*.

The new codex was issued conjointly by Theodosius and Valentinian, and it impressed a sort of seal on the unity of the Empire (15th February 438). The visit of the younger Emperor to Constantinople on the occasion of his marriage with Eudoxia facilitated this co-operation. On 23d December of the same year, at a meeting of the senate of Old Rome, the code which had been drawn up by the lawyers of New Rome was publicly recognised, and an official account of the proceedings on that occasion

—*gesta in senatu Urbis Romae de recipiendo Codice Theodosiano*—

may still be read.

The praetorian prefect and consul of the year, Anicius Acilius Glabrio Faustus, spoke as follows:

“The felicity of the eternal Emperors proceeds so far as to adorn with the ornaments of peace those whom it defends by warfare. Last year when we loyally attended the celebration of the most fortunate of all ceremonies, and when the marriage had been happily concluded, the most sacred Prince, our Lord Theodosius, was fain to add this dignity also to his world, and ordered the precepts of the laws to be collected and drawn up in a compendious form of sixteen books, which he wished to be consecrated by his most sacred name. Which thing the eternal Prince, our Lord Valentinian, approved with the loyalty of a colleague and the affection of a son”.

And all the senators cried out in the usual form, “Well spoken!”. But instead of following the course of the *gesta* in the Roman senate house, it will be more instructive to read the imperial constitution which introduced the great code to the Roman world.

“The Emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, Augusti, to Florentius, Praetorian Prefect of the East.

“Our clemency has often been at a loss to understand the cause of the fact, that, when so many rewards are held out for the maintenance of arts and (liberal) studies, so few are found who are endowed with a full knowledge of the Civil Law, and even they so seldom; we are astonished that amid so many whose faces have grown pale from late lucubrations hardly one or two have attained to sound and complete learning.

“When we consider the enormous multitude of books, the diverse modes of process and the difficulty of legal cases, and further the huge mass of imperial constitutions, which hidden as it were under a veil of gross mist and darkness precludes men's intellects from gaining a knowledge of them, we feel that we have met a real need of our age, and dispelling the darkness have given light to the laws by a short compendium. We selected noble

men of approved faith, lawyers of well-known learning; and clearing the interpretation of all difficulties, we have published the constitutions of our predecessors, so that men may no longer have to await formidable Responses from expert lawyers as from an inner shrine, when it is really quite plain what action is to be adopted in suing for an inheritance, or what is to be the weight of a donation. These details, unveiled by the assiduity of the learned, have been brought into open day under the radiant splendour of our name.

“Nor let those to whom we have consigned the divine secrets of our heart imagine that they have obtained a poor reward. For if our mind's eye rightly foresees the future, their names will descend to posterity linked with ours.

“Thus having wiped away the cloud of volumes, on which many wasted their lives and explained nothing in the end, we establish a compendious knowledge of the Imperial constitutions since the time of the divine Constantine, and allow no one after the first day of next January to use any authority in the practice of law except these books which bear our name and are kept in the sacred bureaux. None of the older Emperors however has been deprived of his eternity, the name of no issuer of a constitution has fallen to the ground; nay rather they enjoy a borrowed light in that their august decrees are associated with us. The glory of the originators, duly refined (filed), remains and will remain for ever; nor has any brilliance passed thereby to our name except the light of brevity.

“And though the undertaking of the whole work was due to our auspicious initiation, we nevertheless deemed it more worthy of the imperial majesty and more illustrious, to put envy to flight and allow the memory of the authors to survive perennially. It is enough and more than enough to satisfy our consciences, that we have unveiled the laws and redeemed the works of our ancestors from the injury of obscurity.

“To this we add that henceforward no constitution can be passed in the West or in any other place, by the unconquerable Emperor, the son of our clemency, the everlasting Augustus, Valentinian, or possess any validity, except the same by a divine *pragmatica* be communicated to us.

“The same precaution is to be observed in the acts which are promulgated by us in the East; and those are to be condemned as spurious which are not recorded in the Theodosian Code, excepting special documents in the official bureaux.

“It would be a long tale to relate all that has been contributed to the completion of this work by the labours of Antiochus, the all-sublime ex-prefect and consul; by the illustrious Maximin, ex-quaestor of our palace, eminent in all departments of literature; by the illustrious Martyrius, count and quaestor, the faithful interpreter of our clemency; by Sperantius, Apollodorus, and Theodore, all respectable men and counts of our sacred consistory; by the respectable Epigenes, count and *magister memoriae*; by the respectable Procopius, count, formerly *magister libellorum*. These men may be compared to any of the ancients.

“It remains, o Florentius, most dear and affectionate relation, for your illustrious and magnificent authority, whose delight and constant practice is to please Emperors, to cause the decrees of our August Majesty to come to the knowledge of all peoples and all provinces.

“Date 15 February at Constantinople” (438).

We have already referred to the fact that a marriage was arranged between the young princess Eudoxia and the youthful Emperor, Valentinian III, her second cousin. It was celebrated in 437 at Constantinople, whither the bridegroom came for the occasion. After the departure of her daughter the Empress probably felt lonely, and she undertook, in accordance with her husband's wishes, a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to return thanks to the Deity for the marriage of their daughter. In this decision they seem to have been confirmed by a saintly lady of high reputation, Melana by name, a Roman of noble family, who had been forced into a marriage repugnant to her, and had afterwards, along with her husband, whom she converted to Christianity, taken up her abode at first in the land of Egypt, where she founded monastic houses, and then at Jerusalem. She had visited Constantinople to see her uncle Volusian, whom she converted before his death, and, moving in the most exalted society of the capital, she exercised considerable influence even over the Emperor and his household. The journey of Eudocia to Jerusalem (in spring 438) was marked by her visit to Antioch, where she created a great effect by the elegant Greek oration which she delivered, posing rather as one trained in Greek rhetoric and animated with Hellenic traditions and proud of her Athenian descent, than as a pilgrim to the great Christian shrine. Although there was a large element of theological bigotry both in Antioch and in Alexandria, yet in both these cities there was probably more appreciation of Hellenic style and polish than in Constantinople. The last words of Eudocia's oration brought down the house—a quotation from Homer,

“I boast that I am of your race and blood”.

The city that hated and mocked the Emperor Julian and his pagan Hellenism loved and feted the Empress Eudocia with her Christian Hellenism; a golden statue was erected to her in the curia and one of bronze in the museum. Her interest in Antioch took a practical form, for she induced Theodosius to erect a new basilica, restore the *thermae* (hot baths), extend the walls, and bestow other marks of favour on the city.

Eudocia's visit to Aelia Capitolina, as Jerusalem was called, brings to the recollection the visit of Constantine's mother Helena, one hundred years before, and, although Christianity had lost some of its freshness in the intervening period, it must have been a strange and impressive experience for one whose youth was spent amid the heathen memories and philosophers' gardens of Athens, and who in New Rome, with its museums of ancient art and its men of many creeds, had not been entirely weaned from the ways and affections of her youth, to visit, with all the solemnity of an exalted Christian pilgrim, a city whose memories were typically and diametrically opposed to Hellenism, a city whose monuments were the bones and relics of saints. It was probably

only this ideal side that came under Eudocia's notice; for Jerusalem at this period was a strange mixture of idealism with gross realism—it was double in character as it was double in name. The Christian reminiscences which affected Eudocia were the rich hangings in a more than homely house; epicurism and lust made it “more like a tavern or a brothel than a graced palace”. We are told by an ecclesiastical writer of the age that it was more depraved than Gomorrah; and the fact that it was a garrison town had something to do with this depravity.

The fall of Eudocia took place soon after her return, but although a circumstantial story is told about it, historians are all inclined to treat it as a legend, and the matter seems shrouded in impenetrable obscurity. It is best to relate the story in the words of the earliest chronicler who records it.

“It so happened that as the Emperor Theodosius was proceeding to the church in *sanctis theophaniis*, the master of offices, Paulinus, being indisposed on account of an ailment in his foot, remained at home and made an excuse. But a certain poor man brought to Theodosius a Phrygiatic apple, of enormously large size, and the Emperor was surprised at it, and all his court (senate). And straightway the Emperor gave 150 nomismata to the man who brought the apple, and sent it to Eudocia Augusta; and the Augusta sent it to Paulinus, the master of offices, as being a friend of the Emperor. But Paulinus, not being aware that the Emperor had sent it to the Empress, took it and sent it to the Emperor Theodosius, even as he entered the Palace. And when the Emperor received it he recognised it and concealed it. And having called Augusta, he questioned her, saying, ‘Where is the apple that I sent you’. And she said, ‘I ate it’. Then he caused her to swear the truth by his salvation, whether she ate it or sent it to someone; and she swore, ‘I sent it unto no man but ate it’. And the Emperor commanded the apple to be brought and showed it to her. And he was indignant against her, suspecting that she was enamoured of Paulinus and sent him the apple, and denied it. And on this account Theodosius put Paulinus to death. And the Empress Eudocia was grieved, and thought herself insulted, for it was known everywhere that Paulinus was slain on account of her, for he was a very handsome young man. And she asked the Emperor that she might go to the holy places to pray; and he allowed her. And she went clown from Constantinople to Jerusalem to pray”.

Gregorovius remarks that Eudocia's apple of Phrygia eludes criticism as completely as Eve's apple of Eden, but perhaps both may be explicable as having arisen from the language of oriental metaphor. We know on good evidence that the magister officiorum Paulinus was put to death by Theodosius' command in 440; and history seems entitled to draw the conclusion that it was probably a charge, whether true or false, of a criminal attachment to the beautiful Paulinus that led to the disgrace of the Empress and the execution of the minister. It would be unwarrantable to ascribe this affair to machinations of the eunuch Chrysaphius, whose influence began about this time, and who is said to have been in league with Eudocia to bring about the decline of Pulcheria's influence. Pulcheria retired from court to Hebdomon at this period. These court intrigues, scarcely more than hinted at by our authorities, are very slippery ground, and we must beware of that tendency among modern as well as ancient historians to attribute on all occasions unprincipled acts to eunuchs.

For two or three years after the death of Paulinus, the Empress remained at Constantinople; in what relation she stood to the Emperor, whether she was partially reconciled or quite estranged, we know not. It is possible that the affair of Paulinus may have been forgotten, and that her retirement to Jerusalem in 443 was either voluntary or the result of some web of intrigue spun perhaps by the eunuch Chrysaphius. However this may have been, a messenger of Theodosius' displeasure or jealousy, the count of the bodyguard, Saturninus, followed her to Jerusalem, and “slew the priest Severus and the deacon Johannes who served the Empress Eudocia in the town of Aelia”. Eudocia avenged this act by permitting the death of Saturninus; the words of the best authority would lead us to suppose that she caused him to be assassinated, but it has been suggested that officious servants or an indignant mob may have too hastily anticipated her supposed wishes. Then, by her husband's command, she was compelled to “disquantity” her train, and she remained at Aelia, where she was destined to die.

When Theodosius died, of a spinal injury caused by a fall from his horse, in 450 (28th July), leaving only one daughter, Eudoxia, the wife of Valentinian III, the difficulty of the succession to the throne was solved by the Empress Pulcheria, who became the nominal wife of Marcian, an able senator and soldier. We read that on his deathbed Theodosius said to Marcian, in the presence of Aspar, the general, and all the senators, “It has been revealed to me that you will reign after me”. Thus a capable successor was secured and the Theodosian dynasty formally preserved. The first act of the new reign was the execution of Chrysaphius, the obnoxious eunuch, whose influence with Theodosius had been on the decline for some time before his death. It is significant that Chrysaphius had favoured the green faction of the circus, and that Marcian patronised the Blues, while at the same time the new reign was attended with a religious reaction against the monophysitic heresy, which Theodosius had been inclined to favour.

Marcian belonged to the senatorial party of reform, which at the beginning of Theodosius' reign was led by Anthemius; and we are told that his reign and that of his successor Leo were a period of profound calm, a sort of golden interval, all the more striking when contrasted with the storms which preceded the dismemberment of the Empire in the West. The good policy of these sovereigns consisted in paying regard to the condition of their subjects and alleviating the pressure of taxes as far as Roman fiscal principles would permit, in assisting them from the imperial treasury when unwonted calamities befell, in keeping the expenses of the court within reasonable limits. Marcian in particular did away with the *follis*, which pressed heavily on the higher classes; he confined the burdensome office of the *praetura* to residents in the capital, and made its burden lighter by compelling the consuls to share the expenses of building with the praetors. Leo, Zeno, and Anastasius pursued more or less the same policy; for the financial difficulties in which the Empire was involved during the last thirty years of the century were greatly due to the mismanagement of the expensive naval expedition of Leo against the Vandals, as will be explained in due course. At this period of the world heaven was often wroth; earthquakes were frequent and cities were constantly laid in ruins by these divine visitations (*theomenia*). The Emperors always exhibited a laudable solicitude to repair these losses.

One of Marcian's first acts at once reduced the expenses of the treasury, and redounded to the dignity of the Roman name. Attila sent an embassy demanding the tribute which he had been wont to receive, and Marcian refused to pay it. This refusal would have involved a war, if it had been made some years before, but Attila was already preparing to overwhelm the West, and was interfering in the politics of the Franks. Marcian was doubtless well informed of the state of Attila's affairs, and knew he could refuse with impunity.

The only event of striking importance in the East during this reign was the council of Chalcedon (451), which finally decided the orthodox Christian doctrine as to the natures of Christ; of this something will be said in another place. Pulcheria died in 453, having earned by her pious and charitable works the eulogies of the Church; Marcian died in the first month of 457, and with him the Theodosian house, of which he may be considered a representative, as being the husband of Pulcheria, ceased to reign at New Rome.

CHAPTER VI

BEGINNINGS OF THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE EMPIRE

Alaric's brother-in-law Athaulf (Adolphus) succeeded him (410), and the Visigoths remained in Italy for two years longer, spoiling the land. In 412 they came to an understanding with Honorius, and Athaulf engaged to suppress the tyrants who had risen up in Gaul. This leads us to record the events which had agitated the Gallic provinces during the preceding six years.

The noteworthy circumstance about the events of these years, which were decisive for the future of Gaul, Spain, and Britain, was that two series of phenomena were going on at the same time, to some extent side by side and without clashing, but mutually conditioning and limiting one another. These two series of events are the rise of usurpers and the invasion of barbarians; and it seems that the same conditions which favoured the dismemberment of the western provinces by the Teutons favoured also the enterprise of illegitimate aspirants to the purple.

Up to the year 406 the Rhine was maintained as the frontier of the Roman Empire against the numerous barbarian races and tribes that swarmed uneasily in central Europe. From the Flavian Emperors until the time of Probus (282), the great military line from Coblenz to Kehlheim on the Danube had been really defended, though often overstepped and always a strain on the Romans, and thus a tract of territory (including Baden and Wurtemberg) on the east shore of the Upper Rhine, the titheland as it was called, belonged to the Empire. But in the fourth century it was as much as could be done to keep off the Alemanni and Franks who were threatening the provinces of Gaul. The victories of Julian and Valentinian produced only temporary effects. On the last day of December 406 a vast company of Vandals, Suevians, and Alans crossed the Rhine. The frontier was not really defended; a handful of Franks who professed to guard it for the Romans were easily swept aside, and the invaders desolated Gaul at pleasure for the three following years. Such is the bare fact which the chroniclers tell us, but this migration seems to have been preceded by considerable movements on a large scale along the whole Rhine frontier, and these movements may have agitated the inhabitants of Britain, and excited apprehensions there of approaching danger. Three tyrants had been recently elected by the legions in rapid succession; the first two, Marcus and Gratian, were slain, but the third Augustus, who bore the auspicious name of Constantine, was destined to play a considerable part for a year or two on the stage of the western world.

It seems almost certain that these two movements, the passage of the Germans across the Rhine and the rise of the tyrants in Britain, were not without causal connection; and it also seems certain that both events were connected with the general Stilicho. The tyrants were elevated in the course of the year 406, and it was at the end of the same year that the Vandals crossed the Rhine. Now the revolt of the legions in Britain was evidently aimed against Stilicho, as the revolt of Maximus had been aimed against Merobaudes; there was a Roman spirit alive in the northern island, which was jealous of the growth of German influence. There is direct contemporary evidence, to which I have referred in a preceding chapter, that it was by Stilicho's invitation that the barbarians invaded Gaul; he thought that when they had done the work for which he designed them he would find no difficulty in crushing them or otherwise disposing of them. We can hardly avoid supposing that the work which he wished them to perform was to oppose the tyrant of Britain—Constantine, or Gratian, or Marcus, whoever was tyrant then; for it was quite certain that, like Maximus, he would pass into Gaul, where numerous Gallo-Roman adherents would flock to his standards. Stilicho died before Constantine was crushed, and the barbarians whom he had so lightly summoned were still in the land, harrying Gaul, destined soon to harry and occupy Spain and seize Africa. From a Roman point of view Stilicho had much to answer for in the dismemberment of the Empire; from a Teutonic point of view, he contributed largely to preparing the way for the foundation of the German kingdoms.

The first act of the tyrant Constantine was to cross with all his military forces into Gaul, which sorely needed a defender to expel the barbarians who were harrying it, or, failing that, to protect the Rhine frontier against new

invaders. He inflicted a severe defeat on the intruders, though he did not expel them; and, according to Zosimus, he guarded the Rhine more securely than it had been guarded since the reign of Julian. The representatives of the rule of Honorius, the praetorian prefect Limenius and the general Chariobaudes, fled into Italy probably soon after the arrival of the usurper from Britain, and Constantine passed into the south-eastern provinces which had escaped the devastations of the barbarians. "For two years", writes Mr. Freeman, "they and he both carry on operations in Gaul, each, it would seem, without any interruption from the other. And when the scene of action is moved from Gaul to Spain, each party carries on its operations there also with as little of mutual let or hindrance. It was most likely only by winking at the presence of the invaders and at their doings that Constantine obtained possession, so far as Roman troops and Roman administration were concerned, of all Gaul from the Channel to the Alps. Certain it is that at no very long time after his landing, before the end of the year 407, he was possessed of it. But at that moment no Roman prince could be possessed of much authority in central or western Gaul, where Vandals, Suevians, and Alans were ravaging at pleasure. The dominion of Constantine must have consisted of a long and narrow strip of eastern Gaul, from the Channel to the Mediterranean, which could not have differed very widely from the earliest and most extended of the many uses of the word Lotharingia. He held the imperial city on the Mosel, the home of Valentinian and the earlier Constantine".

When Constantine obtained possession of Arelate, then the most prosperous city of Gaul, it was time for Honorius and his general to rouse themselves. Stilicho formed the design of assigning to Alaric the task of subduing the adventurer from Britain, who had conferred upon his two sons, Constans, a monk, and Julian, the titles of *caesar* and *nobilissimus* respectively. But this design was not carried out. A Goth indeed, and a brave Goth, but not Alaric, crossed the Alps to recover the usurped provinces; and Sarus defeated the army which was sent by Constantine to oppose him. But he failed to take Valentia, and was obliged to return to Italy without having accomplished his purpose (408).

The next movement of Constantine was to occupy Spain. It is not necessary for us to follow Mr. Freeman in his account of the difficult and obscure operations which were carried on between the kinsmen of Theodosius and the troops which the Caesar Constans and his lieutenant Gerontius led across the Pyrenees. It is sufficient to notice the main point, which Mr. Freeman has made out, that we are not justified in accepting the version of the story which states that the representatives of the Theodosian house were engaged in defending the northern frontier of the peninsula against the Vandals and their fellow-plunderers before Constantine attempted to occupy it. The defenders of Spain were overcome, and Caesar-Augusta (Zaragoza) became the seat of the Roman Caesar. Thus in the realm of Constantine almost all the lands composing the Gallic prefecture were included; he might claim to be the lord of Britain, which he had left masterless; the province of Tingitana, beyond the Straits of Gades, was the only province that had obeyed Limenius and did not in theory obey Constantine.

Constans, however, was soon recalled to Gaul by his father, and elevated to the rank of Augustus. But Constantine himself meanwhile, possessing the power of an Emperor, was not wholly content; he desired also to be acknowledged as a colleague by the son of Theodosius, and become, as it were, legitimised. He sent an embassy for this purpose to Ravenna, and Honorius, hampered at the time by the presence of Alaric, was too weak to refuse the pacific proposals. Thus Constantine was recognised as an Augustus and an imperial brother by the legitimate Emperor; but the fact that the recognition was extorted and soon repudiated, combined with the fact that he was never acknowledged by the other Augustus at New Rome, justifies history in refusing to recognise as the third Constantine the invader from Britain who ruled at Arelate. Some time afterwards another embassy, of whose purpose we are not informed, arrived at Ravenna, and Constantine promised to assist his colleague Honorius against Alaric, who was threatening Rome. Perhaps what Honorius was to do in return for the proffered assistance was to permit the sovereign of Gaul to assume the consulship. In any case it was suspected that Constantine aspired to add Italy to his realm as he had added Spain, and that the subjugation of Alaric was only a pretext for his entering Italy, as it might have been said that the subjugation of the Vandals and their fellow-invaders had been only a pretext for his entering Gaul. A high official, Allobich, master of the horse, was also suspected of favouring the designs of the usurper, and the suspicion, whether true or false, cost him his life; Honorius caused him to be assassinated. When this took place Constantine was already in Italy, and the fact that when the news reached him he immediately recrossed the mountains, strongly suggests that the suspicion was true, and that he depended on the treason of the master of horse for the success of his Italian designs.

Constans had left the general Gerontius in charge of Spain, and the error was committed—it is not clear whether through a want of judgment on the part of Gerontius or of Constans—of substituting barbarian mercenaries for the Spanish legions to defend the Pyrenees. This unwise act produced an insurrection of the legions; the barbarian soldiers indulged in unlawful plunder; and Constans was sent back to Spain to restore order. Blame seems to have been thrown on Gerontius, and the Augusti resolved to supersede him by the appointment of a certain Justus; but Gerontius was not of a spirit to submit tamely. He rose against the usurper whom he had supported, and, though he did not assume the purple himself, raised up a new Emperor—a tyrant against a tyrant—in the person of Maximus, who was perhaps his own son. For a while there were six Emperors, legitimate or illegitimate, ruling over parts of the Roman Empire, even as there had been one hundred years before. Besides Theodosius ruling at New Rome and Honorius at Ravenna, there were Constantine and his son Constans at Arelate; there was Attalus at Old Rome, who had been set up by Alaric; and Maximus at Tarragona, who had been set up by Gerontius.

This act of Gerontius, although both he and the Emperor he made soon vanished from the scene, led to important consequences. In order to hold out against the old usurper, the new usurper adopted the momentous course of inviting the Vandals, Suevians, and Alans, who for three years had been ravaging Gaul, to pass into Spain. This act led to the loss of Spain; it led also to the loss of Africa. And thus we may say that it was the loss or abandonment of Britain in 407 that led to the further loss of Spain and Africa. Africa would not have been conquered by the Vandals if they had not passed into Spain; Spain would not have become the possession of Vandals and Suevians, to be afterwards the realm of the Visigoths, if Gerontius had not revolted and invited them to enter; the revolt of Gerontius and his presence in Spain were a direct consequence of the tyranny of Constantine; and the tyranny of Constantine in Gaul and Spain depended upon his abandoning Britain. It is really

worthy of notice how the loss of the furthest outlying of the Roman conquests in the West was followed by this curious series of effects; and how when the Roman armies retired from the Britannic borders, the retreat did not cease even at the Pillars of Hercules.

It may be noticed here that Britain was not yet forgotten. We learn that Honorius, when Alaric retired from besieging Ravenna, wrote letters to the cities of Britain, bidding them defend themselves, perhaps against Saxon enemies.

Constans soon fled before Gerontius and his new allies; and while Maximus reigned in state at Tarraco, his maker, if not his father, marched into Gaul against the father and son, who had been once his masters. Constans was speedily captured at Vienna and put to death; and the victor, marching down the Rhone, laid siege to Arelate.

Meanwhile Honorius had sent an army under the command of Constantius and Ulfilas to do what Sarus had failed to do before and win back the Gauls. Thus Constantine was menaced on the one hand by the general of a usurper and on the other hand by the general of the lawful Emperor. Before the representatives of legitimacy the blockading army fled, and Gerontius returned to Spain, to meet death there at the hands of his own troops. The house in which he took refuge was set on fire; he and his Alan squire fought long and bravely against the besiegers; and at length in despair he slew his squire and his wife Nunechia, at their own request, and then stabbed himself.

Thus besiegers in the interest of Honorius replaced the besiegers in the interest of Maximus at Arelate, where Constantine and his second son Julian held out. For more than three months the siege wore on, and the hopes of the usurper depended upon the arrival of Edobich, his Frankish master of soldiers (it is to be presumed he held this title), who had been sent to engage barbarian reinforcements beyond the Rhine. Edobich at length returned with a formidable army, and a battle was fought near the city, which resulted in a victory for the besiegers. Edobich was slain by the treachery of a friend in whose house he sought shelter, and Constantine, seeing that his crown was irrecoverably lost, thought only of saving his life. "He fled to a sanctuary, where he was ordained priest, and the victors gave a sworn guarantee for his personal safety. Then the gates of the city were thrown open to the besiegers, and Constantine was sent with his son to Honorius. But that Emperor, cherishing resentment towards them for his cousins, whom Constantine had slain, violated the oaths and ordered them to be put to death, thirty miles from Ravenna". (September 411)

But Constantine and Constans were not the only adventurers who called themselves Emperors in Gaul in the year 411. While the army of Constantine was still blockading Arelate, Jovinus, a Gallo-Roman, was proclaimed at Moguntiacum (Mainz). Like Attalus, he was set up by barbarians, but by barbarians farther from the pale of civilisation than Alaric. Gundicar, the king of the Burgundians—prototype of the Gunther of the Nibelungen—and Goar, a chief of the Alans, were the makers of this Emperor, and his elevation was intimately connected with the occupation of the Middle Rhine by the Burgundians. We know not how it was that Constantius and Ulfilas, the victors of Arles, returned to Italy without striking a blow against the other tyrant who had arisen on the Rhine, ere he had yet gathered strength. But the subjugation of Jovinus was reserved, not for the Roman general, but for his rival in war and love, the Visigothic king.

At the beginning of 412 Athaulf and his Goths abandon Italy and pass into Gaul, just as four years before Alaric had abandoned Illyricum and passed into Italy; the Visigoths were inevitably drawn to the shores of the Atlantic. It is sometimes represented that Athaulf crossed the Alps as the bearer of a commission from Honorius to suppress the tyrant Jovinus, but this was not so. Athaulf had come to no understanding with the court of Ravenna; he carried the captive Placidia with him, against her own will and the will of her brother, and he was far more disposed to side with Jovinus against Honorius than with Honorius against Jovinus. An accident decided that he was to be the champion of the legitimate Emperor

Attalus, the ex-Emperor, who was to become a sham Emperor once more, was in the train of the Visigoths, and his persuasions induced Athaulf to march to Mainz, that he might co-operate with the tyrant. But it appears that the arrival of this unexpected help was not so welcome to the Augustus who reigned on the Rhine as the Visigoths might have hoped, and Jovinus blamed Attalus in dark sayings as the cause of the presence of an ungrateful supporter. Why the prince who had been elevated by one Teutonic king disliked the support of another is not clear; but perhaps he had already entered into friendly negotiations with Sarus, that Visigoth whom he saw acting with partial success against Constantine, and who was the mortal enemy of Athaulf as he had been the mortal enemy of Alaric. Sarus certainly arrived on the scene at this juncture with about a score of followers to attach himself to the fortunes of Jovinus; the feeble and prejudiced Honorius, who was unable to retain his best officers, had refused to grant him justice for the murder of a faithful domestic. The feuds of the West Goths proved favourable to the cause of legitimacy; Athaulf was incensed when he heard of the approach of Sarus, and advanced with ten thousand to crush twenty soldiers. Hardly was Sarus, after having performed deeds of marvellous heroism, taken alive; his relentless conqueror put him to death.

A quarrel soon ensued between Athaulf and Jovinus and the latter defied the desires and injunctions of the former by proclaiming his brother Sebastian Augustus. Then Athaulf decided to war against him whom he had come to assist, and defend the rights of the Emperor whom he had intended to oppose. He sent envoys to Honorius, promising to send him the heads of Jovinus and Sebastian, and he seems to have been so prompt that when the ambassadors returned Sebastian was already crushed.

It is not clear how far the Roman prefect Dardanus, who had resolutely opposed the tyranny of the man who was set up by the Burgundians, influenced Athaulf's change of attitude, but it is clear that once Athaulf had turned against the tyrant he co-operated with Dardanus. Jovinus fled from Mainz on the Rhine to Valence on the Rhone, but soon surrendered to the Visigoths who blockaded him, and was executed by Dardanus at Narbonne (autumn 413). His head, and that of his brother, were exposed at New Carthage in Spain, to assert in that troubled country the might of the Empire and the Theodosian house.

Before following further the actions of Athaulf in Gaul, we must turn for a moment to Africa and notice the revolt of Count Heraclian, whose rebellion, by the express testimony of a contemporary, was influenced by the examples of usurpation which he had observed in Gaul. The man who, three years before, had resisted so staunchly the proposals of Attalus and the threats of Alaric, and stood by the throne of Honorius, was now seized by the infectious disease of tyranny and threatened his sovereign without provocation. With an immense fleet, whose numbers even at the time were grossly exaggerated, he sailed to Italy, but was almost immediately defeated, and fled back to Africa to find its provinces prepared to reject him. He was slain at Carthage about the same time that Jovinus was slain at Narbo.

This revolt in Africa was partly influenced by recent events in Gaul, and it also exercised in turn an influence on affairs there. The great aim of Honorius, whose mental horizon was bounded by his family and his poultry-yard, was to recover his sister Placidia from the hands of the Visigoth, and this desire was ardently shared by his influential general Constantius, who aspired to the hand of the princess. Accordingly negotiations were carried on with Athaulf, who demanded that he and his people should be supplied with corn, and, as a consequence thereof, be recognised as dependants of the Roman Empire. To this Honorius and Constantius agreed; but Africa was the corn chamber of Italy, and when Heraclian revolted and inhibited the transport of supplies, it became impossible to fulfil the engagement with Athaulf. He therefore refused to fulfil his part of the treaty, and seized the three most important towns of south-western Gaul, Narbo Martius, Tolosa, and Burdigala (Bordeaux) the city of the poet Ausonius. He also made an attempt to take Massilia, which he hoped might fall by treachery; but it was defended by “the most noble Boniface”, who was afterwards to play a more ambiguous and more conspicuous part in Africa, and Athaulf himself was wounded wellnigh to death by a stroke which the Roman dealt him.

The assault on Massilia seems to have taken place in one of the latest months of 413, and almost immediately after it Athaulf determined to give himself a new status by marrying his captive, the Roman princess. Whether he had meditated this design before we are not told; but doubtless its execution at this juncture partly depended on the lady herself. It was celebrated in January 414 at Narbonne, in the house of one Ingenius, a leading citizen; and the pride of Constantius in his first consulship was spoiled for him by the news that the lady whom he loved was the bride of a barbarian. We are told how, arrayed in the dress of a Roman and a royal bride, Placidia sat in the hall of the citizen of Narbo, and how Athaulf sat beside her, he too dressed as a Roman. With other nuptial gifts the Visigoth gave his queen fifty comely youths, appalled in silk, each bearing two large chargers in his hands, filled one with gold, the other with priceless gems—the spoils of Rome. They had an ex-Emperor to pronounce an epithalamium, and Attalus was assisted by other Romans. The marriage festivities were celebrated with common hilarity by barbarians and Romans alike.

A contemporary writer has recorded words spoken by Athaulf, which throw light on his attitude to the Empire. “At first”, he said, “I ardently desired that the Roman name should be obliterated, and that all Roman soil should be converted into an empire of the Goths; I longed that Romania should become Gothia and Athaulf be what Caesar Augustus was. But I have been taught by much experience that the unbridled licence of the Goths will never admit of their obeying laws, and without laws a republic is not a republic. I have therefore chosen the safer course of aspiring to the glory of restoring and increasing the Roman name by Gothic vigour; and I hope to be handed down to posterity as the initiator of a Roman restoration, as it is impossible for me to change the form of the Empire”.

The birth of a son, Theodosius, who died in infancy, rendered the sentiments of Athaulf still more Roman; but Honorius and Constantius were disposed to reject his friendly advances. Moved by resentment or policy, Athaulf, who had put down the tyrant Jovinus, set up the tyrant Attalus, the same who had been created Augustus by Alaric in 409, and was always ready to be made or unmade as it suited his Gothic friends. In the following year we find Constantius at Arelate, determined to drive his enemy from Gaul into Spain, and preventing all ships from reaching the coast of Septimania. Athaulf, taking his Emperor Attalus, complied with the wishes of the general and moved southward along the coast to Barcelona, where it was destined that the death of Sarus should be avenged. Unsuspectingly and unwisely he had received into his service a certain Dubius, one of the followers of Sarus, who avenged his first master by slaying his second master. The king had gone to the stable, as was his custom, to look after his own horses, and the servant, who had long waited for a favourable opportunity, stabbed him (September 415). Perhaps the assassin had been encouraged to commit this deed by Singeric, the brother of Sarus, who immediately seized the royalty, and put to death the children of the dead king, tearing them from the arms of the bishop Sigesar, to whose protection they had fled for refuge. Placidia herself, whose husband had killed and whose brother had offended Sarus, was compelled by the brother of Sarus to walk on foot in the company of captives. But Singeric’s reign endured only for seven days; he was slain and succeeded by Wallia.

The new king was not disposed to adopt the policy of Athaulf and assume a pacific attitude towards Rome. The historian, who wrote two years later, informs us that “he was elected by the Goths just for the purpose of breaking the peace, while God ordained him for the purpose of confirming it”. His first act, apparently at the beginning of 416, was to organise an expedition against Africa; but it was not destined that the Visigoths should set foot there. Alaric had essayed the sea just before his death and could not reach Sicily; even so the ships of Wallia were shattered in the Straits of Gades. The object of Wallia was probably the same as the object of Alaric—he was pressed by want of supplies of corn. This ill-success had the fortunate effect of changing his policy. “Alarmed at the loss of a large body of Goths, who had perished last year by the storm in the straits, attempting to cross into Africa, he concluded a treaty with Honorius and honourably restored Placidia, engaging to undertake for the Romans the war against the barbarians in Spain. So far we are told that the Alani, the Vandals, and the Suevi are destroying one another, and it is said that Wallia is very anxious to bring about a peace”.

The conditions of this peace of 416 were that the Romans on their part should supply Wallia with corn; that Wallia on his part should restore Placidia, should give up the tyrant Attalus, and should fight in Spain against the barbarians who had occupied it. During the lifetime of Athaulf such a treaty could not have been concluded, the narrow-minded Honorius, who held fast by the Roman pride of family, would never have recognised a king

of the Visigoths as his brother-in-law, and rivalry in love placed a barrier between the husband and the suitor of Placidia. Placidia might now be restored without detriment to Gothic honour.

Attalus escaped in a ship, and tried to elude the vigilance of the Romans, but he was captured and delivered alive to Constantius. In the eleventh consulship of Honorius and the second of Constantius, the Emperor entered Rome in triumph, with Attalus at the wheels of his chariot. He punished the inveterate and harmless tyrant by maiming him of a finger and thumb, and condemning him to the same fate that he had wished to inflict upon himself. Honorius had doubtless not forgotten how Attalus demanded, with an air of patronising clemency, that the son of Theodosius should retire to some small island, and he now banished his prisoner to Lipara. If the consulate of Honorius was sweetened by the triumph over Attalus, the second consulate of Constantius was sweetened for him by attainment to the object of his hopes, the hand of Placidia, even as his first consulate, three years ago, had been embittered by her marriage with Athaulf. On the first day of January she married him against her own will, by the constraint of her brother. The marriage was followed by the birth of two children, Honoria in 418 and Valentinian III in 419 (3d July).

A personal description of the Count and Patrician Constantius, now the most influential minister of Honorius, the brother-in-law of the Emperor, and destined to be an Emperor himself, has come down to us from the pen of a contemporary writer, "When he walked in public", says Olympiodorus, "his eyes were downcast, and he looked askance; he had large eyes and a large neck and a flat head; when he rode, his whole body inclined over the neck of his steed, and he used to cast his eyes obliquely hither and thither; all deemed his appearance that of one who might aim at empire. At feasts and carouses he was amenable and sociable, descending even to vie with the mountebanks who performed for the guests". We can understand that Placidia was not attracted by this rough Roman. In 420 he entered upon his third consulate, and early in the following year was co-opted by Honorius and proclaimed Augustus, Placidia at the same time receiving the title Augusta, against whose assumption by his sister-in-law Eudoxia Honorius had protested more than twenty years ago.

We must now return to Spain, which we left in 409 when the barbarian, at the invitation of Gerontius, entered that fair land, rich in corn and crops, rich in mines of gold and precious stones. The four nations, the Vandal Asdings and the Vandal Silinsjs, the Suevians and the Alans, divided the land between them. The Suevians and the Asdings together occupied the north-western province of Gallaecia, the regions north of the Douro; the Alans took up their abode in Lusitania, the modern Portugal; and the Silingi obtained the southern lands of the Baetis, whose name was changed by the Saracen occupation, and is now called Guadalquivir. The eastern coast of the peninsula was not occupied by the invaders, and throughout the whole country the Spaniards were able to defend themselves in the cities; but the bloody harryings and devastations of the Germans soon forced the inhabitants to make a compromise, by which the natives retained the cities and the invaders possessed the open country.

Wallia's treaty with the Empire had been made before the month of June in 416. He marched against the barbarians of Spain before the year was over, and fought successfully against the conquerors of Lusitania and Baetica. The chief of the Silingian Vandals was sent to Honorius. In the following year, still fighting "for the Roman name", *Romani nominis causa*, he inflicted great slaughter upon the barbarians, and in 418 the Silingians were totally extinct through the valour of the Visigoth. Hispalis, Corduba, and Gades were at length delivered from the presence of a menacing foe. The Alans were not so completely exterminated, but their king Atax was killed, and the remnant of them who escaped the sword of Wallia fled to Gallaecia and submitted to Gunderic, the king of the Asdingian Vandals.

Thus Wallia the chief, who had been elected for the express purpose of reversing the policy of Athaulf and warring with the Romans, is by the stress of events found fighting for the Roman name, and carrying out the ideal which Athaulf professed to have set before himself—the ideal of restoring the Roman power by Gothic arms. He received his reward. He was not obnoxious to Constantius and Honorius, as the rival and brother-in-law had been; and they were ready to recompense him for his services in Spain, as they were unwilling to recompense Athaulf for his similar services in Gaul. It was apparently in the consulship of Monaxius and Plintha (419) that the compact was made by which the Empire granted to the Visigoths a permanent home in south-western Gaul. The whole province of Aquitania Secunda, the northern part of the province of Narbonensis and part of Novempopulania, formed the nucleus of the Visigothic kingdom, which was afterwards to include a larger portion of Gaul. Thus the two great cities that are built on the banks of the Garonne, Burdigala at its mouth, now Bordeaux, and Tolosa, were ruled over by Wallia and his successors; but Narbo Martius, on the Mediterranean coast, was reserved by the prudence of Constantius, who was the author of this compact. This final settlement of the Visigoths—who had been able to find no home in Illyricum, nor yet in Italy—after many wanderings, was a momentous event; it was the beginning of that compromise between the Empire and the Teutons to which everything had been tending for many years. Constantius was herein the successor of Theodosius the Great and Stilicho; he carried out that in which they had failed. About the same time the same policy was adopted in regard to the Burgundians who had settled on the Middle Rhine; a definite territory was marked out for them, and they were recognised as dependent on the Empire.

It has been justly pointed out that this arrangement in regard to the Visigoths must have been acceptable to the Gallo-Roman inhabitants of those regions. In the year 418 an edict of Honorius—the work of Constantius—conferred local government on the inhabitants of the Seven Provinces; a representative council was to be held every year at Arelate; and we may assume that the government, solicitous for the welfare of those provinces, would not have imposed the Visigoths upon any one of them against the will of the inhabitants. In fact, is it not legitimate to assume that the settlement of the Goths and the measure which instituted a provincial assembly were closely connected?

The imperial government seems to have been deeply concerned for the state of southern Gaul, which had lately endured so much at the hands of tyrants and barbarians, and Constantius conceived the idea of combining a remedy with the solution of another problem. It was evident that the Visigoths must be allowed to occupy the

lands which they had conquered for the Empire in Spain, or else receive an allotment of territory elsewhere. In any case the Roman Emperor would probably have hesitated to concede Spain, the land of gold mines, the land of Theodosius, to a German people; but perhaps the choice of south-western Gaul was influenced by the idea that the presence of the Visigoths might invigorate a declining region.

The Roman inhabitants of the provinces where the strangers settled would naturally be in a looser relation to the Empire; but it was important that the relation should not cease to exist. We can hardly then avoid seeing in the edict of Honorius of April 418 a very ingenious idea, intended not only to give new life to southern Gaul, but to enable the Empire to retain a hold on the lands which it was determined to surrender to the Goths. The idea consisted in relaxing the strict bonds of administration which connected all the Seven Provinces with the central government, by removing the imperial governors and allowing the inhabitants, as a dependent federation, to conduct their own affairs, for which purpose representatives of all the towns were to meet every year in Arles. Thus the Gallo-Romans of those provinces and towns, which were to pass into the hands of the Goths, would, without clashing with their masters, belong to a Roman political body, which was under imperial control.

It seems hardly possible to set aside the notion (although, as far as I know, it has never been put forward) that the rescript was drawn up with full consciousness on the part of Constantius that the Visigoths were to be settled in Gaul. That settlement cannot have been made on the spur of the moment; it must have received long and serious consideration, for it is represented by the consent of all our authorities as coming spontaneously from the Patrician.

The scheme of representative government for the Seven Provinces, intended to multiply social relations, to increase commerce and healthy life, was not taken up with enthusiasm by the municipalities. If the idea had taken root the history of southern Gaul might have been different. "The city of Constantine", the little Rome of Gaul, where all the famous products of the rich Orient, of perfumed Arabia and of delicate Assyria, of fertile Africa, of fair Spain and of brave Gaul, abounded so profusely that one might have thought the various marvels of all the world were indigenous in its soil—Arelate, built at the union of the Rhone with the Tuscan sea, provided with all the facilities of trade, might have been the centre of a federation, able to have maintained a distinct Gallo-Roman life for many centuries, to have accelerated the civilisation of the Franks, and to have prevented the Asiatic stranger from ever crossing the Pyrenees.

After the Visigoths left Spain there was war between Gunderic, king of the Vandals, and Hermeric, king of the Suevians. The latter were blockaded in the Nervasian mountains; but suddenly Asterius, count of the Spains, appears upon the scene, and in consequence of his operations the Vandals abandoned their blockade of the Suevians. At Bracara a large number were slain by the Romans, and then they left Gallaecia and passed into the southern provinces of Baetica (420), which Wallia had cleared of their kinsmen two years before. Vigorous measures were now demanded if the Roman Emperor desired to save Spain, if the work of the Visigoths was not to be undone. The elevation of Constantius in February 4212 seemed of good augury for the interests of the Roman republic; but the third Constantius was not destined to wear the purple long. It is characteristic that he is said to have found the restraints attending imperial power intolerably irksome; he was not free to go and come as he used, when he was still a private individual. We shall see how this trait came out in his daughter Honoria. And his elevation was not without a bitter element. The announcement of his co-option was sent to Constantinople, but Theodosius refused to recognise him; and the new Augustus, indignant at the insult, prepared to force recognition by the sword. We are in the dark as to the motive of the hesitation of the ruler of New Rome to acquiesce in the choice of his uncle; it has been conjectured that he looked forward to the death of Honorius without heirs and the devolution of the western provinces upon himself. The warlike intentions of Constantius were fortunately not to be realised. After a reign of seven months he died of pleurisy (2d September). We know not whether it was at his suggestion that an expedition was undertaken in the following year (422) against the Vandals in Spain. Castinus commanded this expedition; but all the expeditions which were sent at various times against the Vandals were destined to fail, until the days when the great Belisarius overcame Gelimer. The general Castinus fled before the enemy to Tarraco.

After the death of Constantius the relations between Honorius and his step-sister became close and tender, and slanderous tongues whispered that their kisses and endearments portended a criminal intimacy. But the sweetness was soon turned into gall. A cabal was formed, in which Leonteus, the steward of Placidia, and two of her women, Spadusa and Elpidia, played a prominent part in fostering suspicion and unkindness. There were frays in the streets of Ravenna, and the barbarians who had come with the widow of Athaulf from Barcelona struck blows for the name and the fame of their mistress. The breach widened, and at length the Augusta, with her two children, was banished from the city which Honorius loved, and sought refuge with her kindred in New Rome (423), even as her mother had once fled from the usurper Maximus.

It is probable that in the court intrigue more powerful personages were involved than the subordinates, such as the nurse Elpidia, who are mentioned as sowing the seeds of discord. We can hardly help conjecturing that the general Castinus and the Count Boniface were concerned in it. The celebrated Boniface now appears on the stage of history, and he was at this time probably count of Africa (422).

The circumstances, however, which attended his presence in Africa are veiled in obscurity. In 422 he was ordered to accompany Castinus on the expedition against the Vandals in Spain, but he quarrelled with the commander and proceeded to Africa. It is hard to decide whether this was more than an act of disobedience,—whether he seized the African government without imperial warrant, or, having been already governor in that province and having been summoned specially to Italy to organise the expedition, he returned in pique to the sphere of his administration. It may be observed that there is no hint that at this time Boniface really quarrelled with the court of Ravenna, and there is no mention of any commander in Africa whom Boniface ousted from his office; we may therefore best suppose that the intention was to combine the forces of Italy and the forces of Africa against the invaders of Spain, and that a quarrel between the two commanders thwarted its execution.

This act of Boniface, whatever character it bore, was, according to a chronicler, “the beginning of many labours to the republic”. His administration was highly lauded by a contemporary, and he is not represented as having defied, at this period, the court of Ravenna. On the contrary, we shall find him espousing the cause of legitimacy against the usurper John in 424, when that very Castinus with whom he had quarrelled “connived” at the usurpation. If we combine with this the fact that Boniface strongly upheld the cause of Placidia in her quarrel with Honorius in so far as he supported her with money in her exile at Constantinople, and remember that the quarrel between the brother and sister must have begun much upon the same time as the ambiguous departure of Boniface for Africa (422) took place, we shall be disposed to conjecture that the two events had some links of connection. If, when the Augustus and Augusta were in conflict, the latter were supported by Boniface and opposed by Castinus, not only would the conduct of Boniface be explained, but the uncertain language of the chroniclers in regard to his “seizure” of Africa would be accounted for. If he deserted the palace and proceeded to Africa, the seat of his administration, against the will and consent of Honorius, his act might be regarded as disobedient and illegitimate; while the same act, if it were approved of and supported by the Augusta Placidia, might be regarded as lawful.

Honorius, who, weak though he was, had by his mere existence held things together, died of dropsy on 15th August 423. When the news arrived at Constantinople, the first care of the government was to occupy the port of Salona in the province of Dalmatia, which belonged to the prefecture of Italy. The event was then made public; for seven days the hippodrome of Constantinople was closed, and the city mourned for the deceased Emperor. The intervention of Theodosius at this crisis was evidently indispensable, and two courses were open. He might overlook the claims of Valentinian, the son of the Augustus whom he had refused to recognise, he might aspire to rule the whole Empire himself, as his grandfather and namesake had ruled it, without dividing the power; or else he might recognise his child step-cousin as his colleague and act provisionally as his regent and protector. In either case there was fighting to be done in the West, for a usurper, whose name was John, had arisen at Ravenna, and the general Castinus did not disapprove of the usurpation. Theodosius and Pulcheria decided to take the second course, and to support the rights of their kinsman Valentinian and their kinswoman Placidia. The ambassadors of John, who soon arrived to demand his recognition by the sovereign of New Rome, were banished to different places on the Propontis; if Theodosius had disdained Constantius as a colleague, how much more would he have disdained John, the *primicerius notariorum*?

When Constantius had been proclaimed Augustus, Placidia had also been proclaimed Augusta, and the child Valentinian had received the title of *nobilissimus*; but the court of Constantinople had as little vouchsafed to recognise the *nobilissimus* or even the Augusta, as to recognise the Augustus. And so now Placidia and Valentinian received those titles anew, and then set forth with a large army to recover their inheritance. The army was commanded by Ardaburius, who was supported by his son Aspar, and by Candidian, who had probably accompanied Placidia in her exile. At Thessalonica, which by this time had recovered from the terrible vengeance of the great Theodosius, the grandson of Theodosius was raised to the rank of Caesar. It was destined that he should once more see its churches, and look forth over Grecian waters, when he returned, not from a sort of exile, but from marriage festivities, accompanied by his bride Eudoxia.

The infantry were commanded by Ardaburius and the cavalry by Aspar, and when they arrived at Salona, the city of Diocletian’s palace, the troops of Ardaburius embarked in the ships which were stationed there and sailed across to the coast of Italy, while the troops of Aspar proceeded by land to Sirmium, and thence over the Julian Alps to the great city of the Venetian march, Aquileia.

The fleet of Ardaburius was unfortunate; it was caught in a storm and scattered. The general himself, driven ashore near Ravenna, was captured by the soldiers of John. If the usurper had immediately proceeded to operate against Aspar, he might have thwarted the expedition. But he waited and gave the enemy time. He relied on the arrival of an army of Huns, who were advancing to support him under the command of Aetius.

Ardaburius employed the time of his captivity in forming connections with the officers and ministers of the tyrant, and shaking the fidelity of his adherents in Ravenna. He then succeeded in sending a message to his son, who waited uneasily and expectantly at Aquileia, bidding him advance against Ravenna with all haste. Guided by a shepherd through the morasses which secured that city, the soldiers of Aspar entered without opposition; some thought that the shepherd was an angel of God in disguise. John was captured and conducted to Aquileia, where Placidia doomed him to death. His right hand was cut off; and, mounted on an ass, he was driven through the circus before he was executed.

Aetius now arrived on the scene with 6000 Huns; but John was no longer there to employ their aid. Aetius himself was pardoned and reconciled with Placidia; and his influence with the Huns was so great that he was able by a donation of money to induce that large army to retire to their homes. The general Castinus, who had connived at the tyranny of John, was banished; and when all things had been peacefully arranged Valentinian was proclaimed Augustus at Rome on 23d October (425).

It is strange that the first appearance of Count Aetius, who was destined to be the great support of the Theodosian house, the right hand of Valentinian as was afterwards said, should have been as the champion of a usurper; it may seem strange too that the first sight we have of him who was to be the great deliverer of Europe from the Huns is as the leader of an army of Huns, with whom he is on the best terms. But it has been well pointed out by Mr. Freeman that there was nothing remarkable—nothing recreant, we may say—at this period for a Roman to use Huns in contending against Romans; every general used Hun and Alan, as well as German, mercenaries in civil as well as in other wars. This employment of Huns on the part of Aetius did not mean that he Hunnised in an opprobrious sense. The circumstances of his youth had brought about his familiarity with the barbarians. He was the son of an Italian mother and of Gaudentius, who had fought with Theodosius against the tyrant Eugenius; and he was born at the town of Dorostena (now Dristra or Silistria) in Lower Moesia. He had been, as a child, a hostage with Alaric, and had afterwards been sent as a hostage to Eugila, king of the Huns; his

sojourn in Hunland made him familiar with Scythian ways. In later years too he was on friendly terms with Attila, until Attila threatened Europe.

CHAPTER VII

INVASIONS OF THE HUNS

In 441 AD the realm of Theodosius was in danger from a powerful combination. It was involved in war with three powers, the Huns, Vandals, and Persians, at the same time, and at least two of them, the Huns and Vandals, were in league. The rise of the great Hunnic power, which threatened European civilization in the fifth century, was as sudden and rapid as its fall. The Huns had gradually advanced from their Caucasian abodes, pressing westward the Goths who lined the north shores of the Black Sea, and had now become a great power. Attila, their king, ruled over a European empire stretching from the Don to Pannonia, and including many barbarian kingdoms. In 395 Asia Minor and Syria had been ravaged by Huns entering by the north-east passes, but in 400 we find Uldes, a king of other Huns, hovering on the shores of the Danube and putting Gainas to death. At the beginning of Theodosius' reign the Romans gained a victory over this Uldes, and followed up the success by defensive precautions. The strong cities in Illyricum were fortified, and new walls were built to protect Byzantium; the fleet on the Danube was increased and improved. But a payment of money was a more effectual barrier against the barbarians than walls, and about 424 Theodosius consented to pay 350 lbs. of gold to Rugila or Rua, king of the Huns, who had established himself in the land which is now Hungary, and to whom, about 433, the western government conceded a part of Pannonia. It was to Eugila probably, that Aetius, afterwards to be the terror of Huns, was sent as a hostage; and it was he who supplied Aetius with the auxiliaries for the support of the tyrant John. When Eugila died in 434 his nephews Attila and Bleda, the sons of Mundiuch, succeeded him, and a new treaty was contracted by which the payment was doubled.

Attila cherished friendly relations with Aetius, the general of Valentinian, and entered into an alliance with Gaiseric, king of the Vandals, who had passed from Spain into Africa in 429 and established themselves there, as will be related in another chapter. The movements of Attila from 434 to 441 are lost to us, but at the latter date we find him ruler over an enormous barbaric empire in central Europe, which stretched to the Caucasian mountains on the east, threatening the provinces of Theodosius. At the same time the forces of the East were required against the Vandals and the Persians; and it has been suspected that the hostilities of the latter were not uninfluenced by the Huns, as the hostilities of Attila were certainly influenced by the movements of Gaiseric.

The Vandals were unique among the German nations by the fact that they maintained a fleet, so that they were able to afflict the eastern as well as the western lands of the Mediterranean, and to make piratical raids on the coasts of Greece; it was even thought advisable to fortify the shore and harbours of Constantinople against a possible Vandal expedition. The security of traders and commercial interests demanded that an attempt should be made to suppress this evil, and a large armament, whose numbers have perhaps been exaggerated, was fitted out by Theodosius, and placed under the command of Areobindus. It was despatched to Sicily to operate against Gaiseric, who had taken Lilybaeum and was besieging Panormus; but tidings of some dark danger which threatened him in Africa induced the friend of pirates to make a truce with the Roman general and hurry back to his kingdom. The danger came from a son-in-law of Boniface, the famous Sebastian, who died as a martyr and became a favourite subject with Italian painters; but how his passage into Mauretania, of which Prosper tells us, menaced Gaiseric is not clear. From a fragment, attributed to John of Antioch and preserved by Suidas, it would seem that he was the commander of a pirate crew which served the Emperor Theodosius; and so we might suspect that his invasion of Mauretania was closely connected with the Sicilian expedition.

Most of the military forces which had not accompanied Areobindus to the West accompanied Anatolius and Aspar to the East. What happened there is not recorded clearly, but the hostilities were of short duration and slight importance.

At this moment Attila determined to invade the Empire. It was destined that he, like Alaric the Visigoth at an earlier, and Theodoric the Ostrogoth at a later time, should desolate the provinces of the East before he turned to the West. He condescended to allege a cause for his invasion; he complained of the irregular payment of tribute, and that deserters had not been restored; but the government at Constantinople disregarded his embassy. Then Attila, who had advanced towards the Danube from his home, which was somewhere on the Theiss, laid siege to the city of Ratiaria, an important town on the Ister in Dacia Ripensis. Here ambassadors arrived from New Rome to remonstrate with the Huns for breaking the peace, and the invader replied to their complaints by alleging that the bishop of Margus had entered Hunnic territory and robbed treasures from the tombs of their kings; the surrender of these treasures and of deserters was demanded as the condition of peace.

The negotiations were futile, and, having captured Ratiaria, the Hunnic horsemen rode up the course of the Ister and took the great towns which are situated on its banks. Viminacium and Singidunum, in Upper Moesia, were overwhelmed in the onslaught of the "Scythian shepherds", and it seems that the friendship of Attila with Aetius did not preserve the town of Sirmium in Lower Pannonia from being stormed. The town of Margus, which faces Constantia on the opposite side of the river, fell by treachery; the same bishop whom Attila accused of robbing tombs incurred the eternal disgrace of betraying a Roman town and its Christian inhabitants to the greed and cruelty of the heathen destroyer. The invaders advanced up the valley of the Margus, now called the Morawa,

and halted before the walls of Naissus, now called Nisch, in the province of Dardania—the city which had been strengthened and improved by the affection of the great Constantine, and which had recently given to the Empire a Third Constantius. The inhabitants made a brave defence, but the place fell before the machines of Attila and the missiles of a countless host. Then the victors passed south-eastward through narrow denises into Thrace and penetrated to the neighbourhood of Constantinople. Attila was not to lay siege to New Rome, just as ten years later when he invaded Italy he was not to lay siege to Old Rome; but he took Philippopolis and Arcadiopolis, and a fort named Athyras, not far from the Bosphorus.

If the nameless bishop of Margus is branded with infamy for his recreant Hunnism, the name of the strong fortress of Aseumus in Lower Moesia deserves to be handed down by history in golden letters for its brave and successful resistance to the Hun, even as the town of Plataea earned an eternal fame by its noble action in the Persian war. While the great towns like Naissus and Singidunum yielded to the violence of the whirlwind, Aseumus did not bend. A division of the Huns, different from that which marched to Thrace, but of countless multitude, invaded Lower Moesia and laid siege to Aseumus. The garrison not only defied the foes, but so effectually harassed them by sallying forth that they retreated. The Aseumuntians were not satisfied with a successful defence. Their scouts discovered the opportune times, when plundering bodies of the Hunnic army were returning to the camp with spoils, and these moments were eagerly seized by the adventurous citizens; the pillagers were unexpectedly attacked; many Scythians were slain, and many Roman prisoners, destined to languish in the wilds of Hungary, were rescued from captivity.

Meanwhile the Roman armies were returning from their campaigns in the East and in the West, but it is not clear whether the troops were actually employed against Attila, or whether Areobindus, who had commanded against Gaiseric, or Aspar, who had commanded against Isdigerd (Yezdegerd), the Persian king, accomplished anything of note against the Huns. A battle was certainly fought in the Thracian Chersonese, and Attila won the victory; but we know not who was his opponent. Nor do we know what the master of soldiers in Thrace, Theodulus by name, was doing at Odessus. After this battle a peace was concluded between Theodosius and Attila. As it was Anatolius who was the negotiator, it was generally known as the Peace of Anatolius (443 D). The terms were that the former payment of 700 lbs. of gold, made by the Romans to the Huns, was to be trebled; besides this 6000 lbs. of gold were to be paid at once; all Hunnic deserters were to be restored, while Roman deserters were only to be given up for a payment of 10 solidi a head.

For four years after this the Illyrian and Balkan lands were not laid waste by the harryings of the great enemy, but in 447 Scythia and Lower Moesia, which had suffered less in the former invasion, felt the presence of the Hun again. Marcianopolis was taken, and the Roman general Arnegisus fell in a battle fought on the banks of the river Utus. At the same time another multitude descended the valley of the Vardar and advanced southward—though some doubt the record—as far as Thermopylae.

Meanwhile embassies passed to and fro between the court of Attila and the court of Theodosius; and of the embassy of Maximin the historian Priscus, who accompanied the ambassador, has left us copious and interesting details, which give us a glimpse of Hun life, and will be reproduced in another chapter.

Until the end of the reign of Theodosius the oppressive Hun-money was paid to Attila; but when Marcian came to the throne he refused to pay the stipulated tribute. It seemed that the Illyrian peninsula would be again trampled under the horse-hoofs of Hunnic cavalry; but complications in the West averted the course of the destroyer in that direction, and the realm of Valentinian, not the realm of Marcian, was to resist the storm.

The Hunnic empire had assumed a really formidable size and power under the ambitious warrior Attila, who, we are told, in spite of his hideous features and complexion, had the unmistakable aspect of a ruler of men. Gepids and Ostrogoths, with many other German tribes, acknowledged the over-lordship of the king of the Huns, who, as Jordanes says, “possessed Scythian and German kingdoms”—*Scythica et Germanica regna possedit*—though the extent of his domination is often exaggerated. Before 440 the Huns had attempted an invasion of Persia, and Roman officers talked of the chances of the overthrow of the Persian power by Attila and the possible consequences of such an event for the Roman world. But it was not destined that Attila should attempt to confront the great power of Asia; he was to shatter his strength in a contest with the forces of Europe on one of the great battlefields of the world’s history.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PATRICIAN AETIUS

We have seen how Spain was lost to the Empire and occupied by the Teutonic Vandals and Suevians, and the probably not Aryan Alans, whom the rebel Gerontius invited south of the Pyrenees. We have seen too how the Visigoths, who crossed the Alps to put down the usurpers in Gaul, formed a dependent kingdom in Aquitaine—the kingdom of Tolosa, as it is called by Dahn. Stilicho and Alaric, Constantius and Athaulf, who played such prominent parts in the first scene of the dismemberment of the Empire, have passed from the stage; new figures, Bonifacius and Aetius, Theodoric and Gaiseric, will now come to the front; we shall see what became of Africa and what became of Spain, and follow further the fortunes of Gaul, where so many peoples ruled and so many kingdoms fell; we shall see, finally, how the shadow of the Hun fell upon Teutons and Romans, invaders and

invaded alike, and how they successfully united to drive away the horror of darkness and desolation which menaced them.

Africa, so far away from the Rhine and the Danube, where the Teutonic foes were pressing on the Empire, had not as yet suffered from their invasion; but the occupation of Spain by the hordes of Vandals and Suevians was now bringing them into closer proximity. But the Roman legions in the African provinces had work enough to occupy them in defending the southern frontier against another persistent enemy, the Moors, who at this time seem to have been carrying on active operations. At least we find the heroic Boniface shortly after, if not before, the year 422, delivering Africa from many barbarous nations.

We have seen how Boniface supported the claims of the sister and nephew of Honorius, and refused to acknowledge the claims of John. After the restoration of the legitimate dynasty, he may have been rewarded by the title "Count of Africa", though it seems more likely that he held that title before; but it appears that he began to degenerate, and complaints were made that he no longer repelled the incursions of the African barbarians with his pristine energy. In 427 he was summoned to Ravenna to answer the charges and account for his conduct, Placidia acting here by the advice of Felix, the master of soldiers who had succeeded Castinus. By refusing to obey the order, Boniface placed himself in the position of an "enemy of the republic", and an army was sent against him under three commanders, all of whom were slain.

Thus there was civil war in Africa, but its events are merged in obscurity. Of the following facts alone can we be certain. The Goth Sigisvult was sent to Africa against Boniface, after the death of the three commanders (probably in 428): the Vandals, under Gaiseric (who succeeded Gunderic in 427), arrived in Africa in May 429, having perhaps been summoned thither by Boniface or by his opponents, or by both; there were operations at Hippo, which was besieged by the Vandals, and an army was sent from the East under Aspar against the invaders. But the relations between the recalcitrant general, the general who was sent to crush him, and the alien nation cannot be recovered; it seems most likely that the two former combined against the common enemy. However this may have been, the Vandals conquered Africa; both the rebel and the suppressor of rebellion seem to have soon retired; and in the year 432 Boniface appears in Italy restored to favour and holding the office of master of soldiers. His rival Felix had been slain in a military tumult in 430, but now he has a new opponent in Aetius, the hero who had been lately distinguishing himself in Gaul, and was destined to win yet greater distinction when it devolved upon him to resist the Hun.

For some unknown cause Placidia decided to depose Aetius from his office as general; and Aetius, as Boniface before, refused to submit. Boniface was now called upon to play the opposite part to that which he had recently played, and, like Sigisvult, to force a self-willed general to submission. There was civil war in Italy. A battle was fought near Ariminum and Aetius was defeated, but he proved superior to his opponent in strategy, and Boniface died shortly afterwards of disease—it is said produced by chagrin—and his opponent obtained possession of his property and his wife. Curious legends have grown up round this battle which was fought at Ariminum; Boniface and Aetius were afterwards represented as rivals of ancient date, who decided their feud by single combat, and the story has only recently been finally exploded by our greatest living English historian.

We saw the Vandals in Africa besieging Hippo, which, however, they did not take. But they extended their dominion rapidly over Africa; they defeated the army which was sent from the East under Aspar; and soon they held all the strong cities except Cirta, Hippo, and Carthage herself. This expeditious conquest is to be explained not only by the fact that in Italy Africa was forgotten for the more immediate struggle between Aetius and Boniface, but by the state of Africa itself, where a large portion of the population were heretics and prepared to welcome a change of rule. The oppression of the Donatists, and their consequent opposition to the imperial government, gave an excellent opening for an invader, and if any invitation was sent to Gaiseric, who was known not to be a Catholic—he had lapsed from Catholicism to Arianism—it probably came from these heretics. The bands of Circumcellions, who went about the country preaching and practising socialism, sworn foes of existing circumstances and closely identified with the followers of Donatus, also prepared the way for a conqueror.

In spite of his wonderfully rapid career of success, Gaiseric was glad to make a compact with the Empire in 435 (11th February, at Hippo), of a similar nature with the compacts which had been made with the Burgundians and the West Goths. The province of Africa—except the city of Carthage—the province of Byzacena, and a part of Numidia, were handed over to the Vandals, who bound themselves to pay a tribute, perhaps of corn and oil, for their lands. Thus the Vandals were in the same position as the Burgundians and Visigoths, the position of dependants allowed to live in Roman territory. Aetius, who was now the right hand of Placidia and Valentinian, had pursued the policy of Constantius, and might be called the friend of the Vandals with more justice than Boniface, who, if he had lived, might have taken steps to expel the invader.

But this compact could only be provisional, and Gaiseric did not intend to stop short of the total conquest of Africa. In less than five years Carthage was taken (October 439), and Africa had become a Vandalic kingdom. A large part of the land was reserved as a royal domain, another portion was distributed among the Vandal warriors in lots; probably the poorest territory was left to the Roman provincials.

It is to be observed that the Vandals now held a position of vantage in regard to the Empire that none of the other Teutonic nations ever occupied. In relation to the foreign peoples of northern Europe, the front of the Roman Empire was the Rhine and the Danube. And so we may say that the Vandals had come round to the back of the Empire and were able to attack it behind. Another peculiar feature was that, in the language of a chronicler, the sea was made pervious to them; they created a naval power and attacked the Empire by sea, as no other Teutonic people had done in the Mediterranean, though the Saxons and other men of the north used ships to harry it in the northern ocean. Sicily was soon the object of their attacks; Panormus was besieged, but not taken; and Corsica and Sardinia became for a time parts of the Vandalic kingdom.

The dependent kingdom of the Burgundians in the districts of Mainz and Worms (Gesoriacum) was not of long endurance, for in 437 Aetius almost exterminated the nation, and the small remnant which escaped the punishment of disloyalty moved south-westward, and received from the Romans territory in Sapaudia (Savoy), about Lake Lemman, which may be called the second Burgundian kingdom.

This change made way for the Alemanni. They had been driven from Roman ground by the arms of Julian, but at the beginning of the fifth century, amid the general confusion of migration, they came back to their old haunts and settled on the Upper Rhine. Thus before 437 there were three nations, two at least nominally under Roman supremacy, from the mouth of the Rhine to its source, the Franks, the Burgundians, and the Alemanni. When the Burgundian kingdom was overthrown, the Alemanni profited by the event, and extended their dominion northwards. Before the end of the century their extended kingdom was incorporated in Francia by the battle of Tolbiacum (496).

It was not only against the Burgundians that Aetius was active in Gaul to maintain the respect due to the Roman name, and prevent the nations from trespassing on soil which was not opened to them. He warred successfully against the Franks, who had invaded the regions between the Somme and the Rhine, and he kept the ambition of Visigothic Theodoric, Wallia's successor, in check. For Theodoric tried to do what Gaiseric actually did in Africa, to enlarge the land which he held with Roman consent by acquiring new lands without Roman consent. Aetius prevented him from realising his aims, as Boniface, if he had lived, might have prevented Gaiseric; and the Visigoths were beaten back from Arelate. We need not follow these hostilities, but it may be noticed that Aetius employed Alan and Hunnic auxiliaries against the Teutons. In 439 an event occurred which paved the way for friendly relations between the great general and the great king. When Aetius was absent in Italy the Roman captain Litorius, whom he had left in charge of the army, hoping to accomplish a success which would throw the deeds of his commander in the shade, attacked Tolosa, and was repulsed by Theodoric. The opposition between Christianity and paganism was emphasised here, and the fact that the Visigoths were believers in Christ and the Huns infidels. Litorius gratified the Hunnic soldiers by the performance of pagan rites and the consultation of auspices; and this rendered conspicuous the Christian attitude of Theodoric; it showed how much nearer he was to Aetius than were Aetius' soldiers.

It is time for us to speak more particularly of Aetius himself, the great figure of the West. So far we see in him only the successor of Stilicho and Constantius, with the former of whom he presents many points of resemblance. It was the function of both Stilicho and Aetius to keep the Teutonic barbarians in check, and yet both, coming of barbarian stock themselves, had considerable sympathy with the barbarian. In this neither of them was like Constantius, who was a Roman of the Romans; but nevertheless, in regard of the Visigoths and Gaul, Aetius carried on the work which Constantius had begun. But he never fully won the confidence of Placidia, or even of Valentinian, as Stilicho had won the confidence of Honorius; and his disgrace in 432, a strange reward for his services in Gaul, indicates clearly this distrust. When the war with Boniface was over, Aetius, after several adventures, withdrew to Pannonia, and obtained the assistance of the Huns, whose help he had obtained nine years before to support John. They did not fail him in his need; by their means, by a menacing embassy, perhaps, or even by a hostile demonstration, the court of Ravenna received the general again into favour, and conferred on him the title of Patrician (433) and the office of *magister utriusque militiae*. This transaction is significant of Aetius' position throughout his career; he forced Placidia and Valentinian to have him against their will. Conscious, perhaps, that he was the one man who could guide the Empire through this critical stage, and arrange the delicate relations into which it was thrown with the Teutonic nations, by both yielding and refusing to yield at the right time, he pressed himself on the court, and made it follow his leadership. A panegyric description of the man has been preserved to us, written by Renatus Frigeridus. He was "of middle height, of manly condition, well-shaped, so that his body was neither too weak nor too weighty, active in mind, vigorous in limb, a most dexterous horseman, skilled in shooting the arrow, and brave in using the spear; he was an excellent warrior and famous in the arts of peace; free from avarice and greed, endowed with mental virtues, one who never deviated at the instance of evil instigators from his own purpose, most patient of wrongs, a lover of work, dauntless in perils, able to endure the hardships of hunger, thirst, and sleeplessness".

But the successful accomplishment of the gigantic task which now awaited Aetius has made him justly famous as no panegyrics could have done.

Hitherto he has appeared to us greater indeed than Constantius, but not as great as Stilicho; we shall now see him as the man who had most to do with the happy decision of a crisis which concerned wider interests than those of the Roman Empire. The exigency of a common interest—the opposition to a common foe—was now to set a seal on the relations which had been recently established between the Empire and many of the Teutonic nations; and the germ of a new idea, the idea of Europe as the habitation of Teutons and Romans—Romans in the widest sense,—was to be sown on the Catalaunian Fields.

The rise of the Hunnic empire under Attila, and the devastation suffered by the Illyrian and Thracian provinces, have been related. At the time of the embassy of Maximin it had seemed that there was little likelihood of serious hostility against western Europe on the part of the Huns; for, though small points of difference arose, Aetius had kept up very friendly relations with Attila. The factors which operated in bringing about Attila's invasion of Gaul seem to have been three, but one of these was more important than the others.

Here we are brought to speak of the strange story of the princess Honoria, daughter of Placidia and Constantius. At the age of sixteen she had condescended to the embraces of a chamberlain named Eugenius, and when the signs of pregnancy revealed the degradation of a princess, the indignation of her mother and her brother banished her to Constantinople, where she lived for fifteen years or more in the prim and irksome society of her religious step-cousins. She was betrothed against her will to a respectable consular named Herculanius, and at length, with a wildness which she had perhaps inherited from her father's Illyrian ancestors, she took the

adventurous course of offering her hand to the great enemy of the Empire; the daughter of the lady who shrank from union with Christian Athaulf was willing to unite herself to heathen Attila, the husband of innumerable wives. Attila was not slow to take advantage of her impetuous act. Adopting the principle that all children, male and female, inherit equal portions from their father, he sent the ring of betrothal which he had received from Hyacinthus, the secret messenger of Honoria, to her brother Valentinian, and demanded that the share of the Empire, whereof that sovereign had unrighteously deprived his sister, should be instantly restored.

The act of Honoria gave Attila an excellent pretext against the Empire, but he might not have taken advantage of it so soon save for another event which arose, not from a quarrel at the court of Ravenna, but from the relations between the Teutonic courts of Carthage and Tolosa. Theodoric had two daughters, of whom one was married to the king of the Suevians in Spain, and the other to Huneric, the son of Gaiseric the Vandal. The Suevic son-in-law was on good terms with the Visigoths—we hear of his paying his father-in-law a visit at Tolosa; but for the daughter who was sent across the seas to Carthage misfortunes were reserved by fate. Gaiseric suspected her of plotting against himself, and with a cruelty which even Attila might hardly have practised, he mutilated her ears and nose, and sent her back to her father. The bitter hatred which followed upon this outrage influenced the attitude of the Huns. Theodoric was the friend and ally of Aetius; Gaiseric sought the friendship and alliance of Attila, and stirred him up to make war upon the Romans and their allies. Priscus, who is our best contemporary authority, and especially credible in all that relates to Hunnic politics, states expressly that Attila made war “to oblige Gaiseric”.

But the quarrel in the imperial court itself and the quarrel between the barbarians within the Roman pale were not the only factors which operated in bringing about Attila's invasion; a quarrel among barbarians outside the pale also operated. In a struggle for the succession between two Frank princes the rivals appealed to Attila, and he against whom Attila decided appealed for help to Aetius. Here was another circumstance which forced the Huns and the Romans to measure swords.

Thus when Attila invaded Gaul in 451, he came to wrest from Valentinian half of his dominion, in the name of Honoria, and he came equally to make war on the Visigoths for the sake of the Vandals. As against the Empire he could claim to be the champion of a recreant imperial princess; as against the Teutons he could claim to be the ally of a recreant Teutonic nation. But the question at stake was not a quarrel between Valentinian and Honoria, nor a feud between two German peoples, nor a disputed succession of the Franks; it was the perpetual question of history, the struggle told long ago by Herodotus, told recently by Trikoupis, the struggle between Europe and Asia, the struggle between cosmos and chaos—the struggle between Aetius and Attila. For Aetius was the man who now stood in the breach, and sounded the Roman trumpet to call the nations to do battle for the hopes of humanity, and defend the cause of reason against champions of brute force. The menace of that monstrous host, which was preparing to pass the Rhine, was to exterminate the civilisation that had grown up for centuries, to spread desolation in Gaul and Italy, to undo the work of Plataea and the Metaurus, and to paralyse the beginnings of Teutonic life. If Attila had not been repelled, western Europe might have been converted into a spiritual waste, unspeakably more lost and degraded than Turkey at the present day.

But the interests of the Teutons were more vitally concerned at this crisis than the interests of the Empire. We can imagine that if Attila had been the victor on the great day, and had hurled Valentinian from his throne, and had reigned at Rome or Ravenna, cities which were happily never to be called the seats of an Asiatic sovereign, or at Arelate, which was once to pine for a short space under the rule of the Saracen, even then the Empire might have held out in the East, and Marcian and Leo and Aspar might have beaten back the Hun. But the doom of the Visigoths and the Burgundians and the Franks would have been inevitable; their nascent civilization would have been crushed under the yoke of that servitude which crushes and blights, and they would not have been able to learn longer at the feet of Rome the arts of peace and culture.

The work of Aetius, then, was as much for the future of the Teutonic nations as it was for the Roman Empire. Theodoric the Visigoth did not realise the danger. But Avitus, the emissary of Aetius, explained the situation, and persuaded him to join the Romans against the invader. This decision was momentous; the Roman and the Teuton were to make common cause against the Hun. Neither knew—that was the secret of history—that there was a latent affinity between them, and that in the remote past their ancestors had spoken the same language; they knew not that they were kindred nations fighting against a true enemy. Burgundians and Franks joined their ranks, and all the inhabitants of Brittany and Armorica. The Ostrogoths and the Gepids and the Thuringians, some Burgundians and Franks and Suevians, fought in the ranks of Attila, but these were yet wild peoples without the pale, mostly Attila's subjects and possessing no choice in the matter.

Attila, having taken Metz and other towns, laid siege to Aureliani (Orleans), but the city was relieved by the arrival of Aetius (June 451), and the great battle took place in the wide district known as the Catalaunian Fields. Neither the day of this event nor the exact place are known; the month was perhaps July, and the locus Mauriacus was probably either Mery-sur-Seine or Moirey, in the neighbourhood of Troyes.

The chief feature of this battle is that Attila was rendered unable to advance; herein lay the great success of the Romans and their allies. Strictly speaking, the battle was drawn; the Huns and the Visigoths fought long and hard without any result, except slaughter on both sides. But the Hunnic forces were innumerable, while the soldiers of Aetius and Theodoric were comparatively few, as were the Greek soldiers at Plataea or the Greek sailors at Salamis, against the overwhelming numbers of the foe. The fact, then, that the small army hewed down the ranks of the immense host, and withstood, though it did not rout, the Huns, was a tremendous victory. The king of the Visigoths, Theodoric,—whose name deserves to be handed down to fame, no less than that of his more celebrated Ostrogothic namesake, whose father and uncles fought with Attila,—was killed in the fray, and his son Thorismond was proclaimed king on the field of battle. As for the part played by the Roman general himself in the engagement, we hear that at the onslaught of Attila the “prudence of the Patrician Aetius, was such that by hastily collecting around him a band of warriors from all sides he was able to oppose the multitude of the enemy on an equality” (non impar). The union of a certain clearness with a certain obscurity as to the events of this great

day of deliverance lends the tale of the battle of the Catalaunian Fields a peculiar charm, preparing us for those legends which afterwards grew up that the spirits of the fallen warriors continued the battle in the air.

Thus the cause of the Romans and the Teutons, the cause of Europe, prevailed; the cause even of those Teutons who fought for the invader. The Ostrogoths were in his ranks, and the Thuringians, who out-Hunned the Huns by deeds of unutterable cruelty; but both Thuringians and Ostrogoths were as yet without the pale, as were all the other Germans who warred for Attila. We cannot forget that the only Teutons within the Roman pale, who, though they did not take part in the conflict, not only hoped for the victory of the Hun, but had even provoked him to war, were the settlers in Africa; we cannot forget that when Aetius and Theodoric did battle for the common cause of cosmos and civilization, the Vandals alone sided with chaos and barbarism; even as the Greeks could not forget that the Thebans had chosen the side of the Persian invader and refused to fight for the freedom of all the Greeks. But the Vandals had no Epaminondas, no Pindar, no Plutarch to redeem their name. It seemed that, when they entered Africa, a part of the mantle of the Phoenicians had fallen upon them, though they came by another way, from the West and not from the East, and though they were Christians; it seemed that something in their nature drove them to espouse the cause which had been before represented by the Carthaginians, and was afterwards to be represented by the Saracens on the northern coast of Africa. But their power passed away quickly, even as the power of the Huns passed away, and their name has only been commemorated in an opprobrious word expressing the barbarous spirit which defaces the exterior graces of civilization.

After the great check, Attila, "having lost confidence in fighting", returned to his own land, and then with renewed strength invaded Italy. Aquileia, the city of the Venetian march, the city which two hundred years before had endured with bravery and constancy the terrible siege of the barbarian tyrant Maximin, now fell before the Huns, and was razed to the ground, never to rise again; in the next century hardly a trace of it could be seen. Verona and Vicentia did not share this fate, but they were exposed to the violence of the Scythian, while Ticinum and Mediolanum were compelled to buy from the invader exemption from fire and sword.

But the Hun was suddenly induced to retreat; the lands south of the Po, and Rome herself, were spared the humiliating sight of the presence of the Scythian shepherds. According to the generally received account, the thanks of Italy were on this occasion owed not to the general Aetius but to the bishop of Rome. Aetius, now unaided by his Visigoths and other German allies, is said to have dreamed of departing with Valentinian to Byzantium; but Leo I with two noble Romans, Avienus and Trigetius, visited the camp of Attila, perhaps near the south shore of Lake Garda, and the majesty of the Church persuaded the barbarian to withdraw. The story is surrounded with a legendary halo; the apostles Peter and Paul are said to have appeared to Attila, and by their threats terrified him into leaving Italian soil.

The fact of the embassy cannot be doubted; but that it was the sole cause which brought about the departure of the Huns cannot be admitted. It is not in itself probable that heathen Attila, the enemy of Christendom, would have cared for the thunders or the persuasions of the Church; and a trustworthy authority hands down another account, which does not conflict with the circumstance of the embassy, but gives a rational and evidently correct explanation of the true reasons which induced Attila to receive the embassy favourably. "The Huns", says Idatius, "are stricken by strokes from heaven, partly by famine and partly by disease; moreover, they are slain by auxiliary troops, which were sent by the Emperor Marcian, under the leadership of Aetius ... And being thus subdued, having made peace with the Romans, they all returned to their own abodes"

Thus the position of the Huns was untenable in northern Italy; famine and pestilence thinned their ranks, and the troops of Aetius, which had been sent from Marcian, harassed them. Thus Aetius was not skulking or preparing to flee; with a force too small to venture an open battle, he was vexing the host of the destroyers. Attila was glad to make peace, he had obtained sufficient booty to satisfy him, and he yielded graciously to the arguments or entreaties of Leo and Avienus.

Attila survived this Italian expedition only one year. He died of the bursting of an artery, and in the morning his attendants found the bride whom he had married the night before sitting beside his bed in tears. Some said that he was stabbed by the hand and knife of a woman.

"It is a saying", writes Gibbon, "worthy of the ferocious pride of Attila, that the grass never grew on the spot where his horse had trod. Yet the savage destroyer undesignedly laid the foundation of a republic, which revived, in the feudal state of Europe, the art and spirit of commercial industry". But there was another benefit as well as the doubtful foundation of the city of St. Mark that Attila conferred undesignedly on Europe,—a spiritual benefit. It was the need of opposition to him that first awoke the idea of a Roman and Teutonic Europe in the West; it was under the dread of his unshapely shadow that it first dawned upon Romans and Teutons that they had a common cause. Greece alone fought at Salamis; republican Rome alone fought at Metaurus and Zama; imperial Rome alone held the Euphrates against the Persian Sassanid; but both Romans and Teutons, both Romania and Germania (not Gothia alone), fought side by side on the Mauriac Plain.

As the death of Attila followed hard upon his defeat, the death of Aetius followed hard upon his victory. His reward for supporting Valentinian's Empire was, that he should fall by Valentinian's hand; his fate was like that of Stilicho, and due to a similar cause, the cabal of certain persons who were jealous of his power and had influence at court.

Maximus, a noble and powerful man, who had been twice consul, entertained enmity against Aetius, the master of soldiers in Italy. He discovered that Heraclius, a eunuch who had very great influence with the Emperor, was also an enemy of Aetius, and wished, like himself, to oust the general from power; accordingly, he conspired with him, and they persuaded the Emperor that he would perish at the hands of Aetius, unless he hastened to slay him first.

“It was fated that Valentinian should pull down the bulwark of his own government; so he admitted the representation of Maximus, and devised death against Aetius”. Even when the general was in the palace, laying his account before the Emperor and reckoning up the moneys that had been collected by taxation, Valentinian suddenly leaped from the throne and accused him of treason, perhaps of seeking the Empire for his son Gaudentius. Not allowing him time to defend himself, he drew his sword, and rushed upon the defenceless officer, who was at the same moment attacked by the chamberlain Heraclius. Thus perished the patrician and consul Aetius; and someone afterwards aptly remarked, it is said, to the Emperor, “You have cut off your right hand with your left”. Who was now to oppose the Vandals?

The assassination of Aetius led directly to the assassination of Valentinian, of which the most authentic account has been preserved by the historian John of Antioch. It will be best to narrate it in his own words.

“And after the murder of Aetius, Valentinian slew also Boethius, the prefect, who was a very dear friend of Aetius. And having exposed their bodies unburied in the forum, he immediately summoned the senate, and brought many charges against the men: this was a precaution against a revolt on account of the fate of Aetius. And Maximus, after the death of Aetius, went to Valentinian, seeking to be promoted to the consulship; and failing it he desired to obtain the rank of patrician, but in this too was foiled by Heraclius, who countervailed the aims of Maximus and persuaded Valentinian that being well rid of the oppressive influence of Aetius he ought not to transfer his power to Maximus. Thwarted in both his wishes, Maximus was wroth, and he sent for two Scythians (Huns), brave in war, named Optila and Thraustila, who had fought campaigns with Aetius, and were intimate with Valentinian. When he met them pledges were exchanged, and he accused the Emperor of the murder of Aetius and advised them to take vengeance on him, suggesting that they would win very great advantages by justly avenging the victim.

“A few days later, it seemed good to Valentinian to ride in the Campus Martius with a few guards, accompanied by Optila and Thraustila and their attendants. And when he dismounted and proceeded to practise archery, Optila and those with him attacked him. Optila struck Valentinian on the temple, and when the prince turned to see who struck him, dealt him a second blow on the face and felled him. And Thraustila slew Heraclius. And the two assassins taking the imperial diadem and the horse hastened to Maximus ... They escaped all punishment for their deed. But a strange marvel happened to the corpse of Valentinian. A swarm of bees lit upon it, and drained and wiped away all the blood that flowed from it to the ground. Thus died Valentinian, having lived thirty-seven years”.

The death of Aetius and the death of Valentinian, which were causally in close connection, were grave misfortunes for the West. The strong man who might have opposed the imminent danger from the Vandals, and the weak man whose mere existence maintained the Imperium, were removed; there was no general to succeed Aetius as there was no member of the Theodosian house to succeed Valentinian. Marcellinus speaks of the Patrician Aetius as “the great safety of the western republic”, the terror of King Attila; “and with him the Hesperian realm fell, and up to the present day has not been able to raise its head”. We cannot disagree with this judgment; the death of Aetius marked a distinct stage in the dismemberment of the western provinces. But we must not leave out of sight the importance of the death of his master Valentinian without male offspring. A legitimate heir of the Theodosian house might have prevented some of the troubles which befell Italy in the days of Count Ricimer and the array of Emperors whom he pulled down or set up.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHURCH IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

In the fourth century the Church had to solve two problems; one was political and the other theological. The political problem was to determine the relation of the Church to the Imperium; the theological problem was to determine the relation of the Son to the Father. At the end of the fourth century both these questions had received general solutions; and these very solutions gave birth to new problems which agitated the fifth century.

I. Whether Constantine the Great was personally a Christian is a point that is open to dispute. The evidence seems to show that his religion was a syncretistic monotheism, he was content to see the Deity in the Sun, or in Mithras, or in the God of the Hebrews. The important point, however, is that he did not break with the old Roman ritual; although, as Constantine, he may possibly have been a Christian before he died, as Emperor he was a pagan. He extended special favour to the new religion, but the general line of his policy was toleration.

Constantius conceived a political idea which was a distinct advance on his father's system, the idea of a close union between the Imperium and the Christian Church, but of such a kind that the Church should be entirely dependent on the Emperor. Herein he anticipated the policy of Justinian; he wished to concentrate all things in imperial absolutism. Ammianus speaks of him as wearing on all occasions the cothurnus of imperial power. In order to realize his idea it was desirable to produce a unity in the Church itself, which was rent asunder by the schism of Arius; and Constantius' interference took the form of adopting the formula that the Son was of like essence (*homoiousios*) with the Father—a compromise between the *homoousios* (of same essence) of Athanasius

and the *heterousios* (of other essence) of Arius. This intermediate formula of Sirmium could not stand; it was merely a way of avoiding the difficulty; but Constantius carried it at the time, in spite of much opposition, by his personal influence. His policy is further characterised by his persecution of Athanasius, whose stability and power in the Church stood most in the way of the designed unification.

The depression of the Church under the pagan Julian; whose reign was the last glimmer of the ancient faiths, only strengthened it. And just as Julian's championship of the dying cause furthered the victorious creed, so the patronage which the Emperor Valens bestowed on the less deep doctrine of the Godhead, the doctrine of Arius, went far to strengthen the deeper, less easily comprehensible *homo-ousian* belief of Athanasius, which prevailed in the West.

Gratian and Theodosius the Great completed the union of the Church with the Imperium. Their edict in 380 officially adopted Athanasianism, the creed of Damasus, bishop of Rome; and the councils of 381 (at Constantinople and Aquileia) defined one creed for the universal Church. But the union of State and Church could not be looked on as complete, as long as the official religion of the Empire, as distinguished from the personal religion of the Emperor, was not Christian. Gratian had abdicated and abolished the office of Pontifex Maximus; but an act of the pagan party in Rome in 384 brought the question to a crisis. The restoration of the altar of Victory in the senate house, which Constans had removed, was requested by the senate. Symmachus, prefect of the city, addressed a petition of this purport to Valentinian II; it was rejected through the influence of Ambrosius, bishop of Milan. But the decision of the young Valentinian was not so important as the attitude of Theodosius, Emperor in the East. The revolt of Eugenius, which was directly connected with the pagan party in Rome, and aimed at restoring the religious customs of the old Imperium, rendered a declaration on the part of Theodosius necessary; he took the side of Ambrose and Valentinian. The defeat of Eugenius combined the Church and State closer than ever, and the penance of Theodosius at Milan indicated that if the Church was not to be first, at least it was not to be second. At the same time the State entered upon a path of intolerance, and heretics were esteemed as guilty and as dangerous as pagans; it may be said that the last spark of religious freedom was contained in the law of Valentinian II in favour of Arians, passed in 386. Almost at the same time we have the earliest example of a State inquisition in the prosecution of Priscillian by Maximus (385).

Thus at the end of the fourth century the Roman Imperium was Christian, and at the same epoch the Church had asserted her independence. The bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, was the head of the Church, and the weakness of the Empire in the West increased his power and confirmed his independence, while from Constantinopolitan interference he was quite free. But the geographical distance from Constantinople had also another effect; it contributed to rendering the Patriarch of Constantinople and the eastern churches independent of the bishop of Rome. The oriental and occidental churches had a tendency to separate along with the political systems to which they belonged; and consistent with this tendency was the desire of the Patriarch of Constantinople, which in the fifth century became the most important city in the world, to free himself from the jurisdiction of Rome. In order to do so he naturally leaned on the power of the Emperor, whose ecclesiastical authority was further increased by the fact that his capital was the Patriarch's residence, whereas the independence of the bishop of Rome was aided by the fact that the Emperors resided at Milan or Ravenna.

The result was that in the West the ecclesiastical hierarchy was independent in spiritual matters, and afterwards attained secular power, but in the East the Church and the Imperium were closely allied, the Church being dependent on the Emperor. This was a leading feature in the Byzantine world. The Emperor was the head of the three hierarchies, the Church, the army, and the civil service; and his position depended on the allegiance of all three. The consent of the Church was officially recognised as a condition of elevation to the throne by the introduction of the ceremony of coronation. Leo I was the first Emperor crowned by the Patriarch.

The career of John Chrysostom illustrates the power and the weakness of the Patriarchs, and it was his defeat in a long struggle with the court that mainly determined the subsequent relations between the imperial and the patriarchal palaces. In one respect the Patriarchs obtained a new hold on the sovereigns during the fifth century, when the custom of coronation became indispensable, and Euphemius made use of this power to extort a confession of faith from Anastasius; but Anastasius' treatment of the same hierarch some years later shows how subordinate the representative of spiritual was to the holder of temporal power. The opposition of Chrysostom to Eudoxia naturally suggests the opposition which Ambrose of Milan presented to the Empress Justina. In both cases the populace sided with the bishop; but Ambrose defied the Empress with impunity and carried the day, while the Patriarch of Constantinople was not strong enough even to avoid punishment,

II. The great controversy between Arius and Athanasius concerned the relation of Christ to the Father. Arius adopted the rationalistic and easier doctrine that their essence was not the same: the Son had a beginning. Athanasius held that their essence was the same; the Logos was God, co-eternal with God the Father.

The question might be raised whether this controversy was really of importance for the future of mankind, whether its interest is more than merely ecclesiastical, or is only of historical note in so far as it affected the immediate politics of the fourth century; whether in fine, if Arianism had survived, the spirit of the world would have been much altered. I conceive that its importance is world-historical, and that the victory of Athanasianism, representing the triumph of a distinct idea, is of just as great consequence to the general historian as to the ecclesiastical specialist. The very essence of Christianity was at stake. For the special power of Christianity depended on the idea of Christ, and the doctrine of Arius tended to depress Christ, as less than God, a tendency which, if it had prevailed, would have ultimately banished Christ prematurely from the world. For the whole significance of Christ, or the Logos, was contained in his Divinity.

Soon after the final decision of the Church (381) that the Son was co-essential with the Father, the political divergence of the East and West began. The western and eastern Churches henceforward underwent each a different development, and the controversies which distracted them were of a different kind. The western Church held fast by the Athanasian doctrine, and was not concerned to probe it further; its divines turned from the rare

air of the sphere of the Absolute to anthropological questions concerning original sin, faith, and works. The tendency of eastern theologians was always metaphysical. They could not rest content with the general symbolum that the Son was "of one substance with the Father"; they must determine the exact mode of this coincident identity and difference.

And thus in the fifth century the eastern Church embarked in a series of christological controversies as bitter as the Arian.

How were the two natures, the human and the divine, combined in Christ—this was the problem of Christology. We can see from the mere statement of the question that two opposite views would necessarily arise according as the human or the divine nature were emphasised.

Early authorities had contented themselves with vague phrases to express the union of the natures, such as *mixture*, *inweaving*, *envelope*. But such phrases were unsatisfactory, because they were vague. The problem was to find a category which could express the union and avoid the confusion of the two natures—"an unconfounded nature-union", as Athanasius said.

The two opposite schools of the fifth century which swerved from the rigid mean line of orthodoxy on either side were the schools of Nestorius and Eutyches. But the spiritual fathers of Nestorianism and Eutychianism were Theodoros of Mopsuestia and Apollinaris of Laodicea, men who did not, like the eponymous propagators of the heresies, take an active part in party contention.

Apollinaris explained the nature of Christ on this wise. The nature of a human individual, he said, consists of body, soul, and spirit; the nature of the Divine man consists of body, soul, and logos,—logos, not spirit, for spirit implies free will, and thereby the possibility of change.

In opposition to this theory, which did not ascribe complete humanity to Christ, Theodore of Mopsuestia founded a new christological theory, which ascribed to Christ the fullness of humanity, including a free will, but a will higher than mere choice. To explain the union of the two natures he adopted the category of *inhabitation*; the category of *becoming* (the "Word became flesh") he judged rightly to be inadequate for philosophical purposes. But the main point is that he assumed two persons, whom in their union he esteemed one person, illustrating this junction by man and woman being-one flesh; whereas Apollinaris blended two natures in one person.

The theory of Theodore was taken up by Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, and the controversy turned especially upon what was really an incidental corollary of the main doctrine, namely, whether Mary should be called Mother of God, or, as Nestorius held, only Mother of Christ; and thus the word Theotokos (Mother of God) became the catchword of the controversy. The Nestorian heresy was crushed at the council of Ephesus in 431, chiefly through the energy of Cyril of Alexandria, the most influential opponent of Nestorius.

One of the most vehement anti-Nestorians was Eutyches; his zeal against the heresy of the two persons made him rebound into the opposite extreme and promulgate the doctrine that there was only one nature in Christ, the doctrine of monophysitism. He did not clearly see that the tenet of two natures does not imply the tenet of two persons; he did not understand the category of hypostasis; being, as Pope Leo I wrote in his celebrated Dogmatic Epistle to Elavian, "very imprudent and exceedingly unskilled".

This Dogmatic Epistle was the basis of the symbolum of orthodox doctrine, the *unio hypostatica*, or unity of person in both natures, laid down at the ecumenical council of Chalcedon (451). That council, at which the Emperor Marcian presided, condemned monophysitism, of which the real originator was Apollinaris. The value of this doctrine turns evidently on the category of *hypostasis*, which seems to have received a new shade of meaning since it was used by Athanasius. Athanasius rejected hypostatic union, for he understood thereby merely *substantial* union, which seemed to confound the substances. The hypostasis of Chalcedon is not substance; it is a category higher than substance, but is not yet the subject of modern philosophy; we may perhaps render it approximately by *personal substrate*.

We must make a remark on the attitude of Theodosius II. Both he and his father were religious men, and took a great interest in ecclesiastical affairs. But it cannot be said that Theodosius was consistent either in orthodoxy or heterodoxy. Before the synod of 431 he was a partisan of Nestorius, and wrote rather sharply in answer to the appeals of Cyril; afterwards he completely deserted to the opposite side. In the Eutychian strife, which was not decided until the reign of his successor Marcian, he was a partisan of Eutyches, who held diametrically opposite views to the Nestorians. In this he was probably influenced by the favourite eunuch Chrysaphius, who patronised Eutyches, as Eutropius had patronised Chrysostom.

Dyophysitism became, by the council of 451, the recognised doctrine of the whole Christian Church, but the heresies lingered on, Nestorianism especially in the far east, Eutychianism in Alexandria, Palestine, and Armenia. In the reigns of Leo and Zeno the scandalous acts of violence committed by both the orthodox and the monophysites in Alexandria under Timothy the Weasel (monophysite), who was deposed by Leo, and Timothy *Salophakialos*, who succeeded him, and in Antioch, under Peter the Fuller, became so serious that a new attempt at union was demanded. In the struggle of Basiliscus and Zeno the religious question played an important part, and the restoration of Zeno was a triumph for orthodoxy. Zeno and the Patriarch Acacius, in order to effect the desired union, manufactured the Henotikon, a symbolum which was intended to reconcile both parties by veiling the point at issue. It was expressly stated that Christ was both God and man, in accordance with the doctrine of Chalcedon; but the word *nature* was diligently avoided, and an indirectly slighting allusion to the council of Chalcedon was inserted to win the monophysites. This half measure (which reminds us in its spirit of the homoiousian doctrine of the preceding century) not only failed to satisfy either party, but was a live coal blown between the eastern and western Churches, unquenched for thirty years. In this schism the rivalry of

the see of Rome and the see of Constantinople comes to a climax, and represents the opposition of the East and West. During the first half of the fifth century the western Church had, as it were, come of age; it was no longer dependent on the Greeks for its theology. Jerome's translation of the Scriptures and Augustine's new theological system had set occidental Christendom on an independent path of development—had, we may say, founded Latin Christianity.

Simplicius was Pope when the Henotikon of Zeno was published (482). A special circumstance tended to widen the breach which was caused by the opposition of Simplicius to Acacius. In the same year Timothy *Salophakialos*, Patriarch of Alexandria, died, and two rivals for the vacancy appeared, John Talaias, who was actually consecrated bishop, and Peter the Stammerer, who was favoured by Zeno. The rejected Talaias repaired to Rome and laid his case before Simplicius, who took his part. Soon after this Simplicius died, and Felix II, his successor, prosecuted the opposition to Constantinople with vehement energy. The legates whom he sent thither were induced, by imprisonment and threats, to recognise the appointment of Peter, whereupon Felix, informed of the circumstance by the "sleepless" monks, who were strong pillars of orthodox Chalcedonism in Byzantium, held a council at Rome (484), at which he deposed the apostate legates from their bishoprics, and excommunicated Acacius. It would have been dangerous for anyone to deliver the sentence of excommunication openly to the Patriarch, and a secret stratagem was adopted. It was pinned to the back of Acacius as he was officiating in St. Sophia, and a few moments afterwards he retorted the sentence on Felix, thus placing his power on a par with that of the bishop of Rome.

The schism continued after the deaths of Felix and Acacius, during the reign of Anastasius, who, though not unquestionably orthodox like Zeno, adopted Zeno's Henotikon. At this time the Ostrogoths ruled in Italy, and the Popes were thus independent of the Emperor, and able to resist his authority. Felix was succeeded by Gelasius, who emphatically insisted on the precedence of the Roman see as the highest spiritual authority on earth; we may refer especially to his letter to the bishops of Dardania. His successor, Pope Anastasius, was a milder man, like his namesake the Emperor, and more conciliatory, but the bitterness broke out again in the episcopate of Hormisdas, and was not finally allayed until 519, the year after Anastasius' death, when the new Emperor Justin inaugurated an orthodox reaction. This pacification was a victory for Rome; the names of Acacius and Peter the Stammerer were erased from the diptychs of Constantinople.

DONATISM AND PELAGIANISM

It has already been noticed that the foundations of Latin Christianity, or western Catholicism, as well as the foundations of the German kingdoms, were laid in the first half of the fifth century. It is not our business here to go into the work of Augustine and Jerome, whose varied activity chiefly contributed to the creation of an independent western Church with a Latin theology. But we must briefly notice the suppression of the schisms of Donatus and Pelagius, against both of which the bishop of Hippo was a leading combatant.

Britain was said to have been fertile in tyrants; Africa may be said to have been fertile in schisms; at least there was no part of the Empire which was more rent and riven by the divisions and the furies of religious sects. In the fourth century the followers of Donatus had been men of strict and pure morals, and presented an edifying contrast to the demoralisation that infected the orthodox Church; but pride in their own sanctity led to a holy contempt for all who were not of themselves, and ultimately to a fanatical hatred which doomed Catholics and other sects to the flames of hell. They were highly objectionable to the civil power, nor was the saying of Donatus forgotten, "What has the Emperor to do with the Church?". But in Africa they had force on their side. The rich proprietors lived in constant fear of bands of men, who were called *circumcellions* and threatened their possessions and their lives. These men were socialists, infected with religious fanaticism. Having suffered from the stress of the times, they desired to introduce into society an equality, by which they could profit, and regarded themselves as the instruments of divine vengeance. They posed as the protectors of slaves, and used clubs in their deeds of violence, because Christ had said to Peter, "Put up thy sword". In 348, when the Donatists were threatened by the military power, they enlisted the circumcellions to fight in their cause. Julian favoured the Donatists, perhaps because Constantius had oppressed them; but Gratian deprived them of the right of holding services (377). In 405 severe laws were passed against them, and in 411 the great public controversy took place, in which the dialectic of Augustine won the victory—according to the judgment of the tribune Marcellinus, who was appointed to arbitrate—over the Donatist Petilian. After this judgment, which Honorius confirmed, severe penalties were enforced; the Donatists were persecuted, but they continued to exist as an unquiet factor, and probably assisted in the conquest of Africa by the Vandals.

But in the last twenty years of St. Augustine's life (410-430) the great question of the day was the problem of predestination and free will. Pelagius, born of a Roman family in Britain, propounded, and his friend Celestius supported, the doctrine that man's will is free; that God has given us the capacity for good, but that the will and the performance are our own. The doctrine was opposed by Orosius and Augustine; it was condemned by synods in Africa; it was condemned by Innocent, bishop of Rome; it was condemned by his successor Zosimus, who had at first exonerated Pelagius and his views from blame. In 418 an imperial rescript ordained that all Pelagians should be banished, and their theory was afterwards rejected at the general council of Ephesus. Thus the wisdom of the Church condemned the deadly doctrine of free will, and the most learned and earnest theologians did not shrink from the possible consequence of the denial of moral responsibility.

On consideration it can hardly be denied that the view of Pelagius was fraught with peril to Christianity. If man is born as sinless as Adam was before the fall, and if his will is free, there is no inconsistency in assuming that many may pass their lives utterly devoid of sin; and thus there may be righteous men in the world who need no redemption, men who can dispense with the work of Christ and the consolation of Christianity. Such a position was extremely dangerous, and Augustine naturally adopted the more consistent and simple doctrine of Christian fatalism, which in later ages assumed the form of Calvinism.

But in this controversy the question was argued on the platform of the understanding; and the view of Augustine won, not because his metaphysical armoury was better, but because he and those who embraced his view had more authority. As each party embraced one horn of the antinomy and rejected the other, the question itself could not be rationally decided, any more than a controversy between men who regard space as finite and men who regard it as infinite. Reason knows that both the doctrine of free will and the doctrine of necessity are defective and therefore false; and that true freedom does not conflict with necessity, but that necessity is only a moment in it. But in the fifth century the opponents did not rise to the point of view of reason; and when Cassian of Massilia tried to compromise between the two views by mixing a little of one with a little of the other—semi-pelagianism—it was really as if one tried to solve the antinomy of Zeno by blending an element of the finite nature of space with an element of its infinity, though the former mixture might not have been on the face of it so absurd.

CHAPTER X

LIFE AND MANNERS IN THE FIFTH CENTURY

The life of the higher classes at Constantinople was distinguished by its oriental richness and luxury. To some small extent this oriental colouring may have been due to direct eastern influences affecting Byzantium during the fourth century, but in the main it was merely the splendour of Old Rome translated to the palaces of New Rome. To begin with the Emperor, a rich purple dress enveloped his whole body, wrought dragons shone on his silken robes, and a golden diadem set with precious gems adorned his head. His golden chariot was drawn by white mules, whose harness glittered with the same metal, and when he drove out men gazed in wonder at the sheen of the purple and the gold, the whiteness of the mules, and the revolving plates of gold which gleamed in the sun as the car to which they were attached moved along. The caparisons of his horse were of gold, and as he rode, seated on a saddle white as snow, through the city or the neighbouring country, he was accompanied by imperial guards who carried spears with golden tips and shields with golden centres encircled by golden eyes. And it was not only the Emperor whose appointments were enriched with the most precious of the metals; his courtiers and attendants and all men of opulence used it in ornamenting their saddles and bridles, their belts and their boots; their garments were of gold-threaded silk, their carriages were covered with gold or silver, their servants were tricked out with golden ornaments. Many rich nobles possessed ten or twenty mansions and as many private baths; a thousand, if not wellnigh two thousand, slaves called them lord, and their halls were thronged with eunuchs, parasites, and retainers. In their gorgeous houses the doors were of ivory, the ceilings lined with gold, the floors inlaid with mosaics or strewn with rich carpets; the walls of the halls and bedrooms were of marble, and wherever commoner stone was used the surface was beautified with gold plate. Spacious verandas and baths adjoined the houses. The beds were made of ivory or solid silver, or, if on a less expensive scale, of wood plated with silver or gold. Chairs and stools were usually of ivory, and the most homely vessels were often of the most costly metal; the semicircular tables or *sigmas*, made of gold or silver, were so heavy that two youths could hardly lift one. Oriental cooks were employed; and at banquets the atmosphere was heavy with all the perfumes of the East, while the harps and pipes of musicians delighted the ears of the feasters.

These are some of the details which may be gleaned from the writings of Chrysostom respecting the luxurious life of the great and opulent men of his time, which was so revolting to him that it drove him in the direction of social communism. In the preceding chapters many things have been related in the course of the narrative which illustrate the manners and morals of the age, and they need not be repeated here. It is hardly necessary to say that Christianity had not been able to do very much towards refining the character of theatrical representations, or improving the morality of green-rooms. Chrysostom complained of the lewdness prevalent in theatres and the obscenity of the songs that delighted the audiences; he was specially scandalised by the exhibition of women swimming. We must, however, remember that Chrysostom was unusually austere. It surprises us somewhat to learn that the habit was kept up in Christian society of permitting courtesans to exhilarate or contaminate weddings with their presence. As to the amusements of the Emperor and the nobles, we know that they used to hunt in the neighbourhood of Byzantium. Theodosius II was passionately fond of riding, and it was probably in his reign that the game of *tzukan* or polo was introduced at Constantinople, if we may trust the evidence of a very late writer, who states that he laid out a *tzuknisterion*, or polo-ground, in the precincts of the palace. The game was perhaps derived from the Huns, who were accomplished riders.

The oriental court life which was developed at Byzantium with an elaboration which, perhaps more than anything else, gave that city its peculiar flavour, was stigmatised by the Neoplatonic bishop Synesius, in the speech he delivered before the Emperor Arcadius, as one of the evils that endangered the weal and safety of the Empire. The concern of the Emperors for their dignity, he said, and their fear lest they should become ordinary mortals if their subjects beheld them often, lead to the result that they see and hear as little as they well can of those things by which the wisdom of life is acquired; they live in a sort of sensual retirement, and their soul is a mist. He compares this life to the life of oysters, or of lizards which peep out occasionally on a hot day; and likens the small and stupid men by whom the monarch is surrounded to peacocks flaunting their colours. The motive of this retirement, he insists, is the wish to appear more than man.

As nothing, perhaps, is more effective in conveying an idea of the ways and manners of an age than the actual words of a contemporary narrator describing the unimportant details of a journey or an enterprise, I have

thought it well to give a tolerably literal translation of the narrative of Marcus the deacon, recounting what befell Porphyrius, bishop of Gaza, when he and others visited Constantinople, including an account of the baptism of Theodosius II.

The bishops set sail from Caesarea and reached Rhodes in ten days, where they visited a holy hermit named Procopius, who was gifted with second sight, and told them all that would befall them when they should arrive at Byzantium. The voyage to Byzantium occupied likewise ten days. Having secured lodgings, they visited the Patriarch John Chrysostom on the morrow of their arrival: "And he received us with great honour and courtesy, and asked us why we undertook the fatigue of the journey, and we told him; and when he learned the reason he recollected that on a former occasion we made this petition by letter, and recognising me [Marcus] greeted me kindly. And he bade us not to despond but to have hope in the mercies of God, and said, 'I cannot speak to the Emperor, for the Empress excited his indignation against me because I charged her with a thing which she coveted and robbed. And I am not concerned about his anger, for it is themselves they hurt and not me, and even if they hurt my body they do the more good to my soul ... Tomorrow I shall send for the eunuch Amantius, the *castrensis* (chamberlain) of the Empress, who has great influence with her and is really a servant of God, and I shall commit the matter to him, and if God consents all will go well! Having received these injunctions and a recommendation to God, we proceeded to our inn. And on the next day we went to the bishop and found in his house the chamberlain Amantius, for the bishop had attended to our affair and had sent for him and explained it to him. And when we came in, and Amantius was told that we were the persons of whom he had heard, he stood up and did obeisance to the most holy bishops, inclining his face to the ground, and they, when they were told who he was, embraced him and kissed him. And the most holy archbishop John bade them explain orally their affair to the chamberlain. And the most holy Porphyrius explained to him all the concernment of the idolaters, how licentiously they perform the unlawful rites and oppress the Christians. And Amantius, when he heard this, wept and was filled with zeal for God, and said to them, 'Be not despondent, fathers, for Christ can shield His religion. Do ye therefore pray, and I will speak to the Augusta. And I trust in the God of the Universe that He will show His mercy according to his wont'. With these injunctions he departed, and we having conversed on many spiritual topics with the archbishop John, and having received his blessing, withdrew.

"The next day the chamberlain Amantius sent two deacons to bid us come to the Palace, and we arose and proceeded with all expedition. And we found him awaiting us, and he took the two bishops and introduced them to the Empress Eudoxia. And when she saw them she saluted them first and said, 'Give me your blessing, fathers', and they did obeisance to her. Now she was sitting on a golden sofa. And she says to them, 'Excuse me, priests of Christ, on account of my situation, for I was anxious to meet your sanctity in the antechamber. But pray God on my behalf that I may be delivered happily of the child which is in my womb'. And the bishops, wondering at her condescension, said, 'May He who blessed the wombs of Sarah and Rebecca and Elizabeth, bless and quicken the child in thine'. After further edifying conversation, she said to them, 'I know why ye came, as the *castrensis* Amantius explained it to me. But if you are fain to instruct me, fathers, I am at your service'. Thus bidden, they told her all about the idolaters, and the impious rites which they fearlessly practised, and their oppression of the Christians, whom they did not allow to perform a public duty nor to till their lands from whose produce they pay the dues to your imperial sovereignty. And the Empress said, 'Do not despond; for I trust in the Lord Christ, the Son of God, that I shall persuade the king to do those things that are due to your saintly faith and to dismiss you hence well treated. Depart, then, to your privacy, for you are fatigued, and pray God to co-operate with my request'. She then commanded money to be brought, and gave three darics apiece to the most holy bishops, saying, 'In the meantime take this for your expenses'. And the bishops took the money and blessed her abundantly and departed. And when they went out they gave the greater part of the money to the deacons who were standing at the door, reserving little for themselves.

And when the Emperor came into the apartment of the Empress, she told him all touching the bishops, and requested him that the heathen temples of Gaza should be thrown down. But the Emperor was put out when he heard it, and said, 'I know that city is devoted to idols, but it is loyally disposed in the matter of taxation and pays a large sum to the revenue. If then we overwhelm them with terror of a sudden, they will betake themselves to flight and we shall lose so much of the revenue. But if it must be, let us afflict them partially, depriving idolaters of their dignities and other public offices, and bid their temples be shut up and be used no longer. For when they are afflicted and straitened on all sides they will recognise the truth; but an extreme measure coming suddenly is hard on subjects'. The Empress was very much vexed at this reply, for she was ardent in matters of faith, but she merely said, 'The Lord can assist his servants the Christians, whether we consent or decline'.

"We learned these details from the chamberlain Amantius. On the morrow the Augusta sent for us, and having first saluted the holy bishops according to her custom, she bade them sit down. And after a long spiritual talk, she said, 'I spoke to the Emperor, and he was rather put out. But do not despond, for, God willing, I cannot cease until ye be satisfied and depart, having succeeded in your holy purpose'. And the bishops made obeisance. Then the sainted Porphyrius, pricked by the spirit, and recollecting the word of the thrice blessed anchorite Procopius, said to the Empress: 'Exert yourself for the sake of Christ, and in recompense for your exertions He can bestow on you a son whose life and reign you will see and enjoy for many years'. At these words the Empress was filled with joy, and her face flushed, and new beauty beyond that which she already had passed into her face; for the appearance shows what passes within. And she said, 'Pray, fathers, that according to your word, with the will of God, I may bear a male child, and if it so befall, I promise you to do all that ye ask. And another thing, for which ye ask not, I intend to do with the consent of Christ; I will found a church at Gaza in the centre of the city. Depart then in peace, and rest quiet, praying constantly for my happy delivery; for the time of my confinement is near'. The bishops commended her to God and left the Palace. And prayer was made that she should bear a male child; for we believed in the words of Saint Procopius the anchorite.

"And every day we used to proceed to the most holy Johannes, the archbishop, and had the fruition of his holy words, sweeter than honey and the honey comb. And Amantius the chamberlain used to come to us, sometimes bearing messages from the Empress, at other times merely to pay a visit. And after a few days the Empress brought forth a male child, and he was called Theodosius after his grandfather Theodosius, the Spaniard,

who reigned along with Gratian. And the child Theodosius was born in the purple, wherefore he was proclaimed Emperor at his birth. And there was great joy in the city, and men were sent to the cities of the Empire, bearing the good news, with gifts and bounties.

“But the Empress, who had only just been delivered and arisen from her chair of confinement, sent Amantius to us with this message: ‘I thank Christ that God bestowed on me a son, on account of your holy prayers. Pray, then, fathers, for his life and for my lowly self, in order that I may fulfil those things which I promised you, Christ himself again consenting, through your holy prayers’. And when the seven days of her confinement were fulfilled, she sent for us and met us at the door of the chamber, carrying in her arms the infant in the purple robe. And she inclined her head and said, ‘Draw nigh, fathers, unto me and the child which the Lord granted to me through your holy prayers’. And she gave them the child that they might seal it (with God’s signet). And the holy bishops sealed both her and the child with the seal of the cross, and, offering a prayer, sat down. And when they had spoken many words full of heart-pricking, the lady says to them, ‘Do ye know, fathers, what I resolved to do in regard to your affair?’ [Here Porphyrius related a dream which he had dreamed the night before; then Eudoxia resumed:] ‘If Christ permit, the child will be privileged to receive the holy baptism in a few days. Do ye then depart and compose a petition and insert in it all the requests ye wish to make. And when the child comes forth from the holy baptismal rite, give the petition to him who holds the child in his arms; but I shall instruct him what to do, and I trust in the Son of God that He can arrange the whole matter according to the will of His loving kindness’. Having received these directions we blessed her and the infant and went out. Then we composed the petition, inserting many things in the document, not only as to the overthrow of the idols but also that privileges and revenue should be granted to the holy Church and the Christians; for the holy Church was poor.

“The days ran by, and the day on which the young Emperor Theodosius was to be illuminated arrived. And all the city was crowned with garlands and decked out in garments entirely made of silk and gold jewels and all kind of ornaments, so that no one could describe the adornment of the city. One might behold the inhabitants, multitudinous as the waves, arrayed in all manner of various dresses. But it is beyond my power to describe the brilliance of that pomp; it is a task for those who are practised writers, and I shall proceed to my present true history. When the young Theodosius was baptized and came forth from the church to the Palace, you might behold the excellence of the multitude of the magnates and their dazzling raiment, for all were dressed in white, and you would have thought the multitude was covered with snow. The patricians headed the procession, with the *illustres* and all the other ranks, and the military contingents, all carrying wax candles, so that the stars seemed to shine on earth. And close to the infant, which was carried in arms, was the Emperor Arcadius himself, his face cheerful and more radiant than the purple robe he was wearing, and one of the magnates carried the infant in brilliant apparel. And we marvelled, beholding such glory.

“Then the holy Porphyrius says to us: ‘If the things which soon vanish possess such glory, how much more glorious are the things celestial, prepared for the elect, which neither eye hath beheld nor ear heard, nor hath it come into the heart of man to consider’.

“And we stood at the portal of the church, with the document of our petition, and when he came forth from the baptism we called aloud, saying, ‘We petition your Piety’, and held out the paper. And he who carried the child seeing this, and knowing our concernment, for the Empress had instructed him, bade the paper be showed to him, and when he received it halted. And he commanded silence, and having unrolled a part he read it, and folding it up, placed his hand under the head of the child and cried out, ‘His majesty has ordered the requests contained in the petition to be ratified’. And all having seen marvelled and did obeisance to the Emperor, congratulating him that he had the privilege of seeing his son an emperor in his lifetime; and he rejoiced thereat. And that which had happened for the sake of her son was announced to the Empress, and she rejoiced and thanked God on her knees. And when the child entered the Palace, she met it and received it and kissed it, and holding it in her arms greeted the Emperor, saying, ‘You are blessed, my lord, for the things which your eyes have beheld in your lifetime’. And the king rejoiced thereat. And the Empress, seeing him in good humour, said, ‘Please let us learn what the petition contains that its contents may be fulfilled’. And the Emperor ordered the paper to be read, and when it was read, said, ‘The request is hard, but to refuse is harder, since it is the first mandate of our son’.”

The petition was granted, and Eudoxia arranged a meeting between the quaestor, one of whose offices was to draft the imperial rescripts, and the bishops, that all the wishes of the latter might be incorporated in the edict. The execution of it, which was invidious and required a strong hand and will, was intrusted to Cynegius, and the bishops returned to Palestine, having received considerable sums of money from the Empress and Emperor, as well as the funds which the Empress had promised for the erection of a church at Gaza

This narrative is extremely interesting. It gives us a concrete idea of the manner in which things were done, and of the kind of little dramas that probably lay behind the greater number of the formal decrees and rescripts contained in the Codices of Theodosius and Justinian. The wonder of the provincial bishops at the splendid apparel of the great of the earth, their edifying spiritual conversations with the Empress, with the eunuch, and with the archbishop, the ruse of Eudoxia to compass the success of the petition, all such details help us in attempting to realise the life of the time; while the hesitation of the pious Arcadius to root out the heathen “abominations” because the heathen were respectable taxpayers shows that even he, when the ghostly and worldly policies of the Empire clashed, was more inclined to be the Emperor than the churchman.

As a favourable example of an educated Byzantine of noble position we may take Anthemius, who became Emperor in the West as the colleague of Leo I, and who was the grandson of that prefect Anthemius who guided the State through the critical period following the death of Arcadius. He knew Latin as well as Greek, and a knowledge of Latin was very necessary for a politician, as it was still the official language throughout all the Empire. Yet acquaintance with the imperial language was beginning already to decline in the eastern provinces, and the fact that Pulcheria knew it was considered deserving of especial remark. Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, Plautus, and Virgil were among the books that Anthemius studied, so that he was quite at home in the society of the

cultivated senators of Old Rome, when he resided there as Emperor. But if he had studied the Latin language and delighted in the Roman literature, he had not put away from himself the Greek love of speculation and mysticism. He dabbled in theosophy and magic, and this propensity gave him a bad name in Rome. He loved to surround himself with sorcerers, and with men who held strange opinions; pagans and heretics were more welcome guests than orthodox Christians. One of his best friends was Severus, a pagan magician who had lived at Alexandria and made his house the resort of spiritualists, brahmans, and theosophists; and it was said that Severus was wont to ride on a fiery horse which emitted sparks as it galloped. Another of his friends, Philotheus, was an adherent of the sublime or impious doctrine of Macedonius, which held that the Holy Ghost was not a person but a thing spread generally through nature—somewhat like the Earth-spirit in Goethe's *Faust*. The bishop of Rome felt himself obliged to interfere with the meetings which Philotheus held in that city to propagate his doctrine.

Let us now turn to the city of the Ptolemies, Alexandria-on-Nile, where life was as busy, as various, and as interesting as ever. Here Ptolemy Soter had established his "brilliant palace and court, with festivals which were the wonder of the world". "The city", writes Mr. Mahaffy, "was adequate by the largeness and splendour of its external experience". We have it described in later times as astonishing the beholder not only with its vastness—to wander through its streets, says Achilles Tattius, is taking a tour without leaving home—but with the splendour of the colonnades which lined the streets for miles and kept the ways cool for passengers; with the din and bustle of the thoroughfares, of which the principal were horse and carriage ways, contrary to the usual Greek practice; with the number and richness of its public buildings; and with the holiday and happy air of its vast population, who rested not day and night, but had their streets so well lighted that the author just named says 'the sun did not set, but was distributed in small change to illumine the gay night'. The palaces and other royal buildings and parks were walled off, like the palace at Pekin [and that at Constantinople], and had their own port and seashore; but all the rest of the town had water near it and ship traffic in all directions. Every costume and language must have been met in its streets and quays. It had its fashionable suburbs, too, and its bathing resorts to the east—Canopus, Eleusis, and Nicopolis; to the west its Necropolis. But of all this splendour no eyewitness has left us in detail, what we are reduced to infer by conjecture".

The Romans found no city in the Empire so difficult to govern as that of the quick-witted and quick-tempered Alexandrians; the streets were continually the scene of tumults between citizens and soldiers, and revolts against the augustal prefects. "While in Antioch, as a rule, the matter did not go beyond sarcasm, the Alexandrian rabble took on the slightest pretext to stones and cudgels. In street uproar, says an authority, himself Alexandrian, the Egyptians are before all others; the smallest spark suffices here to kindle a tumult. On account of neglected visits, on account of the confiscation of spoiled provisions, on account of exclusion from a bathing establishment, on account of a dispute between the slave of an Alexandrian of rank and the Roman footsoldier as to the value or non-value of their respective slippers, the legions were under the necessity of charging among the citizens of Alexandria".

Instead of healing the discords and calming the intractable temper of this turbulent metropolis by diffusing a spirit of amity and long-suffering, the introduction of Christianity only gave the citizens new things to quarrel about, new causes for tumult, new formulae and catchwords which they could use as pretexts for violence and rioting. It was only in Alexandria that such acts as the destruction of the Serapeum or the cruel death of Hypatia could take place.

An account of the latter event falls within the limits of our period, and I have reserved it for this chapter, as it illustrates the nature of the Alexandrian atmosphere.

Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, the great mathematician, who was a professor at the Museum or university of Alexandria. Trained in mathematics by her father, she left that pure air for the deeper and more agitating study of metaphysics, and probably became acquainted with the older Neoplatonism of Plotinus which, in the Alexandrian Museum, had been transmitted untainted by the later developments of Porphyrius and Iamblichus. When she had completed her education she was appointed to the chair of philosophy, and her extraordinary talents, combined with her beauty, made her a centre of interest in the cultured and aristocratic circles at Alexandria, and drew to her lecture-room crowds of admirers. Her free and unembarrassed intercourse with educated men and the publicity of her life must have given rise to many scandals and backbitings, and her own sex doubtless looked upon her with suspicion, and called her masculine and immodest. She used to walk in the streets in her academical gown (the philosopher's cloak) and explain to any person who wished to learn, difficulties in Plato or Aristotle. Of the influence of her personality on her pupils we have still a record in the letters of Synesius of Cyrene, who, although his studies under her auspices did not hinder him from going over to Christianity, always remained at heart a semi-pagan, and was devotedly attached to his instructress. That some of her pupils fell in love with her is not surprising, but Hypatia never married, though a later tradition made her the wife of a heathen philosopher, Isidorus.

The real cause of her tragic fate, which befell her in March 415, is veiled in obscurity. We know that she was an intimate friend of the pagan Orestes, the *prefect augustalis* of Egypt; and we could be sure, even if we had not the testimony of Suidas, that she was an object of hatred to Cyrillus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, both because she was an enthusiastic preacher of pagan doctrines and because she was Orestes' friend. Moreover, she was murdered just after the great conflict between Orestes and Cyril, in which the Jews played an important part.

The Alexandrian bishop was already very powerful, and Cyril, who succeeded to the chair in 412, aimed at attaining the supreme power in the city and reducing the authority of the imperial prefect to a minimum. The opposition of the Jews to the bishop brought matters to a crisis, for when, on one occasion, they saw a notorious creature of Cyril present in an assembly, they cried out that the spy should be arrested, and Orestes gratified them by inflicting public chastisement on him. The menaces which Cyril, enraged by this act, fulminated against the Jews led to a bloody vengeance on the Christian population. A report was spread at night that the great church

was on fire, and when the Christians flocked to the spot the Jews surrounded and massacred them. Cyril replied to this horror by banishing all Hebrews from the city, and allowing the Christians to plunder their property, a proceeding which was quite beyond the Patriarch's rights, and was a direct and insulting interference with the authority of Orestes, who immediately wrote a complaint to Constantinople. At this juncture 500 monks of Nitria, sniffing the savour of blood and bigotry from afar, hastened to the scene. These fanatics insulted Orestes publicly, one of them hitting him with a stone; in fact the governor ran a serious risk of his life. The culprit who hurled the missile was executed, and Cyril treated his body as the remains of a martyr.

It was then that Hypatia seems to have fallen a victim in the midst of these infuriated passions. As she was returning home one day she was seized by a band of men, led by a certain Peter, who dragged her to a church and, tearing off her garments, hewed her in pieces and burned the fragments of her body. The reason alleged in public for this act of barbarity was that she hindered a reconciliation between Orestes and Cyrillus; but this, of course, was only a pretext, and the real reason, as Socrates tells us, was envy. Whether the motive of Cyrillus in instigating this murder—for that he was the instigator may be considered almost certain—was a grudge against Hypatia herself, or whether, as has been suggested, he intended by her assassination to wound another person (Orestes or Synesius) we cannot determine.

In my opinion we shall do most wisely to consider that the conflict of Orestes with Cyril was exacerbated by the fact that Orestes was really, though not openly, a heathen, and that Cyril wished it to appear that the struggle was not merely the collision of rival authorities or conditioned by his own ambition, but rather a strife of the Christian Church with the "Hellenic" society of Alexandria. Hence Hypatia, as a prominent pagan teacher and as the intimate friend of Orestes, was sacrificed in order to lend this aspect to the conflict; and the sacrifice was all the more grateful to the bishop as it was a personal blow to his enemy.

Such was Alexandria at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, when Christianity was in conflict with paganism; in the latter half of the fifth century it was as turbulent as ever, but the conflict was then among Christians themselves—various sects of monophysites and orthodox Chalcedonians.

Let us now glance for a moment at Antioch-on-Orontes, the famous capital of another great successor of Alexander, and in Christian times a city of note as the seat of one of the great Patriarchs of Christendom. "In no city of antiquity", says Mommsen, "was the enjoyment of life so much the main thing and its duties so incidental as in *Antioch-upon-Daphne* as the city was significantly called, somewhat as if we should say *Vienna-upon-Prater*. For Daphne was a pleasure-garden about five miles from the city, ten miles in circumference, famous for its laurel trees, after which it was named, for its old cypresses, which even the Christian Emperors ordered to be spared, for its flowing and gushing waters, for its shining temple of Apollo, and its magnificent much-frequented festival of the 10th August". Its chief street, nearly four and a half miles long, stretched straight along the river, and a covered colonnade afforded shade from sun or rain. Its streets were brilliantly lighted at night, and the supply of water, it has been remarked, was so good that there was no fighting at the public baths. Mommsen, comparing it with Alexandria, observes that "for enjoyment of life, dramatic spectacles, dining, pleasures of love, Antioch had more to offer than the city in which no one went idle". It was a gay and corrupt place. Julian had abhorred it for its corruption and Christianity, and it had abhorred Julian for his paganism and austerity. Syria was the home of actors, singers, ballet-dancers, and circus clowns, as well as of eloquent theologians; and the heart of Chrysostom was distressed in vain for the depravity of the Antiochian amusements. When riots occurred the causes were generally connected with the circus; and though the men of Antioch, like the men of Alexandria, had sharp tongues, they were generally content with using them, and did not proceed to anything more violent. In Antioch, as well as in Alexandria, it may be observed the Jews formed an important element of the population, which, not counting slaves and children, numbered about 200,000.

The situation of Antioch, however, was not so fortunate as that of its rival. It was fourteen miles from the coast, and thus had not the advantage of being a seaport; and it was liable to be shaken by frequent and violent earthquakes, which ultimately proved its ruin.

Antioch does not seem to have been a resort of pagans. In the fourth century, indeed, Libanius may be mentioned as a pagan of Antioch, but in the fifth century probably very few non-Christians of a serious type were to be found there. If a writer of Antioch were named, we might guess with considerable certainty that he was a Christian, just as we might guess that a writer of Athens was a pagan. An Alexandrian author, except he were a theologian, would more probably be a pagan than a Christian; a Byzantine author would more probably be a Christian than a pagan. As for a native of Asia Minor, the chances in regard to his faith would be about equal.

As a contrast to the highly civilised life of the Roman Empire, it will be well to take a glimpse at the primitive manners of the Huns, as they impressed a contemporary Roman, whose account of an embassy to Attila in the year 448 has been preserved. As the narrative, which I have translated freely, with some omissions, is of considerable length, a separate chapter may be devoted to it.

CHAPTER XI

A GLIMPSE OF HUN LIFE

The historian Priscus accompanied his friend Maximin on an embassy to Scythia or Hunland in the year 448, and wrote a full account of what befell them. Of this account, which has been fortunately preserved, the following is a free translation:

“We set out with the barbarians, and arrived at Sardica, which is thirteen days for a fast traveller from Constantinople. Halting there we considered it advisable to invite Edecon and the barbarians with him to dinner. The inhabitants of the place sold us sheep and oxen, which we butchered, and prepared a meal. In the course of the feast, as the barbarians lauded Attila and we lauded the Emperor, Bigilas remarked that it was not fair to compare a man and a god, meaning Attila by the man and Theodosius by the god. The Huns grew excited and hot at this remark. But we turned the conversation in another direction, and soothed their wounded feelings; and after dinner, when we separated, Maximin presented Edecon and Orestes with silk garments and Indian gems...

“When we arrived at Naissus we found the city deserted, as though it had been sacked; only a few sick persons lay in the churches. We halted at a short distance from the river, in an open space, for all the ground adjacent to the bank was full of the bones of men slain in war. On the morrow we came to the station of Agintheus, the commander-in-chief of the Illyrian armies, who was posted not far from Naissus, to announce to him the imperial commands, and to receive five of those seventeen deserters, about whom Attila had written to the Emperor. We had an interview with him, and having treated the deserters with kindness, he committed them to us.

“The next day we proceeded from the district of Naissus towards the Danube, we entered a covered valley with many bends and windings and circuitous paths. We thought we were travelling due west, but when the day dawned the sun rose in front; and some of us unacquainted with the topography cried out that the sun was going the wrong way, and portending unusual events. The fact was that that part of the road faced the east, owing to the irregularity of the ground. Having passed these rough places we arrived at a plain which was also well wooded. At the river we were received by barbarian ferrymen, who rowed us across the river in boats made by themselves out of single trees hewn and hollowed. These preparations had not been made for our sake, but to convey across a company of Huns; for Attila pretended that he wished to hunt in Roman territory, but his intent was really hostile, because all the deserters had not been given up to him. Having crossed the Danube, and proceeded with the barbarians about seventy stadia, we were compelled to wait in a certain plain, that Edecon and his party might go on in front and inform Attila of our arrival. As we were dining in the evening we heard the sound of horses approaching, and two Scythians arrived with directions that we were to set out to Attila. We asked them first to partake of our meal, and they dismounted and made good cheer. On the next day, under their guidance, we arrived at the tents of Attila, which were numerous, about three o'clock, and when we wished to pitch our tent on a hill the barbarians who met us prevented us, because the tent of Attila was on low ground, so we halted where the Scythians desired ... (Then a message is received from Attila, who was aware of the nature of their embassy, saying that if they had nothing further to communicate to him he would not receive them, so they reluctantly prepared to return.) When the baggage had been packed on the beasts of burden, and we were perforce preparing to start in the night time, messengers came from Attila bidding us wait on account of the late hour. Then men arrived with an ox and river fish, sent to us by Attila, and when we had dined we retired to sleep. When it was day we expected a gentle and courteous message from the barbarian, but he again bade us depart if we had no further mandates beyond what he already knew. We made no reply, and prepared to set out, though Bigilas insisted that we should feign to have some other communication to make. When I saw that Maximin was very dejected, I went to Scottas (one of the Hun nobles, brother of Onegesius), taking with me Rusticius, who understood the Hun language. He had come with us to Scythia, not as a member of the embassy, but on business with Constantius, an Italian whom Aetius had sent to Attila to be that monarch's private secretary. I informed Scottas, Rusticius acting as interpreter, that Maximin will give him many presents if he would procure him an interview with Attila; and, moreover, that the embassy will not only conduce to the public interests of the two powers, but to the private interest of Onegesius, for the Emperor desired that he should be sent as an ambassador to Byzantium, to arrange the disputes of the Huns and Romans, and that there he would receive splendid gifts. As Onegesius was not present it was for Scottas, I said, to help us, or rather help his brother, and at the same time prove that the report was true which ascribed to him an influence with Attila equal to that possessed by his brother. Scottas mounted his horse and rode to Attila's tent, while I returned to Maximin, and found him in a state of perplexity and anxiety, lying on the grass with Bigilas. I described my interview with Scottas, and bade him make preparations for an audience of Attila. They both jumped up, approving of what I had done, and recalled the men who had started with the beasts of burden. As we were considering what to say to Attila, and how to present the Emperor's gifts, Scottas came to fetch us, and we entered Attila's tent, which was surrounded by a multitude of barbarians. We found Attila sitting on a wooden chair. We stood at a little distance and Maximin advanced and saluted the barbarian, to whom he gave the Emperor's letter, saying that the Emperor prayed for the safety of him and his. The king replied, 'It shall be unto the Romans as they wish it to be unto me', and immediately addressed Bigilas, calling him a shameless beast, and asking him why he ventured to come when all the deserters had not been given up ...

“After the departure of Bigilas, who returned to the Empire (nominally to find the deserters whose restoration Attila demanded, but really to get the money for his fellow-conspirator Edecon), we remained one day in that place, and then set out with Attila for the northern parts of the country. We accompanied the barbarian

for a time, but when we reached a certain point took another route by the command of the Scythians who conducted us, as Attila was proceeding to a village where he intended to marry the daughter of Eskam, though he had many other wives, for the Scythians practised polygamy. We proceeded along a level road in a plain and met with navigable rivers—of which the greatest, next to the Danube, are the Drecon, Tigas, and Tiphesas—which we crossed in the monoxyles, boats made of one piece, used by the dwellers on the banks: the smaller rivers we traversed on rafts which the barbarians carry about with them on carts, for the purpose of crossing morasses. In the villages we were supplied with food—millet instead of corn, and mead, as the natives call it, instead of wine. The attendants who followed us received millet, and a drink made of barley, which the barbarians call him. Late in the evening, having travelled a long distance, we pitched our tents on the banks of a fresh-water lake, used for water by the inhabitants of the neighbouring village. But a wind and storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning and heavy rain, arose, and almost threw down our tents: all our utensils were rolled into the waters of the lake. Terrified by the mishap and the atmospherical disturbance, we left the place and lost one another in the dark and the rain, each following the road that seemed most easy. But we all reached the village by different ways, and raised an alarm to obtain what we lacked. The Scythians of the village sprang out of their huts at the noise, and, lighting the reeds which they use for kindling fires, asked what we wanted. Our conductors replied that the storm had alarmed us; so they invited us to their huts and provided warmth for us by lighting large fires of reeds. The lady who governed the village—she had been one of Bleda's wives—sent us provisions and good-looking girls to console us (this is a Scythian compliment). We treated the young women to a share in the eatables, but declined to take any further advantage of their presence. We remained in the huts till day dawned and then went to look for our lost utensils, which we found partly in the place where we had pitched the tent, partly on the bank of the lake, and partly in the water. We spent that day in the village drying our things; for the storm had ceased and the sun was bright. Having looked after our horses and cattle, we directed our steps to the princess, to whom we paid our respects and presented gifts in return for her courtesy. The gifts consisted of things which are esteemed by the barbarians as not produced in the country—three silver *phialai*, red skins, Indian pepper, palm fruit, and other delicacies.

“Having advanced a distance of ten days further, we halted at a village; for as the rest of the route was the same for us and Attila, it behoved us to wait, so that he might go in front. Here we met with some of the ‘western Romans’, who had also come on an embassy to Attila—the Count Romulus, Promotus governor of Noricum, and Romanus a military captain. With them was Constantius whom Aetius had sent to Attila to be his secretary, and Tatulus, the father of Orestes; these two were not connected with the embassy, but were friends of the ambassadors. Constantius had known them of old in the Italies, and Tatulus’ son Orestes had married the daughter of Romulus.

“The object of the embassy was to soften the soul of Attila, who demanded the surrender of one Silvanus, a silversmith (or banker) in Rome, because he had received golden vessels from a certain Constantius. This Constantius, a native of Gaul, had preceded his namesake in the office of secretary to Attila. When Sirmium in Pannonia was besieged by the Scythians, the bishop of the place consigned the vessels to his (Constantius’) care, that if the city were taken and he survived they might be used to ransom him; and in case he were slain, to ransom the citizens who were led into captivity. But when the city was enslaved, Constantius violated his engagement, and, as he happened to be at Rome on business, pawned the vessels to Silvanus for a sum of money, on condition that if he gave back the money within a prescribed period the dishes should be returned, but otherwise should become Silvanus’ property. Constantius, suspected of treachery, was crucified by Attila and Bleda; and afterwards, when the affair of the vessels became known to Attila, he demanded the surrender of Silvanus on the ground that he had stolen his property. Accordingly Aetius and the Emperor of the Western Romans sent to explain that Silvanus was Constantius’ creditor, the vessels having been pawned and not stolen, and that he had sold them to priests and others for sacred purposes. If, however, Attila refused to desist from his demand, he, the Emperor, would send him the value of the vessels, but would not surrender the innocent Silvanus.

“Having waited for some time until Attila advanced in front of us, we proceeded, and having crossed some rivers we arrived at a large village, where Attila’s house was said to be more splendid than his residences in other places. It was made of polished boards, and surrounded with a wooden enclosure, designed, not for protection, but for appearance. The house of Onegesius was second to the king's in splendour, and was also encircled with a wooden enclosure, but it was not adorned with towers like that of the king. Not far from the enclosure was a large bath which Onegesius—who was the second in power among the Scythians—built, having transported the stones from Pannonia; for the barbarians in this district had no stones or trees, but used imported material. The builder of the bath was a captive from Sirmium, who expected to win his freedom as payment for making the bath. But he was disappointed, and greater trouble befell him than mere captivity among the Scythians, for Onegesius appointed him bathman, and he used to minister to him and his family when they bathed.

“When Attila entered the village he was met by girls advancing in rows, under thin white canopies of linen, which were held up by the outside women who stood under them, and were so large that seven or more girls walked beneath each. There were many lines of damsels thus canopied, and they sang Scythian songs. When he came near the house of Onegesius, which lay on his way, the wife of Onegesius issued from the door, with a number of servants, bearing meat and wine, and saluted him and begged him to partake of her hospitality. This is the highest honour that can be shown among the Scythians. To gratify the wife of his friend, he ate, just as he sat on his horse, his attendants raising the tray to his saddlebow; and having tasted the wine, he went on to the palace, which was higher than the other houses and built on an elevated site. But we remained in the house of Onegesius, at his invitation, for he had returned from his expedition with Attila’s son. His wife and kinsfolk entertained us to dinner, for he had no leisure himself, as he had to relate to Attila the result of his expedition, and explain the accident which had happened to the young prince, who had slipped and broken his right hand. After dinner we left the house of Onegesius, and took up our quarters nearer the palace, so that Maximin might be at a convenient distance for visiting Attila or holding intercourse with his court. The next morning, at dawn of day, Maximin sent me to Onegesius, with presents offered by himself as well as those which the Emperor had sent, and I was to find out whether he would have an interview with Maximin and at what time. When I arrived at the house, along with the attendants who carried the gifts, I found the doors closed, and had to wait until

someone should come out and announce our arrival. As I waited and walked up and down in front of the enclosure which surrounded the house, a man, whom from his Scythian dress I took for a barbarian, came up and addressed me in Greek, with the word *Xoupe*, Hail!. I was surprised at a Scythian speaking Greek. For the subjects of the Huns, swept together from various lands, speak, beside their own barbarous tongue, either Hunnic or Gothic, or—as many as have commercial dealings with the western Romans—Latin; but none of them easily speak Greek, except captives from the Thracian or Illyrian sea-coast; and these last are easily known to any stranger by their torn garments and the squalor of their head, as men who have met with a reverse. This man, on the contrary, resembled a well-to-do Scythian, being well dressed, and having his hair cut in a circle after Scythian fashion. Having returned his salutation, I asked him who he was and whence he had come into a foreign land and adopted Scythian life. When he asked me why I wanted to know, I told him that his Hellenic speech had prompted my curiosity. Then he smiled and said that he was born a Greek and had gone as a merchant to Viminacium, on the Danube, where he had stayed a long time, and married a very rich wife. But the city fell a prey to the barbarians, and he was stripped of his prosperity, and on account of his riches was allotted to Onegesius in the division of the spoil, as it was the custom among the Scythians for the chiefs to reserve for themselves the rich prisoners. Having fought bravely against the Romans and the Acatiri, he had paid the spoils he won to his master, and so obtained freedom. He then married a barbarian wife and had children, and had the privilege of partaking at the table of Onegesius.

“He considered his new life among the Scythians better than his old life among the Romans, and the reasons he urged were as follows: ‘After war the Scythians live in inactivity, enjoying what they have got, and not at all, or very little, harassed. The Romans, on the other hand, are in the first place very liable to perish in war, as they have to rest their hopes of safety on others, and are not allowed, on account of their tyrants, to use arms. And those who use them are injured by the cowardice of their generals, who cannot support the conduct of war. But the condition of the subjects in time of peace is far more grievous than the evils of war, for the exaction of the taxes is very severe, and unprincipled men inflict injuries on others, because the laws are practically not valid against all classes. A transgressor who belongs to the wealthy classes is not punished for his injustice, while a poor man, who does not understand business, undergoes the legal penalty, that is if he does not depart this life before the trial, so long is the course of lawsuits protracted, and so much money is expended on them. The climax of the misery is to have to pay in order to obtain justice. For no one will give a court to the injured man except he pay a sum of money to the judge and the judge's clerks’.

“In reply to this attack on the Empire, I asked him to be good enough to listen with patience to the other side of the question. ‘The creators of the Roman republic’, I said, ‘who were wise and good men, in order to prevent things from being done at haphazard, made one class of men guardians of the laws, and appointed another class to the profession of arms, who were to have no other object than to be always ready for battle, and to go forth to war without dread, as though to their ordinary exercise, having by practice exhausted all their fear beforehand. Others again were assigned to attend to the cultivation of the ground, to support both themselves and those who fight in their defence, by contributing the military corn-supply ... To those who protect the interests of the litigants a sum of money is paid by the latter, just as a payment is made by the farmers to the soldiers. Is it not fair to support him who assists and requite him for his kindness. The support of the horse benefits the horseman ... Those who spend money on a suit and lose it in the end cannot fairly put it down to anything but the injustice of their case. And as to the long time spent on lawsuits, that is due to concern for justice, that judges may not fail in passing accurate judgments, by having to give sentence offhand; it is better that they should reflect, and conclude the case more tardily, than that by judging in a hurry they should both injure man and transgress against the Deity, the institutor of justice ... The Romans treat their servants better than the king of the Scythians treats his subjects. They deal with them as fathers or teachers, admonishing them to abstain from evil and follow the lines of conduct which they have esteemed honourable; they reprove them for their errors like their own children. They are not allowed, like the Scythians, to inflict death on them. They have numerous ways of conferring freedom; they can manumit not only during life, but also by their wills, and the testamentary wishes of a Roman in regard to his property are law’.

“My interlocutor shed tears, and confessed that the laws and constitution of the Romans were fair, but deplored that the governors, not possessing the spirit of former generations, were ruining the State.

“As we were engaged in this discussion a servant came out and opened the door of the enclosure. I hurried up, and inquired how Onegesius was engaged, for I desired to give him a message from the Roman ambassador. He replied that I should meet him if I waited a little, as he was about to go forth. And after a short time I saw him coming out, and addressed him, saying, ‘The Roman ambassador salutes you, and I have come with gifts from him, and with the gold which the Emperor sent you. The ambassador is anxious to meet you, and begs you to appoint a time and place’. Onegesius bade his servants receive the gold and the gifts, and told me to announce to Maximin that he would go to him immediately. I delivered the message, and Onegesius appeared in the tent without delay. He expressed his thanks to Maximin and the Emperor for the presents, and asked why he sent for him. Maximin said that the time had come for Onegesius to have greater renown among men, if he would go to the Emperor, and by his wisdom arrange the objects of dispute between the Romans and Huns, and establish concord between them; and thereby he will also procure many advantages for his own family, as he and his children will be always friends of the Emperor and the imperial race. Then Onegesius inquired what measures would gratify the Emperor, and how he could arrange the disputes. Maximin replied: ‘If you cross into the lands of the Roman Empire you will lay the Emperor under an obligation, and you will arrange the matters at issue by investigating their causes and deciding them on the basis of the peace’. Onegesius said he would inform the Emperor and his ministers of Attila's wishes, but the Romans need not think they could ever prevail with him to betray his master or neglect his Scythian training and his wives and children, or to prefer wealth among the Romans to bondage with Attila. He added that he would be of more service to the Romans by remaining in his own land and softening the anger of his master, if he were indignant for aught with the Romans, than by visiting them and subjecting himself to blame if he made arrangements that Attila did not approve of. He then retired, having consented that I should act as intermediate in conveying messages from Maximin to himself, for it would not have been consistent with Maximin's dignity as ambassador to visit him constantly.

“The next day I entered the enclosure of Attila’s palace, bearing gifts to his wife, whose name was Kreka. She had three sons, of whom the eldest governed the Acatiri and the other nations who dwell in Pontic Scythia. Within the enclosure were numerous buildings, some of carved boards beautifully fitted together, others of straight planed beams, without carving, fastened on round wooden blocks which rose to a moderate height from the ground. Attila’s wife lived here, and, having been admitted by the barbarians at the door, I found her reclining on a soft couch. The floor of the room was covered with woollen mats for walking on. A number of servants stood round her, and maids sitting on the floor in front of her embroidered with colours linen cloths intended to be placed over the Scythian dress for ornament. Having approached, saluted her, and presented the gifts, I went out, and walked to the other houses, where Attila was, and waited for Onegesius, who, as I knew, was with Attila. I stood in the middle of a great crowd—the guards of Attila and his attendants knew me, and so no one hindered me. I saw a number of people advancing, and a great commotion and noise, Attila’s egress being expected. And he came forth from the house with a dignified strut, looking round on this side and on that. He was accompanied by Onegesius, and stood in front of the house; and many persons who had lawsuits with one another came up and received his judgment. Then he returned into the house, and received ambassadors of barbarous peoples.

“As I was waiting for Onegesius, I was accosted by Romulus and Promotus and Romanus, the ambassadors who had come from Italy about the golden vessels; they were accompanied by Rusticius and by Constantiolus, a man from the Pannonian territory, which was subjected to Attila. They asked me whether we had been dismissed or are constrained to remain, and I replied that it was just to learn this from Onegesius that I was waiting outside the palace. When I inquired in my turn whether Attila had vouchsafed them a kind reply, they told me that his decision could not be moved, and that he threatened war unless either Silvanus or the drinking vessels should be given up ...

“As we were talking about the state of the world, Onegesius came out; we went up to him and asked him about our concerns. Having first spoken with some barbarians, he bade me inquire of Maximin what consular the Romans are sending as an ambassador to Attila. When I came to our tent I delivered the message to Maximin, and deliberated with him what answer we should make to the question of the barbarian. Returning to Onegesius, I said that the Romans desired him to come to them and adjust the matters of dispute, otherwise the Emperor will send whatever ambassador he chooses. He then bade me fetch Maximin, whom he conducted to the presence of Attila. Soon after Maximin came out, and told me that the barbarian wished Nomos or Anatolius or Senator to be the ambassador, and that he would not receive any other than one of these three; when he (Maximin) replied that it was not meet to mention men by name and so render them suspected in the eyes of the Emperor, Attila said that if they do not choose to comply with his wishes the differences will be adjusted by arms.

“When we returned to our tent the father of Orestes came with an invitation from Attila for both of us to a banquet at three o’clock. When the hour arrived we went to the palace, along with the embassy from the western Romans, and stood on the threshold of the hall in the presence of Attila. The cup-bearers gave us a cup, according to the national custom, that we might pray before we sat down. Having tasted the cup, we proceeded to take our seats; all the chairs were ranged along the walls of the room on either side. Attila sat in the middle on a couch; a second couch was set behind him, and from it steps led up to his bed, which was covered with linen sheets and wrought coverlets for ornament, such as Greeks and Romans use to deck bridal beds. The places on the right of Attila were held chief in honour, those on the left, where we sat, were only second. Berichus, a noble among the Scythians, sat on our side, but had the precedence of us. Onegesius sat on a chair on the right of Attila’s couch, and over against Onegesius on a chair sat two of Attila’s sons; his eldest son sat on his couch, not near him, but at the extreme end, with his eyes fixed on the ground, in shy respect for his father. When all were arranged, a cupbearer came and handed Attila a wooden cup of wine. He took it, and saluted the first in precedence, who, honoured by the salutation, stood up, and might not sit down until the king, having tasted or drained the wine, returned the cup to the attendant. All the guests then honoured Attila in the same way, saluting him, and then tasting the cups; but he did not stand up. Each of us had a special cupbearer, who would come forward in order to present the wine, when the cupbearer of Attila retired. When the second in precedence and those next to him had been honoured in like manner, Attila toasted us in the same way according to the order of the seats. When this ceremony was over the cupbearers retired, and tables, large enough for three or four, or even more, to sit at, were placed next the table of Attila, so that each could take of the food on the dishes without leaving his seat. The attendant of Attila first entered with a dish full of meat, and behind him came the other attendants with bread and viands, which they laid on the tables. A luxurious meal, served on silver plate, had been made ready for us and the barbarian guests, but Attila ate nothing but meat on a wooden trencher. In everything else, too, he showed himself temperate; his cup was of wood, while to the guests were given goblets of gold and silver. His dress, too, was quite simple, affecting only to be clean. The sword he carried at his side, the latches of his Scythian shoes, the bridle of his horse were not adorned, like those of the other Scythians, with gold or gems or anything costly. When the viands of the first course had been consumed we all stood up, and did not resume our seats until each one, in the order before observed, drank to the health of Attila in the goblet of wine presented to him. We then sat down, and a second dish was placed on each table with eatables of another kind. After this course the same ceremony was observed as after the first. When evening fell torches were lit, and two barbarians coming forward in front of Attila sang songs they had composed, celebrating his victories and deeds of valour in war. And of the guests, as they looked at the singers, some were pleased with the verses, others reminded of wars were excited in their souls, while yet others, whose bodies were feeble with age and their spirits compelled to rest, shed tears. After the songs a Scythian, whose mind was deranged, appeared, and by uttering outlandish and senseless words forced the company to laugh. After him Zerkon, the Moorish dwarf, entered. He had been sent by Attila as a gift to Aetius, and Edecon had persuaded him to come to Attila in order to recover his wife, whom he had left behind him in Scythia; the lady was a Scythian whom he had obtained in marriage through the influence of his patron Bleda. He did not succeed in recovering her, for Attila was angry with him for returning. On the occasion of the banquet he made his appearance, and threw all except Attila into fits of unquenchable laughter by his appearance, his dress, his voice, and his words, which were a confused jumble of Latin, Hunnic, and Gothic. Attila, however, remained immovable and of unchanging countenance, nor by word or act did he betray anything approaching to a smile of merriment except at the entry of Ernas, his youngest son, whom he pulled by the cheek, and gazed on with a calm look of satisfaction. I was surprised that he made so much of this son, and neglected his other

children; but a barbarian who sat beside me and knew Latin, bidding me not reveal what he told, gave me to understand that prophets had forewarned Attila that his race would fall, but would be restored by this boy. When the night had advanced we retired from the banquet, not wishing to assist further at the potations”.

It will be noticed that in the foregoing narrative the word Scythian and the word Hun seem at first sight to be used indifferently. A certain distinction between them can, however, be perceived, and therefore, though they are most often practically synonymous, I have reproduced both words in the translation just as they occur in the original. Scythian is not merely an ancient term applied to a new people, in the same way as the Goths and the Slaves were often called Getae by pedantic historians; Scythian was a generic term for all nomadic nations, and as a great many different nomadic nations were united under the sovereignty of Attila, it was a very convenient and natural name to apply to his subjects. The Huns, Attila's own nation, were Scythians, but all Scythians were not Huns. And thus, to use a more modern distinction, we might say that Attila was king of the Huns and emperor of the Scythians.

BOOK III

THE

HOUSE OF LEO THE GREAT

CHAPTER I

LEO I

The Roman Empire never recognized explicitly the principle of hereditary succession; the title of Emperor or Augustus was always conferred by the army, with which the office had been originally so closely connected. At the same time a natural instinct led Emperors to wish that their sons or members of their own house should succeed them; and by adopting the plan of nominating a successor in their lifetime, and securing his recognition by the army as a Caesar or Augustus, Emperors could found a dynasty without violating the theory that the elevation to the throne was elective. Accordingly the Empire tended to become practically hereditary while it was theoretically elective; and the constant examples of claims to the crown founded on relationship prove that there was a feeling that heredity involved a right.

It was always a critical moment when a dynasty ended without a designated successor, or a member of the family who cared to claim the crown. Theodosius I had created his son Arcadius Augustus; Arcadius had given that title to his infant son Theodosius II; Theodosius had designated Martian as his successor before his death, Martian's title being sealed by his marriage with the Empress Pulcheria. On Martian's death the Theodosian dynasty had come to an end, and the choice of a new Emperor rested with the army, whose consent was in every case necessary.

The man of most authority in the army was the general Aspar, an Alan by descent, who with his father Ardaburius had distinguished himself thirty-five years before in suppressing the usurper John and helping Valentinian III to his legitimate succession. Aspar's position in the East resembled that of Ricimer in the West. He and his three sons, being Arians and foreigners, could not hope to sit on the imperial throne; and thus the only course open to Aspar was to secure the elevation of one on whose pliancy he might count. He chose Leo, a native of Dacia and an orthodox Christian, who was steward of his own household. Thus Aspar, like Ricimer, was a kingmaker. But when Leo assumed the purple (7th February)—on which occasion the ceremony of coronation by the Patriarch of Constantinople (then Anatolius), was first introduced—he did not prove as amenable to influence as Aspar had hoped; on the contrary, he took measures to reduce the resources of Aspar's family, which by its close relations with the army had considerable power, and was the centre of a large faction of Arians and barbarians. In fact Aspar, though an Alan and not a German, was the representative of German influence in the Empire, and the danger which had threatened the Empire in the reign of Arcadius through the power of Gainas was now repeated. Leo however firmly resisted the aggressiveness of this influence, and in order to neutralize the great fact which worked in Aspar's favour, namely that the bulk and flower of the army consisted of Germans, he formed the plan of recruiting the line from native subjects. For this purpose he chose the hardy race of Isaurian mountaineers, who lived almost like an independent people, little touched by the influence of Hellenism, in the wild regions of Mount Taurus. This is Leo's great original work, for which he deserves the title "Great", more than for his orthodoxy, for which he probably received it. He conceived an idea, whose execution, begun by himself and carried out by his successor, counteracted that danger of German preponderance which threatened the State throughout the fifth century.

Aspar appears to have possessed all the characteristics of an untutored barbarian. Brave and active in war, he was idle and frivolous in peace. During the reign of Martian, and doubtless also in the reign of Leo, while the Empire enjoyed rest, "he betook himself to relaxation and womanly ease. His pleasures consisted in actors and jugglers and all stage amusements, and spending his time on these ill-famed occupations he lost all count of the things that make for glory". But if he was no longer active as a warrior, he won repute in the humbler part of an energetic citizen or a competent policeman, for in the great fire which laid waste a large part of Constantinople in 465 it is recorded that Aspar exerted himself unsparingly for the public interest.

Leo had made a promise, apparently at the time of his elevation, to raise one of Aspar's sons to the rank of Caesar, and thereby designate him as his successor, in spite of the fact that he was a barbarian. When he delayed to perform this promise, Aspar is said to have seized him by his purple robe and said, "Emperor, it is not meet that he who wears this robe should speak falsely"; to which Leo replied, "Nor yet is it meet that he should be constrained and driven like a slave". This story, which may be true, shows the relations which existed between the king; and the kingmaker—the firmness of Leo, the persistence of Aspar. On this occasion, however, Leo yielded, and created one of Aspar's sons Caesar; but the concession was displeasing to the senate and to the orthodox population of Byzantium, as it was a direct encouragement to the Arian party. It appears that a deputation of orthodox clergy and laymen waited on the Emperor, imploring him to appoint a Caesar who did not hold heretical views, and that there were riots and seditions in the city, a protest against the new Caesar. We may say that the chief political feature of the reign was a sort of duel between the Emperor and the general for power and popularity. When Leo undertook the great naval expedition, which but for the incapacity of the commander would have exterminated the kingdom of the Vandals and made his reign really glorious, Aspar was jealous of the fame that Leo might probably gain, and seems to have wished to thwart its success by obtaining the nomination of Basiliscus, an incompetent commander, who was perhaps disloyal and certainly avaricious.

The struggle came to a critical point in some matter connected with two unknown persons (Tatian and Vivian), and it was then that Leo decided to have recourse to the Isaurians. In this project he was supported by the Isaurian Zeno, who became his son-in-law. Thereupon Ardaburius, the son of Aspar, attempted to gain over the Isaurians to his father's faction, but these intrigues were betrayed to Zeno. Leo then resorted to the abrupt measure of putting to death Aspar and his son Ardaburius (471 AD) In consequence of this act, which was probably unwise, the Emperor received the name of "Butcher". An attempt was also made to kill Patricius, the

son of Aspar who had been created Caesar, but he recovered from his wounds; while a third son, Ermenaric, escaped, happening to be absent. It has been said that Leo's motive in removing Aspar and his sons was to secure the succession of his own infant grandson Leo; he may have feared that he would be unable to hold his own against the powerful barbarian family. But the whole drama has a deeper significance as a repetition of that struggle between Roman and barbarian elements in the Empire, which in the days of Arcadius was decided in favour of the former.

The most striking event of Leo's reign was the enormous "Armada", already referred to, which he organized against the kingdom of Gaiseric the Vandal, who had become a formidable foe of the Empire in the Mediterranean waters, but of this it will be more convenient to speak in the following chapter.

Leo was a man of no education, but of natural good sense. He pursued, as we already remarked, the policy of Anthemius and Marcian, and placed a limit on fiscal oppression. Malchus, the historian, who detested Leo and condemned his civil policy as ruinously rapacious, says that he was a sewer of all wickedness, but admits that his subjects, as well as foreigners, considered him "most fortunate", and we may conclude that his reign was on the whole prosperous, though his military operations were unsuccessful. In regard to Malchus' accusations we must remember, on the one hand, that he hated Leo for his religious bigotry, and, on the other hand, that in spite of all alleviations the mode of collecting taxes, combined with the fatal growth of centralization, gradually wore away the resources of the provinces and affected disastrously their social and moral life. We must judge of an Emperor's civil policy relatively, not absolutely.

Like Marcian, Leo was solicitous to relieve provincial towns that had suffered disasters, and his clemency was celebrated by his admirers. He is reported to have said that a king should distribute pity to those on whom he looks, as the sun distributes heat to those on whom it shines.

A curious detail has survived regarding the manner in which petitioners addressed themselves to him. His unmarried sister resided in a house in the south-west corner of the Augusteum, close to the hippodrome. The Emperor used to pay her a visit with affectionate regularity every week, "because she was modest and a virgin". She erected a statue to him beside her house, and there seems to have been some contrivance in the pillar like a modern letter-box, in which petitioners used to place their memorials, and every week one of the imperial staff used to collect them.

Towards the end of his reign the commerce of the Empire met with a serious blow by the loss of Jotaba, an important depot on the Red Sea. This leads us to give an account of the Persian adventurer Amorkesos, who "whether he thought that he was not treated with due consideration in Persia, or for some other reason preferred Roman territory, migrated thence to the adjacent province of Arabia". There he supported himself as a brigand, making raids, not on the Romans, but on the Scenite Saracens. His power gradually increased, and he seized the island of Jotaba, which belonged to the Romans, and, driving out the Greek custom-officers, he instituted himself master of it, and soon became wealthy by receiving the dues from traders. He made himself ruler of some other communes in the neighbourhood, and conceived the desire of becoming a phylarch or satrap of the Saracens of Arabia Petraea, who were nominally dependent on the Roman Emperor. He sent an ecclesiastic to Leo to negotiate the matter, and Leo graciously signified his wish to have a personal interview with Amorkesos. When the latter arrived, he shared the imperial table, was admitted to the meetings of the senate, and even honoured with precedence over the patricians. The Byzantines, it appears, were much scandalized at these privileges accorded to a Persian fire-worshipper, and Leo seems to have been obliged to pretend that his guest intended to become a Christian. On his departure Leo gave him a valuable picture in mosaic, and compelled the members of the senate to present him with other gifts; and, what was more important, he transferred to him the permanent possession of Jotaba, and added more villages to those which he already governed, granting him also the coveted title of phylarch. Malchus finds fault with Leo severely for the invitation of Amorkesos to his court, on the principle that what is distant is most dazzling; and says that it was impolitic to allow the foreigner to see the towns, through which he had to travel, unarmed and defenceless.

One of the great conflagrations which so often destroyed the buildings of Constantinople broke out in 465. The fire ran both from east to west and from north to south, laying waste a wide area, and lasting for four days. The splendid senate house, which had been erected after the destruction of Julian's senate house by fire in the reign of Arcadius, was burnt down, and also the Nyrphaeum, directly opposite to it, a building in which those who had not houses of their own used to celebrate their weddings. Countless magnificent residences of private persons were destroyed. It is said that Aspar ran about the streets with a pail of water on his shoulders, urging the people to follow his example, and offering each a silver nummus (*nomisma*) as pay for his activity. There is no hint of the existence of a fire brigade at Constantinople.

There were still many pagans in the days of Leo, and we must not omit to notice the case of Isocasius, a native of Aegae in Cilicia and a citizen of Antioch, who was accused and tried on the charge of paganism. His case was to be judged by the governor of Bithynia, but Jacobus, the court physician, a remarkable man of that time, who was so much beloved by the higher classes that the senate erected a statue to him in the baths of Zeuxippus, and who, as well as a physician, was an excellent rhetor and philosopher, interfered in his behalf, and obtained Leo's consent that he should be tried in Byzantium by the praetorian prefect Pusaesus. "Do you see in what position you stand", asked the prefect. "I see, and am not surprised", was the reply, "for I am human, and human misfortunes have befallen me. But do you judge me with impartial justice, as you used to judge along with me". Then Isocasius was led away to the church of St. Sophia and baptized.

Leo died on the 3d of February 474, having previously nominated as his successor his grandson Leo, a young child. His wife, Verina, was an ambitious woman who played a considerable part in the Byzantine world after his death. He had two daughters, Ariadne, who married Zeno the Isaurian, and Leontia, the wife of Marcian, son of Anthemius.

CHAPTER II

RICIMER THE PATRICIAN

It was a critical moment in Italy after the death of Valentinian III (455), as there was no male heir of the house of Theodosius. There had been similar situations before, as in 68, when the Julian-Claudian house came to an end; as in 190, when Commodus had died without issue; as in 363, after the death of Julian. Military riots were inevitable, a civil war was possible; and we read in a trustworthy historian: "After this Rome was in a state of disturbance and confusion, and the military forces were divided into two factions, one wishing to elevate Maximus, the other supporting Maximian, a certain Egyptian merchant, who had been successful in Italy and become the steward of Aetius". A third possible candidate was Majorian, the brother-at-arms of Aetius, with whom he had fought against the Franks, and he had the good wishes of Eudoxia, the widowed Empress. Maximus' command of money decided the event in his favour, even as Pertinax had won the Imperium in 190 by bribing the praetorian guards.

He endeavoured to secure himself on the throne by forcing Eudoxia to marry him, and if she had consented, it is just possible that his subjects might have rallied round him and that he might have reigned not brilliantly but securely like Honorius or Valentinian. But Petronius Maximus, though he was a member of the noble Anician house, was not like Marcian; he was not one whom an Augusta would condescend to marry, even for cogent political reasons. If he was really related to British Maximus, who had been subdued by Theodosius, the great-granddaughter of Theodosius had perhaps not forgotten it; but the widow of Valentinian must have known or suspected the instigator of her lord's murder. In any case, the new Augustus was a paltry person, and Eudoxia hated or despised him so much that she is said to have taken the bold and fatal step of summoning Gaiseric the Vandal to overthrow the tyrant—an act almost worthy of her sister-in-law Honoria. But in this crude shape we can hardly accept the story; John of Antioch mentions it in language which implies that he did not consider it well attested; it was "told by some". The true account seems to be that Gaiseric came of his own accord, seeing that it was a good opportunity for attacking Italy, and considering that the death of Aetius and Valentinian released him from the treaty of 435, which he regarded as a contract made with them personally, not with the Roman Republic. The story of the invitation of Eudoxia will then reduce itself to the probability that, vexed by the importunities and threats of Petronius Maximus, she welcomed Gaiseric on his arrival in Italy as a deliverer from an abhorred oppressor.

On the approach of Gaiseric, Maximus, deserted by his supporters, determined to flee from Rome. His departure was attended with riots, and the tyrant was killed by a stone which a soldier cast at him as he was riding from the gates.

Three days later—it was in the first week of June 455—Gaiseric and his Vandals entered Rome. For fourteen days they abode in the city and plundered, but the intervention of Pope Leo and the Church, although it did not protect the city against pillage, violence, and vandalism seems at least to have preserved it from the evils of massacre and conflagration.

The monarch of the Vandals ravaged Campania, and loaded his ships with the precious things of Rome. He carried with him the Empress Eudoxia and her two daughters, Eudocia and Placidia. Gaiseric had conceived the idea of an alliance with the Theodosian house. It was no new idea; Athaulf the Visigoth had married Placidia, and Attila had perhaps wished to marry Honoria. It was not strange that a marriage should be determined on between Huneric and Eudocia.

The question was, who was to be Emperor? At Rome things had come to a deadlock, but on this occasion Gaul intervened. Marcus Maecilius Avitus, the man who had fought by the side of Aetius, and had, in the great crisis of Europe, decided by his persuasions the king of Tolosa to march with the Romans against the Scythians, was proclaimed Emperor, first at Tolosa and then at Arelate (9th July 455). It is important to observe that it was by the united voices of the Visigoths and the Gallo-Romans that he was called to fill the vacant throne as the successor of Maximus, from whom he had received the appointment of master of soldiers. Of his short reign we hear little, though his son-in-law, Sidonius Apollinaris the poet, has recorded many personal details about the man himself. We know, however, that it was marked by successes against German enemies, and here again it is important to notice that the Visigoths identified themselves with the Empire.

The Suevian general, Count Ricimer, who now makes his entry on the stage, was sent by Avitus to Sicily to operate against the fleet of the Vandals. Marcian, who did not hesitate to recognise Avitus, had already sent an embassy to Gaiseric to remonstrate with him on his Italian expedition and on the captivity of the imperial ladies. The arms or skill of Count Ricimer now administered a blow to the Vandalic navy, according to one account in Sicilian waters, according to another statement in the neighbourhood of Corsica (456).

While Suevian Ricimer protected one part of the Empire against the Vandals, Theodoric II, king of the Visigoths, was protecting another part of the Empire against the Suevians. In conjunction with the Burgundians, and at the instance of Avitus, he invaded Spain; he defeated the dwellers in Gallaecia, who harried Roman territory, in the great battle of Urbicus (near Astorga); he took the town of Bracara, where the Roman Count Asterius had in former days slaughtered the Vandals of Gunderic; and he put to death the Suevian king Rechiar. This was a mortal blow to Suevic power, and paved the way for Visigothic Hispania.

Avitus meanwhile had crossed the Alps. It seems to have been hardly a prudent step; it seems to have been hardly necessary. At all events it made his position untenable. We may well ask why he did not decide to add Arelate to the number of imperial capitals—the city where he had many friends, the city which had received him first, and which was not too far from friendly Tolosa. But Arelate, the capital of the illegitimate Constantine, did not seem a suitable residence to legitimate Avitus. He abandoned the city of the Rhone to take up his abode in the city of the Tiber. But there he was not welcome; he was looked upon as a sort of interloper, of insufficiently defined position. He was acceptable neither to the army nor to the senate, and his behaviour does not appear to have tended to make him popular. The circumstances of his fall are thus related by a historian, who, we are justified in supposing, derived his facts from the contemporary writer Friscus:

“When Avitus reigned at Rome there was famine in the city, and the people blaming Avitus compelled him to remove from the city of the Romans the allies from Gaul who had entered it along with him (that so there might be fewer mouths to feed). He also dismissed the Goths whom he had brought for the protection of Rome, having distributed among them money which he obtained by selling to merchants bronze stripped from public works, for there was no gold in the imperial treasury. This excited the Romans to revolt when they saw their city stripped of its adornments.

“But Majorian and Ricimer, no longer held in fear of the Goths, openly rebelled, so that Avitus was constrained—terrified on the one hand by the prospect of internal troubles, on the other hand by the hostilities of the Vandals—to withdraw from Rome and set out for Gaul. But Majorian and Ricimer attacked him on the road and forced him to flee into a sanctuary, where he abdicated the throne and put off his imperial apparel. But Majorian’s soldiers did not cease to blockade him, until he died of starvation, after a reign of eight months; others say that he was strangled”.

According to another account Avitus reached Gaul safely, and there collected an army with which he crossed the Alps once more to assert his contemned authority, but Count Ricimer routed him at Placentia; he was deposed from the throne and made bishop of the city which witnessed his discomfiture (October 456).

The deposition of Avitus caused a new crisis. It is quite conceivable that at this juncture, or at the death of Valentinian in the year before, the western line of Emperors might have ceased to exist, as it ceased to exist twenty years later. In 476 the presence of the barbarian Odovacar was an essential element in the situation, but in 455 or in 456 the only barbarian whom we can conceive as acting the part of Odovacar was the Vandal Gaiseric. A temporary cessation of a separate imperial rule in the West did, however, take place on several occasions before the deposition of Romulus Augustulus. One of these temporary cessations followed on the overthrow of Avitus. These intervals are often called interregnums; it is natural to say that from October 456 to April 457 there was an interregnum in the West. And the expression really represents the actual situation; but we must not forget that, from a theoretical point of view, the expression is not correct. Legally, Marcian was the sole head of the Empire from the fall of Avitus to his own death at the end of January 457, and Leo was the sole head of the Empire from the death of Marcian to the elevation of Majorian.

It has often been remarked that at the beginning of 457 the situation in Italy was similar to the situation in Constantinople. In both cases the solution of the difficulty depended on the action of a military leader of barbarian birth; Aspar held a similar position to that of Ricimer. Both were the makers of Emperors; neither aspired to be an Emperor himself.

The elevation of Julius Valerius Majorian, the man who had fought with Aetius, the man who had been the chosen candidate of Eudoxia after the death of Valentinian, and who had combined with Ricimer to suppress Avitus, took place on the 1st April. This elevation rested on a very different combination from that which had crowned Avitus; it was initiated by the proposal of the Emperor Leo, and obtained the consent of Ricimer. It was also acceptable to the Roman senate, for Majorian was a thorough Roman. The laws which he passed during his reign for the preservation of the buildings of Rome were a direct reflection on his predecessor Avitus.

There were two tasks to be accomplished by the new Augustus, both necessary for the security of his seat on the throne. He must, in the first place, quell the Gallo-Roman and Visigothic opposition, and subdue or conciliate the provincials who had been roused to wrath by the death of Avitus. It was the reverse problem, the conciliation of Roman and Italian goodwill, that the Gallic Avitus had been called upon to solve, and it was because he failed therein that he had fallen. It is evident that at this period the enmity between the Romans and the Gallic provincials had an important influence on public affairs. Majorian entered Gaul with an army, and found the Burgundians—the friends of Avitus—in league with the citizens of Lugdunensis Prima against himself. A conciliation, however, was effected with the help of Avitus’ son-in-law Sidonius, and Majorian advanced to the relief of Arelate, which the Visigoths were besieging. As Aetius had driven Theodoric back thirty years before, so Aegidius, Majorian’s general, drove back a new Theodoric from the walls; and most firm compacts of peace were made between the Augustus Majorian and the King Theodoric.

Majorian had accomplished the first task, but the other was harder. It was absolutely indispensable that an Emperor, whose reign was to be permanent, should win universal confidence by proving himself equal to the great emergency of the time; he must <3preserve the state of the Roman world<3. And just at this moment the great emergency was the hostility of the Vandals, who in their ships harried the Roman provinces and infested the Mediterranean waters. It might have seemed that Avitus, under whose auspices Count Ricimer worsted the fleet of the foe at Corsica or at Sicily, had in some sense met the difficulty. But the blow was not decisive; it did not paralyze the hostilities of the Vandals. The words of an historian indicate that Avitus felt the necessity of facing this problem, and also his inability to grapple with it: “he was afraid of the wars with the Vandals”.

Majorian prepared an expedition against Africa on a grand scale; his fleet numbered 300 ships, and was collected in a Spanish port, probably New Carthage. The hopes of the West were awakened, and their eyes were fixed on the preparations of Majorian. But a curious fatality attended all expeditions undertaken against the

Vandals, whether they proceeded from Old Rome or from New Rome, or from both together. The expedition of Castinus had collapsed in 422, that of Aspar had failed in 430, the armament of Ardaburius had not even reached its destination in 441, and now the preparations of Majorian fell through in 460. Gaiseric ravaged the coasts of Spain, and incapacitated the Roman ships before they left the port. Yet another expedition, and one on a far larger scale, was to meet with discomfiture; and more than seventy years were, to elapse until the rise of the great Justinian, when the numerous failures were to be blotted out by the success of Belisarius.

This misfortune led to the fall of Majorian; he had forfeited confidence; it appeared that he was not able to “preserve the state of the Roman world”. He returned from Spain to Gaul, and after a sojourn in Arles passed into Italy, without an army. At Tortona the officers of Count Ricimer, who had judged him unworthy of empire, seized him, stripped him of the imperial purple, and beheaded him (7th August 461). It is natural enough that only two alternatives could be entertained by the Suevian count, who had the army at his back; he could tolerate a strong Emperor, capable of defending the Empire, or he could tolerate a puppet-Emperor, who depended absolutely on his own will. But an Emperor who was just strong enough to assume an independent position, and was not strong enough, to contend with the enemies of the State—such an one was naturally not acceptable to the count. Ricimer himself seemed determined not to leave Italy, probably judging that its security against the Vandals depended on the constant presence of an able general with a strong army; and he did actually defend it in the north against the Ostrogoths of Pannonia and against the Alemanni of the Upper Rhine. He was determined to hold Italy at all costs; he associated himself with the foreign *foederati*, being himself a Sueve; and he cherished a bitter hatred against the Vandals;—these were the chief elements in his position. His hatred against the Vandals was due to a family feud. He was the nephew of Wallia, and Wallia had fought against the Vandals in Spain; wherefore Gaiseric hated him, and he reciprocated the hatred.

The death of Majorian was followed in less than four months by the election of Libius Severus, a Lucanian. He was elected by the senate with the consent of Ricimer and proclaimed at Ravenna (19th November 461); and though he reigned four years—four months less than Majorian—he did nothing; he was only a figure-head; Ricimer was the true sovereign. Stilicho had guided the councils of Honorius, Aetius had guided the councils of Valentinian; but the personalities of Honorius and Valentinian, weak though they both were, influenced affairs to a certain extent; it would be going too far to say that either Aetius or even Stilicho was a virtual Emperor. Ricimer was the first German who had become a virtual king of Italy; he is the link between Stilicho and Odovacar.

It might seem that at this juncture Italy might have received another Augustus from Gaul, and that Aegidius, the general and friend of Majorian, might have crossed the Alps to avenge Majorian’s death. But Aegidius was occupied with the task of defending southern Gaul against the Visigoths, who, shaking themselves loose after the death of Avitus from the bond which attached them to the Empire, were attempting to extend their power in the province of Narbonensis. We find him in 463 winning a great battle at Orleans, and in the following year he died.

Another opponent of Ricimer in another quarter was the Count Marcellinus. We see him in Sicily in the year 461 in command of an army chiefly consisting of Hunnic auxiliaries (Scythians); he had been probably posted there by Majorian to protect the island against the Vandals. But Ricimer operated upon the cupidity of the Huns by bribes to induce them to leave the service of Marcellinus and enter his own. Then Marcellinus, fearing danger and conscious that he could not vie with Ricimer in riches, abandoned Sicily and returned to Dalmatia, where a few years later we find him ruling as if he were the king thereof, even as Ricimer ruled in Italy and as Aegidius and Syagrius ruled in Gaul. At this time Gaul, Italy, and Dalmatia were practically independent kingdoms. On the departure of Marcellinus, who seems to have defended the island ably, Gaiseric sent his Vandals and auxiliary Moors to ravage the island. A pacific embassy from Ricimer did not avail, but another embassy sent at the same time by the Emperor Leo induced Gaiseric to come to terms at last in regard to the ladies of the Theodosian house, whom he still retained at Carthage. He carried out his determination of uniting Eudocia in marriage with his son Huneric, but he sent her mother Eudoxia and her sister Placidia to Constantinople; in return he received a certain share of the property of Valentinian III as the dowry of Eudocia.

But now Gaiseric posed as the protector and champion of the Theodosian house against the upstart Emperors in Italy. Olybrius, a member of the noble Anician gens, had married Placidia, and Gaiseric demanded that he should be acknowledged as Emperor. The situation in 463 is described by Priscus as follows: “The western Romans were afraid concerning Marcellinus, lest, his power increasing, he should wage war against them; for they were involved in diverse difficulties on other sides; they were threatened by the Vandals, and they were threatened by Aegidius, a man of the western Galatians [we are reminded of Celtic reminiscences in the East], who had fought campaigns with Majorian and had a very large power around him, and was indignant on account of the slaying of the Emperor (Majorian). Hitherto dissensions with the Goths in Gaul withheld him from war against the Italiots. For he fought valiantly against them, contending for border-territory, and performed in that war the greatest deeds of prowess”.

We see from this account that the cause of western Rome, the cause of Italy, and the cause of Ricimer were all closely bound together, and that the Italiots looked on Ricimer as their protector. “On these accounts the western Romans sent ambassadors to the eastern Romans, asking them to bring about a reconciliation with Marcellinus and with the Vandals. To Marcellinus was sent Phylarchus, who prevailed on him not to wage war against the Romans; but then having crossed over to the Vandals, he retired ineffectual”. Gaiseric claimed all the inheritance left by Valentinian in Italy and also the inheritance of Aetius, whose son Gaudentius he retained in captivity. He led a great expedition against Italy and Sicily, ravaged the unprotected parts of the country, and took undefended towns. There was no efficient navy in Italy to operate against him; and as he was at peace with New Rome, Leo could send no ships to the assistance of Italy. It will be remembered how in the days of Valentinian III Attila was at peace with Ravenna and at war with Constantinople; now in regard to Gaiseric the position was reversed. Priscus makes the remark that the division of the Empire greatly injured “the affairs of the Romans in the West”; it was apparent that their great chance of safety lay in the support of the East.

Accordingly Ricimer, the foe of Gaiseric, begins to enter into closer relations with the Emperor Leo. For a year and six months after the death of Severus, in November 465, no successor was appointed, but at length Leo deigned to select Anthemius as his colleague, and Ricimer's acceptance of an Emperor nominated by Leo indicated a close alliance of interests. The common interest was war against the Vandals; not only Italy and Sicily were threatened, but the entire commerce of the Mediterranean; Africa was now what Illyria had been in the third century BC, or what Cilicia had been in the first.

Anthemius had married the daughter of Marcian; and thus he might be considered in some sort connected with the house of Theodosius, and his pretensions might be set against those of Gaiseric's candidate, the husband of Placidia. He was the grandson of that Anthemius who guided the Empire during the childhood of Pulcheria and Theodosius. The alliance between Ricimer and the new Emperor was sealed by a marriage of the Patrician with Anthemius' daughter. The elder Placidia had married Athaulf, her granddaughter Eudocia had married Huneric, both indeed under a certain compulsion; yet Anthemius afterwards professed to regard it as a great condescension to have surrendered his daughter to the barbarian count.

The expedition, which was organized to overthrow the monarchy of the Vandals, was on a grand and impressive scale, but it ended in a miserable failure. Its success was paralyzed by lukewarmness and even treachery both in the East and in the West.

The number of vessels that set sail from Constantinople is said to have been 1113, and the total number of men who embarked was calculated as exceeding 100,000. But unfortunately Leo, under the influence of his wife Verina and his friend Aspar, appointed as general a man who was both incompetent and untrustworthy, his wife's brother Basiliscus. Aspar, it appears, was not over-anxious that Leo's position should be strengthened by such an exploit as the subversion of the Vandal kingdom; he schemed therefore to procure the election of a general whose success was extremely improbable.

The western armament of Anthemius obeyed a more efficient commander. The pagan Marcellinus, who, in defiance of Emperors, ruled in Dalmatia as an independent prince, was reconciled with Leo, and he left the palace of Diocletian and the city of the tepid Jader to take the command of the Italian fleet. A Roman was now going forth from Illyria to subdue the pirates of Africa; seven hundred years before, the Romans, before their great conflict with the African power, had gone forth to subdue the pirates of Illyria. But here too lay a disturbing element. The participation of Marcellinus in the project alienated Ricimer, who was his enemy; and just as Aspar regarded the project with disfavour, Ricimer, who, as has been already remarked, held in the West a somewhat similar position to that of Aspar in the East, also stood aloof.

The plan of operations was that the eastern forces should be divided into two parts, and that thus the Vandals should be attacked at three points at the same time. Basiliscus himself was to sail directly against Carthage. Heraclius, another general, having taken up the forces of Egypt on his way, was to disembark at Tripolis, and having occupied that town was to march to Carthage by land. Marcellinus, with the Italian forces, was to surprise the Vandals in Sardinia, and sail thence to join the eastern armies at Carthage.

If the commander-in-chief had not been Basiliscus, and if the opponent had not been Gaiseric, the expedition would have easily succeeded. But Gaiseric, though physically the least, was mentally the greatest of the barbarians of his time. He was small in stature, ugly in countenance, but in cunning he was without an equal. He veiled the machinations of his thoughts under a silence that was rarely broken, and he despised luxury, although he was avaricious as well as ambitious. Even as it was, though Basiliscus had such a foe to cope with, success was within the grasp of his hand. The invaders were welcome to the Catholics of Africa, who were sorely persecuted by their Arian lords. Marcellinus accomplished his work in Sardinia without difficulty; Heraclius met no obstacle in executing his part of the project; and the galleys of Basiliscus scattered the fleet of the Vandals in the neighbourhood of Sicily. On hearing of this disaster, Gaiseric gave up all for lost; the Roman general had only to strike a decisive blow and Carthage would not have resisted. But he let the opportunity slip, and, taking up his station in a haven at some distance from Carthage, he granted to the humble prayers of his wily opponent a respite of five days, of which Gaiseric made good use. He prepared a new fleet and a number of fireships. The winds favoured his designs, and he suddenly bore down on the Roman armament, which, under the combined stress of surprise, adverse wind, and the destructive ships of fire, was routed and at least half destroyed. Basiliscus fled with the remnant to Sicily, to join Marcellinus, whose energy and resources might have possibly retrieved the disaster; but the hand of an assassin, inspired perhaps by Ricimer, rendered this hope futile. Heraclius, who had not reached Carthage when he heard of the defeat of the fleet, retraced his steps, and Basiliscus returned to Constantinople, where amid popular odium he led a life of retirement at Heraclea on the Propontis, until he appeared on the scene of public life again after Leo's death.

The failure of this expedition, organized on such a grand scale that it might have seemed invincible, must have produced a very great moral effect, somewhat like the moral effect produced in Europe by the collapse of the Spanish Armada. The Roman Empire had put forth all its strength and had signally failed, not against the combined powers of the barbarians, but against one barbaric nation. This must have not only raised the pretensions and arrogance of the Vandals themselves, but increased the contempt of other German nations for the Roman power; it was felt to be a humiliating disaster by the government at Constantinople, while the government in Italy was too habituated to defeat to be gravely affected. Immense sums of money had been laid out on equipping the armament, and its failure produced a state of bankruptcy in the imperial treasury, which lasted for about thirty years.

The idea was abroad that the arrival in Italy of Anthemius, the political son of Leo, if I may venture to use the expression, was the inauguration of a return to unity; and this formed the theme of the panegyric of Sidonius Apollinaris on the Emperor Anthemius. He hails Constantinople thus—

salve sceptrorum columnen, regina orientis,

orbis Roma tui,

and describes the education of Anthemius in terms of the highest eulogy. Anthemius was suspiciously inclined to paganism, and the pagan character of the poem written by the future bishop of Clermont did not offend him; his predecessor Severus is described as having increased the number of the gods. Ricimer is introduced as

invictus Ricimer quem publica fata

respiciunt.

The poet was made prefect of Rome.

But in Italy the Greek Anthemius was not popular. He was too fond of philosophy or thaumaturgy; he loved strange doctrines; he was inclined to be “Hellenic”, in the bad sense of the word. And in spite of his high standard of justice and honest attempts to administer the laws—in one of his own laws he states a fair ideal of equity—he does not seem to have been looked on with favour by the Italians.

Soon his relations to Ricimer changed from friendliness or mutual tolerance to distrust and hostility; the father-in-law regretted that he had married his daughter Alypia to a *barbarian*; the son-in-law retorted with the contemptuous epithets Galatian and Greekling (*Graeculus*). And in this contest, in spite of the unpopularity of Anthemius, the senate and the people espoused his cause against the Suevian.

Thus it came to pass that in the year 472 Italy was practically divided into two kingdoms, the Emperor reigning at Home, the Patrician ruling at Milan. Epiphanius, the bishop of Pavia, was employed to bring about a reconciliation—a characteristic instance of the position of the Church at this period—but the army of Ricimer soon besieged Rome. Leo had overcome the power of Aspar in the East; was his son Anthemius to overcome the power of Ricimer in the West? For the two problems were similar; and there is a dark notice in a chronicle which suggests that the opposition of Aspar and his sons to Leo may have had hidden links of connection with the opposition of Ricimer to Anthemius.

The hostilities at Rome lasted for five months, the senate and people siding with the Emperor, while Ricimer headed the multitude of his own barbarians. Along with the besieger was the Scyrian Odovacar, the son of Edecon, destined soon to become famous. Ricimer guarded the Tiber and cut off the supplies; the Romans were soon pressed by hunger and resolved to fight. An army under Billimer had come from Gaul to assist them. The engagement resulted in heavy losses on the imperial side, and the victor subdued the rest by treachery.

Gaiseric, it will be remembered, had wished to have a voice in the election of an Emperor and to elevate Olybrius, the husband of the younger Placidia. At this time Olybrius was at Constantinople, and his Vandal connections made him a suspicious person in the eyes of Leo, who planned a curious stratagem. Hearing of the dangers of his colleague Anthemius at Rome, he employed Olybrius on a mission thither to compass the reconciliation of the two opponents. At the same time he sent a private messenger to Anthemius with a letter instructing him to put Olybrius to death. The artifice was frustrated, as Ricimer intercepted the letter.

This circumstance led to the consummation which Leo least wished. After the success gained in the battle, Ricimer invested Olybrius with the purple; and the new Emperor might claim with some fairness to be a member of the Theodosian house. As for Anthemius, when his adherents had surrendered to “the barbarians” and left him “naked”, he disguised himself and mingled with the mendicants who begged in the church of St. Chrysogonus. There he was beheaded by Gundobad, Ricimer’s nephew (4th July 472).

The position of affairs was now the reverse of what it had been in the days of Honorius and Stilicho, or in the days of Valentinian and Aetius. When dissensions arose in 408 between the father-in-law and the son-in-law, the son-in-law had the upper hand; and when there was war in 472 between the father-in-law and the son-in-law, the son-in-law also had the upper hand. But in the earlier case the son-in-law was the Emperor, in the later case the son-in-law was the foreign general.

Ricimer did not survive his victim long; he died in less than six weeks; and the new Emperor whom he had created survived him by only two months.

The death of Ricimer, notwithstanding his anomalous position, was a blow to Italy of the same kind as the deaths of Stilicho and Aetius. While Stilicho lived, there was an able general to protect the peninsula against Alaric; when he died, Alaric entered and laid waste. While Aetius lived, there was a general formidable to Gaiseric; when he died, Gaiseric sailed over and plundered. While Ricimer lived, the barbarians did not venture to enter Italy; but four years after his death, they not only entered but they occupied. If Olybrius had lived longer and been a stronger man—he has no personality in history—his Theodosian connection might have aided him to stay the approach of the day when Italy would be ruled by a German king.

CHAPTER III

ZENO

Zeno the Isaurian had succeeded to the power and influence of Aspar and Ardaburius at Leo's court, and he was marked out by his marriage with Ariadne, the Emperor's daughter, as a probable successor. He was hardly less rude than Aspar, for the Isaurians were semi-barbarous freebooters, but he had the advantage of not being a German. When Leo I died in 474 his grandson Leo, the infant son of Zeno and Ariadne, was proclaimed Emperor, in accordance with his grandfather's wishes. The child conferred the imperial dignity on his father and died in the same year, leaving to Zeno nominally as well as actually the sole power.

Zeno was unpopular, and there was a strong spirit of public hatred against the Isaurians, who formed a portion of the army, and by their violence often irritated the inhabitants of Constantinople. Moreover, the elevation of Zeno was not pleasing to the Empress-mother Verina, a woman of great energy and capacity for intrigue. Her brother Basiliscus, who had lived in retirement since his conduct of the Vandalic expedition, aspired to the throne, and he was supported in his designs by the general Illus, a man of considerable influence and ability. The result was that Zeno's position was so insecure that, in the face of a formidable conspiracy, he was obliged to flee to Isauria, with his wife Ariadne and his mother Lallis, at the end of the year 475 (November). Verina was scheming to place her paramour Patricius on the throne, but her endeavours turned to the profit of her brother Basiliscus, whom the ministers and senators elected to the purple after Zeno's flight. This change of power was an opportunity for the Byzantines to settle accounts of old standing with the obnoxious countrymen of Zeno, and a colossal massacre of Isaurians took place in the capital. War was carried on in Isauria against Zeno by Illus and his brother Trocundus, but they soon deserted the cause of Basiliscus, who had already made himself odious by his extortions, and went over to his rival. His nephew Harmatius, a young fop of whom I shall give some account hereafter, was then created *magister militum per Thrarias*, and sent with an army against the forces of Zeno and Illus, which were advancing against Constantinople. Illus induced him also to desert the usurper, and this desertion decided the fall of Basiliscus and the restoration of Zeno (July 477). Theodoric, the son of Theodemir, and his Ostrogoths, who had been settled in Lower Moesia, had embraced the cause of Zeno.

In his reign of twenty months Basiliscus had made himself very unpopular. He favoured the heresy of monophysitism, he exacted money from bishops, and was only prevented by a crowd of monks from doing violence to Acacius the Patriarch of Constantinople. His fiscal rapacity was so great that he did not spare from severe taxation even the humblest mechanic, and it was said that the world was full of tears at his exactions. Yet we also hear that he contributed 50 lbs. of gold to restore Gabala in Syria, which suffered from an earthquake in his reign. He and his family were banished by Zeno to a fortress in Cappadocia, where they were mured up and allowed to perish of hunger.

A public misfortune of a most deplorable nature, which has probably had manifold indirect results of a negative character, occurred in the reign of Basiliscus, and helped, as accidents in superstitious ages always help, to render his government unpopular. This was an immense conflagration, which, beginning in the bazaar of the bronzesmiths, spread far and wide, reducing to ashes the colonnades of the public square, with the adjoining houses. But more serious than this was the destruction of the Basilike, the library founded by Julian, which contained no fewer than 120,000 books. Among these rolls, the intestine of a serpent, 120 feet long, on which the Iliad and Odyssey were written in golden characters, is specially mentioned. A still greater disaster was the destruction of the palace of Lausus, which contained among its splendours some of the most beautiful works of Greek plastic art, the Cnidian Aphrodite, the Lindian Athene, and the Samian Here. But for this fire these precious works might possibly have been still in existence, and it reminds us that the chief cause of the loss of works of art was not Christian vandalism, but rather the love of art, which collected monuments from their original scattered homes and exposed them in a mass to increased dangers of destruction in a large town. How far the loss of the library influenced the condition of culture in the succeeding centuries, it would be hard to determine.

Zeno has never been a favourite with historians, and Finlay perhaps was the first who was ready to say a good word for him. "The great work of his reign", writes Finlay, "was the formation of an army of native troops to serve as a counterpoise to the barbarian mercenaries"; and he goes on to remark that the man who successfully resisted the schemes and forces of the great Theodoric cannot have been contemptible. Yet even from the pages of Malchus we can see that he was not so bad as he was painted, Malchus himself confessing that he was in some respects superior to Leo, especially less greedy. He was not popular, for his religious policy of conciliation did not find general favour; he was not personally brave; and he was an Isaurian. But he was inclined to be mild; he desired to abstain from employing capital punishment. In fiscal administration he was perhaps less successful than his predecessors and his successor Anastasius. Malchus states that Zeno wasted all that Leo left in the treasury by donatives to his friends and inaccuracy in checking his accounts. In 477 the funds were very low, hardly sufficient to supply pay for the army. But the blame of this may rather rest with Basiliscus, who, reigning precariously for twenty months, must have been obliged to incur large expenses, to supply which he was driven to extortion, and in the following years the Ostrogoths were an incubus on the exchequer; while we must further remember that since the enormous outlay incurred by Leo's naval expedition the treasury had been in financial difficulties, which only a ruler of strict economy and business habits, like the succeeding Emperor Anastasius, could have remedied. Zeno was not a man of business, he was indolent and in many respects weak. But in defending him we need not go further than the admission of Malchus (who throughout seems to censure in Zeno weakness rather than evil inclination), that his reign would have been a good one but for the influence of one Sebastian, who was like Eutropius or Chrysaphius, and introduced a system of venality. From an adverse witness

this is an important admission. Of Sebastian we hear very little, and we may suppose that his influence was not permanent.

Malchus further states that Zeno had nothing of Leo's coarse nature, and that his wrath was not wont to be relentless. His attempt to unify the Church by his famous Henotikon, which raised up against him deadly ecclesiastical odium, has been spoken of in a former chapter, and we must remember this when we read the charges, preferred against him by ecclesiastical writers, of undisguised and almost obtrusive immorality. The favour shown by him to his countrymen the Isaurians, whom the Byzantines regarded as brutish clowns, was an additional cause of unpopularity; while the court intrigues and jealousies, which led to constant conspiracies and frequent bloodshed, throw another shadow over his rather obscure reign. The presence of the Ostrogothic pillagers in the Balkan provinces might be used by the Emperor's enemies to complete the gloomy picture.

I must give an account of some of the personages who played a part at the court of Zeno and were objects of interest in the streets of Byzantium. Harmatius, the nephew of Basiliscus, who has already been mentioned, was a young man of fashion, to whose name doubtless many scandals were attached. The most celebrated was his intrigue with Zenonis, his uncle's wife; their love is described by a historian in a passage worthy of a romance.

"Basiliscus permitted Harmatius, inasmuch as he was a kinsman, to associate freely with the Empress Zenonis. Their intercourse became intimate, and as they were both persons of no ordinary beauty they became extravagantly enamoured of each other. They used to exchange glances of the eyes, they used constantly to turn their faces and smile at each other; and the passion which they were obliged to conceal was the cause of dule and teen. They confided their trouble to Daniel a eunuch and to Maria a midwife, who hardly healed their malady by the remedy of bringing them together. Then Zenonis coaxed Basiliscus to grant her lover the highest office in the city".

The preferment which he received from his uncle elated him beyond measure. He was naturally effeminate and cruel. Theodoric, the son of Triarius, despised him as a dandy who only cared for his toilet and the care of his body; and it was said that in the days of Leo he had punished a number of Thracian rebels by cutting off their hands. When he was exalted by his mistress's husband, he conceived the idea that he was a man of valour, and he manifested this idea by dressing himself as Achilles, in which guise he used to ride about and astonish or amuse the people in the hippodrome. The populace nicknamed him Pyrrhus, on account of his pink cheeks, but he took it as a compliment to his valour, and became still more inflated with vanity. "He did not", says the historian, "slay heroes like Pyrrhus, but he was a chamberer and a wanton like Paris".

Harmatius did not long survive the return of Zeno, and his death may be considered an instance of double ingratitude. Zeno, who owed his recovery of the crown to Harmatius, kept the promise he had made to appoint him *magister militum in praesenti*, and to proclaim his son Basiliscus Caesar. But Zeno did not trust the fidelity of the new *magister*, and he engaged a man, who had risen to high rank by the patronage of Harmatius, to assassinate his patron.

Illus the Isaurian was the most important minister in the Empire after Zeno's return, but his position was surrounded by pitfalls on all sides. Not only was he the object of Verina's enmity and machinations, but Zeno seems to have viewed him with fear and suspicion, and wished to rid himself of him. Only a month or two after his reinstatement on the throne, he was suspected of having suborned a servant to assassinate Illus. In 478 Illus was made consul, and the rebuilding of an imperial *stoa* devolved upon him. One day, while he was attending to matters connected with this work, an Alan, one of the *scholarii* under the master of offices, was found with a sword, which he plainly intended to use against Illus. He confessed under torture that the prefect Epinicus had suborned him. Zeno immediately deposed the prefect, confiscated his goods, and handed his person over to Illus, who despatched him to a place of safety in Isauria. Soon afterwards, Illus invented a pretext to leave the capital himself, and visiting the prison of Epinicus, induced him to confess that he had acted in concert with Verina, the Empress-mother. Zeno and the court met him on his return in the neighbourhood of Chalcedon, and Illus induced the Emperor to consign to him that dangerous woman, while Epinicus might be allowed to return to Byzantium. Verina was then placed in confinement in an Isaurian castle, named Dalisandon, having previously taken the vows of a nun at Tarsus. At this period Isauria and Cappadocia were the recognized places for the banishment of political prisoners, and Illus, being a native of Isauria, had considerable influence there. Another captive, whom he kept immured in an Isaurian stronghold, was Longinus the Emperor's brother—for what reason we know not. But it is evident that the influence and power of Illus in those regions made him formidable to Zeno.

It appears that in 483, Illus, whose life had been recently attempted, this time by the Empress Ariadne, withdrew to Asia Minor, on a plea of wishing for change of air, perhaps really feeling that his life was not safe in Constantinople. In the meantime a certain Leontius had raised the flag of revolt in Syria, with the intention, it was said, of reviving the forlorn cause of paganism. It seems that Illus was then appointed commander-in-chief of the eastern armies, and was sent against Leontius. But for some unknown reason he incurred Zeno's suspicions, and attached himself to the cause of the rebel. Zeno had delivered an oration against him as a public enemy, sold his property, and made a present of the proceeds to the cities of the Isaurians. The object of the last measure was, we may suspect, to bid for their adherence against Illus.

Illus and Leontius made use of the Empress Verina, who was living as a prisoner in the Isaurian castle, to give a semblance of legitimacy to their cause. She crowned Leontius at Tarsus, and issued in his interests a letter which was sent to various cities. Illus, moreover, put himself in communication with Odovacar, the king of Italy, who, however, was unable to give active help, as well as with the Persians and the Armenians. Leontius entered Antioch on 27th June 484 and established there an imperial court. Theodoric the Ostrogoth, who afterwards conquered Italy, was sent to put down the revolt, and it was practically crushed very soon, although the two leaders held out for four years in the Isaurian castle of Papirius, where Verina died during the siege. The fortress was taken by the treachery of Illus' sister-in-law, the wife of Trocundus, and Illus and Leontius were slain.

The most noteworthy circumstance about the revolt of Illus is that he was an Isaurian rebelling against an Isaurian Emperor. It is impossible to unravel the skein of events and see the motives of the two chief actors, Illus and Zeno, as our sources are mere fragments, but it is hardly justifiable to apprehend its chief significance as an attempt to revive paganism. It is possible that this conception may have guided Leontius, though he seems to have been an insignificant and incapable person, and was finally a mere figure-head, but it was the intimacy of Illus with a very remarkable philosopher named Pamprepus that gave the movement a pagan character. It need hardly be observed that such an idea as the revival of pagan religion had as little real danger for Christianity in the reign of Zeno, as the scheme of Pomponius Laetus for a similar revival in the fifteenth century.

Illus was a man with a taste for letters, as well as a good military captain, and he spent the long hours of the siege in the Isauric fort in study. At Constantinople he perhaps affected to be a patron of letters, but at all events he discovered Pamprepus of Panopolis in Upper Egypt, who became his friend, confidant, and spiritual adviser. The career of Pamprepus is worthy of record, as it illustrates life in the fifth century. He went in his youth from Egypt to the university of Athens, where he studied under the Neoplatonist Proclus, and was appointed professor of grammar (i.e. of philology); but he was not only a grammarian and a philosopher, he was also a poet, doubtless of the school of Nonnus, who was born in the same city. Obligated to leave Athens, in consequence of a quarrel with a magistrate, he sought his fortune in the capital, and won the patronage of Illus by a poem which he recited. The influential statesman procured him a professorship, and increased his stipend by a grant of his own. As a man of the highest intellectual ability, as the intimate friend of Illus, and as a pagan who gave bold and undisguised utterance to his unacceptable opinions in a city so religious as Byzantium, he was one of the observed and the dangerous, feared and disliked. In the eyes of the ordinary Christian a Greek or heathen was a nefarious individual who was probably a magician; and the mysticism of a Neoplatonist would naturally present many opportunities for charges of sorcery. During the absence of Illus (478) he was banished, but Illus brought his favourite back in triumph and procured him a seat in the senate and the quaestorship, a post which was especially appropriate to a learned man who could write in a good style. The philosopher accompanied Illus in his revolt, and perished with him.

The revolt of Illus was not the only trouble that tended to make Zeno feel insecure. Another rising took place at an earlier period in his reign which was very nearly successful, although Illus supported the throne. Anthemius, the Emperor of the West, had two sons, Marcian and Procopius. Marcian married Leontia, the second daughter of Leo, who could boast of the fact that she was born in the purple as a ground of superiority to her sister the Empress Ariadne.

They conspired at the end of 479 to dethrone Zeno on account of the banishment of Verina, and they enlisted a number of citizens as well as barbarians in their cause. One of the brothers surprised the imperial guard in the palace, while everything was quiet in the midday heat, and the Emperor was only saved by escaping from the building. But time was wasted, and at night Illus conveyed Isaurian soldiers from Chalcedon in market boats, as Marcian had seized the ferries. On the following day the rebels were overpowered; Marcian was compelled to take orders and banished to Cappadocia; while Procopius found a refuge in the camp of the Ostrogoth Theodoric, the son of Triarius, who had approached the city with hostile intent.

Zeno had one son, of the same name, whose brief and strangely disreputable career must have been one of the chief scandals at the court. His father desired that he should be carefully trained in manly exercises, but unscrupulous young courtiers, who wished to profit by the abundant supplies of money which the boy could command, instructed him in all the vulgar excesses of luxury and voluptuousness. They introduced him to boys of his own age, who did not refuse to satisfy his desires, while their adulation flattered his vanity to such a degree that he treated all who came in contact with him as if they were servants. His excesses brought on an internal disease, and he died, still a boy, after lying for many days in a senseless condition.

In the declining years of Zeno his brother Longinus began to gain influence; he filled high official posts, and looked forward to succeeding his brother. Zeno, however, consulted a certain Maurianos, skilled in occult learning, who informed him that a silentarius would be the next Emperor. This prophecy was unfortunate for a distinguished patrician of high fame named Pelagius, who had once belonged to the silentarii, for Zeno, seized with alarm and suspicion, put him to death. The Emperor in his last days seems to have been a prey to suspicions, as was indeed not unnatural, seeing that so many rebellions had vexed his reign; and his unhappiness was increased by his bad health. An attack of epilepsy carried him off in April 491.

One act of Zeno's latter years deserves special notice, the suppression of the school of Edessa in 489. Edessa was a literary centre in western Mesopotamia, and exercised a vast influence in diffusing Hellenism in those regions. The teachers of Edessa, however, were Nestorians, and it is to this fact that we must ascribe Zeno's narrow-minded act, which was clearly designed to please the monophysites and Chalcedonians.

CHAPTER IV

THE OSTROGOTHS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

We saw how in the reign of Arcadius the Visigoths of Alaric abode in the Illyrian peninsula, and almost formed a kingdom there, before they invaded Italy and established themselves in the West; we shall now see how in the reign of Zeno the same phenomenon was repeated in the case of the Ostrogoths of Theodoric, how they almost formed a kingdom in the land of Mount Haemus, before they went westward and founded a realm in Italy.

After the death of Attila in 453, the subject nations immediately threw off the yoke of the Huns, and asserted their independence on the field of Netad (454). Of these nations the chief was the Ostrogoths, over whom three brothers ruled jointly, Walamir, Theodemir, and Widemir. These brothers made an arrangement with the Emperor Valentinian, by which, probably as federate, they were allowed to occupy Pannonia. After some years, during which they repulsed an attack of the remnant of the Huns, they came into collision with the Emperor Leo, on account of an unpaid allowance of gold, and ravished the Roman provinces; but peace was made in 461, in consequence of which Theodoric, the son of Theodemir, was sent as a hostage to Constantinople, where he remained for ten years, and had the advantage of a Roman training. This training, however, did not perhaps include letters, for it is said that he was never able to write. During these ten years his nation was engaged in wars with the Suevi and King Hunimund, in which Walamir, his uncle, whom contemporary Greek historians wrongly called the father of Theodoric, was killed.

In 471 (or 472) Theodoric returned to his people. He distinguished himself by a campaign against the Sarmatians, and a year or two later joined his father in an invasion of Illyricum, while Widemir attacked the Romans of Italy. The father and son marched, capturing cities as they went, as far as Thessalonica, and there the old treaty between the Romans and Goths was renewed, and certain towns (Pella, Methone, Pydna, Beroea) in the neighbourhood of the Thermaic Gulf were assigned to the Goths. But for some unrecorded reason they were soon transferred to Lower Moesia and Scythia, where we find them stationed during the usurpation of Basiliscus.

About the same time Theodoric (Strabo, "Squinter"), the son of Triarius, the chief of another tribe of Ostrogoths that was supported by the bounty of the Empire, comes into prominence. He could not boast the noble descent of his namesake Theodoric, the son of Theodemir the Amal, from whom he must be carefully distinguished. War broke out between the Ostrogoths and Scyrians in 467, and both peoples applied to Leo for assistance. The general Aspar counselled the Emperor to remain neutral, but Leo determined to listen to the prayers of the Scyri. Aspar was on friendly terms with the Goths, and it was because he knew that there was no chance of Leo's aiding them that he advised him to reject both requests. In 468 Leo rejected overtures of the sons of Attila, and in the following year the remnant of the Huns combined with the Goths against the Empire, but the campaign was unsuccessful because they quarrelled among themselves.

The Ostrogothic chief Theodoric, son of Triarius, aspired to succeed to the position of Aspar, and in 473 he sent an embassy to that effect to Constantinople. When Leo refused his demands, Theodoric, having divided his forces in two parts, with one division ravaged the territory of Philippi and with the other reduced Arcadiopolis by starvation. These energetic proceedings extorted concessions from Leo; he agreed to pay a yearly stipend of 2000 lbs. of gold to the Goths, to allot them a district in Thrace, to create Theodoric *magister eq. et ped. praes. mil.* Theodoric, on his part, was to fight for the Emperor against all enemies except the Vandals. He was, moreover, to be recognized as king of the Goths

In the troubles that followed Leo's decease, the son of Triarius took the part of Basiliscus, while the son of Theodemir supported Zeno. The relations which existed between Zeno and the two Theodorics during the three years succeeding Zeno's restoration (477-479) may be divided into three stages. In the first stage Zeno and the son of Theodemir are combined against the son of Triarius; in the second stage the two Gothic chieftains join forces against the Emperor; in the third stage the son of Triarius and Zeno are allied against the son of Theodemir.

In 477 Zeno received an embassy from the son of Triarius and his federate Goths who were desirous to make a treaty with the successful Emperor. The ambassadors reminded Zeno of the injuries which the son of Theodemir had inflicted on the Empire, though he was called a Roman "general" and a friend. It appears that Theodoric the Amal, who was now stationed in Lower Moesia, had received the title of general in reward for his opposition to Basiliscus. Zeno called the senate, and it was concluded to be impossible to support the two generals and their armies, for the public resources were hardly sufficient to pay the Roman troops. The exchequer, it must not be forgotten, had not yet recovered from the failure of the Vandal expedition of 468. As the son of Triarius had always shown himself hostile at heart, was unpopular on account of his cruelty, and had assisted Basiliscus "the tyrant", it was determined to reject his offer. Yet, as Zeno for a time withheld a reply, three friends of Theodoric in Constantinople, Anthimus, a physician, and two others, wrote him an account of the course which matters were taking; but the letters were discovered, the affair was examined by a senatorial commission of three persons, in the presence of the *magister officiorum*, and the three friends of the Goths were punished by flogging and exile. It is not quite certain, but it is probable, that after the rejection of his request the son of Triarius harried Thrace up to the walls of the capital.

Soon after this, probably in 478, the Emperor, perceiving that while the son of Triarius was becoming stronger and consolidating forces, the son of Theodemir was becoming weaker, deemed it wise to come to terms with the former. He therefore sent an embassy proposing that the son of the chief should be sent to Byzantium as a hostage, and that Theodoric himself should pass the life of a private individual in Thrace, retaining what he had already secured by plunder, but binding himself to plunder no more. Theodoric refused, representing that it was impossible for him, having collected tribes together and formed an expedition, to withdraw now. Accordingly Zeno decided on war; troops were summoned from the dioceses of Pontus, Asia, and the East, and it was expected that Illus would assume the command. It seems, however, that Illus did not take the field, for we find Martinianus, his brother-in-law, conducting a campaign against the son of Triarius in the same year, and proving himself incompetent to maintain discipline in his own army. Then Zeno sent an embassy to the other Theodoric, whose headquarters were at Marcianopolis in Lower Moesia, calling upon him to fulfil the duties of a Roman general and advance against the enemy. He replied that the Emperor and senate must first swear that they will never make terms with the son of Triarius. The senators took an oath that they would not do so unless the Emperor wished it, and the Emperor swore that he would not break the contract if it were not first violated by Theodoric himself.

The son of Theodemir then moved southwards. The master of soldiers of Thrace was to meet him with two thousand cavalry and ten thousand hoplites at the passes of Mount Haemus; when he had crossed into Thrace another force was to join him at Hadrianople, consisting of twenty thousand foot and six thousand horse; and, if necessary, Heraclea and the cities in the neighbourhood were prepared to send additional troops. But the master of soldiers was not at the gates of Haemus, and when the Ostrogoths arrived on the banks of the Hebrus no troops met them there. At Mount Sondis they fell in with the army of the other Theodoric, and the antagonists plundered one another's flocks and horses. Then the son of Triarius, approaching his rival's tent, reviled him as a traitor to desert his own countrymen, and as a fool not to see through the plan of the Romans, who wished to rid themselves of the Goths, without trouble on their own part, by instigating them to mutual destruction, and were quite indifferent which party won. These arguments took effect, and the two Theodorics made peace. This is the second stage of alliance, which we noted above.

The reconciled Ostrogothic chieftains then sent ambassadors to Byzantium (in the beginning of 479). The son of Theodemir, upbraiding Zeno for having deceived him with false promises, demanded the concession of territory to his people, a supply of corn to support his army till harvest time, and also that the domestics, who collected the revenue, should be sent at once to give an account of what they had received; and he urged that, if these demands were not satisfied, he would be unable to restrain his soldiers from plundering, in order to support themselves. The son of Triarius demanded that the arrangements he had made with Leo (in 473) should be carried out, that the payment he had been accustomed to receive in former years should be continued, and that certain kinsmen of his, who had been committed to the care of Illus and the Isaurians, should be restored. We are not informed what answer Zeno made to the elder Theodoric, or whether he made any; to the son of Theodemir he replied, that if he consented to break with his namesake and make war upon him he would give him 2000 lbs. of gold and 10,000 lbs. of silver immediately, besides a yearly revenue of 10,000 aurei and an alliance with the daughter of Olybrius or some other noble lady. But his promises did not avail, and Zeno prepared for war, notifying his intention to accompany the army in person. This intention created great enthusiasm in the army, but at the last moment Zeno drew back, and the murmurs of the soldiers threatened a revolt, to prevent which the army was broken up and the regiments sent to their winter quarters.

When the army was disbanded, Zeno's only resort was to make peace on any terms with the son of Triarius. In the meantime Theodoric, the son of Theodemir, was engaged in ravaging the fairest parts of Thrace in the neighbourhood of Mount Rhodope, which divides Thrace from Macedonia; he not only ruined the crops, but extorted from the farmers or slew them. The son of Triarius, when he received Zeno's message—remarking that he was sorry that the innocent husbandmen, for whose welfare Zeno did not care in the least, suffered from the ravages of his rival—concluded a peace on the conditions that Zeno was to supply a yearly payment sufficient to support thirteen thousand men selected by himself (Theodoric); that he was to be appointed to the command of two *scholae* and to the post of a master of soldiers in *praesenti*, and receive all the dignities which Basiliscus had bestowed upon him; that his kinsmen were to inhabit a city assigned by Zeno. The Emperor did not delay to execute this agreement; Theodoric, son of Theodemir, was deposed from the office of master of soldiers, and Theodoric, son of Triarius, appointed in his stead. This marks the third stage in these changeful relations.

In the meantime the son of Theodemir laid waste Macedonia, including Stobi, its chief city. He even threatened Thessalonica, and the inhabitants felt so little confidence in Zeno that they actually believed that the Emperor wished to hand their city over to the barbarians. A sedition broke out which ended in the transference of the keys of the city from the praetorian prefect to the archbishop, a remarkable evidence of the fact that the people looked on the ministers of the Church as defenders against imperial oppression. These suspicions of the Emperor's intentions seem, however, in this case to have been unjust, and Zeno sent Artemidorus and Phocas to Theodoric, who was persuaded by their representations to stay his army and send an embassy to Byzantium. Theodoric demanded that a plenipotentiary envoy should be sent to treat with him. Zeno sent Adamantius, directing him to offer the Goths land in Pautalia, a district of Macedonia, on the borders of Thrace, and 200 lbs. of gold to supply food for that year, as no corn had been sown in the designated region. The motive of Zeno in choosing Pautalia was that if the Goths accepted it they would occupy a position between the Illyrian and Thracian armies, and so might be more easily controlled.

Meanwhile Theodoric had proceeded by the Egnatian way to Heraclea in Macedonia, and sent a message to Epirus to one Sidimund, an Ostrogoth who had been in the service of Leo and had inherited an estate near Dyrrachium, where he was living peaceably. Theodoric induced him to make an attempt to take possession of that important city of New Epirus, and for this purpose Sidimund employed an ingenious device. He visited the citizens individually, informing each that the Ostrogoths were coming with Zeno's consent to take possession of the city, and advising him to move his property with all haste to some other secure town or to one of the coast islands. The fact that his representations were listened to and that he managed to dispose of a garrison of two

thousand men proves that he must have possessed considerable influence. Theodoric was at Heraclea when the messenger of Sidimund arrived with the news that the plan had been successfully carried out; and the Amal chief, having burnt a large portion of the town because its inhabitants could not supply him with provisions, set out for Epirus. This collusion of Sidimund, the Ostrogothic, subject of the Empire, with Theodoric, the Ostrogothic despoiler of the Empire, is an example of the manner in which the Germans within helped the Germans without, or more strictly, those who were half foes and half dependants, for Theodoric had been a Roman general, was still a Roman patrician, and had been educated at New Rome.

When he left Heraclea—the city now called Monastir, situated in that plain of Pelagonia which became famous on one occasion in the later history of the Roman Empire—the Gothic invader proceeded along the Egnatian way, crossing the range of the Scardus mountains, and arrived at Lychnidus, which is probably identical with Ochrida. Built in a strong situation on the shore of Lake Ochrida, and well provided with water and victuals, Lychnidus defied the assault of the barbarians, who, unwilling to delay, hastened onwards, and having seized Scampa, the most important town between Lychnidus and Dyrrachium, arrived at the goal of their journey.

It may be wondered whether at Dyrrachium (the Calais of the south Adriatic passage if Brundisium was the Dover) it entered the mind of Theodoric to ship his people across to the western peninsula and attack the Italian kingdom of Odovacar in the south, as in old time the power of Rome and the Latin name was attacked by the Epeirotes Pyrrhus. Adamantius, the ambassador who had been sent by Zeno to treat with him, seems to have thought it more likely that the Ostrogoths would employ vessels for the purpose of plundering the Epeirotes or Dalmatian coasts, for he sent a post messenger to Dyrrachium, to blame Theodoric for his hostile advance while negotiations were pending, and to exhort him to remain quiet and not to seize ships until he arrived himself.

Starting from Thessalonica, and passing Pella on the Via Egnatia, Adamantius came to Edessa, the modern Vodena, where he found the captain Sabinianus, and informed him that he had been appointed master of soldiers in Illyricum. The messenger, who had been sent to Dyrrachium, returned in the company of a priest, to assure Adamantius that he might proceed confidently to the camp of Theodoric; and having issued a mandate to collect all the soldiers available, the general and the ambassador moved forward to Lychnidus. Here Sabinianus made difficulties about binding himself by oath to restore the hostages whom Theodoric was willing to deliver as a gage for the personal safety of Adamantius. This produced a deadlock; Theodoric naturally refused to give the hostages. Adamantius naturally refused to visit Theodoric.

Adamantius invented a simple solution of the difficulty, which led to a strange and striking scene. Taking with him a body of two hundred soldiers he climbed by an obscure and narrow path, where horses had never set hoof before, and reached by a circuitous route an impregnable fort, built on a high cliff, close to the city of Dyrrachium. At the foot of the cliff yawned a deep ravine, through which a river flowed. A messenger was sent to inform Theodoric that the Roman ambassador awaited him, and, attended by a few horse-soldiers, the son of Theodemir rode to the bank of the river. The physical features, the cliff, the chasm, and the river, are sufficiently simple and definite to enable us to call up vividly this strange scene. The attendants of both Adamantius and Theodoric had retired beyond range of earshot; and “they twain, like a king with his fellow”—the representative of the Emperor standing on the edge of the cliff, and the Ostrogothic chieftain, whose name was in later years to become so great, on the opposite side of the ravine,—held “converse of desolate speech”.

“I elected to live”, complained Theodoric, “beyond the borders of Thrace, far away Scythia, deeming that if I abode there I should trouble no man, and should be able to obey all the behests of the Emperor. But ye summoned me as to war against Theodoric, and promised, firstly, that the master of soldiers in Thrace would meet me with his army, yet he never appeared; secondly, ye promised that Claudius, the steward of the Gothic contingent, would come with the pay for foreign troops, yet I never saw him; thirdly, ye gave me guides who, leaving the better roads that would have taken me to the quarters of the foe, led me by steep and precipitous rocky paths, where I wellnigh perished with all my train, advancing as I was with cavalry, wagons, and all the furniture of camp, and exposed to the attacks of the enemy. I was therefore constrained to come to terms with them, and owe them a debt of gratitude that they did not annihilate me, betrayed as I was by you and in their power”.

“The Emperor”, replied Adamantius, “bestowed upon you the title of Patrician, and created you a master of soldiers. These are the highest honours that crown the labours of the most deserving Roman officers, and nothing should induce you to cherish towards their bestower other than filial sentiments”. Having endeavoured to defend or extenuate the treatment of which Theodoric complained, the envoy proceeded thus: “You are acting intolerably in seizing Roman cities, while you are expecting an embassy; and remember that the Romans held you at their mercy, a prisoner, surrounded by their armies, amid the mountains and rivers of Thrace, whence you could never have extricated yourself, if they had not permitted you to withdraw, not even were your forces tenfold as great as they are. Allow me to counsel you to assume a more moderate attitude towards the Emperor, for you cannot in the end overcome the Romans when they press on you from all sides. Leave Epirus and the cities of this region—we cannot allow such great cities to be occupied by you and their inhabitants to be expelled—and go to Dardania, where there is an extensive territory of rich soil, uninhabited, and sufficient to support your host in plenty”.

To this proposal Theodoric replied that he would readily consent, but that his followers, who had recently endured many hardships, would be unwilling to leave their quarters in Epirus, where they had fully expected to pass the winter. He proposed a compromise, and engaged that if he were permitted to winter at Dyrrachium he would migrate to Dardania in the ensuing spring. He added that he was quite ready to leave the unwarlike mass of his Ostrogoths in any city named by Zeno, and giving up his mother and sister as hostages, to take the field against the son of Triarius with six thousand of his most martial followers, in company with the Illyrian army; when he had conquered his rival he expected to succeed to the post of master of soldiers and to be received in New Rome as a Roman. He also observed that he was prepared, if the Emperor wished, “to go to Dalmatia and

restore Julius Nepos". Adamantius was unable to promise that the wishes of the Goth would be acceded to; it was necessary to send a messenger to Byzantium to consult the Emperor. And thus the interview terminated.

Meanwhile the military forces, stationed in the Illyrian cities, had assembled at Lychnidus, around the standard of Sabinianus. It was announced to the general that a band of the Ostrogoths led by Theudimund, the brother of Theodoric, was descending in secure negligence from Mount Candaira, which separates the valley of the Genusus from that of the Drilo.

This band had formed the rear of the Ostrogoths' line of march, and had not yet reached Dyrrachium. Sabinianus sent a few infantry soldiers by a circuitous mountain route, with minute directions as to the hour and place at which they were to appear; and himself with the rest of the army proceeded thither, after the evening meal, by a more direct way. Marching during the night he assailed the company of Theudimund at dawn of day. Theudimund and his mother, who was with him, fled with all speed into the plain, and, having crossed a deep gully, destroyed the bridge which spanned it to cut off pursuit. This act, while it saved them, sacrificed their followers, who turned at bay upon the Romans. Two thousand wagons and more than five thousand captives were taken, and a great booty.

After this the Emperor received two messages, one from Adamantius announcing the proposals of Theodoric, the other from Sabinianus exaggerating his victory, and dissuading from the conclusion of peace. War seemed more honourable to Zeno, and the pacific offers were rejected; Sabinianus was permitted or commanded to continue the war, which seems to have been protracted in these regions for more than two years longer. But the able general was murdered by an ungrateful master; and we hear that John the Scythian and Moschianus were sent to succeed him.

Of the events of the following years our notices are meagre. We find the son of Triarius assisting Illus in the suppression of the revolt of Marcian in the same year in which the campaign of Epirus took place. Soon afterwards we hear that he operated successfully against Huns, and we may be sure that these Huns were identical with the Bulgarians, who were now for the first time roused up by Zeno to make war against both the Theodorics. From another source we learn that Theodoric, the son of Theodemir, defeated an army of Bulgarians. Hence we may conclude that, in the year 480, the two Ostrogothic chieftains combined against the Empire, and that Zeno sought the alliance of the Bulgarians, who, in the movements that had ensued upon the dissolution of Attila's power, had migrated westward from their homes near the Caspian and hovered on the lower Danube. Moreover, both the Theodorics gained victories over the Bulgarian forces.

In the following year (481) the son of Triarius advanced against Constantinople itself, and he would easily have reduced it if Illus had not guarded the gates in time. Thence he passed to the so-called Sycae (a suburb), where he again failed in an attempt on the city. It remained for him to proceed to the place named *Pros Hestiais* and the so-called Losthenion, and endeavour to cross the straits to Bithynia. But he was defeated in a sea-fight, and departed to Thrace. Thence he set forth for Greece (Hellas) with his son Recitach and his two brothers and his wife and about 30,000 Goths (Scythians). And when he was at the Stable of Diomedea he was killed. Having mounted his horse in the morning he was thrown by it on a spear which was standing erect beside the wall of the tent. Others asserted that the blow was inflicted on him by his son Recitach because he had whipped him. His wife Sigilda buried him by night. Recitach succeeded to his authority over the people, his father's brothers sharing in the power. But he slew them afterwards, and reigned alone over the land of the Thracians, performing more outrageous acts than his father had performed. Recitach was soon afterwards slain by Theodoric, the son of Theodemir, whom Zeno instigated to the deed (483 or 484).

In 482 we find Theodoric—the name is no longer ambiguous—ravaging both the Macedonias and Thessaly and capturing the town of Larissa. For the ensuing six years (until 488) he continues to be a thorn in the side of the Roman Emperor, and a burden and menace to the lands of the Haemus, though, for the most part, he is not openly hostile, having been conciliated by honours and benefits. Parts of Moesia and Dacia were conceded to him (483), and he was appointed master of soldiers. In 484 he enjoyed the great dignity of giving his name to the year as consul, and he assisted Zeno against the rebel Illus. But three years later (487) he marched on Constantinople, laying waste the country as he went; Melantias was taken, and the capital was once more threatened by the Ostrogoths. But in 488 the land was delivered from their presence, and the Ostrogoths, like the Visigoths eighty years before, left Illyricum to seek a new home in the West.

CHAPTER V

ODOVACAR THE PATRICIAN AND THEODORIC THE PATRICIAN

For more than four months after the death of Olybrius, Leo was the sole Roman Emperor, and during that time the power in Italy seems to have rested with the senate and Gundobad, the nephew of Ricimer. On 5th March 473 Glycerius, count of the domestics, was proclaimed Emperor at Ravenna, "by the advice of Gundobad", even as Severus had been proclaimed Emperor at the same place by the advice of Ricimer. But Gundobad the Burgundian was not like Ricimer, and he soon disappears from the scene of Italian politics. One important public act is recorded of the Emperor Glycerius. Italy was threatened by an invasion of Ostrogoths, who were moving from Pannonia under the leadership of Widemir; Glycerius' diplomacy averted the storm, so that it fell on Gaul.

The eastern Augustus did not approve of the new election, which was made without his consent; and he selected another as the successor of Anthemius. His candidate was the husband of his niece, Julius Nepos, the nephew of Marcellinus, who had ruled independently in Dalmatia. And the career of Julius Nepos partakes of two characters; at one moment we think of him as the successor of Anthemius, at another moment as the successor of Marcellinus.

Glycerius was easily deposed, he did not fight; and in Portus, *Portus Augusti et Trajani*, the town at the mouth of the Tiber, he was ordained as bishop of Salona. It is not quite clear whether he ever reached the city of his episcopate, and lived in the vicinity of the palace, which another ex-Emperor, far different from him, had built for himself at the mouth of the Jader. He was ordained and he died, that is all we know. Nepos was proclaimed Emperor and ruled at Rome (24th June 474).

Once more an Augustus at Old Rome and an Augustus at New Rome reigned in unison. At this juncture Epiphanius, the old bishop of Pavia, who was adored in the land of Liguria, appears on the scene, and negotiates a peace between Nepos and Euric, the Visigothic king, as he had before negotiated a peace between Anthemius and Ricimer. Euric had taken advantage of the recent confusion to extend his dominions, and had attacked Auvergne, which was bravely defended by Ecdicius, the son of Avitus. Sidonius, his brother-in-law, celebrates the enthusiasm of his grateful fellow-citizens—"How they gazed at you from the walls of Arverni". But by the peace of Epiphanius, Arverni was ceded to Euric, in order to save Italy from invasion, and Sidonius breaks out into bitter complaints of this abandonment. What made the yoke of the Visigoths at this time especially intolerable, was the fact that King Euric, who had acceded in 466, was a fanatical Arian. He oppressed the Catholics in his realm; he refused to allow Catholic bishops to be elected at Burdigala, Lemovici (Limoges), and other cities; and Sidonius hesitated whether he should regard him as the leader of an Arian party or as the king of the Goths. Ennodius says that he ruled the "Getae" with an iron sway.

But it was not with Euric, nor yet with Gundobad, that Nepos had to measure swords; a general named Orestes, of patrician rank, was to be his adversary. This was that Orestes who had been the secretary of Attila, and had married the daughter of a certain Count Romulus. He was, perhaps, employed as a general in Gaul by Julius Nepos; certain it is that he was in Italy in 475, and he disdained to submit to the rule of him whom the sovereign of New Rome had sent. He determined to do what Stilicho probably desired to do, what Aetius probably desired to do, what Gerontius probably did; he determined to elevate his son to the imperial throne, and thereby possess the supreme power himself.

We are told that Nepos went to Ravenna, and the Patrician Orestes pursued him with an army. And Nepos, fearing the coming of Orestes, embarked in a ship and fled to Salona. This was on the 28th of August 475; the same year that saw the flight of Zeno from Constantinople saw the flight of Nepos from Ravenna; but while in less than two years Zeno returned, the return of Nepos was not to be. He lived for five years at Salona, the third ex-Emperor who had bent his course thither; and if Glycerius really survived, he had the satisfaction of seeing the man who overthrew him overthrown in turn.

The Caesar Julius was succeeded by the Caesar Augustulus; for so young Romulus was nicknamed, whom his father invested with the imperial insignia (31st October 475). These names, Julius, Augustulus, Romulus, in the pages of the late chroniclers, meet us like ghosts re-arisen from past days of Roman history.

We now come to an event which is often presented in a wrong light, the resignation of Romulus Augustulus on 22d August 476. The immediate cause which led to the fall of Orestes was a mutiny of the *foederati*, as Gibbon clearly saw; Orestes' own conduct in heading a mutiny against Nepos was "retorted against himself". The foreign soldiers in the army, consisting of Heruls, Rugians, Scyrians, and other obscure nationalities, demanded a third part of Italy for themselves; Orestes boldly refused the demand, and his shield-bearer, Odovacar, headed the mutineers. Pavia, to which Orestes retired, was easily taken, and the Patrician was slain at Placentia; his brother Paul was put to death in the pine-woods of Classis. "Entering Ravenna, Odovacar deposed Augustulus, but granted him his life, pitying his infancy, and because he was comely; and he gave him an income of six thousand solidi, and sent him to live in Campania with his relations".

These words of a chronicler represent what practically took place. Italy was now to be divided among the followers of Odovacar, as south-western Gaul more than fifty years ago had been divided among the followers of Wallia. But as Athaulf and Wallia did not break with the Empire, so Odovacar did not desire to break with the Empire; he aspired to govern Italy as a Patrician, nominally dependent on the Emperor, while he was king of his own Germans. For this purpose he made the deposition of Romulus Augustulus take the form of an abdication; he induced the Roman senate to endorse formally the permanent institution of a state of things which had often actually existed in the days of Ricimer; and ambassadors were sent to the Augustus of New Rome to signify the new order of things. In 477, when Zeno had been restored to the throne of which Basiliscus had robbed him, the

messengers of the Roman senate appeared in Constantinople, and informed Zeno that they did not require a separate Emperor to govern them, but that his sole supremacy would be sufficient both for East and West; at the same time they had selected Odovacar as a person capable of protecting their interests, being both a warrior and a man endowed with political intelligence; and they now asked Zeno to confer upon him the rank of Patrician and entrust him with the administration of Italy.

At the same moment, messengers arrived from Nepos, to congratulate Zeno on his restoration, and to ask for his sympathy with one who had suffered the same misfortune, and for his aid in men and money to recover the imperial power. This message affected Zeno's reply to the envoys from Italy. To the representatives of the senate he said, that of the two Emperors whom they had received from the East, they had slain one, Anthemius, and banished the other, Nepos; let them now take Nepos back. To Odovacar, who had also sent envoys, he replied that he would do well if he accepted the rank of the Patriciate at the hands of Nepos; he praised the respect for Rome and the observance of order which had marked his conduct; and bade him crown his goodness by acknowledging the rights of the exiled Emperor. The fact that Verina was a kinswoman of the wife of Nepos was a determining element in the situation. But Odovacar did not acknowledge the claim of Nepos, and Zeno was not in a position to do more than give him advice.

The unfortunate phrase *Fall of the Western Empire* has given a false importance to the affair of 476: it is generally thought that the date marks a great era of the world. But no Empire fell in 476; there was no western Empire to fall. There was only one Roman Empire, which sometimes was governed by two or more Augusti. If, on the death of Honorius in 423, there had been no Valentinian to succeed him, and if Theodosius II had assumed the reins of government over the western provinces, and if, as is quite conceivable, no second Augustus had arisen again before the western provinces had all passed under the sway of Teutonic rulers, no one would surely have spoken of the *Fall of the Western Empire*. And yet this hypothetical case is formally the same as the actual event of 476. The fact that the union of East and West under Zeno's name was accompanied by the rule of the Teuton in Italy, has disguised the true aspect. And in any case it might be said that Julius Nepos was still Emperor; he was acknowledged by Zeno, he was acknowledged in southern Gaul; so that one might just as legitimately place the Fall of the Western Empire in 480, the year of his death. The Italian provinces were now, like Africa, like Spain, like the greater part of Gaul, practically an independent kingdom, but theoretically the Roman Empire was once more as it had been in the days of Theodosius the Great or in the days of Julian.

When the Count Marcellinus in his Chronicle wrote that on the death of Aetius "the Hesperian realm fell", he could justify his statement better than those who place 476 among the critical dates of the world's history. It is more profitable to recognize the continuity of history than to impose upon it arbitrary divisions; it is more profitable to grasp that Odovacar was the successor of Merobaudes, than to dwell with solemnity on the imaginary fall of an empire. Merobaudes, the German against whose influence in the western court the Britannic legions made a Roman manifestation, was succeeded by the semi-barbarian Stilicho, who at once encouraged and kept in check the barbarians, at once undermined and protected the Empire. After a short Roman reaction under Constantius, who, however, was constrained to do what Stilicho never did, and assign to the Goths lands within the Empire, arose the great Aetius, of German descent on his father's side and reared among barbarians, who now warred with the Teutons and now led them to battle. If Stilicho was a semi-barbarian, Aetius might be called a semi-Roman. His successor was the Suevian Ricimer; with him the opposition between the German element and the principles of the Roman Imperium appears; he will only have an Emperor whom he likes; the Emperor depends upon the Patrician, not the Patrician upon the Emperor. The next step is Odovacar the Patrician, not without an Emperor—for that would have been an absurdity in theory—but subject to an Emperor ruling, not at Ravenna or Rome, but at Constantinople, and therefore practically independent. Odovacar is likewise king of his own nation, and though he is not "King of Italy", Italy is virtually a Teutonic kingdom, like Spain and Africa. The administration of Odovacar therefore does not come within my scope. The significance of his reign is that it prepared for the kingdom of the Ostrogoths. The death of Gaiseric (477) was followed by the decline of the Vandalic power, and Odovacar had less difficulty than his predecessors in providing on that side for the safety of Italy. He annexed Dalmatia to his dominion in 481, after the death of Julius Nepos, and acted in every regard as an independent prince. It is noteworthy that the one extant coin, which may be probably attributed to Odovacar, has no reference to the Emperor.

We may pass on to the circumstances which led to the overthrow of the Scyrian monarch and the establishment of the Ostrogothic kingdom of Theodoric in the Italian peninsula. The words of a chronicle, in which the events are clearly and simply related, may be quoted.

"And so Zeno recompensed Theodoric with benefits; he made him a Patrician and consul, gave him much and sent him to Italy. And Theodoric made a compact with him, that, in case Odovacar were conquered, he should, as a reward for his labours, rule in place of Odovacar, until Zeno came himself. Accordingly Theodoric the Patrician supervened from the city of Novae with his Gothic people, being sent by the Emperor Zeno from the east to win and keep Italy for him.

"When he came he was met by Odovacar at the river Sontius (Isonzo), and fighting there was conquered and fled. But Odovacar departed to Verona and fixed his camp in the Lesser Veronese plain on the 27th of September [489]. And Theodoric followed him there, and a battle was fought and people fell on both sides; but Odovacar being overcome fled to Ravenna on the last day of September.

"And Theodoric the Patrician marched on to Mediolanum, and the greater part of Odovacar's army surrendered to him; especially Tufa, the Master of Soldiers, whom Odovacar with his chief men had ordained on the 1st April. In that year Tufa, the Master of Soldiers, was sent by Theodoric to Ravenna against Odovacar.

"Tufa, coming to Faventia, blockaded Odovacar with the army with which he had been sent; and Odovacar left Ravenna and came to Faventia. And Tufa delivered to Odovacar the comrades (*comites*) of the Patrician Theodoric, and they were put in irons and led to Ravenna.

“In the consulate of Faustus and Longinus [490], King Odovacar left Cremona and proceeded to Mediolanum. Then the Visigoths came to the assistance of Theodoric, and a battle was fought on the river Addua, and people fell on both sides. Pierius, the Count of Domestics, was slain on the 11th August, and Odovacar fled to Ravenna. Then the Patrician Theodoric followed him and came to the Pinewoods (Pineta) and pitched his camp. And he blockaded Odovacar, keeping him shut up in Ravenna for three years. And a bushel of corn reached the price of six solid! And Theodoric sent Faustus, the head of the senate, to the Emperor Zeno, hoping to receive at his hands and wear the royal apparel.

“In the consulate of Olybrius, *vir clarissimus*, [491] King Odovacar departed from Ravenna by night and entered the Pinewoods along with the Heruls and came to the camp of the Patrician Theodoric. And soldiers fell on both sides; and Levila, Odovacar’s Master of Soldiers, fleeing was killed in the river Bedens. And Odovacar being vanquished fled to Ravenna on the 15th of July.

“Then [493] Odovacar, being constrained, gave his son Thelane as a hostage to Theodoric, having his pledge that his life would be spared. Thus Theodoric entered in (to Ravenna). And some days after, Odovacar was discovered to be plotting against him, but his design was anticipated; for Theodoric with his own hand slew him with a sword in the palace of Lauretum. On the same day all his soldiers were slain, wherever they could be found, and all his kin”.

Thus Theodoric “supervened” and succeeded Odovacar, as Odovacar had supervened and succeeded Orestes. Both for one and for the other it had been a political necessity to slay his rival; it would have been dangerous to accord him his freedom; and it was not the habit of German warriors to immure fallen adversaries in dungeons. The only possible compromise would have been to divide Italy; but Theodoric had come from the East to recover the whole land. The death of Odovacar was the most natural and simple alternative; confinement in an island was not a method likely to be adopted by a German king. The statement that Odovacar was found plotting against Theodoric has been doubted, though it is quite credible; and whether it is true or not, Theodoric could hardly escape the necessity of putting him to death.

But Zeno, who had given the commission of recovering Italy to Theodoric the Patrician, had meanwhile been succeeded by Anastasius; and the new Emperor had adopted an attitude of reaction against his Isaurian predecessor. Theodoric therefore could not be sure of imperial recognition. “He had sent Faustus Niger as an ambassador to Zeno. But having learned of his death before the embassy returned, the Goths confirmed Theodoric as their king, when he entered Ravenna and slew Odovacar, and did not wait for the order of the new Emperor”. It was not till five years later that he made peace with Anastasius (498) and “received all the ornaments of the palace which Odovacar had sent to Constantinople”. The Roman Emperor tardily recognized him, but looked upon Italy as the territory of an enemy rather than of a Patrician, and even sent ships to make a raid on the coast of Apulia (508).

Theodoric adopted Ravenna, the city of Honorius and Placidia and Valentinian, as his capital. The Emperors who reigned in the days of Ricimer had seldom resided in the palace of the Laurelwood, but Odovacar had adopted it as his home. Theodoric built a new palace in another part of the city, close to the church of St. Martin, in which his Arian Goths worshipped. This church, which is still extant, was afterwards dedicated to St. Apollinaris, and is now known as San Apollinare Nuovo. Of the Ostrogothic palace perhaps some relics still remain; but of the Lauretum, where Odovacar was slain, no trace is left.

While Italy was being ruled by the German Patricians Ricimer, Odovacar, and Theodoric, a new power was consolidating itself in Gaul. Aegidius was the successor of Aetius in the work of maintaining Roman authority and resisting Teutonic advance in Gaul; he opposed Frankish Childeric as Aetius had opposed Frankish Chlojo. It was Childeric who really founded the kingdom of the Franks; he acquired the cities of Koln and Imperial Trier; and at Tournai his tomb and corpse with his armour were found in the seventeenth century. If Childeric founded, his son Chlodwig reared and extended, the new kingdom, and achieved for it an important position in the political system of Europe. As the Patrician Aegidius was the adversary of Childeric, the Patrician Syagrius, his son, was the adversary of Chlodwig. Syagrius ruled at Augusta Suessionum (Soissons) as independently of the Empire as Odovacar ruled at Ravenna, yet as the representative of the Roman name. But Syagrius had no allies; his forces were not a match for the might of Chlodwig; and in the year 486 he fled vanquished from a field of battle. The Visigoths, with whom he sought refuge, did not dare to save him; he was delivered to the victor and put to death. This battle decided the predominance of the Franks in Gaul.

Among the German nations who settled in the Roman Empire the Franks had a peculiar position. In the first place, they were less imbued with Roman ideas, they were more-opposed to the Roman spirit, they represented more purely the primitive German man, with his customs and ways, than the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, or the Burgundians. In the second place, they had never served as *foederati* under a Roman Emperor, like the Visigoths under Alaric or the Ostrogoths under Theodoric; neither Chlojo nor Childeric had ever been Roman Patricians or masters of soldiers, nor had they received grants of territory from an Augustus; they won their kingdom by force, without the semblance of right. In the third place, while the Burgundians, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, and Vandals formed their kingdoms in countries where people of their races had never settled before, the kingdom of Childeric arose in lands where Franks had been settled for more than a hundred years. Yet another mark distinguished them from the neighbouring Teutonic kingdoms, when Chlodwig was converted to Christianity by the influence of his Burgundian wife Clotilda and embraced the Catholic creed (496 AD), whereas the other German kings and peoples had either been originally baptized or afterwards lapsed into the Arian doctrine. This act smoothed the relations between the Gallo-Roman subjects and their Frankish rulers, and was of vital consequence for the history of western Europe.

Chlodwig subdued the Alemanni in a great battle (about 492 AD), and rendered them tributary; he defeated the Arian Burgundians, and compelled them, too, to pay tribute; and he won a decisive victory over the Arian Visigoths on the Campus Vocladensis, where King Alaric the Second fell. But against the great Theodoric

he could not contend as he had contended against Alaric and Gundobad; he besieged Arelate, but the forces of the Ostrogoths inflicted a terrible defeat on the Franks and Burgundians outside the walls of the Roman city. *La Province* was incorporated in the Ostrogothic kingdom, and ruled by a vicar. Before the death of Theodoric its limits were increased to westward and northward, at the expense of Visigoths and Burgundians, and it was ruled by a praetorian prefect.

Chlodwig, meanwhile, who stood as the Catholic power of the West over against the Arian kings, was recognized as an ally by Anastasius. The Roman Emperor conferred upon the king of the Franks the dignity of the consulate. The geographical positions of the Empire and the kingdom of Chlodwig rendered the alliance natural, as their borders did not touch. The bestowal, however, of the consulship on Chlodwig implies the theory that, as his territory once belonged to the Empire, he was in a certain way still connected with, if not dependent on, the Emperor. Anastasius would hardly have thought of bestowing the consular rank on a German prince who lived in a district of central Europe which had never been an imperial province. Chlodwig was hereby recognized by the Emperor as his successor or vicegerent in Gaul.

Of the political administration of Theodoric something will be said in a future chapter. We may point out here that in relation to the Vandals he followed the policy of Odovacar, and allowed them to retain a small corner of Sicily, including the fortress of Lilybaeum, which had in old days belonged to the Carthaginians. Thus at the beginning of the sixth century the political geography of Europe was very different from its simple character at the beginning of the fifth, when civilized Europe and the Roman Empire were conterminous. Beside his possessions in Asia and Egypt, the Emperor exercised direct authority over Thrace and Illyricum, that is the prefecture of Illyricum; but the diocese of Illyricum or Western Illyricum, as it is sometimes called, including Rhaetia, Noricum, Pannonia, and Dalmatia, belonged to the Ostrogothic kingdom of Italy. As the Ostrogothic king was a Roman Patrician, it might be said that the Emperor still ruled nominally over Italy. The rest of the old prefecture of Italy, that is, Africa, Sardinia, and Corsica, with a small part of Sicily, was held by the Vandals, whose kings accentuated their independence of the Empire by wearing the diadem on their coins. The old prefecture of the Gauls had been converted into four Teutonic kingdoms: (1) the small realm of the Suevians in northwestern Spain; (2) the large realm of the Visigoths, which extended from the Loire to the Straits of Gades; (3) the kingdom of the Burgundians, on the Rhone; (4) the kingdom of the Franks, which comprised all northern Gaul, and extended east of the Rhine. In these kingdoms two corners are not included, the north-western corner, which was inhabited by Celtic Britons, and the south-eastern corner, Province, which passed into the hands of Theodoric when he protected it against the Franks. As for Britain, it was at this time experiencing the invasions of the Saxons and the Angles, and passing out of the remembrance of the Roman Empire

Saint Severinus.

Before I conclude this chapter I must give some account of one of the strangest episodes in the history of the dismemberment of the Empire in the West—the condition of the provinces of Noricum and Rhaetia under the dominion of a saint. These provinces formed a Roman island in the midst of a barbarian sea, for German nations had penetrated westward along the Julian Alps and formed a wedge dividing Noricum from Italy. They were exposed to constant invasions from the barbarians who encompassed them: the Ostrogoths, who, after the break-up of the Hun empire, had settled in the lands of the Save, the Thuringians in the northwest, the Alemanni and Suevi in the south-west, the Rugians to the north and north-east, with their dependants, the Turcilingi and Heruls. The Rugians proposed to protect these Roman provinces against the other barbarians, but such a protectorate was a pretext for oppression.

The Rhaetian and Noric lands fell into a state of complete disorganization, political, military, and moral. The imperial officers abandoned their dangerous posts in this inhospitable country and departed to Italy, leaving the maintenance of order to the municipal magistrates. The soldiers quartered as garrisons in the strong towns had no means of maintaining communication, and as their pay became irregular, and finally ceased, owing to the interruption of direct relations with Italy, they were more ready to quarrel with the provincials than to fight with the enemy. They reinforced the bands of brigands or scamars, who began to infest the wild mountainous regions and plunder the plains. The moral chaos is represented as appalling. While the distinction of right and wrong vanished, while prudence and pity were forgotten, the grossest superstitions prevailed. Human beings were actually sacrificed in a town of Noricum to appease some deity or fiend, to whom the miserable condition of the country was attributed. In Noricum and Rhaetia the pain which attended the great travail of the fifth century reached its highest degree, the darkness assumed its blackest hue.

Here, if anywhere, there was need of some divine intervention, of a prophet at least who believed himself divinely inspired. A new social organization was required to render possible an adequate defense against the barbarians, and as joint action requires a certain minimum of unselfishness, some moral regeneration was a condition of success.

Such a prophet, the apostle of Noricum, came from the East.

It was in the year after Attila's death that Saint Severinus appeared in Pannonia. His past history was a secret that went to the grave with himself. It was only known that he was by birth an Italian, and that "he had set out to a solitude in the East, through a burning desire of the more perfect life", and that he had travelled much in oriental countries. He learned there the austerities of a monk. His life in the lands of the upper Danube makes us imagine him as a sort of mystic theosophist with strong practical energy.

He united the mission of John the Baptist with the mission of Christ; he preached repentance and loving-kindness. The first city to which he came was Astura, an important commercial centre in Pannonia. He bade the people repent and change their ways, prophesying that otherwise destruction would speedily come upon their

city—a safe prophecy; but the people were froward. and looked upon the prophet as a common beggar. Having made only one convert, the porter of the city gate who had taken him in, he proceeded to another town, Comagenae. Soon afterwards Astura was surprised by barbarians, and the fulfilment of the prediction of Severinus, which was noised abroad by the porter, who escaped from the sack of the town, changed his position from that of an obtrusive mendicant impostor to that of a prophet and a saint. It was suddenly discovered that he was the one man capable of saving the imperilled countries, which God seemed to have abandoned.

And for this work Severinus proved well adapted. He was not merely an enthusiast capable of exciting enthusiasm in others, but he had a genius for organization and command. He was skilful in judging an actual situation, in planning a mode of defense or a sally, in dealing with individual men. He soon had an opportunity of displaying his talents at Faviana (now Mauer), where he was summoned on account of an impending famine, owing to the scarcity of corn, which, as the Inn was frozen, could not be obtained in the usual quantity. The disorganization and immoral tone in the town prevented its fair distribution, but Severinus restored order, and superintended the apportionment with complete effectiveness. In this town, on the borders of Rhaetia and Noricum, he took up his abode, and made it, as it were, the centre of his administration.

Having led the people into the path of repentance, he proceeded to teach them charity. He imposed on all a tax of one-tenth of provisions and one-tenth of raiment for the benefit of the poor, who had always been the chief objects of his solicitude. This tax was enforced by his own moral influence. It is to be particularly observed that his charity was extended to barbarians and brigands as well as others. Misery was a sufficient recommendation. But his practical activity had not subdued his passion for solitude and the life of the hermit. Suddenly he disappeared from Faviana, and made a cell for himself in a valley of Mount Cettius. And so he passed his life, meditating alternately in his mountain cell and in the monastery which he founded at Faviana.

he history of the intimacy of Severinus with Flaccitheus, king of the Rugians, whose territories reached the left bank of the Danube at Faviana; of his relations with that king's two sons, the feeble Feva and the crafty Frederick, and with Ghisa, Feva's wife, whose nature was deadly and pestilential, might form the framework of a romance. It is a matter of interest that Odovacar visited the saint's cell as he journeyed southward in search of a career, and that the saint prophesied his greatness; and further, that when he had attained the royal power in Italy, the saint predicted his downfall.

Severinus' government in Noricum and Rhaetia lasted about thirty years (453-482). His task was hardest at the beginning and at the end. At the beginning he had to regenerate the inhabitants; at the end the barbarians pressed harder on the provinces. The Ostrogoths were indirectly the cause of this; for their movement from Pannonia into the Illyrian lands left a place for other nations to press in, and disturbed the existing equilibrium. We may attribute the peace that existed during the reign of Flaccitheus between the Rugians and the provincials of Noricum to the constant warfare that was waged between the Rugians and the Ostrogoths. We hear how the saint made the king of the Alemanni tremble in every limb under his glance; but he was obliged first to abandon Passau and retreat to Lauriacum (Lorch), and afterwards to yield to the determination of Feva that the provincials should be transported into the land of Lauriacum. The saint did not long survive this; he died in 482, the Rugian royal family standing at his bedside. His dying injunctions and menaces had little effect; Frederick pillaged his monasteries as soon as his eyes were closed.

Odovacar avenged the saint. He determined to win back the provinces of Noricum from the Rugians, with whom, though some said he was a Rugian himself, he had nothing in common. He set out for Italy in 487, and exterminated the Rugian nation. After adorning his triumph, Feva was put to death and Ghisa thrown into a dungeon. The provincials were transported to Italy, and the remains of St. Severinus were conveyed to a monastery at the villa of Lucullus, at the request of a Neapolitan lady.

CHAPTER VI

ANASTASIUS I

After the death of Zeno, Flavius Anastasius of Dyrrachium was proclaimed Emperor (11th April 491) through the influence of the widowed Empress Ariadne, who married him about six weeks later. Anastasius, who held the not very distinguished post of a *silentarius* or guardsman, was nevertheless a remarkable and well-known figure in Constantinople. He held unorthodox opinions, partly due, perhaps, to an Arian mother and a Manichaean uncle, and he was possessed by a sort of religious craze, which led him to attempt to convert others to his own opinions. He did this in a curiously public manner. Having placed a chair in the church of St. Sophia, he used to attend the services with unflinching regularity and give private heterodox instruction to a select audience from his cathedra. By this conduct he offended the Patriarch Euphemius, who by Zeno's permission expelled him from the church and pulled down his chair of instruction; but he gained golden opinions from the general public by his piety and liberality. It even appears that he may have at one time dreamt of an ecclesiastical career, for he was proposed for the vacant chair of Antioch. Euphemius, unpleasantly surprised at the choice of the Empress, who was supported by the eunuch Urbicius, refused to crown Anastasius until he had signed a written declaration of orthodoxy, which, in spite of his heretical tendencies, he did not hesitate to do.

The accession of Anastasius must have seemed to Byzantium a great and a welcome change. Instead of a man like Zeno, who in spite of considerable ability was very unpopular on account of the unfair favour shown to the Isaurians, and who scandalized propriety by his loose life, while he could not attract men by an imposing or agreeable exterior, a man of the highest respectability occupied the throne, a man with a strong religious turn, of slender stature and remarkable for his fine eyes, which differed in hue, a man to whom the people called out when he was proclaimed Emperor, "Reign as you have lived", and to whom a bishop of Rome wrote, "I know that in private life you always strove after piety". He is characterized in general as a man of intelligence and good education, gentle and yet energetic, able to command his temper and generous in bestowing gifts, but with one weak point, a tendency to be unduly parsimonious.

But the accession of the new Emperor was not undisputed. Zeno's brother Longinus, who was president of the senate, conceived that he had a claim to the crown, and he had actually a strong support in his countrymen the Isaurians, who saw that their privileges were endangered. Zeno, who knew his brother well, had with real patriotism refused to designate him as his successor, feeling that his elevation would be a disaster to the Empire; somewhat as Antipater the Macedonian refused to transmit his protectorate to his son Cassander. Longinus, supported by a magister militum of the same name, played much the same part against Anastasius that Basiliscus, the brother-in-law of Leo, had played against Zeno. He organized the numerous Isaurians who resided in the capital, and the year of Anastasius' elevation was marked for Constantinople by bloodshed and fatal street battles, in the course of which a large part of the town, including the hippodrome, was destroyed by a conflagration. Anastasius, however, succeeded in removing his rival to Alexandria, where he became a priest by compulsion, early in 492. Longinus, the master of soldiers, was deposed from his office and returned with many other Isaurians to his mountainous home in Asia Minor.

The tedious Isaurian war, of which this was the first scene, lasted for five years, 491-496. The events of the first years are often obscured by failing to understand clearly that hostilities were carried on in Constantinople and Isauria simultaneously; the war had begun in Isauria before the Isaurians were expelled from Constantinople. Longinus and his friends, who arrived, filled with indignation, in the regions of Mount Taurus, roused their excitable countrymen to revolt; and an understanding evidently existed between the rebels in Asia Minor and the rebels in Byzantium. Among the generals who led the Isaurians in conjunction with Longinus was Conon, the archbishop of Apamea. Their forces marched in a north-westerly direction towards the Propontis, but at Cotyaeum in Phrygia they were met by a small army which Anastasius had sent against them under the command of many experienced officers. The masses of the rebels were utterly routed and fled back to their mountains, while the imperial soldiers followed leisurely and took up winter quarters at the foot of the Taurus range.

In what relations the various generals in command of Anastasius' small army stood to one another we do not know; but it would be unfair to suppose that Anastasius was adopting the policy of dividing the command from motives of jealousy or suspicion. The number of commanders is quite accounted for by the nature of the warfare to be expected in the defiles of Taurus, where it was necessary for small divisions to act in many places, and a large regiment under a single leader would have been of little use.

The news of Cotyaeum was followed by an edict (issued in the capital in 493) unfavourable to the Isaurians, who thereupon filled the streets with all the horrors of fire and sword, and hauled along with ropes the bronze statues of the Emperor.

These scenes of indecent violence were with difficulty suppressed, and then a summary edict was issued banishing all Isaurians from the city, among the rest the family of Zeno, while the Isaurica or annual grant of 1000 lbs. of gold (which Zeno had instituted) was withdrawn.

The banished members of the obnoxious nationality, burning for revenge, reinforced their countrymen in the castles and hiding-places of the Taurus mountains, and for the next three years (493-496) a somewhat desultory but anxious war was carried on round the strong places of the country. Claudiopolis, a very important position, was taken in 493, and in 494 a considerable victory was won near the same city in a battle which was fatal to archbishop Conon. The following year saw the capture and execution (at Byzantium) of Longinus, one of the chiefs, not to be confounded with the ex-magister; and in 496 the last two surviving leaders, Longinus and Athenodorus, were taken, and the war was at an end.

It is important to note that the Isaurians were then removed from their Asiatic home and transported to Thrace, but it is hard to believe that this measure can have been carried out with any degree of completeness. The whole history of the Isaurian war indicates what an isolated position, from their sentiments, habits, and mode of life, the Isaurians held in the Empire, as we have already described. It was as natural for them to take up arms when an Isaurian did not succeed Zeno as it would have been for the Ostrogoths if by some extraordinary concurrence of circumstances Theodoric had become a Roman Emperor and on his death an Ostrogoth did not replace him.

Besides its disastrous effects on agriculture and industry in the south of Asia Minor, this long war led indirectly to other harmful consequences. It was a very unsuitable and unfortunate preparation for the serious Persian war which broke out in 502, and was only temporarily terminated by the peace of 505. An account of this three years' war will be given in the next chapter, but it may be here observed that the Isaurian warfare, which required operations in small divisions and introduced the practice of numerous independent commands, was a bad drill for the war in Mesopotamia, which demanded the united action of large bodies under one supreme general.

In the meantime the Balkan lands were becoming acquainted with new foes, who were destined to play a great part in the subsequent history of the Roman Empire. The departure of Theodoric the Ostrogoth to Italy left Thrace and Illyricum free for the Slaves, who dwelt beyond the Danube in the countries which are now

called Siebenbürgen and Moldavia, to invade and plunder. The first invasion of which we have record took place in 493, on which occasion they severely defeated Julianus, the master of soldiers, and devastated Thrace. The next invasion that we hear of was in 517, when they penetrated into Macedonia and Thessaly; but it is highly probable that in the intervening years they were not idle, though we have no record. But other enemies had also laid waste the provinces and defeated the legions. These were the Bulgarians, a people of the Ural-Altai or Ugro-Finnic race, who must not be confounded with the Slaves. They are first mentioned as having been employed by Zeno against Theodoric, by whom they were defeated. In 499 they crossed the Danube, and returned gorged with plunder, and crowned with the glory of a victory over a Roman army; and in 502 they repeated their successful expedition.

It seems clear to me that there must have been invasions, whether of Slaves or Bulgarians, between the years 502 and 512, which our scanty and brief notices have not recorded. For, in the first place, they had met with no repulse; invasion was easy and inviting; nothing except hostilities among the barbarians themselves could have hindered them. In the second place, Anastasius built the Long Wall for protection against their hostilities in 512, and it is hardly conceivable that he would have built it then if, during the ten preceding years, the provinces had been exempted from the devastations of the heathen. It rather seems probable that in 510 or 511 a really dangerous invasion took place, and that this was the immediate cause of the erection of the wall. This wall, of which traces are still visible, stretched from the Sea of Marmora at Selymbria to the Black Sea. Its length was 420 stadia, its distance from the city was 280 stadia, and its effect was to insulate Constantinople.

Thus the arms of Anastasius were so unsuccessful in Europe that at last no serious attempt was made to protect Thrace; he confined himself to saving the capital by a massive fortification. This wall was really efficacious, and it is meaningless rhetoric to call it a "monument of cowardice", an expression which might be applied to all fortifications. On the other hand, in Asia some useful successes were gained in 498 against the Bedouin or Scenite Arabs, who had begun to invade Syria and Palestine. They were thoroughly defeated in two battles. But a success of still greater consequence was the recovery of the island of Jotaba, from which the Romans had been expelled in the reign of Leo. Jotaba was the centre of an important Red Sea trade; all the ships with cargoes from India put in there, and custom-house duties were collected by imperial officers. Its possession was thus extremely important for the Empire.

Anastasius' reign was signalized by many riots and disturbances in Constantinople. These often took the form of conflicts between the Blues and Greens, the latter of whom were favoured by Anastasius, as they identified themselves with the unorthodox monophysitic party. The religious disputes and the schism with Rome were noticed in a previous chapter; here I shall only call attention to the strained relations, already referred to, between the Emperor and the Patriarch Euphemius.

It happened that in 495 Anastasius informed the Patriarch that he was sick of the Isaurian war, and would willingly make easy conditions with the rebels, if he could thereby conclude it. Euphemius was treacherous enough to repeat these words to Johannes, a son-in-law of Athenodorus, one of the Isaurian leaders. We cannot determine to what extent Euphemius entertained a traitorous design; but Anastasius, when Johannes made him aware of the Patriarch's communication, looked upon him, or chose to look upon him, as a traitor and accomplice of the rebels. He was banished, or fled, soon afterwards from Byzantium.

There was a strong party of opposition whose hostile machinations must have often made the Emperor feel insecure. How this party, which represented the orthodox faith, acted in regard to the Isaurian revolt we do not hear; but the incident of Euphemius, just related, might incline us to suspect their loyalty during those years. The measures adopted by Anastasius for the reform of abuses created much discontent among those who profited by them; he put down informers (*delatores*) with a firm hand. His conscientious scruples did not permit him to indulge the corrupt populace in the dissolute and barbarous amusements to which they were accustomed. He forbade the practice of contests with wild beasts, a relic of heathen Rome which was an anachronism in the Christian world.

We cannot be surprised at its survival so long when we remember that gladiatorial shows lasted for fifty years after Rome had become Christian; and we must also recollect that the Christian doctrine that animals have no souls hindered any strong sentiment on the subject. He also refused to allow the celebration of nocturnal feasts, which were the occasions of licentious orgies. The May feast of Bruta was on two occasions the scene of scandalous riots, resulting in the sacrifice of life, and the Emperor forbade its celebration for the future, thereby (says a contemporary) "depriving the city of the most beautiful dances".

Thus his staid and frugal court, which his enemies might call shabby, his strict censorship of morals, which seemed, as we should say, puritanical, and his heretical opinions in theology, exposed Anastasius to constant odium, which culminated (511 AD) when he sanctioned the adoption of a monophysitic addition to the hymn called Trisagios ("thrice holy"). To quell the sedition Anastasius adopted a theatrical artifice, which was successful. He appeared before the people without a crown, and offered to resign the sovereignty in favour of another. The respect which his uniform conscientiousness had inspired in all predominated for the moment, and the multitude cried to him that he should resume the diadem. But discontent continued to prevail, and the opposition was so strong that it seemed a good opportunity for an ambitious man who had soldiers at his command to attempt to dethrone the Emperor.

In 514 such an attempt was made. The commissariat which had been supplied by the State to the corps of foreign foederati, who were stationed to defend Thrace and Scythia, had been withdrawn, and the discontent which ensued afforded a new pretext against the existing government. Vitalian, the son of a man who had been himself count of the foederati, fostered the ill-feeling. He was a man small in stature, and afflicted with a stammer, but he had associated constantly with Huns and Bulgarians, and could count on their co-operation. The brunt of the unpopularity of the government with the soldiers was borne by Hypatius, the Emperor's nephew, who was the master of soldiers in Thrace, and it was against him in the first instance that Vitalian directed his attack. By

stratagem he compassed the death of the chief officers of his staff, he corrupted the governor of Lower Moesia, and then capturing Carinus, Hypatius' trusted confidant, he granted him his life on the conditions that he should co-operate in the capture of Odessus and recognize himself as general. Hypatius seems to have escaped to Constantinople.

The rebel, or "tyrant", as he was called, then advanced on the capital with 50,000 soldiers, consisting partly of the foederati and partly of rustics, some of whom were perhaps Slaves settled in Moesia and Scythia. It was not merely as spokesman of the grievances of the army, and as protesting against the administration of Hypatius, that Vitalian posed; he also professed to be the champion of orthodoxy, indignant at the treatment of certain bishops whom Anastasius had banished. He took care to insist on this pretext; and we may confidently assume that he had established intimate relations with the disaffected party in the city.

The Emperor, inclined to be timorous on account of his recent experiences (that is, the revolt of 511), and vexed by the unexpectedness of these occurrences as well as by the fact that the adversaries who were advancing made a similar pretence of blaming his religion (as the rebels had done on the former occasion), commanded bronze crosses to be set up over the gates of the walls, setting forth in writing the real cause of the rebellion. He also reduced by one-quarter the tax on animals for the inhabitants of Bithynia and Asia, depositing the bill to that effect on the altar of the First Church (St. Sophia). He employed the officers and ministers as a garrison for the city.

But when Vitalian attacked the suburbs and marched round the walls, the Master of Soldiers, Patricius, was sent to him. Such missions devolved upon him in virtue of his office; moreover, he was distinguished by honour and dignities, and had considerably helped Vitalian himself in his successful career. He took Vitalian sharply to task, availing himself of the liberty permitted to a benefactor; and in reply Vitalian, as was to be expected, dwelled on many acts passed by the Emperor, and pointed out that the present object of himself and his party was (1) to rectify the injustices committed by the *magister militum per Thracias* (Hypatius), and (2) to obtain the recognition and sanction of the orthodox theological creed.

Next day the chief officers of Vitalian's camp came, on the Emperor's invitation, without Vitalian, for he could not be persuaded to enter the city; and an interview was held in which the Emperor, having charged them and proved to them that they were not disdained or passed over, won them by presents and by promises that they would receive their dues, and undertook that the church of Old Rome would be allowed to arrange the religious questions at stake. When they had declared with oaths their future loyalty to him, he dismissed them. Having returned to Vitalian, they departed with him and the army.

Thus the first essay of Vitalian was frustrated by the desertion of his officers, whose confidence Anastasius won. Anastasius followed up his promises by appointing Cyrillus to the post of *magister militum* instead of his nephew, who was so unpopular with the army. Cyrillus proceeded to Lower Moesia, where he knew that he would find Vitalian actively engaged in new schemes. Vitalian was even more on the alert than he thought, and as the general was enjoying the society of his concubines a Hunnish assassin slew him. This act made it clear that the rebel was irreconcilable, and a decree of the senate was passed in old Roman style—the use of this formality is noteworthy — that Vitalian was an enemy of the republic.

A large army of 80,000 was collected, and while Alathar, a Hun, was appointed to succeed Cyrillus, the supreme command of the army was assigned to the unpopular Hypatius, who was accompanied by Theodorus, "steward of the sacred treasures". Vitalian's new army consisted of Huns, Bulgarians, and perhaps Slaves, recruited probably as before from rustics of the Haemus provinces. We have no hint that his former adherents, the officers whom Anastasius' adroitness had won over, or their soldiers, fell back again from their allegiance, and we may assume that they joined the imperial army. The Emperor's forces gained an inconsiderable victory, which was soon followed by serious reverses. Julian, a *magister memoriae*, was taken alive by the rebels, and carried about in a cage, as Bajazet was carried about by Timour, but was afterwards ransomed. Hypatius then fortified himself behind a rampart of wagons at Acris, on the Black Sea, near Odessa. In this entrenchment the barbarians attacked him, and, assisted by a sudden darkness, which a superstitious historian attributed to magic arts, gained a signal victory. The Romans, driven over precipices and into ravines, lost about 60,000 men. Hypatius himself ran into the sea, if perchance he might conceal himself in the waves, but his head betrayed him, for he was unable to practice the cunning trick of the Slaves, who were accustomed thus to elude the pursuit of their enemies, breathing under water through a long hollow reed, one end of which was held in their mouth while the other was just above the surface. Vitalian preserved him alive as a valuable hostage. This victory enabled him to pay his barbarian allies richly, and placed him in possession of all the cities and fortresses in Moesia and Scythia, which he ruled as an emperor. The ambassadors whom Anastasius sent with 10,000 lbs. of gold to ransom his nephew were captured in an ambush at Sozopolis.

In the meantime a tumult, attended with loss of life, took place in Constantinople because the Emperor forbade the celebration of a festival on account of disorders in the circus which had occurred on the same day; among others the prefect of the watch was slain. This disturbance, along with the captivity of his nephew and the threatened siege, may have perhaps contributed to induce Anastasius to make a compromise with Vitalian. The conditions were that Vitalian should be made *magister militum per Thracias*, that he should receive 15,000 lbs. of gold, that the proclamation of the orthodox faith should be renewed, and that Hypatius should be liberated.

The following year (515) was troubled not only by the ravages of a horde of Sabir Huns, who entered Asia Minor through Armenia, and laid waste Cappadocia and the provinces of Pontus, penetrating as far as Lycaonia, whence they returned gorged with booty and laden with captives, but also by a fresh demonstration of hostility on the part of Vitalian. He marched on Constantinople, and took up his quarters at Sycae. He then embarked in a fleet which he had prepared, and was completely defeated off Scutari by Marinus the Lycian, some say with the help of chemicals prepared by a man of science named Proclus, an Archimedes of that day. This naval victory

decided the war. Vitalian withdrew, probably to the neighbourhood of the Danube, and we hear that a Hunnish leader named Tarrach was captured and burned at Chalcedon, and that many other prominent rebels were punished.

Although Anastasius did not accomplish anything that can be called brilliant, his reign was prosperous. His mild character and his beneficial reforms partially blotted out, in the eyes of contemporaries and of historians, the deadly taint of heterodoxy, and he appeared in a still more favourable light as he was directly contrasted with his unpopular Isaurian predecessor. Mildness is a trait on which his panegyrist Priscian more than once insists, comparing him to Nerva—and another eulogist represents him as a *deus ex machina* setting right the wrongs and lightening the burdens of the Empire. A member of the civil service, who began his career in this reign, asserts that Anastasius' careful financial policy, and his strictness in supervising personally the details of the budget, really saved the State, which had first become financially involved by the money that was expended on Leo's unsuccessful armament against the Vandals, and had been kept in a depressed condition by the short-sighted and "miserable" policy of Zeno.

The act which earned for him most glory and popularity was the abolition of the Chrysargyron, a tax on all receipts, to which the humblest laborer and the poorest prostitute were liable. It had been instituted by Constantine, and Anastasius abolished it in 498. The chief fault that the Church had to find with this tax was that it recognized vices forbidden by nature and the laws. Another abuse which the Emperor remedied was the unfairness of officers in paying rations to their soldiers, in order to make a private profit; this is not mentioned by any writer, but the facts are preserved in an inscription at Ptolemais in the Pentapolis. His donations to soldiers are perhaps another indication of his interest in the army. He was indefatigable in restoring "prostrate cities", and, besides the Great Wall, he executed an important public work which deserves mention, the construction of a canal connecting Lake Sophon with the Gulf of Astacus.

But the men of Dyrrachium had the reputation of being avaricious, and even favourable writers say that Anastasius was no exception. Elegiac verses were posted up in the hippodrome by his foes, addressing him as "bane of the world". His love of money, it was said, induced him to listen to the counsels of Marinus, a Syrian scriniarius, who wormed himself into his confidence by promising to raise large sums. It is very probable, however, that our authority, Johannes Lydus, had strong prejudices against the successful Syrian, and misrepresents his policy. There seem to have been a Marinus faction and an anti-Marinus faction in official circles.

The great innovation of Marinus was the abolition of the old curial system, by which the curiae or municipal corporation collected the moneys due to the State. A new farming system was introduced. Officers, named *vindices*, were appointed to collect the revenue, which on the old system was often cheated through the collusion of the provincial magnates with the governors of the provinces and the tax-collectors (*canonicarii*). The enemies of Marinus said that the *vindices* treated the cities like foes, because the appointments were given by auction to those who promised most. The nature of the new system evidently involved this evil, but it is only fair to assume that Anastasius, whose mildness was so remarkable, took care to arrange a mode of checking this by increasing the influence of the *defensores*, and his panegyrist Priscian represents the measure as healing a flagrant abuse. It must be noted that this change involved an increase of centralization, which seems to have been an object of Anastasius' policy. Henceforward even minute matters were referred to the Emperor, so that few steps could be taken in the provinces "without a divine command".

Anastasius is said to have never sent petitioners empty away, whether they represented a city, a fort, or a harbour. He was above giving offices by favour, and when his wife Ariadne requested him to appoint Anthemius to the praetorian prefecture, he refused to make an exception to his principle that only men of forensic training were entitled to it. His saving policy necessarily involved a great reduction of the court expenditure, and he was probably on that account unpopular with the frivolous nobles and the court ladies, accustomed to the pageants and pleasures of Byzantine festivals. But the staid Anastasius did not care for pomp, and the result of his fiscal economy was that he not only righted the financial depression of the Empire, but that at his death 320,000 lbs. of gold were found in the treasury.

Anastasius died in July 518, more than eighty years old.

CHAPTER VII

THE PERSIAN WAR

The restored Persian empire under the sovereignty of the Sassanid dynasty rose on the ruins of the Parthian Arsacids in the reign of Alexander Severus (226 AD) During the third and fourth centuries, the eastern frontier was the scene of fatal wars, in the course of which two Roman Emperors, Valerian and Julian, perished. In 363 a treaty was concluded, by which Jovian ceded five provinces beyond the Euphrates, including Arzanene and Corduene, and the towns of Nisibis and Singara to Sapor, and this cession was followed by an emigration of the Greeks from those lands, because Sapor and the Magi afflicted the Christians with persecutions.

During the fifth century the relations of the Empire with Persia varied, but there were no protracted or considerable hostilities, although Armenia, the perpetual source of annoyance, was in a state of ferment, and a

serious war seemed ever on the point of breaking out. This was in a great measure due to the circumstance that the Persian monarchs were fully occupied with dangerous and savage enemies on the north-east frontier of their kingdom—the Ephthalite Huns; while the Roman Emperors had enough to do in weathering the storms that were convulsing Europe.

When our period begins, in the reign of Arcadius, Varahran was on the throne, but was succeeded in 399 by Isdigerd, who was as much an object of veneration to Greek historians as he was an object of detestation to the chroniclers of his own kingdom. He did not take advantage of the childhood of Theodosius II to vex the Empire; and I do not see that there is sufficient reason to follow modern writers in rejecting the statement of Procopius, that Arcadius in his testament made Isdigerd the guardian of his son. There is nothing incredible in this, provided we regard it in the proper light, and recognize that it was only a way of paying a compliment to a royal brother. The guardianship was merely nominal; and Arcadius' act of courtesy is not without a parallel in later Roman history. The fact that Procopius mentions it with no expression of amazement shows that it did not strike all men, who breathed in the atmosphere of the time, with surprise; and it is therefore arbitrary in modern writers to follow Agathias in pronouncing it improbable.

Isdigerd's successor, Yarahran II, was sufficiently amenable to the influence of the Magi to persecute the Christian residents in Persia. A cruel system of proselytizing was carried on in Persarmenia, and some outrages were committed on Roman merchants. The consequence was a war, which lasted for two years (420-421); the Persians held Nisibis against the siege of the Roman general Ardaburius (father of Aspar), and the Romans on their side defended Theodosiopolis against the attacks of the Persians. It is narrated that the war was decided by a sort of medieval single combat between a Persian, Ardazanes, and a Goth, Areobindus, in which the latter was victorious; but the tale should perhaps be relegated to the region of myth. A peace, however, was concluded for one hundred years. An interesting incident of this war, which deserves to be recorded, was the humanity of Acacius, the bishop of Amida, who ransomed 7000 Persian captives at his own and the Church's costs.

Varahran appointed a Parthian governor in Armenia in 422, but this governor's personal character made him so unpopular that the Armenian nobles begged in 428 for a Persian satrap, and their petition was granted.

At this time began the struggles of Persia with the Haithal nation, known in Roman history as the Ephthalite Huns, whose abode was beyond the Oxus.

They invaded Persia, but Varahran defeated them. Under Varahran Persia flourished. He was succeeded (440) by Isdigerd "the clement", who straightway declared war against the Empire, but circumstances, on which historians are silent, led to an almost immediate conclusion of peace. Isdigerd was soon engaged in a war with the Ephthalites, which lasted for nine years. He made energetic endeavours to convert Armenia to the religion of Zoroaster, but the Armenians were so tenacious of their Christianity that his efforts were expended in vain. The noble family of the Mamigonians was noted as singularly staunch in supporting the national faith.

Perozes succeeded Isdigerd II (453), having overthrown his rival Hormisdas with the assistance of the Ephthalites, who were the inveterate enemies of the Persian kingdom, but might be the temporary friends of a Persian aspirant. His reign was occupied in quelling serious revolts, which agitated Armenia, and in making war on the khan of the Ephthalites, by whose cunning stratagem of covered ditches he was defeated and slain in 483. Balas (Valakhesh), perhaps his brother, followed him, and enjoyed a shorter but more peaceable reign. He made a treaty with the Huns, consenting to pay them a tribute for two years. He pacified Armenia by granting unreserved freedom of religion, and ordaining that in future it should be governed directly by a king and not by a deputy. Soon afterward internal conspiracies forced him to make yet further concessions; Vahan the Mamigonian was appointed governor of Armenia, and Christianity was fully reinstated. Balas died in 487.

The reign of his successor Kobad (Cabades), the son of Perozes, is remarkable for the rise of the communistic reformer Mazdak. The first principle of this teacher was that all men are naturally equal. It followed that the present state of society is contrary to nature and unjustifiable, and thence that the acts which society considers to be crimes are, as merely tending to overthrow an unjustifiable institution, themselves blameless. Community of property and wives was another deduction that naturally followed. The remarkable thing is that King Kobad himself embraced and actively helped to promulgate these doctrines, which the Persian lords and the orthodox Zoroastrians viewed with utter repugnance and contempt. Impatient of such a recreant monarch, the nobles immured him in the castle of Lethe, and proclaimed Zamasp king (498-501); while Mazdak was imprisoned, but forcibly released by his disciples. In the space of two or three years Kobad found means to escape, and with the help of the Huns was reinstated on the throne. In his attitude to Mazdakism and Zoroastrianism during his restored reign he adopted a compromise; as a king he was a fire-worshipper, as a man he was a follower of Mazdak.

It was at this point that hostilities were renewed between Persia and New Rome. In 442 it had been agreed that the Roman government was to contribute a certain sum to enable Persia to provide for the defense of the Caucasian pass of Derbend, close to the Caspian Sea, against trans-Caucasian tribes. Demands had been twice made of the Emperor Leo to fulfil the engagement, but he had refused. It is generally stated that Kobad pressed Anastasius for this payment; but it is more probable that the cause of the outbreak of the war was somewhat different. For their assistance in restoring him to his throne the Persian king owed the Ephthalites a large sum of money which he had promised them, and, finding difficulty in raising it, he applied to Anastasius. The Emperor, however, had no intention of lending it to him, and his refusal took the form of a demand for a written acknowledgment or *cautio*, as he knew well that to Kobad, unfamiliar with the usages of Roman law, such a mercantile transaction would appear contemptible and intolerable. Kobad replied by a hostile demonstration in Armenia, and thus the "hundred years" peace was broken, after a duration of exactly eighty (502 AD)

Martyropolis, Theodosiopolis, and Amida, the strong places of the great marchland, fell into the hands of the Sassanid monarch one after another. Martyropolis surrendered, Theodosiopolis was betrayed, and Amida, after a long and laborious winter siege, was surprised during a festival early in the year 503, a Persian soldier having chanced to discover the issue of a mine. The besiegers had been so long baffled that the garrison and inhabitants ultimately yielded to the negligence of security, and they used to mock the Persians from the walls. A massacre commenced, but was stayed, perhaps by the persuasions of a priest, and Amida was left with a garrison of 1000 men. Thus in the course of a year the three most important frontier fastnesses of the Romans had been lost—Amida in Mesopotamia, Martyropolis and Theodosiopolis on the borders of Armenia.

Anastasius arrayed an army of 15,000 men to take the field, but, still influenced by the traditions of the Isaurian warfare, which had been waged some years before, he committed the grave mistake of dividing the command among several generals. First among these must be named Areobindus, the great-grandson of Aspar (on the mother's side) and husband of the daughter of the Emperor Olybrius; he was a man who seems to have loved dancing and flute-playing better than the serious things of life, and he exhibited slowness and slackness in his conduct of the war. Hypatius, a nephew of Anastasius, also received a general's commission, a post which his military inexperience did not deserve. Other commanders of less importance but more ability or energy were Justin, who afterwards became Emperor; Patriciolus, the father of Vitalian; Romanus.

The campaign of 503 opened with a success for the combined divisions of Areobindus and Romanus in the neighbourhood of Nisibis; but the enemy soon mustered a stronger army and forced Areobindus from the position which he had occupied at Constantina in Arzanene. The jealousy of Hypatius induced him to keep back the assistance which the most moderate standard of duty and patriotism required him to send to Areobindus, and the latter, left unsupported, had almost decided to return to Constantinople. In the meantime, while the Roman generals were quarrelling, the Persians occupied Nisibis, and soon afterwards fell unexpectedly upon the troops of Hypatius and Patricius (a Phrygian commander) and destroyed a large number of their men.

At this juncture an event happened which changed the tide of fortune, but from which the Romans, had they been led by one able general, might have drawn far greater profit. The Huns invaded Persia, and numerous forces were demanded in the north-east of the kingdom; Kobad therefore desired to make peace. But he thought he could have peace and war simultaneously, and while he treated he devastated. Areobindus, however, defeated him near Edessa, and then he withdrew. The campaigns of 504 were advantageous to the Empire. Hypatius had been recalled, and a valiant Illyrian named Celer, the master of offices, was appointed as a new general. He invaded and devastated Arzanene, and his achievements were followed by successes which the other generals gained elsewhere. Nisibis was wellnigh recovered, and Amida was blockaded. The Roman siege, like the Persian siege two years before, lasted throughout the winter (504-505), and the garrison finally consented to surrender, but on very favourable terms. This advantage was followed by the conclusion of a peace for seven years, by which Amida was left in possession of the Romans, who, however, on the whole had lost, while the Persians on the whole had gained, by this three years' war.

Some years later, probably in 507, Anastasius converted the little village of Daras in Mesopotamia into a splendid fortified town, provided richly with churches, corn magazines, and cisterns, and boasting two public baths. He named it after himself, Anastasiopolis, and it was henceforward one of the centres of frontier warfare. Kobad protested against the work, but, hampered as he was by hostile neighbours in the northeast, he was ready to yield to the diplomacy and accept the bribes of Anastasius, who at the same time strengthened the city of Theodosiopolis on the Armenian borders.

CHAPTER VIII

GREEK LITERATURE OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

An able critic of the first or second century *AD* describes a discussion which he had with a literary friend as to the causes of the decline of Greek letters; why, they asked, are literary works of supreme excellence, works in the grand style, no longer produced. His friend attributed it to the Empire of Rome, which kept the spirits of men in bondage; he considered that grandeur of thought, and consequently grandeur of style, were largely conditioned by political freedom. The critic himself, on the other hand, was inclined to defend the "peace of the world" against this impeachment, and to attribute the decadence of letters and the lack of inspiration to the decline of human character, to the growing love of money, the growing love of luxury, and, above all, the growing feeling of indifference.

A modern critic, accustomed to take account of the reciprocal influences of character on environment and of environment on character, would reconcile the disputants by observing that the discrepant opinions were only superficially discordant, and that each gave one aspect of the truth.

Now, while the decadence, so plain in the time of Longinus, could with little justice be called an effect of the Roman Empire, no better could the still lowlier condition which literature reached in the fourth and fifth centuries be called an effect of Christianity. But at the same time, just as the spirit of the Roman sway—the chill of imperial Rome—was a most favourable atmosphere for the rapid decay that had set in, just as it exercised a

freezing influence on the wells of inspiration, so also the spirit of early Christianity was a most favourable atmosphere for the stifling of humane literature; and as Christian theology became current, and Christian ideas penetrated the minds of men, little breathing space was left for the faint life of that humane literature which had already travelled so far from its former heights. It continued to support in nooks and byways a flickering artificial existence; but the gods of Greece had gone into exile, and inspiration had departed with them.

Although Christianity looked upon pagan literature as full of demonic snares, just as she looked upon the heathen gods as demons, she did not disdain to learn the tricks and ornaments of pagan rhetoric, she did not hesitate to plume her arrow with the eagle's feather. Chrysostom, as a Christian priest, could not forget what he had learned in his youth from Libanius; Salvian's treatise *On the Government of God* exhibits careful attention to the effects of rhetorical style. It was not till the sixth century that culture had declined so much that Gregory, the bishop of Rome, could warn his clergy against superfluous concern for grammar. Augustine, in his *Confessions*, only went so far as to marvel that men care to peruse the rules of grammar and not to obey the divine precepts. Both Augustine and Jerome were rhetoricians and stylists, Prudentius wrote Christian hymns in Horatian metres, Licentius even spoke of Christ as "our Apollo". Just in the same way pagan art influenced Christian art, notwithstanding all Christian zeal against it. The habitations of the Greek gods were imitated in the Christian churches. Theodosius, who permitted the destruction of temples, who abolished the Olympic games, permitted his victories to be represented as the labours of Hercules. Representations taken from pagan mythology were constantly used in allegorical sense on Christian tombs.

It should be borne in mind that while zeal for the house of God exhibited itself prominently as zeal against the houses of the gods, those divinities had still a corner in men's hearts, the charm of paganism still lingered. For, once paganism had lost all power, the works of the ancients lost also their dangerous qualities, and then they were neglected. But in the fifth century the Christians themselves felt the glamour of antique perfection. We see Jerome shrinking in fear from his love of Cicero, we see Augustine shrinking in fear from his love of Virgil. The classics were, for many of the early saints, like beautiful horrors, possessing a double potency, to attract and to repel. Augustine calls Homer *dulcissime vanus*; and even Orosius confessed of his great contemporary Claudian that though he was a "most pervicacious pagan" he was an excellent poet. The children of light felt that they could not approach the children of this world in the finite perfections of genius. "Infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae"—no Christian of his day could approach that, and Augustine knew it.

In western Europe, among the Latin-speaking Romans, paganism held out longest, and offered most resistance to the new faith, and at the same time it is among Latin divines that we find the strongest abhorrence of pagan literature. On the other hand, in eastern Europe, where Christianity had spread rapidly, among Greek-speaking Romans, paganism clung less obstinately to life, and the feeling in regard to pagan literature was more moderate and indulgent—less saintly, we might say, and more rational. This difference of feeling may be considered as in some degree the beginning of that difference of culture which distinguished the East from the West in later centuries, when in the West indifference to letters prevailed, while in the East learning and the study of ancient writers never fell into disuse.

It may be wondered why no works of great literary value were produced in the fourth and fifth centuries under the inspiration of the great Christian idea which was changing the face of the world. Perhaps someone will contest the statement, and cite St. Augustine's *City of God*. But that work is not a work of great literary value; it is a work of great religious and theological value. The idea itself—the idea of the city of God in the world and not of the world—has, potentially at least, literary value, but the work itself possesses very little. The incomparably less important work of Sir Thomas More on an imaginary state has more worth in this respect than the *City of God*. Other Christian works of the time, remarkable in many respects, deserve this criticism in a higher degree, for example Salvian's book *On the Government of God*. We go to Chrysostom or Cyril for history or doctrine, but no one would go to either for general ideas.

The fact is that there was a very small stock of new ideas current at the time, and there was no literary instinct. It may seem perverse to say that there was a small stock of new ideas in the face of the fact that the general view of the world was so thoroughly transformed. But the theories current were of a homogeneous kind; they were imbued with that theological tinge which renders thought unfruitful and unfits it for literary handling. The new spirit tended to stereotype itself in technical theology, and also to express itself in a particular phraseology; and thus the thoughts of the time lost their elasticity and their freedom in the bonds of dogma. Men's minds wandered through eternity, but they wandered on a beaten highroad. That is partly the reason why the writings of the stoic philosophers have much more literary flavour than the writings of Christian theologians, although Stoicism was so much less effective than Christianity. On the speculations of the Stoics no trammels were imposed from without; the Stoics had no church, no ecumenical councils, no popes. And that too is partly the reason why the New Testament writers were far more fertile in original ideas, expressed with effect, than doctors of the Church in subsequent ages.

To note the want of literary instinct is merely to note the other side of the same fact—the subjective side of it. Literary instinct implies a certain elasticity and freedom of mind, because it implies the faculty of selection; it is not easily compatible with formalism or with dogma. The Christian divines had not this sort of elasticity, and they would not have cared to have it; just as they had not originality, and would not have cared to have it. That freedom of mind on which a doctrine or creed sits lightly would have seemed license to those who delighted in thralldom to a formulated system, just as originality would have seemed undesirable, or at least unnecessary, to those who considered that all things needful had been revealed. The want of literary taste among Christian divines may be illustrated by the case of Jerome, who did not care for and could not feel any charm in the style of the old Hebrew scriptures, in spite of the prepossession for them that his beliefs would naturally produce.

The same want of taste is displayed in his frigid and degrading comparison of the love of Christ to the love of woman, a comparison which is characteristic enough of the man and of the time.

It cannot be denied that there were pagans of some literary ability in the fourth century. Historians of literature deal very hardly with Ammianus Marcellinus, a Greek writing in Latin; yet do we not feel that there is a unique literary quality in his curious style, as though the perfume of the fourth century had passed into his pages? And of Greek writers Julian had considerable literary talent. The *Misopogon*, which deserves attention as an attempt to express the most scathing satire with ironical urbanity, and *The Banquet of the Emperors*, are works that one reads without feeling an inclination to skip a line. He allows his own cultured personality to penetrate his writings in a way that no divine could do, and his writings therefore have a human interest.

But Julian and Libanius and Themistius had no successors. The only essayist of the fifth century who deserves to be mentioned was Synesius, the bishop of Cyrene. He was the pupil and friend of the unfortunate Hypatia; he was superficially imbued with philosophy; he appears for a moment on the stage of public affairs; he was fond of literary composition; he used to indulge in the pleasures of the chase in the vicinity of Cyrene. All these details remind us of Xenophon, who had the same stamp of respectability, a man fond of philosophy, not a philosopher. And we might add that as Xenophon represents the type of transition from the Athenian of the fourth century to the cosmopolitan of the age of Alexander and his successors, so Synesius, dividing his worship between Plato and Christ, is the type of the transition from the pagan to the Christian gentleman. If he had been brought up in the atmosphere of Constantinople he would not have been a Platonist, he would have been an unexceptionably orthodox Christian; if he had been brought up in the atmosphere of Athens he would have been a thorough-going pagan and refused to bow the knee to Baal; but brought up as he was in the atmosphere of Alexandria, which was at this time divided between pagan philosophy and Christianity, his pliable nature adapted itself to both influences and he became a platonic bishop. His works consist of rhetorical compositions, political essays and letters, which possess considerable interest. When he stayed at Constantinople he mixed in a circle of literary mediocrities, who enjoyed ephemeral notoriety, and he is himself a typical member of such a society.

Perhaps the most interesting and attractive feature in Synesius is his love of the pure intellect and his supreme disdain for mere ethical virtue. In this, although a Christian bishop, he was more unchristian than the heathen Neoplatonists; in this too he was more platonic than they. Plato did not set store by what we call "goodness"; he almost disdained the demotic virtues. It is curious to see the aristocratic spirit of the pure intellect in the fifth century AD, and it is only to be regretted that Synesius was not a stronger man.

Far the most important pagan Greek writer of the fifth century was the philosopher Proclus, of whose system I have already spoken. I have dwelt on the dearth of ideas of literary value in that age. Now Proclus has the credit of having expressed a thought that was well worth expressing in a form that deserves to be remembered—in a form that possesses literary value. He said that the true philosopher would never consent to confine himself to any one set of religious ideas; "a philosopher", he said, "is the hierophant of the whole world". Perhaps that is one of the few remarks made in the fifth century that deserves to be remembered in the words in which it was originally expressed. It contains moreover a thought which had long been in the air and had constantly inspired others than philosophers; it idealizes in the form of a philosophical maxim that cosmopolitan eclecticism which was practiced by such different persons as Alexander Severus and Constantine. Both a great philosopher like Proclus and a great statesman like Constantine can feel themselves above the world and the things, including the religions, that are therein; the eclecticism of Alexander Severus was merely that of a serious dilettante.

The poetical remains of Proclus are a few hymns, conceived in the same style as the famous hymn of Cleanthes to Zeus, and exhibiting the influence of the mystical Orphic poems. The gods are addressed as mythical beings; their attributes have second imports; and the reader feels that he does not possess the key to a chamber of theosophic significances. But they are not lifeless like formulated chants of a sorcerer or a vulgar theosophist; there is in them perceptible the breath of an "immortal longing" the same longing that was felt by Plato and by Plotinus. Proclus was ever pressing to the "way sublime", and he prays to the sun, to Athene, to the Muses for pure light, the kindly light that leads upwards, the means of attaining thereto being the study of books that awaken the soul.

Athens, where Proclus studied and afterwards lectured, had preserved its fame as a university town since the days of Cicero, though it had not any political importance. It was the headquarters of the pagans, the "Hellenes", who, suffered by the Christian Emperors to live quiet lives in unobtrusive retirement, still practiced secretly the old customary sacrifices, still worshipped Athene, Artemis, and Asclepius. They formed here a small cultured society, on which the "urbane" society of the residence might look down as provincial, and which the Christians held in abhorrence as profane. At the same time Athens was regarded with a peculiar respect; it was fashionable to go thither, and it was considered by some a mark of inferiority, almost of philistinism, not to have visited it.

The storm of the Visigoths of Alaric, which laid in ruins the temple of Eleusis, passed by the city of the philosophers without harming it much. But after the foundation of the university in Constantinople Athens gradually declined; it seemed as if the departure of Athenais had led to a cessation of the patronage of the goddess whose name she bore. Even when Synesius visited Athens (about 416 AD) he was not favourably impressed with it; in the description of his visit he does not say a word of the beauties of the place, the works of art or the flavour of antiquity. Desolateness and dilapidation overwhelmed for him all other impressions.

But while Athens was the home of the most profound philosophers, Alexandria was the centre of the widest culture, just as was the case in the days of Alexander's successors, when Stoics and Epicureans taught at Athens, while the schools of poetry and learning flourished in the great capital where they came into contact with the general movement of the world. In the fourth and fifth centuries all the Greek poets of any distinction wrote at Alexandria, and most of them were born in Egypt; there too pagan philosophy and Christian theology lived side by side.

We are told by Damascius, a pupil of Isidorus, that his master was superior to Hypatia not only as a man to a woman, but as a philosopher to a mathematician. This remark gives us an insight into the character of Hypatia's philosophy. In contrast with those mystical and misty speculators, Iamblichus and the "Egyptian writer on Mysteries", she laid stress on philosophical method, divisions, and definitions, as recommended by Plato, and followed rather the intellectual than the mystical side of Neoplatonism. The germs of both developments, the intellectual and the super-intellectual, were contained in the philosophy of Plotinus. The sober and rational character of this lady's metaphysics may also be deduced from the teaching of her pupil Hierocles, who succeeded her after her death in 415. She was not only a philosopher and a mathematician; she also studied physics, a science which was then generally combined with mathematics. Her pupil Synesius mentions that he had constructed an astrolabe with the assistance of his "respected" instructress, and in another place he asks her to superintend the construction of a hydroscope.

There was one remarkable poet in the fifth century, and only one, who had a sufficiently original manner to found a school of inferior imitators. This was Nonnus of Panopolis. It is particularly interesting to note that having been a pagan in his youth, when he wrote his *Dionysiaca*, he became a Christian in later years, and composed a paraphrase of St. John's Gospel in hexameter verse. He thus presents a parallel in Greek literature to Sidonius Apollinaris or Paulinus of Burdigala.

It is easy to say that Nonnus is artificial, that his long poem in forty-eight books lacks unity, and that he falls into prolix digressive descriptions. It is only in the ninth book that he begins the proper subject of his poem. But living, as he did, in a self-conscious age, how could he be other than artificial? To aim at simplicity when simplicity is not in the air is an affectation which can hardly fail to produce the ridiculous. Recognizing that he is always artificial and often tedious, we nevertheless feel in reading his verses that he had a really poetical mind, that he

"ran beside the naked swift-footed

And bound his forehead with Proserpine's hair".

There are few pages on which we do not find some thought or phrase that pleases, if it is nothing more than the picture of Ganymede raising aloft a goblet in his *scratched* hand.

The twelfth book is one of the best. Hore wanders in search of the dead Ampelos, and having learned the *symbols* of prophecy from Hyperion, finds wherever she goes prophecies in writing relating to the death and resurrection of the youth. This introduction of writing into mythological history is characteristic. The effect produced on nature by the death of Ampelos is very charmingly portrayed, and the description of Pactolus restraining the flow of his water, wan with grief, and having the aspect of a dejected man, deserves to be noted for its subjectivity. Even when he wrote the *Dionysiaca*, in his pagan youth, Nonnus could not escape from the atmosphere of Christianity. A line, for example, like this,

Lord Bacchus wept, that mortals might not weep,

could hardly have been written before the air was permeated with Christian sentiment. But while a trait of this kind occasionally appears, the note of the poem is untrammelled fancy, and thus it has some points in common with the romantic poetry of the nineteenth century. The learning displayed in the composition is prodigious, yet Nonnus wields his lore lightly, and he is as far from the obscure dullness of Lycophron as day from night.

The poets whose influence chiefly affected his style seem to have been Homer and Euripides, the latter of whom was far more read under the Roman Empire than his great elder compeers, because he had a premature tincture of that profound individualism and subjectivity which began to penetrate life in the fourth century *BC*. Both Homer and Euripides were favourites with Christians of culture, as may be gathered from the fashion of writing on Christian subjects, and from the *Christus Patiens*, an extant Greek drama which has been attributed to Gregory of Nazianzus, and which is practically a cento of Euripidean verses. Whether Gregory was the author or not, it is probably a product of this age, and it possesses some interest as a specimen of a class of dramas to which the medieval mystery plays partly owe their origin.

The paraphrase of St. John's Gospel which Nonnus wrote when he embraced Christianity is a curious composition, far superior to the ordinary Christian poem. We cannot read a line without seeing that it is the work of an adept, and although the simplicity of the original is lost, a very readable poem, with many interesting touches, is produced. It was really in its way a triumphant achievement, implying no ordinary poetical skill and command of language, to translate a Christian gospel into hexameters that have always a pleasing flow, and into words which, however they expand the original, never offend the taste.

We need not say much of the versifiers who imitated Nonnus and formed an Egyptian school of poetry. Tryphiodorus' *Capture of Ilion* and Koluthos' *Rape of Helen* may still be read, but they possess little interest. *The Hero and Leander* of Musaeus, who probably lived about 500 or a little later, has obtained a reputation which it hardly deserves. It has the merit of brevity and the merit of possessing unity, two advantages which Nonnus lacks, but in all other respects it seems to me inferior. Pamprepus of Panopolis, the friend of Illus, was a poet as well as philosopher, but we have no means of knowing whether he can in any sense be ranked as one of the school of Nonnus. The Athenian Empress Eudocia did not write secular poetry, or if she did no fragment has survived. The most striking of her compositions that remain is the versification of the legend of Cyprian and Justin a, which has been mentioned in a preceding chapter.

One species of literature, which had sprung up when the Greek spirit was already declining, reached its best bloom at this period, the romance. Between the world of the new Greek comedy and Roman *fabulae palliatae*—full of amorous gallants, lost maidens, angry fathers, and smart slaves moving in an atmosphere of

loose morality—and the world of Boccaccio’s *Decamerone* and Shakespeare’s comedies—a gay Italian world, equally frivolous but more refined, in which the lights and shades of morality are not unattended to—there are two intermediate worlds. The first is that of Longus and Heliodorus and the story-writers of the fourth and fifth centuries; the second is that of *Floire and Blanceflor*, *Imberius and Margarona*, and the other romances which circulated first in the countries of the Mediterranean and thence found their way to northern Europe in the later Middle Ages. The outward influences that partly determined the evolution of the former were the opening up of eastern lands by Alexander the Great, the spirit of adventure that then set in, and the cosmopolitan life of Alexandria and Antioch; while the evolution of the latter was affected in somewhat the same way by the Saracen element that had penetrated southern Europe. The romance-world of the fifth century is also one of amorous gallants, of barbarous brigands and cruel pirates, of lovers parted, of children lost in infancy, reared by shepherds and recognized by tokens, of faithful servants; but while it is marked by an unlikelike refinement and an absence of that naked dissoluteness which was a feature of ancient comedy, it has characteristics of Greek life, fibres connecting it with the antique intuitions, and these separate it not only from Boccaccio but from the cycle of medieval tales that was formed a few centuries later. It is a world in the air, which with the help of oriental material was built on the ruins of Greek life, partly to replace it, and which sought in foreign adventure the interest that city life no longer afforded. And we can detect, behind the artificial form, the sentiment of pagans, who, feeling in the Christianized Empire that “not here, o Apollo, are haunts meet for thee”, sought to revive their weary spirits on a Helicon of fancy, as Theocritus had sought in the sphere of his Sicilian idylls to escape from the close and stifling air of Alexandrian reality. It may be said that the romance succeeded the old drama and fulfilled in some respects the same functions, just as in modern times the novel-writer may be considered to have taken the torch from the composer of plays. In these romances love and adventure were interwoven; the spirit of adventure and travel in strange lands having come in with Alexander the Great, around whose name wonderful legends had soon entwined themselves, while fictitious love-stories may be traced back to Callimachus, perhaps even to Stesichorus.

Unfortunately we know nothing or little of the authors of three remarkable romances that were written at this period. Longus, the author of *Daphnis and Chloe*, is a mere name, and even the name is doubtful; Achilles Tatius, who wrote *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, is little better; of Heliodorus, whose *Ethiopica* became famous, we know only that he was a bishop.

All these stories have great similarity; we could easily believe that they were written by the same person. A diligent concern for elegance of style, for the choice of phrases and the order of words, characterizes them all; and quotations, or echoes, sometimes graceful, of old classical writers abound. An unflinching feature is the love of elaborate description of scenes of nature, in which, however, there is no feeling for nature in the modern sense. It is a purely sensual love of nature—the soft grass and the clear springs and the cool caves of the nymphs—just as in that idyllic passage at the beginning of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, the great charm of the spot is that the grassy sward is so inclined that Socrates and his friend can comfortably lie down. Nature is a picture-frame for lovers; “the spot”, says Achilles Tatius of an agreeable place, “is pleasant in every way, and suitable for romances of love”. Flowers and fruit have an erotic import. The association of flowers, especially roses, with love and young maidens is natural and ancient; we find it in the fragments of Sappho. Flower-names are often chosen for heroines, Antheia, for example, and Rodane; the song in praise of the rose that was sung by the maiden Leucippe deserves special mention; and if there was not a “Language of Fruit”, love at least could be declared by the gift of an apple.

In the same way the descriptions of the persons of youths and maidens are long and minute; and we have a consciousness throughout that the writers are thinking of their diction more than of their matter. They have not the art of concealing their art.

The best of these romances and the most popular in recent times is that of *Daphnis and Chloe*, a shepherd and shepherdess of Mytilene, each a child of noble parents, exposed in infancy and found by shepherds. The chief motive of the story turns on the innocence of the boy and girl, who fall in love and are ignorant of their own desires. There is an idyllic realism in the description of Daphnis’ initiation that reminds us of a certain idyll of Theocritus, but it is not bolder than the narrative of Alcibiades in Plato’s *Banquet*. The maidenhood of Chloe is stainless until her marriage, and it is worthy of remark that in all these romances the chastity of women is considered to have a sort of preternatural value, and heroines pass through the most dangerous situations unharmed. This idea is one of the symptoms of a new spirit in the world, and contrasts with the old Greek feelings on the subject, which were not romantic. As an element that entered into the spirit of chivalry and thence into the notions of modern society the appearance of the new idea deserves special notice. In the sixth century we shall see it in operation on the occasion of the capture of Rome by Totila, the king of the Ostrogoths.

Daphnis and Chloe has perhaps more peculiarities than any of the other romances; the idyllic life of Mytilene, an island which, like Sicily, corresponded to the Arcadia of the Renaissance, invests it with a unique atmosphere. The far longer novel of Heliodorus, the *Ethiopica*, is more typical of the genus, and has had a greater effect on the development of romance-writing. The magic gem Pantarbe, the concealment in tombs, and fancied death, all the wild and varied adventures by sea and land, formed a large repertory from which subsequent writers borrowed motives and incidents.

Descriptions of pictures and works of art, resembling the descriptions of Philostratus, are constantly introduced by these writers, and have often considerable merit, reminding us of word-pictures by Gautier. The romance of Achilles Tatius, *Cleitophon and Zeucippe*, opens with a minute account of a picture of the rape of Europa. Love, as a little boy, is leading the bull in the midst of a landscape in which such details as a peasant stooping over a ditch at his work are portrayed. And in another part of the same story a picture of the rape of Philomela by Tereus is graphically described. The accounts which the same writer gives of the crocodile and the hippopotamus remind us of Herodotus, and had at that time a sensational value. The stage sword, that shut up like a telescope and proved the safety of Leucippe, is worthy of a modern “dreadful”.

The story of *Abrocomas and Antheia* is the story of the adventures and misfortunes of a pair of married lovers. The name of the author is Xenophon of Ephesus, but it occurs to one that Xenophon may be a pseudonym, and that the author may have adapted the names of his hero and heroine, Antheia and Abrocomas, from Pantheia and Abradates, of whom a touching story is told in the *Cyropaedeia* of Xenophon the Athenian.

History and romance stand in a relation of kinship to one another. We may say that they have a common mother, mythology, and this common origin seems to cause a certain association between them in later times; we have the romantic history of Herodotus, and we have the historical romance of pseudo-Callisthenes. Moreover, in the history and fiction of a period we generally see common characteristics. The affected artificiality of style which we tolerate in the rhetoric of Libanius, which attracts us in the romance of Achilles Tatius, repels us a little in the history of Eunapius; yet we cannot say that the style of historians was inordinately affected and farfetched until Theophylactus wrote on the reign of Maurice. The love of travel, adventure, and things outlandish, which had developed since the days of Alexander, is reflected in the histories of the fifth and sixth centuries as well as in the fiction. Priscus gives us an account of his personal experiences in Hun-land, Nonnosus describes his adventures among the Ethiopians, and Cosmas relates his visit to the Indian Ocean.

The secular Greek historians of the fifth century were chiefly pagans. Olympiodorus, Eunapius, and Priscus flourished in the first half of the century, Malchus, Candidus, and Zosimus in the second half. Of these, only Candidus was an indisputably orthodox Christian; Eunapius and Zosimus were militant pagans; Olympiodorus and Priscus were quiescent pagans; Malchus seems to have been neither for God nor for God's enemies.

Eunapius of Sardis wrote two books, of which only fragments have survived. One was a history of the Roman Empire from Claudius Gothicus (270 AD, the point at which Dexippus' history ended) to the tenth year of Arcadius (404); the other was a collection of lives of philosophers and sophists. His style bears the impress of a training in rhetoric, which did not teach him taste, though a good critic thought he wrote prettily; he talks of a "rivery tear". His spirit is that of an ardent pagan into whose soul the iron has entered, one to whom the new order of things seems "a world without any order", an ecumenical mistake. Like all ardent pagans of the time he lavishes the most touching hero-worship upon the Emperor Julian (the last who combined the true belief with the power to enforce it), and crowns him with a halo of celestial light. "By virtue of the power of his nature and the greatness, not less than divine, that was in him, he constrained the inherent tendency that drags downward, and, rising above all the waves of life, he saw heaven and knew the beautiful things that are in heaven, in commune with the bodiless beings, being himself still in the body". The last pagan Emperor, the last hero of the forlorn cause, who had died when Eunapius was a boy of sixteen, had entered into his "study of imagination" and appeared to him half a god. There was a further bond of attraction in their common mysticism. Eunapius was a thaumaturge, and had been initiated in supernatural mysteries.

The Christian Emperors, on the other hand, are for him impersonations of all that is malignant and irrational, and Eunapius' history is written from the point of view that the time is out of joint, and that the course of history is exactly what it should not have been. It is probably the first history ever written in Greek from this point of view. It was followed some years later by the history of Zosimus, whose work, as far as he completed it, has come down to us, and is one of our chief sources for fourth-century history. His political and religious opinions were the same as those of Eunapius, whose work was one of his main sources; but while the opposition of Eunapius to the new order of things was altogether inspired by his religious conviction, the opposition of Zosimus was partly affected by his experiences as an officer in the civil service.

Zosimus states expressly that he looked upon Polybius as his master and model in the art of history. He studied his style with diligence, as Demosthenes studied Thucydides, and he adopted, or adapted from him, rules of hiatus to which he makes the structure of his sentences conform. And Zosimus too, like his master, wrote a history dominated by a pervading idea, but an idea exactly the reverse of the idea of Polybius. Polybius' history was written to prove the right of Roman conquest and the merits of Roman conquerors; Zosimus' history was written to show the unright of Christian dominion and the demerits of Christian Emperors. Polybius justified history, Zosimus impugned it.

Of the nexus of cause and effect the notions of Zosimus are as infelicitous as those of contemporary Christian writers. He attributes the decline of the Empire in the West to the fact that the old pagan sacrifices were discontinued in Rome. His superstition is such that he wonders that no oracle foretold the greatness of Constantinople. Of positive historical errors which he employs to justify his political tendency, we may notice that he blames Constantine for having withdrawn all the frontier troops, whereas Constantine removed only the *comitatenses* from the defense of the marks, which were still protected by the *pseudocomitatenses*.

Of Olympiodorus, who was also a pagan, but apparently not bigoted, there is little to say. His history was rather a collection of materials for history, a *silva* or miscellany, as he called it himself, than a history in the usual sense; its style is so simple and uncared for as to be almost vulgar, thus to some extent anticipating the style of late chroniclers like Theophanes, but the substance is extremely valuable and trustworthy. Priscus, whose description of his journey and adventures in the land of the Huns has come down to us, was also a pagan. His style was very good, and we are impressed with the wisdom and the credibility of the writer. The discussion which took place in the Hun town concerning the comparative merits of the freedom of barbaric life and the trammelled existence of the civilized world is of special interest. Priscus was not only a scholar or "sophist"; he was a man who, moving in the midmost circle of the political world, had a near view of the most stirring events of the time. His history was continued by Malchus of Philadelphia (in Palestine), who wrote in the reign of Anastasius. It is in the pages of Malchus that we read the somewhat puzzling narrative of the marches and countermarches of the two Theodorics in the Balkan provinces. Malchus' style is clear and unaffected, though he was a scholar and a rhetorician; and he has a good reputation as a trustworthy narrator. In regard to his religion I should be inclined to suppose that he was a Laodicean; he is said to have been "not outside" the pale.

The only undoubted Christian who wrote secular history in the fifth century was Candidus the Isaurian. His style was frigid and in bad taste, abounding in poetical phrases inappropriately introduced; “in the suave”, says Photius, “he had no part or lot”, although it was just the suave that he attempted to achieve. He was orthodox of the orthodox, an admirer of the council of Chalcedon. The tone of the age rather than that of his own mind is illustrated by his derivation of Isauria, the land of rough and doubtless hairy mountaineers, from Esau, the brother of Jacob.

On the Latin literature of the fifth century it is not my purpose to dwell at length. The most prominent prose-writers were Christian theologians, and the most prominent verse-writers, with two exceptions, were either converts to Christianity when they wrote, or became converts afterwards. Of the two exceptions, the most famous is Claudian, “a most obstinate pagan, but an excellent poet”, who towers above the heads of all his contemporaries. Most will agree with Teuffel, that he is far superior to Statius, who had the distinction of being a contemporary of Martial and Tacitus, in fertility, richness of fancy, and many-sidedness. We have already become sufficiently acquainted with the subjects of his historical poems, which throw a mixed light on the history of Arcadius’ reign; we need only add that his mythological poem “The Rape of Proserpine” shows him at his best. An inscription on a statue erected in his honour at Naples contains an ancient parallel to Dryden’s quatrain on Milton, an elegiac distich expressing that Claudian was Homer and Virgil in one. The other uncompromisingly pagan poet was Eutilius Namatianus, in whose eyes the Christians were “a sect more fell than Circe’s poisons”, as he said in his picturesque poem *de reditu suo*, describing his return to Italy from Gaul.

Of converts to Christianity, whose writings are partly or wholly pagan, may be mentioned Macrobius, Licentius, and Sidonius Apollinaris. Paulinus of Burdigala, who afterwards became bishop of Nola, was converted in time to write a panegyric on Theodosius I in celebration of his victory over Eugenius.

The poems of Sidonius Apollinaris, the son-in-law of the Emperor Avitus, possess the peculiar charm of transporting us into a circle of old Roman culture amid the alien surroundings of the fifth century. His pagan poetry is Roman, but decadent, infected with something not Roman; it is the poetry of one who might become a Christian. He is at home in Rome, amid the monuments of the pagan Emperors and the memorials of the pagan republic; but he is by no means at home in Ravenna, the capital of Christian Emperors, where all the buildings are of brick, the waterless city of marshes, “where the living thirst and the dead swim”. In the consulate of his friend and father-in-law the Emperor Avitus he spent pleasant days at Rome; he wrote and recited a panegyric on the Emperor; and it was decreed by the senate that a bronze statue should be erected to him in the Forum of Trajan, between the Latin and Greek libraries. Thus the poet of Avitus was set up in bronze beside the poet of Stilicho and the poet of Aetius. Twelve years later he was to become the bishop of Clermont.

Of Christian poetry, beside the hymns of St. Ambrose, the writings of Prudentius won popularity; they blended Horatian love-poetry with Christianity, as it were warm wine with cool water, and the mixture suited the taste of the day. The asclepiads of Severus Endelechius “on the deaths of cattle” exhibit the same Christianizing tendency as the writings of Paulinus. Two swains are introduced, complaining of the loss of their cattle by the plague, and as they talk, Tityrus, a Christian, enters driving along a herd of cattle which the pestilence had not injured. The animals had escaped, as Tityrus explains, because the sign of the cross was branded on their foreheads

Into the characteristics of the ecclesiastical and religious writers, Augustine and Jerome, Salvian and Cassian, I cannot attempt to enter here; I can only repeat what has been said before, that they retained the form of pagan style and employed the arts of pagan rhetoric, while they contended against the pagan spirit. Besides Jerome’s translation of the Bible, his enlarged translation of Eusebius’ *Chronicle* was very important and served as a model for Latin chroniclers. Orosius’ *History against the Pagans*, written as a sort of supplement to Augustine’s *City of God*, attained less celebrity, and is now read more for its historical statements than its arguments. All these writers contributed in a greater or less degree to the establishment of a school of Latin theology, though Augustine and Jerome tower so far above the others that they may be considered its founders.

BOOK IV

THE
HOUSE OF JUSTIN

PART I

THE
AGE OF JUSTINIAN

CHAPTER I

THE REIGN OF JUSTIN I; AND THE EARLIER YEARS OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

In order to understand the European history of the sixth century and the reign of Justinian, we must grasp the fact that it is a direct continuation of the history of the fifth century, but that there is one great difference in the situation. It is a continuation of the struggle between the Romans and the Germans, but their relation has altered. In the fifth century the Germans were conquering lands from the Romans, in the sixth century the Romans are reconquering lands from the Germans. Europe is now divided between them. Northwestern Europe is irrevocably lost to the Empire and secured to Teutonic peoples, south-eastern Europe is still Roman in the wide sense of the word. Italy is the intermediate land between these extremes, and consequently becomes the scene of the last combat, which results in the overthrow of the Ostrogoths, and leads to the division of the peninsula between the Romans and the Lombards.

Justinian is the great figure of the time. His enterprising spirit carried out the idea of regaining a footing in western Europe. He set in order a system of law for the world. Politically he was absolute, as against the aristocracy; ecclesiastically he was absolute, as against Pope or Patriarch. His buildings in number and splendour were the marvel of his age; and in St. Sophia he bequeathed to posterity an imposing monument of his greatness.

The reign of Justin I is chiefly important as preliminary to the reign of his nephew Justinian I.

Justin is said to have been originally an Illyrian peasant who came to Constantinople with his two brothers in the reign of Leo. We have already met him as a trusted officer of Anastasius, assisting in quelling the Isaurians, and he was afterwards advanced to the post of commander of the guards (*comes excubitorum*). At the time of Anastasius' death (1st July 518) the eunuch Amantius formed a plot to invest a friend or creature of his own with the purple. To attain this end it was absolutely necessary to gain over the guards, and he consequently enlisted Justin in his service and supplied him with money to bribe the soldiers. But Justin was more wily and more ambitious than Amantius calculated; he took the treasure and secured the interests of the soldiers for himself; the senate consented, and the people acclaimed.

Observe the position of affairs. The government of Anastasius in his later years had been most unpopular in two ways, financially and ecclesiastically. He hoarded the income of the State instead of expending part of it as productive capital, and he increased his hoard by oppressive exactions; he was, moreover, a pronounced monophysite. The opposition to his government was expressed in the revolt of Vitalian, who professed to represent the cause of orthodoxy. Vitalian had indeed been repressed, but he was still in Thrace, his attitude was hostile, and he was doubtless in relation with a faction in the city which shared his disaffection.

Anastasius, though childless, had near relations, especially two nephews, Hypatius and Pompeius, who might urge a claim to the throne, and were secure of the support of the monophysite party and the green faction, which their uncle favoured.

But Justin ousted both Vitalian and the nephews of the late Emperor. Justin's religion was orthodox, and his accession to the throne rested on the facts that he attached to himself the orthodox anti-Anastasian party, including the blue faction, and that he was, by his military reputation and his position as commander of the guards, so formidable that Vitalian could not continue hostilities, especially as the causes for dissatisfaction, which had led to them, were now removed. Vitalian was consoled with a consulship and the office of master of soldiers; and the great schism (which had lasted since Zeno's *Henotikon*) between the Roman and Byzantine Churches came to an end, as the Emperor recognized the dogmatic symbolum of Pope Leo I. But Vitalian enjoyed his new honours for only a few months; he was assassinated, and his assassination was generally attributed to the jealousy of Justinian.

Justin was an able soldier, but was already wellnigh seventy years old. He had not much aptitude for civil affairs, and he was illiterate. The enemies of the new dynasty afterwards said that he was an imbecile old man, who did neither good nor evil to the Empire, because he was unable to do anything. Such a slight is of no value in regard of the fact. He was a man of ambition and strong will who, notwithstanding his advanced age, steered the Empire into a new era and guided a thoroughgoing reaction.

To make up for his own deficiencies in culture and knowledge of civil government he had the assistance of his nephew Justinian, who was destined to succeed him. Justinian assumed the consulate in 521 AD, and exhibited games and spectacles of magnificent costliness. This munificence was a contrast to the careful frugality of Anastasius, and indicated to the people the reactionary policy of the new dynasty. In April 527 Justinian was created Augustus, and in August, on the death of his uncle, became sole monarch.

The financial difficulties in which the Empire was involved in the latter part of the fifth century had been solved by the care of Anastasius, and the new Emperor found a large sum of money in the treasury. But before the accession of Justinian this sum is said to have been considerably reduced, for the frugality of Anastasius had been followed by a more liberal expenditure, and the exactions for which he had been blamed were not continued. Justinian's ideas soared higher than to the mere maintenance of a brilliant court, and he required money to carry them out. The harmless administration of Justin was incompatible with the achievement of public glories—and there is so much truth in the unkind remark that Justin did no good or evil to the State. The great works by which

Justinian's name is remembered, the works on Roman law, the conquest of Italy and Africa, and the public edifices are connected with the names of three men, Tribonian, Belisarius, and Anthemius. The abilities of these men were worthy of the large conceptions of their sovereign. But the great works could never have been executed but for another human instrument, whose name has been handed down to infamy, and not, like theirs, to fame. This was John the Cappadocian, who was appointed praetorian prefect, and supplied the treasury by oppressing the subjects. The most authentic account of him is that of John Lydus, who was a civil servant at the time, and has left us a narrative of his enormities.

It was the duty of the prefect to supply money for needful expenses. John not only supplied it but became immensely wealthy himself, and led a life of gluttony and debauchery. "He did not fear God or regard man". The provinces of Lydia and Cilicia especially suffered from his extortions; he let a company of his creatures loose upon Lydia, and they devastated it for the space of a year, leaving (according to John of Lydia) not a virgin or a youth undeflowered, nor a vessel in a house. He was regarded as a demon, attended by a band of demons, too ready to do his bidding, and such names as Cyclops, Cerberus, Sardanapalus were lavished on him. Of his special acts we may notice the partial abolition, or rather modification, of the State post, *cursus publicus*, the result of which measure was economically disastrous. Directly, certain expenses were saved to the treasury, but the unfortunate provincials were obliged to undergo the labour of transporting their produce themselves to the ports for transference to Constantinople, and large quantities of corn rotted in the granaries. The impoverished provincials flocked to the capital; a large number of new taxes were invented to extort money, and justice is said to have been so abused that men would not go into court, and the business of advocates declined. The prefect instituted the use of hideous and painful fetters, he had dark dungeons under the praetorium for punishing his subordinate officials, and none were exempted from the indignity of torture. The remarkable point is that, according to John Lydus, Justinian was ignorant of the excesses of the prefect. Lydus is continually inserting a parenthesis to warn us that the Emperor knew nothing of this or that unjust transaction. That Justinian was prepared to enforce rigorously the collection of all established dues we know from his laws; but he may not have been aware of, and, we may be sure, did not inquire too curiously into, all the details of his minister's actions. We can easily understand the value he laid upon a prefect who never failed to supply him with the funds requisite for the achievement of his schemes.

Justinian shared his throne with a remarkable woman, the Empress Theodora. She was originally a ballet-dancer; her beauty and intellectual ability attracted the love of Justinian, before he became Emperor, and he married her. A contemporary said it was impossible for mere man to describe her comeliness in words or to imitate it by art; we cannot judge how far this remark was due to the enthusiasm of adulation, but if we were entitled to form an idea of her features from the mosaic picture in San Vitale at Ravenna, we should infer that Procopius, in speaking of her beauty, uses the language of a courtier. Nevertheless I think we may conclude that Theodora was a beautiful woman, not from the praise of Procopius, but from the admissions of the Secret History, whose author would doubtless, if he could, have disparaged her charms. The only blemishes which he can find in her are that she was rather short in stature and had a somewhat pale complexion, but the pallor, which he assures us was not sickly, he seems to admire rather than censure.

In order to understand her political position we must direct our attention to the factions of the circus, which were of considerable historical importance throughout, especially at the beginning of, the sixth century. The origin of the four parties of the circus, symbolized by the colours white, red, green, and blue, is veiled in obscurity. The masters or leaders of these parties (*domini factionum*) are first mentioned in the reign of Nero. Caligula favoured the green, Nero the blue colour, and the rivalry of the parties continued to a late period of the Empire, the Emperor himself generally patronizing either blue or green, in which white and red had been respectively absorbed. It was not merely in Rome that these factions existed; they cheered and fought throughout the capitals of the provinces; they had existed in Byzantium since (at latest) the time of Septimius Severus. At Constantinople in the fifth century they seem to have assumed greater political importance, and we can hardly avoid connecting this with the religious differences which agitated the East. For the parties of the circus became soon identified with the parties of the Church; the eunuch Chrysaphius, who was inclined to the heresy of Eutyches, supported the Greens, Marcian, the orthodox Emperor, supported the Blues; and at the end of the fifth century the monophysite Anastasius favoured the Greens. In the year 501 a battle took place between the two parties in the hippodrome. It must be observed that these parties did not consist merely of the participators in the games; any citizen might belong to them. They were maintained on an organized system, recognized by the government, with regular officers. They were a machine by which the opinion or will of the people could be expressed; and the Greek name of a "party" was *dymos*, a deme, or "people".

The support of the Blues was one of the elements on which the new dynasty rested; the hostility of the monophysitic Greens was one of the lurking dangers against which it had to guard. It was natural for Justin and Justinian to favour the blue party, as Anastasius had favoured the green.

Now Theodora, in the days of her life as a public dancer, was identified with the green faction. Her father is said to have been employed in its service; and she held monophysitic opinions. When she married Justinian, she transferred her sympathies to the Blues, but did not change her creed. It is characteristic that the opposition writer, who afterwards treated her with scurrilous virulence in the Secret History, ascribed this change of colour to personal pique.

Many looked upon the interest taken by Justinian in the blue faction as a mania. He is said to have allowed it to commit the most outrageous acts of petulance and violence with impunity, and even to have heavily chastised governors who ventured to punish members of that faction for their misdemeanours. The Greens, on the other hand, were harshly treated, exposed to the malevolence of their opponents and unable to retaliate. We must not forget that the factions were mixed companies; and among the Blues there was clearly a select fellowship of unprincipled adventurers and debauchees, who, under the cover of orthodoxy and loyalty, threw off the restraints of society. About this time they adopted the fashion of wearing beards like the Persians; and shaving the crown

of the head to the temples, they wore their hair long behind like Huns. But it would be an error to suppose that all the members of the factions were like these obtrusive individuals.

We can perceive that the license permitted to the favoured party was in a manner a political necessity. Even in the most despotic state, public opinion is more or less a check on the acts of the sovereign, for he feels that there is a limit somewhere at which human endurance will rebel. Now Justinian's financial exigencies forced him to try the endurance of his subjects; his vigorous policy and his rapacious ministers naturally excited much discontent. The populace were dissatisfied on account of the reduction which was made in the distributions of corn; the conservatism of the patricians and senators revolted against the Emperor's ideas of innovation; and no favour was shown to the professional classes. Besides this the monophysites were hostile to his government, and there were many adherents of the family of Anastasius. Public opinion was a force which he could not ignore, especially as it had made itself heard in the reign of Anastasius. Now the circus was the place in which public opinion could express itself; the denials of the circus were organized parties capable of political combination and action. It was consequently Justinian's policy to enlist in his service one party as a sort of government organ, and his party was naturally the blue, which had been the party of opposition under Anastasius. He could thus paralyze resistance on the part of the people by keeping them divided, and favouring one division. As long as the two parties were opposed, John the Cappadocian and the other unpopular ministers were safe.

But it is evident that such a policy could not be permanent; Justinian could not be content, while his position depended on a party. In 532 AD a turning-point came, the sedition of "Nika", which shook the throne. The import of this event was that Justinian attempted to render himself independent even of the blue faction, which had grown intolerably turbulent. The blue faction consequently coalesced with the green; and the Emperor quelled the rebellion by the soldiers. The affair was further complicated by the fact that the disaffection was taken advantage of by the party of the Anastasian dynasty, an element of danger which the Emperor finally extinguished.

On the 13th of January the Greens complained to the Emperor in the hippodrome of the grievous oppression which they suffered, especially from Calapodius, a guardsman, who had been a Green in the days of Anastasius and had become a Blue under the new dynasty. The Blues supported the Emperor, and the streets were soon the scene of sanguinary conflicts. But a circumstance occurred which determined the union of the hostile parties in a common insurrection against the oppressive administration. Seven individuals had been condemned to death, and five of them were executed without difficulty. But in the case of two, a Blue and a Green, the hangman blundered, and twice the bodies fell, still alive, to the ground. Then the monks of St. Conon interfered and carried the two criminals to the adjacent monastery. As some of the criminals were Blues, and as the hitch in the execution tended to make the incident more impressive than usual, the Blues and Greens united in a determination to avenge themselves on the civil authorities, and they chose the watchword Nika, "conquer", from which the sedition has received its name.

The most obnoxious ministers were John of Cappadocia the praetorian prefect, Tribonian the quaestor, and Eudemius the prefect of the city, who was especially associated with the executions which had taken place. During five days, from 14th to 18th January, the city was a scene of conflagrations and witnessed all the horrors of street warfare. The troops present in the capital were not numerous. The guards of the palace, who used formerly to be recruited by hardy Armenians or Isaurians, consisted of 3500 men; but as Justinian had made a practice of selling sinecure commissions for large sums, the corps was not very efficient. Belisarius, who had lately returned from the Persian war, had a force of *cataphracti*—cavalry completely mailed—who were lodged in the precincts of the palace; and it happened that the Gepid leader Mundus, who had done good service on the Danube frontier against Bulgarian invaders, was also present in the city with a corps of Heruls. Besides these there were some regiments of municipal guards.

On the 14th (Wednesday) Justinian yielded so far to the public wishes as to depose the three obnoxious ministers and replace them by Phocas, Basilides, and Tryphon. This measure could hardly have been expected to satisfy the Greens, but it might have been fairly expected that it would succeed in dissolving their coalition with the Blues and so paralyze the revolt. But the excitement that prevailed was fomented by the secret machinations and bribes of the partisans of Anastasius' nephews. The people seemed resolved to overthrow the dynasty of Justin. But Hypatius and Pompeius, the nephews of Anastasius, were in attendance on Justinian in the palace, and Probus, their brother, had escaped to Asia, so that the insurgents had no one whom they could proclaim Augustus.

In the afternoon Belisarius issued from the gate of Chalke at the head of his Goths and harassed the rioters until eventide. When he retreated they set fire to the Chalke porch; the flames enveloped the senate house and spread along the Diabatika of Achilles to St. Sophia. On the same evening the offices of the prefect of the city were probably burnt, but we do not know in what locality they were situated. On the 15th (Thursday) the conflagration continued, and a part of the hippodrome on the side of the Augusteum was consumed; on the 16th (Friday) the offices of the praetorian prefect were fired. Meanwhile the ruins of St. Sophia were smouldering, and either from them or from the praetorium (which may have been in that region), a wind blew flames northward, which wrought the destruction of the hospital of Samson and the church of St. Irene. The palace of Lausus, rebuilt after the fire in 465, the baths of Alexander, and many private houses perished in the course of the conflagration. On Friday evening some ships arrived with troops from neighbouring cities; and, encouraged by this increase of his forces, the Emperor arranged an attack on the insurgents, who on the following day (17th, Saturday) assembled in the Augusteum, intending perhaps to make a decisive assault on the palace. The conflict ended with the siege of a building in the Augusteum called the Octagon, where the rebels entrenched themselves; the soldiers, unable to expel them, set fire to it.

On Sunday morning Justinian ventured to appear in the cathisma of the hippodrome with a copy of the Gospels in his hands. It was proclaimed that the Emperor would converse in person with the people, and large crowds assembled, but with no purpose of pacification. Justinian swore that he would grant an unreserved

amnesty, forget the past, and comply with the demands of his subjects. A sovereign could hardly say more than this; but all he heard in reply was, "You lie!" in conjunction with some abusive vocative; and "As you kept your oath to Vitalian, even so would you keep this oath to us". Justinian, when he returned to the palace, ordered all the senators who were present to leave it, among the rest Hypatius and Pompeius; perhaps he thought that his two rivals would be less dangerous outside. They professed to be devoted to the Emperor, and it is not clear whether their devotion was a mask or not. The insurgents were elated when they learned that Hypatius had left the palace; they met him and constrained him to take the decisive step. On Monday morning (19th January) he was crowned in the Forum of Constantine with a golden chain wreathed like a diadem, and soon afterwards he sat in the cathisma of the hippodrome, while a multitudinous assembly below called out, "Hypatie Auguste, tu vincas". They had come to the hippodrome in order to organize an attack on the adjacent palace, contrary to the judicious advice of the senator Origen, who recommended that they should first seize one of the other palaces in the city. Meanwhile Justinian strengthened the fortifications of the palace, and called a council of his ministers. This was the really decisive moment.

John of Cappadocia recommended flight to Heraclea, and Belisarius agreed with his view; but their weighty opinions were outbalanced by the short speech of the Empress Theodora:—

"The present occasion is, I think, too grave to take regard of the principle that it is not meet for a woman to speak among men. Those whose dearest interests are in the presence of extreme danger are justified in thinking only of the wisest course of action. Now in my opinion, on the present occasion, if ever, nature is an unprofitable tutor, even if her guidance bring us safety. It is impossible for a man, when he has come into the world, not to die; but for one who has reigned it is intolerable to be an exile. May I never exist without this purple robe and may I never live to see the day on which those who meet me shall not address me as 'Queen'. If you wish, O Emperor, to save yourself, there is no difficulty; we have ample funds. Yonder is the sea, and there are the ships. Yet reflect whether, when you have once escaped to a place of security, you will not prefer death to safety, I agree with an old saying that 'Empire is a fair winding-sheet'."

From the mere words of this speech we can understand what effect it might have produced; but we can hardly realize how that effect was magnified when it proceeded from the lips of the Empress—"cette diablesse de génie attachée à l'existence de Justinien".

In the meantime it was believed in the hippodrome that the Emperor and his court had fled. For Hypatius, not yet sure of success, had sent a messenger to Justinian, bidding him attack the people assembled in the hippodrome. Ephraem, the messenger, could not himself reach the imperial presence, but he gave the message to one of the secretaries, Thomas, who was a pagan. Thomas, ignorantly or designedly, gave him the false information that Justinian had fled, and Ephraem proclaimed the tidings in the hippodrome. It now seemed to the rebels and the perhaps unwilling usurper that they had only to take possession of the palace.

When Theodora's resolution had conquered the prudence or pusillanimity of the court, the eunuch Narses was sent forth with a well-filled purse to regain the allegiance of the Blues; and at the same time Belisarius led out his troops with the purpose of cutting the revolutionists to pieces in the crowded enclosure. Belisarius first attempted to reach Hypatius himself by the spiral stair which led up to the cathisma, but the door was kept fast by the guard on the inner side. Failing here, he entered the hippodrome by the general entrance to the west of the cathisma, and at the same moment another force under Mundus appeared at the Dead Gate on the east side. Narses' distribution of bribes meanwhile had succeeded in producing dissension between "the friendly Greens and Blues", and this favoured the attack of the soldiers. An unsparing massacre took place, and it is said that about 35,000 persons perished in the sedition of Nika. Hypatius and Pompeius were executed.

Those who draw a line between a "Roman" and "Byzantine" history might well look on this striking sedition as the last scene in "Roman history", for it resulted in an imperial victory which established the form of absolutism by which Byzantine history is generally characterized—a result perhaps partly implied in the remark of Procopius that the revolt was fatal in its consequences to both senate and people. M. Marrast describes it as "the last convulsion which marks the passage from Graeco-Roman antiquity to the Middle Age"

The blue and green factions made themselves conspicuous on several subsequent occasions during the reign of Justinian, but they did not again shake the foundations of the throne as in the Nika revolt. Their rivalry outlived their short union, and as long as they were hostile there was no danger for Justinian; and in spite of the occasional storms that broke out their importance was really decreasing. It is recorded that a faction fight took place in 549, and there was a more serious demonstration in 556, during a great dearth at Constantinople, when common suffering seems again to have united the foes. The people cried, "Provide supplies for the city", and they pulled down the house of the prefect of the city. The factions clamoured against Justinian in the circus, and as Persian ambassadors happened to be present, the Emperor felt especially indignant and mortified. In 561 a conflict of the Blues and Greens took place in the hippodrome before the Emperor arrived, but his appearance quelled it; and in 563 the Greens, who were undoubtedly connected with the conspiracy which was at that time formed against Justinian, reviled and stoned the new urban prefect Andreas, and their behaviour led to a battle with the Blues. I shall have to speak of "the colours" once or twice again in the reigns of Maurice and Phocas, but they are then far on their way to political insignificance.

The conflagration of so many important public buildings would have entailed a heavy outlay for their mere restoration, but they were rebuilt by the ambition of Justinian on a more splendid scale. We must postpone to another place some account of the new St. Sophia, and the architectural works of Anthemius, whose skill raised the city from its ashes fairer than ever. Notwithstanding these expenses, which were incurred simultaneously with the costly wars in Africa and Italy, the condition of the subjects seems to have somewhat improved, owing partly to the milder though short administration of Phocas, the new and popular praetorian prefect of the East. But in the course of little more than a year John the Cappadocian returned to office and oppression. We can hardly doubt that the Emperor, for the fulfilment of whose schemes enormous funds were necessary, found that

his treasury was not so full since the degradation of this unscrupulous minister, and concluded that the only way out of his difficulties was the reappointment of John.

The enemies of Justinian might appeal to this reappointment as their best proof that the Emperor was utterly unscrupulous as to the means employed to carry out his ideas.

The overthrow of John of Cappadocia was due to the hatred of the Empress Theodora. She ruined him by a curious stratagem, contrived by her friend Antonina, the wife of the general Belisarius, who is described by Procopius, her husband's secretary, as a woman "more capable than anyone to manage the impracticable". Antonina cultivated the acquaintance of John's daughter Euphemia, and gave her to understand that Belisarius was highly discontented with the reigning powers, who had shown ingratitude for all his services, but that he could make no attempt to throw off the intolerable yoke without aid from some influential person in the ranks of the civil ministers. Euphemia communicated this news to her father, who was not without ambition and eagerly embraced the chance of ascending the throne with the help of the army. He arranged a secret interview with Antonina at Rufinianum, a country house of Belisarius, and the Empress took care that officials with soldiers should lurk near to overhear the implicating words and arrest the unsuspecting conspirator. It is said that Justinian, aware of the plot, sent to John a secret warning against the trap; but notwithstanding, John went, conspired, and fell. He was sent to Cyzicus (541 AD), disgraced but wealthy, where he lived for some time as a priest; but the relentless indignation of Theodora still pursued him, and he was scourged and stripped of his goods for slaying a bishop. He ended his days as a presbyter at Constantinople, whither he returned after the death of Theodora in 548.

The absolutism of Justinian provoked a strong and bitter opposition, all the bitterer because it was so unsparingly suppressed. He was accused of discouraging all liberal professions, of not only suppressing philosophers and sophists, but of depriving physicians of their allowances, and prohibiting the pay which lawyers (rhetors) had been accustomed to receive. The merchants were harassed by customs and monopolies, the soldiers were ill-treated by *logothetae*, who cheated them of their pay, retarded their promotion, and gave them deficient rations. Taxation, pitilessly imposed, weighed heavier than ever on the landed proprietors and farmers, and no arrears were remitted. Such is the general tenor of the charges made by the dissatisfied member of the party of opposition, who has painted the agony of the Empire under "the demon Justinian" in the *Secret History*. On this subject something will be said in the next chapter, but we may remark here that, although the general tone of Justinian's rule was *Tel est notre plaisir*, he always condescends in his constitutions to give reasons, often elaborate reasons, for his acts, and that many of his laws seem really, as well as professedly, to have aimed at the wellbeing of his subjects, and not merely at the external prestige of the Empire or the replenishing of the treasury.

Two new offices instituted by Justinian seem to have been unpopular at Byzantium, that of the *praetores plebis* and the new quaestorship. In 535 Justinian superseded the prefect of the watch (*praefectus vigilam*), "night prefect", a name which the imperial constitution derides as absurd, and appointed the *praetor plebis*, whose office was to keep order in the city both by night and by day. In 539 he appointed a quaestor, whose chief function was to prevent idlers and strangers who had no special business from sojourning in Constantinople; and in the constitution by which this office was instituted the legislator dwells with complacency on the fact that the institution of the *praetor plebis* had been found by experience "very advantageous to the inhabitants of this our imperial city", and states that the success of that office suggested the introduction of a new one. Tribonian, the great lawyer, was the first quaestor under the new system, and he is said to have been a lover of gain, and very unpopular. Both these innovations are mentioned in the *Secret History* as organs of Justinianean oppression.

The imperial style adopted by Justinian in his constitutions was pompous and imposing. The preface to the second edition of the Codex (534), couched in the form of a constitution, begins thus:

"In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi Imperator Caesar Flavius Justinianus Alamannicus Gothicus Francicus Germanicus Anticus Alanicus Vvandalicus Africanns pius felix inclitus victor ac triumphator semper Augustus senatm urbis Constantinopolitanae S."

In a law concerning imperial constitutions and edicts, which was read aloud "in the new consistory of Justinian's palace" in 529, the Emperor exclaims: "What is greater, what more sacred than the imperial majesty? who is puffed up with such haughty conceit as to disdain the royal judgment, when even the founders of the old law lay down clearly and distinctly that the constitutions, which have gone forth by imperial decree, are valid as law?" And, he goes on to say, the sole promulgator of the laws is the sole worthy interpreter of them likewise.

The imperial pride is always flavoured with the religious spirit of the time, and Justinian does not weary of boasting of the divine favour which has been vouchsafed to him. For example, the opening sentences of the constitution on the Digest (533), known as *Tanta* run thus:

"So great in our regard is the providence of the divine humanity, that it always deigns to sustain us with eternal generousities. For after the Parthian (Parthica, meaning Persian) wars had been lulled to sleep by an Everlasting Peace and the Vandal nation had been overthrown and Carthage, nay all Libya, had been united again with the Roman Empire it has enabled the ancient laws, heavy-laden with old age, to assume a new form of beauty in the shape of an abridgment of moderate size, by means of our watchful care—an achievement, which no one, before our reign ever hoped for or even deemed possible for human intellect".

CHAPTER II

JUSTINIAN AND THEODORA

The sixth century may be called the age of Justinian. But of the man himself, whose works changed the history of the world, it is hard to win a distinct idea; we have only a vague glimpse of the features of that form which dominated Europe. His elusive personality hides behind meagre statements, uninformative panegyrics, or malevolent pasquinades, and perplexes the historian. And even those who do not care for the analytical dissection of motives, who see the greatness of Justinian revealed in his works—by their fruits ye shall know them—feel nevertheless tantalized at the elusiveness of his individuality.

Beside him stands Theodora, another baffling problem, and indissolubly associated with Justinian for those who have visited San Vitale in Ravenna, as well as for those who have read the Secret History, a book of ill fame which has thrown a doubtful light or shadow on the imperial court.

We may first resume briefly Justinian's historical position. He may be likened to a colossal Janus bestriding the way of passage between the ancient and medieval worlds.

On the one side his face was turned towards the past. His ideal, we are told, was to restore the proud aspect of the old Roman Empire, and this was chiefly realized by his conquests in Italy, Africa, and Spain. The great juristic works executed at the beginning of his reign breathe to some degree the spirit of ancient Rome. Moreover he represents the last stage in the evolution of the Roman Imperium; in him was fulfilled its ultimate absolutism. From Augustus to Diocletian there was a dualism, the "dyarchy" of the Emperor and the Senate which was abolished in the monarchy of Diocletian; and from Constantine to Justinian there was another dualism between the Church and the Imperium, which passed into Justinian's absolutism. This second dualism reached in the latter part of the period an antagonism which was conditioned by the falling asunder of eastern and western Europe; and it was by reuniting the West that Justinian was able to overcome the dualism and assert his ecclesiastical authority. The historian Agathias expresses Justinian's absolute government by saying, "Of those who reigned at Byzantium he was the first absolute sovereign in deed as well as in name".

On the other hand, he was a great innovator and a destroyer of old things; and this was made a ground of complaint by the disaffected. The consulate was abolished, the philosophical schools of Athens were closed, and these two events may be considered symbolic of the death of the Roman and the death of the Greek spirit. The Graeco-Roman, Romaic, or Byzantine spirit is installed in their place. He tampered with and partly changed the administrative system of Diocletian; he allowed the Greek tongue to supplant Latin in official documents; the authority of the Twelve Tables, long in disuse, was at length formally abolished; and fundamental conceptions peculiar to the Roman civil law were set aside. Justinian was thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of the Christian world; he spent his nights in theological studies; and in the erection of the great church of St. Sophia, which still remains to commemorate him, it was Solomon and not Pericles that he desired to imitate and surpass.

In four departments Justinian has won an immortal name: in warfare, in law, in architecture, and in church history. Standing on the shore of the medieval or modern period, he cast into the waters of the future great stones which created immense circles. His military achievements decided the course of the history of Italy, and affected the development of western Europe; his legal works are inextricably woven into the web of European civilization; his St. Sophia is one of the greatest monuments of the world, one of the visible signs of the continuity of history, a standing protest against the usurpation of the Turk; and his ecclesiastical authority influenced the distant future of Christendom.

But the means by which he accomplished these things rendered him unpopular. He accomplished them by an artificial system, which could be only temporary, and broke down on his death. It consisted of two parts, (1) a very severe taxation, and (2) a system of ingenious diplomatic relations with those barbarian peoples who hung on the northern frontiers of the Empire. He was not able to keep these nations, Huns, Slaves, and Germans, altogether in check; they were continually devastating the Balkan provinces, and he was obliged to oppose them with armies destined for Italy; but he succeeded, partly by money payments, partly by turning them against one another, in paralyzing their hostilities sufficiently to prevent them from foiling the prosecution of his projects in the West. Frequent and large money payments were necessary, and in so far the second part of his system depended on the first. There was one limit on his activities, which could not be entirely dealt with by this system, the power of Persia under the great king Chosroes Nushirvan. Money payments were often useful and necessary, but the defense of the Asiatic frontier was a constant and considerable check on the Italian campaigns. This is evident from the increased activity in the West which always succeeded a peace with Persia.

As to the oppressive taxation, we have no option but to conclude that for the bulk of Justinian's subjects his reign was not a blessing. Limited as he was by the circumstances of the time, the execution of his designs was inconsistent with the present prosperity of the people. But history justifies him by the event as she justifies all her true children.

There are the two sides here as elsewhere, the universal and the individual, the historical and the biographical; and on the principle of good coming out of evil, many condemn the great man, while they are forced to praise his works, both in themselves and in their historical results. History or providence, it may be said, fully justifies present evils by their effects in the future; those effects may be considered equivalent to the historical motive; but this avails not the individual at whose door those evils lie; the instrument of history is condemned.

But this theory is cancelled by a rejoinder, which is at least equally valid. Instead of attributing the good results to "providence" and blaming Justinian for the present evils, one might reply, should we not credit

Justinian with elevated and far-seeing purposes, and ascribe the miseries of his subjects to the defective economical conditions of the age?

Perhaps the only value of either of these views is to cancel the other; the antinomy teaches us to refrain from introducing the biographical point of view into history, from taking the individual out of his environment and passing irrelevant moral judgments. The motives of all the actions of individuals are more or less personal, and those of prominent men are generally more or less tinged with the desire of fame. This feeling doubtless gave animation to the activity of Justinian, and it would be an anachronism to judge him by the canons of modern philanthropy. To praise Justinian's absolutism in the sixth century is not to praise absolutism. Dante, looking upon the desire of fame as a celestial quality, attributed it to Justinian, and placed him as a revolving light in the planet of Mercury. "Fui Cesare e sono Giustiniano", he says to Dante—words which we might apply in a different sense to signify that the imperial administration and its evils were transient things, now dead, a sort of accident not really appertaining to the glorified Justinian.

There was naturally a strong and virulent party of opposition to the Emperor's government, consisting of monophysites, the green faction, and others who felt the touch of his stern hand. They were interested in putting the most unfavourable construction on all imperial acts, in representing the court as a hotbed of corruption, in aspersing the ministers of the crown. The essence of this virulence has survived in the Secret History attributed to the historian Procopius, the secretary of Belisarius.

There are two distinct questions connected with this curious book: (1) Was Procopius of Caesarea the author? (2) Are its statements trustworthy, wholly or partially, or not at all?

We cannot, I think, answer either of these questions with a simple yes or no. The details of both problems are reserved for an appendix; but conclusions may be stated here. In regard to the first, I agree in the main with the opinion of Ranke, that Procopius is not the author, but that the work was nevertheless founded on a diary or ephemeris of that historian; that a member of the opposition, probably of the green faction, having obtained possession of the diary or a copy of it, worked it up into the form of the Secret History, incorporating all the calumnies which were afloat about the Emperor and the Empress.

In regard to the second question, it seems plain that, on the one hand, a historian is not entitled to make use of any particular statement resting on the unconfirmed authority of this document; but that, on the other hand, there was method in the author's madness, and there were underlying facts which gave relevancy to the inventions. We can hardly doubt that Theodora before her marriage appeared on the stage, for the author's picture of her career would otherwise have no point; and there is some method apparent in the circumstance that he does not charge her with licentiousness after her marriage.

But setting aside these vexed questions, on which we can but barely touch here, and for the present rejecting the evidence of the Secret History on matters of fact, we must observe that the work has a considerable value not only as a product of the age, in which regard it will be spoken of in another place, but also as expressing the feelings of bitterness which the government of Justinian excited.

This book of pain and horror leaves upon the mind the impression that the enlightened spirit of Justinian, his notable projects, his high thoughts, lived in the shadow of some malignant presence; that cowering by the throne of the Emperor, lurking in the gallery of the palace where he walked in meditation at night, ever attending his steps, moved some inhuman horror, some unutterable "Dweller by the Threshold", through whose fatal power the destinies of himself and Theodora, Belisarius and Antonina, John the Cappadocian, and many other victims, were entangled in an inextricable mesh of hates and lusts and bloodshed.

That pasquinades and scandalous stories were in circulation about himself and his wife cannot have escaped the knowledge of the watchful Emperor; and, if I may make a conjecture, he caused a sort of apology to be written before he died, of which a portion is still extant. The treatise on the civil service of John the Lydian bears many traces of having been written with the purpose of defending Justinian; and the introduction of such apologies by the way would make it far more weighty and effectual than a formal panegyric. That Justinian might have employed John the Lydian in the matter may be concluded from the fact that he did at an earlier date employ him to write a panegyric of himself and a history of the Persian war. The circumstance that John was a disappointed civil servant and makes no concealment of the degeneration of the service, may be appealed to in support of the theory that he had some special inducement to speak diligently on every opportunity of Justinian's personal blamelessness.

The Empress Theodora has become, chiefly through Gibbon's reproduction of the portrait in the Secret History, a typical example of those fascinating and voluptuous women, who in their own day exercise a baleful influence in the world, and in after times allure the imagination. When we turn from the Secret History, to which this effect is due, and read what trustworthy authorities tell us of the Empress, we do not meet a tigress or a malicious demon in woman's form, but a bold and able woman with enough of the *diablesse* in her to explain how she might be traduced. The bold effective speech which she made on the occasion of the Nika sedition is one of the most engaging episodes in history; she was ready to stake everything for empire; and she won.

Her intervention on that occasion, her scheme to overthrow the oppressor John the Cappadocian, her interference for the wife of Artabanes, her active interest in supporting the monophysites and their doctrines, her solicitude for reclaiming abandoned women, her charity and almsgiving, are the only facts of importance that we really know about the Empress. Of these, the fact that damned her most in the eyes of Baronius and Alemannus, and made them ready to believe of her any enormity, her religious faith that Christ's nature was not dual, will certainly in the present day do her memory little harm. Had she believed in the two natures, she might have been more extravagant in lusts even than she is said to have been, and no member of the orthodox Church would have cast a stone. Her enthusiasm for religion when she was an Empress is put on a level with her alleged profligacy

as a girl. She is said to have fed the geese of the devil when she was on the stage, she fed the sheep of Christ when she sat on the throne; and in the eyes of orthodox Chalcedonians the second pasture was far more offensive than the first.

John the Lydian speaks of her in high terms, when he describes how she informed her husband of the misdeeds of John the Cappadocian; a woman, he calls her, “superior in intelligence, and in sympathy for the oppressed always awake”; and the remark of Procopius, the historian, that she could not withstand the supplications of the unhappy accords with this; and the two remarks together establish the fact that she was a sympathetic and compassionate lady.

Gibbon’s remark that Justinian “was never young” aptly conveys the sort of impression he gives us. There is a cold atmosphere about him—the atmosphere of inexorable Roman logic, afraid of no consequences—which is tinged also with a certain mysticism. His mode of life was severely abstemious and ascetic, his days and nights laborious. He was a man of wide education, learned in philosophy, theology, jurisprudence, music, and architecture, and a friend of his said that the time despaired of by Plato had come, when a philosopher should reign and a king philosophize. The remark suggests the reflection, how different he was from the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, of whom the same had been said before.

But if Justinian were never young, it cannot be said that he did not grow old. There is an unmistakable difference between the first part and the last part of his reign, unequally divided by the Great Plague. His great ideas were accomplished or undertaken in the earlier period, when he was, if not young, vigorous and hopeful. The plague not only injures the body but paralyzes the spirit; a man or a nation that lives through such a visitation is not the same after it. We can hardly, I think, lay too much stress on its moral as well as physical effects. It was after the Plague that Justinian devoted all his energies to theological points of subordinate importance, sat without guards at the dead of night, deep in discussions with very ancient priests, and almost lost his interest in the conquest of Italy. We may say, I think, that he was touched with, dispiritedness, or with the malady of the Middle Ages.

His ascetic mode of life and nocturnal studies seemed to lend the Emperor an almost inhuman character; which, combined with his cold Roman spirit, prepared to carry out his plans at all costs, suggested to his enemies the theory that he was really an incarnate demon who took a delight in death and ruin for their own sake. This notion, it may be observed, is a curious, and perhaps one of the earliest, instances of the idea of *Schadenfreude*, delight in mischief for its own mere sake.

The conception of Justinian as a malicious demon, or the conception of him and Theodora as a pair of vampires sucking the blood of the Empire or fiends feasting on the misery of men, may be taken as the outcry of a sacrificed generation—sacrificed without being consulted to the realization of an idea. But such outcries do not affect the position which Justinian must always hold. The epithet “great” was not indeed permanently bestowed upon him by posterity; but then it was not bestowed on Julius Caesar nor on Augustus, and it was bestowed on Leo I. As of that Caesar who fulminated at the deep Euphrates, so it may be said of the Caesar who reconquered Italy and Africa,

per populos dat jura viamque affectat Olympo.

CHAPTER III

THE LEGAL WORKS OF JUSTINIAN

Every government, whether democratical, oligarchical, or monarchical, has two duties to perform; and it must up to a certain point perform them, if it is to exist. It may perform them very badly, but its existence ultimately depends upon their performance. These duties are to protect the community against other communities without, and to protect it against its own individual members within; and the means by which such protection is secured are arms and laws. The efficacy of each of these two instruments depends upon the other; the maintenance of the laws depends on arms, and successful warfare on the maintenance of the laws.

With this general reflection Justinian introduced to the world the first of the great legal monuments, which have immortalized his name and contributed to the welfare and progress of mankind. He states that he has kept both duties clearly before his eyes; that he has provided for the improvement both of the military defenses and legal securities of the Empire—of the latter by preserving old and passing new laws, but chiefly by his collection of the imperial constitutions into a code, called after the fortunate name of Justinian.

Written law was of two kinds, the imperial constitutions or *placita*, and the opinions or answers of recognized—we may say licensed—lawyers, *responsa prudentium*.

(1.) As the Emperor stepped into the place of the sovereign people of the republic, it was logical that the *leges* passed by the people in the comitia should be superseded by imperial constitutions. This process of supersession took place in the first century of the Empire; the last *lex* we hear of was an agrarian law of Nerva. There were collections of the constitutions before the time of Justinian; his code was not a novelty. The Gregorian and Hermogenian codes of the fourth century were supplemented by the Theodosian code published in 438, which contained all the constitutions from the time of Constantine. There were two causes which rendered a new code desirable in the reign of Justinian. In the first place, owing to lack of copies, the bulky Theodosian collection could not be always consulted in courts, and therefore the actual practice often failed to conform to the written law; in the second place, a very large number of constitutions had been issued subsequently to the Theodosian code, both by Theodosius II and by his successors, which were not collected in a convenient form, and often seriously modified the law as stated in that code.

A new collection of the constitutions, edited up to date, with the contradictions carefully eliminated, the obsolete laws expunged, superfluous preambles or explanations omitted, words altered, erased, or added for the sake of clearness, was determined on by Justinian (13th February 528), and a commission of ten men, including Tribonian and Theophilus, was appointed to execute it. Clearness, completeness, and brevity were aimed at, and we may say attained, in the Justinianean Code which was published on the 7th April 529.

(2.) Justinian's next undertaking was more difficult, more ambitious, and more novel than the code. No one had ever arranged in an official and accessible volume the *responsa prudentium*, or answers given by lawyers recognized as authorities, in regard to special cases and legal points, which served as precedents for future decisions. These answers were scattered about in many treatises, and not a few difficulties arose in their application, to meet which some attempts had been already made. On many points antagonists might produce two opposite opinions, and on almost any the judge was sure to be perplexed by a large number of inconsistent citations. Hadrian left the choice to the judges' own discretion, and a feeling that certain writers were entitled to precedence in authority gradually established itself without special enactment, to which feeling the choice of authors in the course of jurisprudence for law students considerably contributed. Gaius, and the commentaries of Ulpian and Paulus on the perpetual Edict, Papinian and Modestinus, obtained paramount authority. This inconvenience led Constantine to discredit the notes of Paulus and Ulpian on Papinian, as they frequently differed from the opinions they annotated; but this only lessened, it did not abolish, the evil. Theodosius II passed a very important measure—which may be considered the precursor of the Digest just as his Codex was the precursor of the Codex Justinianus—called the Law of Citations, which ordained that the majority of opinions should determine the decision, and that in cases where the opinions were equally divided that of Papinian should prevail.

There was such admass of legal responses that the field seemed limitless and beyond all human capacity. But it was not too great for the enterprise of Justinian, who conceived the idea of "enucleating the old law".

On the 15th December 530 he appointed a new commission, under the direction of Tribonian the quaestor, who had assisted in compiling the code, for the purpose of reading the books pertaining to Roman law, written by those lawyers who had been licensed by imperial authority to "interpret" the law. They were to eliminate all contradictions and omit all repetitions, and when they had thus won the nucleus of the vast material, they were to arrange it in one fair work, as it were, a holy temple of justice, which was to be divided into 50 books, containing all the law of 1300 years, purged of superfluities. The undertaking was so immense that it seemed almost impossible, but the commission of seventeen specialists worked so diligently that they completed it in exactly three years. The entire work was called the Digest or Pandects, and henceforward it only was to be consulted. According to Roby's computation, a law library of 106 volumes was compressed to $5\frac{1}{3}$.

(3.) Justinian's third, slightest, and best known work, was a manual of the principles of Roman law, intended for students, in 4 books,—the Institutions. It is really a reproduction, with numerous additions, omissions, and changes, of the commentaries of Gaius. At the same time the Emperor made alterations in the course of legal studies to be pursued at the schools of Constantinople and Berytus.

The Digest was a more satisfactory as well as a more stupendous work than the Code, because it could be looked upon as final. The licensed lawyers, *prudentes*, who created the mass of case-law, had long ago ceased to exist, and thus their answers were a given quantity, which no new opinions would supersede. For Constantine had abolished the practice of the *prudentes* and arrogated to the Emperor alone the right of deciding between the letter of the law and the dictates of equity. The Emperor's decisions were constitutions, not responses. The Code, on the other hand, could not be final, as was patent; it must be continually re-edited up to date, and five years after its first publication, Justinian issued a new edition, containing the constitutions passed in the interval; and it is this second edition that has come down to us. But nothing could be more absurd than to insinuate that Justinian spoiled his Code by passing a large number of laws after its publication. A final code in a defective and changing world would be really undesirable; a code in its very nature cannot be final, it can only be "up to date"; and Justinian was not so unpractical as not to apprehend this patent fact. If a code were to prevent all future legislation it would be the reverse of beneficial.

It is a point of special interest, as indicating the spirit of the time, that the Pythagorean theories of number were applied to the arrangement of the Digest, which was determined on a priori principles, independently of the nature of the material. In the constitution of 530 AD (17th December), which appointed the commission, it is decreed that the work shall consist of 50 books. These were divided into 7 parts, and the divisions were defined by mystic principles: $50 = 7 \times 7 + 1$. The first part consists of 4 books in imitation of the Pythagorean tetractys, which also determined the number of books in the Institutions. Students were instructed in 36 of the 50 books, "in order that by reading 36 books they should become perfect youths". The charm of perfection in the number 36 consists in the fact that it is the sum of the first 8, that is, of the first 4 odd and the first 4 even, numbers. The remaining 14 books (2×7) they could study afterwards by themselves.

Whether this application of Pythagorean canons to fix the dimensions of the “most holy temple of Justice” was suggested by Justinian himself or by his quaestor Tribonian, we do not know; but it seems more natural to attribute it to the latter, who was a pagan, and doubtless imbued with Greek philosophy. It is characteristic that the orthodox Emperor should have adopted the mystic numbers of the heathen philosopher. And it is characteristic of the Graeco-Roman time that a thorough mastery of the hard science of Roman jurisprudence should be combined with, or set in a frame of, Greek mysticism. Roman law, taken in doses determined by a Greek philosophy, was to make “most perfect youths”.

The course of history modified Roman law considerably. Roman law consisted of two portions, the *jus civile*, which rested on the Twelve Tables, and the *jus gentium*. The latter was formed by the sentences of the *praetor peregrinus* in disputes between Roman citizens and foreigners or subject peoples not governed by the *jus civile*, and consisted of the “perpetual Edict”, to which Hadrian gave the shape of an unalterable code. As Rome passed from the humble position of a town in Italy to that of mistress of the world, the importance of the second constituent, “the law of nations”, increased. It attained greater dignity—the dignity of priority and universality—through the spread of the Stoic philosophy, which at the end of the second century BC began to influence Rome. The Stoic law of nature was identified with the *jus gentium*. As the Roman spirit became cosmopolitan, Roman law tended to become cosmopolitan too; and in the third century AD the Edict of Caracalla, which made all free subjects of the Empire Roman citizens, and consequently rendered the civil law universally applicable, tended not only to widen the range of the old civil law and its peculiar distinctions, but to modify it. For example's sake, *cives*, *peregrini*, and *Latini* ceased to be a serious distinction. But when the Empire was divided, and a separate seat of rule existed at Constantinople, it was natural that in the eastern provinces, the natural and universal law, the *jus gentium*, should almost completely set aside the old civil law of the Romans. Such forms as *mancipatio* and *in jure cessio* were superseded. But the Twelve Tables continued to enjoy a formal authority until Justinian finally abolished it; and this among other things indicates that his reign marks the furthest limit of the old Roman world, and therefore would be a most suitable point from which to date the so-called Byzantine period. Again, among the distinctions of Roman law, one of the most venerable and fundamental was that of *res Mancipi* and *res nec Mancipi*; this also Justinian set aside.

As well as by the centralization of the Roman Empire in lands not Roman, the law was influenced by the spirit of the new religion. Offences before considered only moral came to be considered legal also; and on the other hand the harshness of the cold *jura Romanae* was modified by considerations of humanity and equity. Christian influences might easily be, and often are, exaggerated. The disuse of the slave system is often attributed to it; but while we cannot deny that Christianity tended to discourage slavery, and to lessen the evils of slavery by humanizing the relations with masters, it is certain that the economical conditions which changed the slave system into the *colonate* and serf system were the chief cause. Beliefs and sentiments generally adapt themselves to facts, and facts are in turn modified by beliefs. It would be a mistake to say that the religious sentiment adapted itself to circumstances; it would be equally a mistake to say that the circumstances adapted themselves to the sentiment. The course of things is generally a simultaneous and reciprocal process of adaptation of fact to sentiment and sentiment to fact.

We can perceive that between the age of Gaius and the age of Justinian the feeling that man is naturally free has become stronger, and this feeling was in the spirit of Christianity. Florentinus said that liberty was a natural faculty, whereas servitude was a constitution contrary to nature; and this view is adopted by Justinian in his Institutes. The ways in which a slave might be manumitted were increased in number by the Emperor; and he speaks of himself as the protector of liberty.

It is interesting to observe the criticism which has been made on the legal work of Justinian by one of the greatest German writers on Roman law, Rudolf von Jhering, in his *Geist des römischen Rechts*. Until Justinian's time, he says, Roman legislation cannot be reproached with invading the dominion of theoretical science; but Justinian's work is altogether conditioned by the principle of blending theory with practical legislation. The Digest and the Institutes are intended to be at once compendia and lawbooks. The disastrous result of such a proceeding is that science is influenced by authority; Justinian's authority tended to cow the theorist. “The example of the schoolmaster on the throne, or the legislator on the cathedra, which Justinian set, has been only too readily imitated in modern legislation. Science should leave to Caesar the things that are the Caesar's, but he should leave to science the things that are hers”.

CHAPTER IV

FIRST PERSIAN WAR

(528-532 AD)

The Emperor Justin adopted the policy of conciliating minor peoples who, dwelling on the borders of the Roman and Persian realms, were ready to sell or change their friendship or allegiance. Among others the Lazic prince Tzath, who had been the vassal of Persia, visited Constantinople, and became the vassal of New Rome. But Kobad was old, and he did not immediately declare war against the successor of Anastasius. On the contrary, he

made the strange proposal—which recalls Arcadius' relations with Isdigerd—that Justin should adopt his son Chosroes. The request was refused, through the influence of the minister Proclus, who pointed out that by Roman law the adopted son would have a legal right to the father's inheritance, and that Persia might claim the Roman Empire. This literal deduction may strike us as amusingly far-fetched, but it is an instance of the ancient habit of pushing things to their extreme logical consequences. The refusal was resented by Kobad, but hostilities did not begin in Justin's lifetime, as a conspiracy of the Mazdakites, which led to their massacre, and an Iberian war occupied Kobad's attention.

When Justinian came to the throne he determined to found a new fortress close to Nisibis, and gave Belisarius, commandant in Daras, directions to that effect. As the building operations were progressing, a Persian army, 30,000 strong, under the command of Prince Xerxes, invaded Mesopotamia. The Romans, under several commanders who had joined forces, advanced against them, and were defeated in a disastrous battle. Tapharas, the commander of the Saracen auxiliaries, and Proclianus, duke of Phoenicia, were slain; Sebastian, the general of the Isaurian troops, Kutzis, the duke of Damascus, and the Count Basilius, were taken prisoners. Belisarius escaped, and the beginnings of the new fortress were left in the hands of the enemy. The victors had themselves experienced grievous losses, and soon retreated into their own territory; while Justinian, undismayed, sent garrisons and new captains to the fortresses of Amida, Constantina, Edessa, Suron, and Berrhoea. A new army was formed, consisting of Illyrians and Thracians, Scythians and Isaurians, and entrusted to Pompeius, perhaps the nephew of Anastasius. But nothing more occurred in the year 528, which closed with a severe winter.

The hostilities of 529 began in March with a plundering expedition of Persian and Saracen forces combined, under the guidance of the Saracen king Alamundar, who penetrated into Syria, almost to the walls of Antioch, and retreated so swiftly that the Romans could not reach him and force him to disgorge his booty. The only thing that was left for them to do was to make reprisals, and in the following month a corps of Phrygians plundered in the territories of the Persians and their Saracen allies. Belisarius was appointed at this time master of soldiers in the East (instead of Hypatius), but the rest of the year was drawn out in ineffectual negotiations.

The following year (530) was a year of glory for the Roman name, and for the general Belisarius, who, at the early age of twenty-five, won his first laurels by a victory at Daras. There was much talk of peace, but the great king did not really desire it, and the ambassador Rufinus waited in vain at Hierapolis. Belisarius, with the help of Hermogenes, who acted as a sort of informal coadjutor, collected at Daras an army of 25,000 mixed and undisciplined troops, largely consisting of Huns and Heruls; while Perozes, who had been appointed the *mirran*, or sole commander of the Persian army, arrived at Nisibis in June at the head of 40,000 soldiers, confident of victory. They advanced within twenty stadia of Daras, and the *mirran* sent to Belisarius a message redolent of oriental insolence—that, as he intended to bathe in the city on the morrow, a bath should be prepared for his pleasure.

The Romans did not intend to submit to the indignity or tediousness of a siege; they made preparations for battle, just outside the walls of the town. The Persians arrived punctually as their general signified, and stood for a whole day in line of battle without venturing to attack the Romans, who were drawn up in carefully arranged positions. In the evening they retired to their camp, but returned next morning, resolved not to let another day pass without a decisive action, and found their enemy occupying the same positions as on the preceding day. For the apprehension of the details of the battle, the dispositions which the inventive genius of Belisarius had adopted must be explained.

About a stone's throw from the gate of Daras that looks toward Nisibis a deep trench was dug, interrupted by frequent ways for crossing. This trench, however, was not in a continuous right line; in fact, we may say that it consisted of five separate trenches. At either end of the central trench, which was parallel to the opposite wall of the city, a trench ran outwards almost at right angles; and where each of these perpendicular trenches or "horns" terminated, two other trenches were dug in opposite directions at right angles, and consequently almost parallel to the first trench. Between the central trench and the town Belisarius and Hermogenes were posted with the main body of their troops. On the left, behind the main ditch and near the left "horn", a regiment of cavalry under Buzes, and 300 Heruls under their leader Pharas, were stationed close to a rising ground, which the Heruls occupied in the morning, at the suggestion of Pharas and with the approval of Belisarius. Outside the angle made by the outermost ditch and the horn were placed 600 Hunnic cavalry, under the Huns Sunicas and Aigan. The disposition on the right wing was exactly symmetrical. Troops under John (the son of Nicetas), Cyril, and Marcellus occupied the position corresponding to that occupied by Buzes on the left, while other squadrons of Hunnic cavalry, led by Simas and Askan, were posted on the extreme right.

Half of the Persian forces stood in a long line opposite to the Roman dispositions, the other half was kept in reserve at some distance in the rear, to replace the soldiers in front when they felt weary. Two generals, subordinate to the *mirran*, commanded the Persians, Baresmanas on the left wing and Pityazes on the right. The corps of Immortals, the flower of the army, was reserved for a supreme occasion. The details of the battle have been described so lucidly by a competent eye-witness that I cannot do better than reproduce the account of the secretary of Belisarius in a loose translation:

"Neither began the battle till midday. As soon as noon was past the barbarians began the action. They had reserved the engagement for this hour of the day because they were themselves in the habit of eating only in the evening, while the Romans ate at noontide, so that they counted on their offering a less vigorous resistance if they were attacked fasting. At first each side discharged volleys of arrows and the air was obscured with them; the barbarians shot more darts, but a great number of soldiers fell on both sides. Fresh relays of the barbarians were always coming up to the front, unperceived by their adversaries; yet the Romans had by no means the worst of it. For a wind blew in the faces of the Persians and hindered to a considerable degree their missiles from operating with effect. When both sides had expended all their arrows, they used their spears, hand to hand. The left wing of the Romans was pressed most hardily. For the Cadisenes, who fought on the Persian right with Pityazes, had advanced suddenly in large numbers, and having routed their opponents, pressed on them valiantly as they fled,

and slew many. When Sunicas and Aigan with their Huns saw this they rushed on the Cadisenes at full gallop. But Pharas and his Heruls, who were posted on the hill, were before them (the Huns) in falling on the rear of the enemy and performing marvellous exploits against the Cadisenes and the other troops. But when the Cadisenes saw the cavalry of Sunicas also coming against them from the side, they turned and fled. When the rout was conspicuous the Romans joined together and inflicted a great slaughter on the enemy.

“The *mirran* [meanwhile] secretly sent the Immortals with other regiments to the left wing. When Belisarius and Hermogenes saw them, they commanded Sunicas, Aigan, and their Huns, to go to the angle on the right where Simas and Askan were stationed, and placed behind them many of the troops that were under Belisarius’ special command. Then the left wing of the Persians, led by Baresmanas, along with the Immortals, attacked the Roman right wing at full speed. And the Romans, unable to withstand the onset, fled. Then those who were stationed in the angle (the Huns, etc.) attacked the pursuers with great ardour. And coming athwart the side of the Persians they cleft their line in two unequal portions, the larger number on the right and a few on the left. Among the latter was the standard-bearer of Baresmanas, whom Sunicas killed with his lance. The foremost of the Persian pursuers, apprehending their danger, turned from their pursuit of the fugitives to oppose the attackers. But this movement placed them between enemies on both sides, for the fugitive party perceived what was occurring and rallied. Then the other Persians and the corps of the Immortals, seeing their standard lowered and on the ground, rushed with Baresmanas against the Romans in that quarter. The Romans met them, and Sunicas slew Baresmanas, hurling him to earth from his horse. Hence the barbarians fell into great panic, and forgot their valor, and fled in utter disorder. And the Romans closed them in and slew about five thousand. And thus both armies were entirely set in motion; that of the Persians for retreat and that of the Romans for pursuit. All the infantry of the defeated army threw away their shields, and were caught and slain pell-mell. Yet the Romans pursued only for a short distance, for Belisarius and Hermogenes would not permit them to go further, lest the Persians, compelled by necessity, should turn and rout them if they followed rashly; and they deemed it sufficient to keep the victory untarnished, this being the first defeat experienced by the Persians for a long time past”.

About the same time the Roman arms were also successful in Persarmenia, where a victory was gained over an army of Persarmenians and Huns, which, if it had not been overshadowed by the success of Daras, would have probably been made more of by Byzantine historians.

After the conspicuous defeat which his army had experienced, Kobad was not disinclined to negotiate a peace, and embassies passed between the Persian and Roman courts; but at the last moment the persuasions and promises of fifty thousand Samaritans induced him to break off the negotiations on a trifling pretext. The Samaritans had revolted in 529, and the fifty thousand, who had escaped the massacre which attended the suppression of the rebellion, actuated by the desire of revenge, engaged to betray Jerusalem and Palestine to the foe of the Empire. Accordingly, in the year 531 hostilities were resumed, and at the suggestion of the Saracen Alamundar fifteen thousand Persian cavalry under Azareth, instead of invading Mesopotamia, crossed the Euphrates at Circesium, with a view to invading Syria. They proceeded along the banks of the river in a north-westerly direction to Callinicum, and, pitching their camp near Gabbulon, harried the surrounding districts.

Meanwhile Belisarius arrived from Daras with eight thousand men and took up his position at Chalcis, but did not attempt to hinder the devastations of the enemy. One of his captains, the Hun Sunicas, ventured to evade the general’s orders, and attacking a party of Persians, not only defeated them, but learned from the prisoners whom he took the Persian plan of campaign, and the intention of the foe to strike a blow at Antioch itself. Yet the success of Sunicas did not in the eyes of Belisarius atone for his disobedience, and Hermogenes, who arrived at this moment on the scene of action from Constantinople, arranged with difficulty the quarrel between the general and the captain. At length Belisarius ordered an advance against the enemy, who had meanwhile taken the fortress of Gabbulon and other places in the neighbourhood. Laden with booty, the Persians retreated and reached the point of the right Euphrates bank opposite to the city of Callinicum, where they were overtaken by the Romans. A battle was unavoidable, and on the 19th of April the armies engaged. What really took place on this unfortunate day was a matter of doubt even for contemporaries; some cast the blame on Belisarius, others accused the subordinate commanders of cowardice.

At Callinicum the course of the Euphrates is from west to east. The battle took place on the bank of the river, and as the Persians were stationed to the east of the Romans, their right wing and the Roman left were on the river. Belisarius and his cavalry occupied the centre; on the left were the infantry and the Hunnic cavalry under Sunicas and Simas; on the right were Phrygians and Isaurians and the Saracen auxiliaries under their king Arethas. The Persians began the action by a feigned retreat, which had the effect of drawing from their position the Hunnic cavalry on the left wing; they then attacked the Roman infantry, left unprotected, and tried to ride them down and press them into the river. But they were not as successful as they hoped, and on this side the battle was drawn. On the right Roman wing the fall of Apskal, the captain of the Phrygian troops, was followed by the flight of his soldiers; a panic ensued, and the Saracens acted like the Phrygians; then the Isaurians made for the river and swam over to an opposite island. How Belisarius acted, and what the Hun leaders Sunicas and Simas were doing in the meantime, we cannot determine. It was said, on the one hand, that Belisarius dismounted from his horse, rallied his soldiers, and made for a long time a brave stand against the charges of the Persian cavalry. On the other hand, this valiant behaviour was attributed to Sunicas and Simas, and the general himself was accused of fleeing with the cowards and crossing to Callinicum. There is no sure evidence to make it probable that the defeat was due to Belisarius; it was hardly possible for him to cope against vastly greater numbers in a field where he had no natural or artificial defenses to support the bravery of his soldiers or his own skill; and perhaps an over-confident spirit in his army prevailed on him to risk a battle against his better judgment. But the rights and wrongs of the case are enveloped in obscurity, because the facts are known to us from writers whom we cannot acquit of the opposite tendencies to exonerate and inculpate Belisarius; yet it must be confessed that the adverse witness seems the more credible and is generally the more trustworthy of the two.

The Persians retreated, and the remnant of the Roman army was conveyed across the river to Callinicum. Hermogenes sent the news of the defeat to Justinian without delay, and the Emperor despatched Constantiolus to investigate the details of the battle and discover on whom the blame, if any, rested. The conclusions at which Constantiolus arrived resulted in the recall of Belisarius and the appointment of Mundus to the command of the eastern armies. During the interval of delay, Sittas, the general who was commanding in Armenia, provisionally commanded in Mesopotamia.

The arms of Mundus were attended with success. Two attempts of the Persians to take Martyropolis were thwarted, and they experienced a considerable defeat. But the death of the old king Kobad and the accession of his son Chosroes (September 531) led to the conclusion of "the endless peace" which was finally ratified in spring 532. The provisions were that New Rome should pay 11,000 lbs. of gold for the defense of the Caucasian passes; that the Roman headquarters were no longer to be at Daras but at Constantina, and that certain places were to be restored.

CHAPTER V

THE RECONQUEST OF AFRICA AND ITALY

Justinian's ideal, we are told by a contemporary, was to restore the grandeur of the old Roman Empire, and accordingly he formed the project of reconquering the western lands, Africa and Italy, which had passed into the hands of German kings; a reconquest of Gaul can hardly have been thought of. The kingdom of Africa and the kingdom of Italy did not bear by any means the same relation to the Empire. The former was openly hostile, and connected by no tie, while the latter was nominally dependent. Before we give a brief account of the campaigns in which the Emperor's generals recovered Africa and made Italy really as well as nominally part of the Empire, we must take a glance at the condition of the Ostrogothic kingdom.

The whole policy of Theodoric was marked by a peculiar deference to things Roman; he combined the independence of a German king with a love of Roman civilization, and we can see this twofold spirit reflected in the letters written by his secretary Cassiodorus. He said in so many words to Anastasius that his kingdom was an imitation of the Roman polity, and his treatment of the Italians was a strong contrast to the conduct of the Vandals in Africa; it was a contrast even to that of the Visigoths in Spain. The Vandals took possession of all the land, the Visigoths seized two-thirds, the Ostrogoths reserved only one-third. Theodoric published an Edict (like the Breviarium of Alaric II), which was to determine the legal affairs of Roman subjects. His attitude to the Church was in the highest degree conciliatory. He did not, like Odovacar, attempt to interfere in ecclesiastical matters, but left to the Church the things of the Church. The schism that existed during the greater part of his reign between the bishops of Rome and the patriarchs of Constantinople rendered this policy successful; the Arian Theodoric's abstention from interference contrasted with the ecclesiastical dictation of the Emperors, and the western Church was well contented with Ostrogothic rule. Here again Italy differed from Africa, where conflicts raged between the Catholics and their Arian conquerors. Theodoric's league with the Church favoured both those tendencies, which we pointed out as characterizing his policy; it brought him into friendly relation with the most enlightened and "civil" portions of his community, and it promoted the security and independence of his German kingdom. During his reign Italy enjoyed peace. He executed works for the material good of the country, repaired the Via Appia, drained the Pontine Marshes, and restored the walls of Rome.

His position really assumed a European importance. He not only conceived the idea of a Romano-German civilization in an independent Italy, but he conceived the idea of a system of German states in the West. He was connected by marriage with the royal houses of the Vandals, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Thuringians, and the Franks; he watched diligently the course of their mutual relations, and made it his object to preserve a balance of power. His judgment carried great weight at all the Teutonic courts, and he used to intervene to prevent the encroachments of the aggressive Franks. "He was an excellent observer of justice", says Procopius, "and asserted the authority of the laws. He secured his provinces from the attacks of neighbouring barbarians, and achieved the culmination not only of prudence, but of bravery. He inflicted no injury on his subjects himself, and allowed no other to do so with impunity. In name Theodoric was a tyrant, in reality a true Emperor, second to none who shone in that position since the beginning of the Empire. Italians and Goths alike had the greatest affection for him".

But everything depended on the personal ascendancy of Theodoric, not only peace with foreign powers, but harmonious unity within the limits of Italy. The Roman and Gothic spirits were, as we have seen, united in the king himself, and his study was to impress this unity on his kingdom, to blend Gothic vigour with Roman culture, combining, in Platonic phrase, the gymnastical and musical elements which the two nations represented. But this process of amalgamation would have required a longer time than Theodoric could expect to live, and while it was yet in its initial stage an external force was necessary to prevent the yet unharmonised elements from violently conflicting. The will of Theodoric was such a force. But after his death, in 526, there was no adequate successor. His daughter Amalasantha assumed the government as regent for her son Athalaric, and we soon behold the discordant elements flying asunder.

Amalasantha, a woman of remarkable vigour and intelligence, was thoroughly Roman in her ideas and sympathies, and she displayed these tendencies both in political administration and in the education of the young prince, whom she caused to be carefully trained in mental studies. On the other hand, the Gothic nobles were exceedingly discontented; they wished their future king to be a true Goth like themselves, one who would not constrain them to act with over-punctilious justice towards their Roman fellow-subjects, and they despised the effeminate education chosen by his mother for Athalaric. They regarded gymnastic and music as inconsistent, freedom and civilization as discordant, and were able to appeal to the fact that Theodoric himself had never been educated. Amalasantha was obliged to yield to their clamor, and Athalaric, glad to be freed from the restraints of school discipline, soon became devoted to the pleasures of sensuality. The position of Amalasantha was critical, and although she steered her course through the perils that beset her with great dexterity, she was soon obliged to beg the Emperor Justinian to grant her a refuge at Constantinople, in case it should become necessary for her safety to leave Italy (533 AD)

From the position of affairs in 527 AD it might have seemed that no occasion would have been likely to arise for the serious interference of the Emperor in the affairs of the West, for Hilderic, a Catholic Christian and a friend of Justinian, with the blood of the Theodosian family in his veins, sat on the throne of Africa, and Amalasantha governed Italy with marked favour to her Roman subjects. But this was only the external and momentary aspect of affairs. In Africa the Arian Vandals were not content with their king, and in Italy the barbarian nobles were not content with their queen. The Catholics in Africa, who had long suffered from the persecution of their Arian conquerors, would have been ready to embrace with open arms the protection of eastern Rome; and in Italy the conclusion of the schism between the Churches of the East and the West, which was brought about by the accession of the orthodox Justin, created a new element of danger to the Ostrogothic kingdom, as Theodoric soon became aware. This schism had been a sort of security that the Roman Church and the Italian subjects would not incline to desert their allegiance to Ostrogothic sovereigns and place themselves again under the Roman Emperor. Justin subjected to persecutions the Arian community in the East, which had strong Gothic proclivities, and Theodoric sent Pope John to Constantinople on a mission of threatening remonstrance. The embassy proved unsuccessful, and the Pope, when he returned to Ravenna, was cast into prison.

There was another element in the situation which must not be forgotten—an element which is a more efficient cause in producing wars than any superficial dispute. The Empire was not the same as it had been in the days of Zeno. Then it was involved in financial difficulties, which were increased by the ravages of the Ostrogoths; but through the prudent policy of the wise Anastasius it had recovered wealth, the sinews of power in a large empire. It was now in a position to assert in the West those rights which it had been obliged to waive in 476, and at the same time a sovereign acceded with the courage and ability to make the attempt.

All things instinctively tended to bring about the restoration of the Empire in the western Mediterranean. Justinian was to do for the German nations what the German nations had done for the Roman Empire; he was to abolish those who were least fitted to survive, the Vandals and Ostrogoths, just as the Germans had reduced the extent of the Empire to those countries where it was best fitted to survive.

VANDALIC WAR.

The crisis which led to Justinian's first westward step occurred in 531 AD, when the throne of the unwarlike Hilderic was usurped by the warrior Gelimer, and Hilderic himself cast into prison. The Emperor addressed to Gelimer a letter of remonstrance on this act, appealing to the testament of Gaiseric, but Gelimer returned an insulting reply. Justinian was at this time engaged in a war with Persia, but peace was made before the end of the year, and the general Belisarius was recalled from Mesopotamia for the purpose of leading an expedition against the Vandals. The opposition of ministers, who enlarged on the dangers of the design—they had not forgotten the disastrous enterprise of Leo I—delayed the undertaking and it was not until June 533 AD that a fleet of five hundred ships set sail for Africa. The army consisted of 10,000 foot-soldiers and 5000 horse-soldiers, of whom many were federate barbarians. Belisarius was accompanied by his wife Antonina; and Procopius, his secretary, who kept a diary of his experiences, commemorates her foresight in storing a large number of jars of water, covered with sand, in the hold of the general's ship, and tells how this provision stood them in good stead in the long voyage from Zacynthus to Catania.

The Vandalic war was brief, and can be briefly related. It was decided by two battles, both of which were fought before the end of the year. Amalasantha assisted the expedition by granting harbourage in Sicily to the fleet on its outward journey. Tripolis revolted on the arrival of the Romans, and Gelimer was completely unprepared for the attack. The power of the Vandals had waned since the days of Gaiseric, and they possessed no naval forces to annihilate the armament of Justinian, as they had once destroyed the doubly great fleet of Leo. Belisarius having landed at Caputvada, advanced slowly by land to Carthage, without opposition, taking care to maintain the strictest discipline in his army, while Gelimer, as soon as he heard of the proximity of the enemy, hastened to put Hilderic to death. The first battle was fought at ten miles from Carthage (Ad Decimum) in September, and it might have proved a defeat for the invaders but for the amiable imprudence of the Vandal king. Ammatas, the brother of Gelimer, was slain, and Gelimer's affectionate grief made him forget the duties of a commander while he lamented and buried his brother. Belisarius took advantage of the delay, and the Vandals were put to rout. Two days later he entered Carthage, and his prudent discipline so strictly prohibited all pillage and violence that the city presented the same appearance as on an ordinary day.

Another brother of Gelimer, named Tzazo, had been sent some time previously to Sardinia, which had revolted from the Vandals. Gelimer, who had retreated to Bulla Regia, west of Carthage, now recalled him, and the letter of the king shows the despondent mood into which he had fallen: "All the old valour of the Vandals seems to have vanished, and all our old luck therewith ... Our only hope is you ... It will be some consolation at least in our misfortunes to feel that we endure them together". The brothers marched towards Carthage together, and at Tricameron, not far from the city, the decisive battle was fought. Gelimer lost a second brother, and the

Vandals were utterly defeated. The king fled to the Numidian highlands and found refuge in a cave among the filthy Moors, where he remained with sorry cheer for a while, but soon surrendered at discretion and adorned the triumph of Belisarius at Constantinople. When he beheld the splendour of the imperial court he merely said, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity", a remark which, as Ranke notices, had a sort of historical signification. For along with Gelimer, Belisarius brought to Constantinople those vessels of gold of which Gaiseric had robbed Rome, and of which Titus had despoiled Jerusalem. They were part of the riches of the king to whom the words "Vanity of vanities" are traditionally attributed.

EVENTS IN AFRICA AFTER IMPERIAL RESTORATION.

It will be convenient to add here a short account of the troubles which agitated Africa after the re-establishment of Roman rule. The eunuch Solomon, who had been left as general by Belisarius to keep the Moors in check, was embarrassed not only by these troublesome invaders, whom he defeated in the battles of Mammas and Burgam, but by the mutinous behaviour of the Roman soldiers, who, dissatisfied with their condition in the newly conquered provinces where they had married the widows and daughters of the Vandals, and intolerant of the burdens of taxation which Justinian imposed upon them, conspired to murder Solomon. The plot failed, but the mutiny continued, and Solomon was obliged to flee to Sicily and seek the assistance of Belisarius, who had just completed the conquest of that island (March 536).

When Belisarius arrived at Carthage it was beleaguered by the rebels, who were led by Stutzas, and numbered 9000 in all, 1000 of these being Vandals. A few hundred Vandals seem to have escaped the sword and chains of the Romans in the year of the conquest; and four hundred, who were being shipped to Syria for military duty there, succeeded in obtaining possession of a ship at Lesbos and returned to Africa, where they found circumstances in a favourable condition for adventurers. The arrival of Belisarius struck terror into the besiegers. They retired from the walls, and were pursued by the Roman general, who overtook them beyond the river Bagradas. A battle was fought in which the rebels were utterly defeated, and Belisarius, deeming his presence no longer necessary, returned to Sicily. But the rebellion was not extinguished, and soon after his departure five Roman generals were treacherously murdered by Stutzas. It was reserved for Germanus, the nephew of Justinian, to quell the revolt by the decisive victory of Scalae Veteres. From this time until the death of Solomon in 543, the African provinces, delivered from the presence of the Moors, who during the insurrection had taken up their abode in the land, were tolerably prosperous. During the prefecture of Sergius, who succeeded Solomon, the extinct rebellion came to life again under the old leader Stutzas, and was supported by the Moors; and this revival seems to have been chiefly due to the incompetence of the prefect. Areobindus, the husband of Promota, Justinian's niece, and John, the son of Sisinniolus, commanded the imperial army, and the rebels were routed at Sicca Venerea, Stutzas himself being slain by John (545). In the same year Areobindus succeeded Sergius as prefect, and was slain by Gontharis, the Roman duke of Numidia, who made himself tyrant of Africa. The death of Areobindus was avenged by the Armenian Artabanus, who was then appointed governor, but soon returned to Constantinople, with the hope of marrying Promota, his predecessor's widow, as will be related in another place.

GOTHIC WAR.

In countenancing and assisting the overthrow of the Vandals, Amalasantha was really smoothing the way for the conquest of Sicily and Italy. Africa was the natural basis of operations for an Italian war, and the troubled course of events in Italy soon gave Justinian a good opportunity of beginning it. Amalasantha had a cousin Theodahad, a man of liberal education but of avaricious character, who owned large estates in Etruria and regarded his neighbours' possession of land as a personal injury to himself. He hated Queen Amalasantha for keeping his greed within limits, and she entertained no high opinion of him, but a circumstance soon occurred which induced her to adopt the course of sharing with him the royal prerogative. This circumstance was the death of her son Athalaric. Such a division of power, which in the language of Cassiodorus was to be "a perfect harmony", meant conflict and could not endure; in April 535 the queen was imprisoned by her colleague in an island of Lake Bolsena and soon afterwards murdered. As she was the friend and ally of Justinian, the moment for decisive action seemed to have come, and the Emperor's envoy Peter declared against Theodahad a war without truce.

In the summer of 535 AD an army of 7500 men, under the command of Belisarius, sole consul for the year, to whom the fullest powers were committed, set sail from Constantinople for Sicily. Of this army three thousand, that is two-fifths, were Isaurians. The towns in Sicily, to the great chagrin of the Goths, joyfully opened their gates to the imperialists, with the exception of Palermo, which was besieged and taken, so that by the end of the year the island was entirely in the hands of the Romans, or, as their enemies called them, the Greeks. Theodahad was so impressed with these successes that he opened negotiations with Justinian, which were conducted by the ambassador Peter, who was still at the court of Ravenna. The king undertook to abdicate the crown if landed property, producing a certain annual revenue, were secured to him, and this offer, we need hardly say, Justinian gladly accepted. In these negotiations Theodahad adopted the part of a philosopher who deemed royalty of little worth, and who desired to avoid the loss of human life which a war would involve, while Justinian assumed the attitude of an emperor claiming his own. But the negotiations came to nothing for while the envoys were at Constantinople, the Roman general Mundus, who had occupied Dalmatia and taken Salona, was defeated and slain in a disastrous battle with an invading army of Goths, who retook the city of the Jader. This success renewed the confidence and changed the plans of Theodahad. When the envoys arrived in Ravenna, the king, supported by his Gothic nobles, drew back from his engagements, and the war began in earnest (536 AD). As for Dalmatia, its position was soon reversed again; Salona, the city of Diocletian, which had passed from the Romans in the days of Odovacar, was recovered by them, and the province became permanently part of the Empire.

Belisarius took Rhegium and marched on Naples. When that city refused to surrender, he might have been tempted to leave it for a time in order to advance to Rome, but an Isaurian discovered an unguarded ingress

through an aqueduct, which rendered it possible to surprise the garrison by night. This success was of the utmost importance, and has even been considered by some historians to have decided the result of the whole undertaking. Belisarius was now master of southern Italy.

Having placed a garrison in Naples, he proceeded without delay to Rome, which he entered unopposed in December; though the inhabitants were too content with the Gothic rule, under which they had suffered little or no religious persecution, to give the newcomers a very enthusiastic welcome.

Theodahad had shown no activity, he had made no attempt to save Neapolis, so that the Goths were highly discontented with him; and when Witigis, whom he had appointed general, joined the army, the soldiers insisted that their leader should be also their king. Witigis was not unwilling. He was proclaimed *thiudans*, and his first act was to put Theodahad to death. In this election the principle of heredity, which the incapacity of Theodahad seemed to discredit, was disregarded by the soldiers, who declared that Theodoric's true kinsman was he who could imitate his deeds; but Witigis took the precaution of confirming his position by coercing Matasuntha, the daughter of Amalasantha, to marry him, thereby connecting himself with the royal family. The new king was an elderly man, and would have made a good sergeant; but he was destitute of originality, destitute of genius. As the historian of *Italy and her Invaders* has well remarked, his election was due to the error of supposing "that respectability will serve instead of genius".

At this time (the beginning of the war) the position of the Goths was complicated by the attitude of the Franks, who threatened to invade the northern provinces of the peninsula; and the presence of a part of the Gothic army was required to defend Provincia. Witigis made up his mind to avert the danger in the north first, and then devote all his resources to the war with the Roman invaders. Leaving Leudaris with 4000 soldiers to hold Rome, he marched with the main body of the army to Ravenna. There he married Matasuntha, he sent to Justinian an embassy treating for peace, and he arranged matters with the Franks by ceding the Ostrogothic possessions in southern Gaul (Provence and Dauphine) and paying the sum of £80,000. It was evident that the new king was guilty of a most imprudent surrender of opportunity by his expedition to Ravenna. This movement involved the loss of Rome, and we cannot perceive what compensatory advantage he gained thereby. It was not necessary for the army, or even for Witigis himself, to be present at Ravenna, either for the settlement with the Franks, or for the embassy to New Rome, or for his marriage. As far as we can judge of the situation, the thing that Witigis ought to have done was to make the defenses of Rome sure.

Belisarius entered the city on the Tiber by one gate (porta Asinaria) on the 10th December, as the Goths of Leudaris went out by another (porta Flaminia); Leudaris himself remained and was taken prisoner. The evacuation by the Goths, without opposition to the Roman occupation, was due to two causes the prestige which Belisarius had won by his former successes, and the fact that the Pope Silverius had invited him to Rome.

The second cause depended on the first, for it was not with any warm enthusiasm that the "Romans", who had never suffered religious persecution from the Goths, welcomed the "Greeks", but rather from fear. In spite of their veneration for the Roman Emperor, they looked upon his subjects rather as Greeks than as Romans, and the Goths were careful to speak of them as "Greeks". The "Greeks", on the other hand, called the Romans of Italy "Italians".

Belisarius garrisoned three towns to the north of Rome, Narnia, Spolegium, and Perugia, and prepared Rome herself to sustain a siege. In this siege, which began in March 537 and lasted for a year and nine days, two circumstances stood him in good stead,—the strength of the Aurelian wall and his command of Sicily, the granary of Italy. The garrison amounted to five thousand men; the army of Witigis numbered fifteen thousand, and was divided in seven camps around the city. The first act of the besiegers was to cut off the city's supply of water by destroying all the aqueducts, eleven (according to Procopius, fourteen) in number. This was one of the greatest disasters that the Ostrogothic war brought upon Rome, which from having been one of the best supplied cities in the world, became one of the worst supplied, until, in the sixteenth century, Sixtus V provided for the convenience and health of Rome by renewing the aqueducts.

When the aqueducts were cut, there was no water to turn the corn mills which supplied the garrison with food. The inventive brain of Belisarius devised a curious and effective expedient. Close to a bridge (probably the Pons Aelius) through whose arch the stream bore down with considerable force, he stretched across the river tense ropes to which he attached two boats, separated by a space of two feet. Two mills were placed on each boat, and between the skiffs was suspended the water-wheel, which the current easily turned. A line of such boats was formed and a series of water-mills in the bed of the Tiber ground all the corn that was required. The endeavours of the Goths to disconcert this ingenious device and break the machines by throwing trees and corpses into the river were easily thwarted by Belisarius; he stretched across the stream chains of iron which formed an impassable barrier to all dangerous obstacles that might harm his boats or wheels.

In their first assaults the Goths were defeated with great loss, and in April a reinforcement of 1600 Slaves and Huns, who arrived from Constantinople, encouraged the defenders to organize a series of sallies. But after some successes they experienced a signal defeat, and acted thenceforth chiefly on the defensive. During the long blockade that followed, the Romans suffered from famine, and both parties from pestilence. The siege was varied by a truce of three months, and the inexplicable negligence of the Goths enabled the garrison to introduce provisions into the city.

At length, in March 538, the Goths raised the siege, and as they departed were pursued by the soldiers of Belisarius and utterly defeated at the Milvian bridge. The cause of the departure of the Goths was the capture of Rimini by John, the nephew of Vitalian, who had arrived four months before with troops from Byzantium, and had succeeded in entering Rome. During the truce Belisarius despatched him to Alba in the Apennines, whence, if the truce were broken, he was ordered to ravage the land and assault the cities of Picenum. The Goths violated the truce by forming two unsuccessful schemes to capture the city. The light of their torches as they attempted to

penetrate the Aqua Virgo was observed by a watchful sentinel, and a Roman whom they hired to drug the sentries at the Flaminian Gate with a sleeping potion revealed the treachery to Belisarius. The operations of John in Picenum were a reply to this Gothic perfidy. It is interesting to note that, when he took Rimini, Matasuntha, the wife of Witigis, opened treasonable communications with him. Her sympathies, like her mother's, were more with the Romans than with the Goths; they were least of all with her husband, who, although he had slain Theodahad, represented his policy.

The siege and relief of Ariminum (Rimini) may be considered the third scene of the war, the sieges of Naples and Rome being the first and second. Belisarius sent two officers to John bearing the mandate that he was to withdraw with his band of two thousand Isaurians from Ariminum, and leave in it a nominal garrison taken from Ancona. John refused to obey, and Witigis soon afterwards appeared before the walls.

At this juncture a new element, of which John's insubordinate refusal had been a sign, was introduced into the situation. Fresh troops arrived from Constantinople under the command of Narses the eunuch, a person of great ability and large influence at the Byzantine court. His instructions were to obey Belisarius in all things, so far as seemed consistent with the public weal. The exception, though it might read as a mere formality, was practically as comprehensive as an exception could be, and was an undisguised expression of doubt or mistrust in Belisarius' conduct of the war. The meaning of Narses' appointment was that the Emperor desired to have in Italy a check on Belisarius; the accrediting formula of Narses' papers was an ingenious but patent way of putting it; the eunuch was really independent.

The affair of Ariminum offered to Narses an occasion to assert himself. Owing to want of provisions, John must soon surrender to the besiegers, and the question for Belisarius was whether he should relieve the place or not. An immediate march to Ariminum, while Auximum (Osimo) was still in the hands of the Goths, was a hazardous enterprise, and John's insubordination was not calculated to hasten the steps of the general. Belisarius and Narses met at Firmum, where Narses convinced the council of officers that circumstances demanded the relief of Ariminum, his chief argument being that the reduction of that important town would have a vast effect on the temper of the Goths, who were now thoroughly dispirited.

Belisarius, by adroit movements, succeeded in dispersing the Gothic beleaguers and saving the city; but the affair had a prejudicial effect on the imperialists themselves. John said pointedly to Belisarius that he thanked Narses for the deliverance—an expression of the discord that divided the camp.

The result of this discord was the loss of Milan and the massacre of its inhabitants by the Goths. At the request of Datius, bishop of Mediolanum, who visited Rome during the last month of the siege, Belisarius had sent Mundilas to Liguria, and that officer had occupied Mediolanum and other cities with small garrisons. The Goths and a large body of Burgundians, sent by Theudebert, king of the Franks of Austrasia, invested Milan. Belisarius ordered John to relieve it, but John refused to move without the order of Narses, and Narses gave the order too late. Milan and Liguria were lost to the Goths in the early months of 539 AD.

Justinian was wise enough to see the disadvantages that were involved in the independent and antagonistic position of Narses, and to apprehend that the conquest of Italy depended on his placing implicit confidence in Belisarius. He remedied the mistake that he had committed, and recalled Narses; we may say that this step decided the result of the undertaking.

The latter part of the year 539 was marked by the sieges of Faesulae (Fiesole) and Auximum, and by the sanguinary invasion of the Franks, who were supposed to be at peace with both parties, but now, under King Theudibert, inflicted terrible slaughter on the Goths, and put the Romans to rout. A disease broke out in their army, and this, joined with the menaces and remonstrances of Belisarius, induced them to retire. Italy had long presented the appearance of a wilderness, waste and uncultivated in consequence of the war, and famine was decimating the Goths. Witigis began to look for foreign assistance. He not only entered into communication with Wacis, king of the Lombards, but sent two Ligurians to Chosroes Nushirvan to induce him to vex the eastern frontier of the Empire; for the Goths saw that the effectiveness of Justinian's operations in the West was conditioned by the maintenance of peaceful relations in the East, as arranged by the treaty of 532. This attempt to negotiate with Persia, and the menace of hostility in that quarter, had the effect of disposing Justinian to conclude the war in Italy as speedily as possible.

The surrender of Faesulae and Auximum at the close of 539 prepared the way for the fall of Ravenna, which Belisarius immediately invested. At this juncture the situation at Ravenna was complicated, though not really determined, by various other interests in distant places. The first problem was whether Italy should be divided between Franks and Goths or between Goths and Romans. An embassy of the Franks waited on Witigis, making the former proposal; but this was counteracted by an embassy from Belisarius, to whose offer Witigis inclined. In the second place, the attitude of Chosroes, who was preparing to invade Syria, and the dangers of the Haemus peninsula, which was threatened by Hunnic inroads, affected the disposition of the Emperor, who proposed to Witigis the very moderate terms that he should reign as king in trans-Padane Italy, that the rest of the peninsula should be Roman, and that the royal treasure of the Goths should be equally divided. But Belisarius was dissatisfied with these terms, which seemed disproportionate to his success. A remarkable proposal of the Goths themselves made it possible for him to set them aside and convert the entire land of Italy into an imperial prefecture. This proposal was that Belisarius should himself assume the dignity of Emperor, and govern both the Goths and Romans. He did not reject the proposal, and the Goths surrendered on that understanding (spring 540). But the general's acquiescence was only a ruse to obtain unconditional mastery of the king and the capital of the Goths, and the idea of a revival of a separate dynasty in western Europe was not carried out. Witigis, the second king who had been vanquished by Belisarius, was conducted in triumph to Constantinople, and the treasures of the Ostrogothic palace were laid at the feet of Justinian.

We have seen that the attitude of the Franks was an element in Italian politics, and it seems desirable to say something in this place of the relations of the Franks and their Merovingian kings to the Empire. Though Gaul was really independent of the Empire in all respects, there were still theoretical ties which bound her to New Rome, and these theoretical ties influenced to some extent practical politics. Chlodwig, as we saw, was created honorary consul, and probably Patrician; he thus held a place in the hierarchy of the Empire, and one might almost look on him as the Catholic champion of Anastasius in the West against Arian Theodoric. The Merovingian sovereigns placed the word *Vir illuster* after their names, thus acknowledging that they belonged to the Roman system. Theudebert, the grandson of Chlodwig, was adopted by Justinian, and addresses him as father in two extant letters, just as Childebert in later days was the son of Maurice. In a contemporary Life of a certain Saint Trevirius we read of Gaul as “under the legal sway of the Empire” in the consulship of Justin (519 or 524); the theory of imperial Gaul was not yet a thing of the past.

From the consulate of Chlodwig until the year 539 the relations of the Empire with Gaul were friendly, but in that year Theudebert, the lord of Austrasia, and “son” of the Emperor, assumed a hostile attitude. He seems to have formed the idea of a confederacy of Teutonic nations against the Empire, but the execution of his plans was cut short by his death in 547. But neither the action of Theudebert nor that of his son Theudsbald some years later dissolved the ties of theoretical connection which bound the Frankish kingdoms of Gaul with the Romana Empire.

SAINT BENEDICT.

It is appropriate to mention here that while Justinian and Belisarius were carrying on a war in Italy which was to affect profoundly the future of that country, Saint Benedict was founding his monastery at Monte Cassino, which in the Middle Ages was to be an important factor in medieval civilization. Benedict was born at Nursia, in the province of Valeria. Sent as a boy to study at Rome, he found his school companions sunk in corruption, and was so deeply disgusted at the presence and prevalence of vice that he fled from the world, at the age of fourteen. He went eastward, accompanied by his nurse, to the lakes at the sources of the Anio. Near Subiaco, having obtained a monk’s garment from a holy man, he set up his abode in a cave at the foot of a mountain. The temptations which he underwent, the perils which he escaped, his conflicts with the Ancient Enemy, and the legends which in the course of a few years had encompassed his name, may be read in the biography which was written of him by his admirer Pope Gregory the Great. In 510 he was made abbot of Vicovano, but the monks could not endure his severe principle of obedience; in other matters he was not over strict. In 528 he went southwards to Campania, and founded the cloister of Monte Cassino, midway between Rome and Naples. He died on 21st March 543. His monastic *regula*, supported by the authority of Pope Gregory the Great, ultimately became the recognized rule of all monastic institutions. This, however, did not immediately come to pass. It appears that it was in the pontificate of Gregory II, in the beginning of the eighth century, that it decidedly obtained the ascendancy over the rules of other monastic reformers. For there were other monastic reformers even in the time of Benedict himself, for example, Aurelian and Caesarius at Arelate. The movement which Benedict represented in Italy was general and widespread, but the rules which he prescribed were more reasonable, mild, and moderate, notwithstanding his excessive personal austerity, than those of others.

CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT PLAGUE

At various periods of the world’s history mankind has been visited by plagues on a great scale. It is noteworthy that they generally attend some moral change in the races which they visit—that they generally mark roughly a historical period. Thus the pestilence in the reign of Marcus Aurelius may be said to have accompanied the inauguration of a new epoch of the Roman Empire. The continuity of history is not broken, but in the last years of the second as in the third century we feel that we have passed into an atmosphere totally different from that of the earlier Empire. The Black Death of 1346 accompanied the inauguration of the Renaissance, and if a single date is desirable to mark the close of the Middle Ages, perhaps 1346 is the most suitable. The great pestilence of 747 AD was the concomitant of an important transition from the early semi-antique medievalism to medievalism proper in the Roman Empire, as I hope to show in its due place. The plague at Athens in the fifth century BC likewise accompanied the change from an old to a new spirit, from the old spirit which Aristophanes praises to the new spirit which he ridicules and breathes, from the old spirit of Herodotus, Aeschylus, and Pindar to the new spirit of Thucydides, Euripides, and Agathon.

The great plague of 542 AD similarly defines the beginning of a new period. If we may speak of watersheds in history, this plague marks the watershed of what we call the ancient and what we call the medieval age. The whole period from Constantine to Justinian was a preparation for the Middle Ages, but its character was more ancient than medieval; the period from Justinian to Constantine V was also a preparation for the Middle Ages, but it was far more medieval than ancient. The four centuries elapsing between Constantine I and Constantine V might be well considered a separate period, neither the ancient nor the medieval, and yet partaking of both characters, the twilight between the day and the night. But it is more convenient to divide it, and assign part of it to ancient history and part of it to medieval history. The question being at what point we are to divide it, I venture to say that the most natural point of division is the great plague in the sixth century.

For really nothing is more striking than the difference between the first half and the latter half of Justinian's reign. We feel in 550 that we are moving in a completely other world than that of 540. The hope and cheerfulness with which his reign opened have vanished, and though the tasks willed in hours of insight are not surrendered, it is veritably in hours of gloom that they are fulfilled, and the Emperor himself, quite a changed man, seems to have forgotten his interest in them. Contemporaries noticed this change that had come upon Justinian, and it has been mentioned in a previous chapter.

The peculiarity of great plagues—that they are concomitants of moral or psychical changes—naturally suggests a problem, the data necessary for whose solution are veiled in obscurity. Are these pestilences to be placed in the same category as earthquakes, for example, which may destroy a city and thereby modify history, although there is no conceivable intrinsic connection between their own causes and the societies which they affect? In this case two alternatives are possible. Either the moral and spiritual change is in the first instance quite independent of the plague, and the synchronism is a pure accident, though when the plague has set in it may facilitate the changes by removing the old generation and transforming the population; or else the plague is the cause of the moral and spiritual revolution. The second alternative must be rejected, because in all cases we see the change at work before the appearance of the disease; and perhaps the first theory will recommend itself as reasonable.

Yet we must not ignore another possibility, which cannot be proved, but does not seem improbable, the possibility that the rise and spread of the plague may be intrinsically connected with the moral and spiritual changes which it so often accompanies. In the present century it is not necessary to remind the reader that, though we reject the unreasonable formula that mind is a mere function of matter, we cannot reject the physiological fact that all processes of the individual consciousness are accompanied by corresponding physical processes of cerebration, and that there is a continual action and reaction between the psychical and physical operations. We can hardly help concluding from this that great psychological—moral and spiritual—changes which transmute societies must be accompanied by biological changes, modifications in the adjustments of the functions of the various parts of the brain, and morphological changes in its configuration. Such cerebral modifications would be naturally and necessarily attended by changes of an imperceptible but actual kind in the whole organism. Now, as the spread of a disease must depend on the state of each patient's organism as well as on the germs which are propagated in the atmosphere, it is quite conceivable that the circumstance that the organisms of a people were undergoing a process of transformation might condition and determine the diffusion, if not the appearance, of a pestilence.

The great plague ravaged the Empire for four years. It began at Pelusium, whence it spread in two directions, throughout Egypt and into Palestine. Its presence in Persia caused Chosroes to retire prematurely from his campaign in 542, and in the spring of the same year it reached Constantinople, where it raged for four months. Procopius, the historian, an eyewitness of its course, has left us an account of it, which one sets beside the description of the plague at Athens by Thucydides, or that of the Black Death by Boccaccio. Procopius does not hesitate to reject all attempts to account for it by natural causes and to attribute its origin directly to the Deity. His reason for this scepticism or faith was that the visitation was universal, and therefore excluded a special cause. This circumstance especially impressed Procopius; the plague did not assail any particular race or class of men, nor prevail in any particular region, nor at any particular season of the year. Summer or winter, north or south, Greek or Arabian, washed or unwashed—of these distinctions the plague took no account; it pervaded the whole world. A man might climb to the top of a hill, it was there; or retire to the depth of a cavern, it was there also. If it passed by a spot, it was sure to return there again; and one condition at least it seemed to obey in the line of its route, for Procopius tells us that it spread from the coast inlandwards. The chief symptom of the disease was the swelling of the groin, whence it is called by Gregory of Tours *lues inguinalis*. Some of those who were attacked were warned by the sight of demon spectres in human forms and by a feeling as if they were struck by an invisible hand. This feature was also characteristic of the plague of 747; it is a medieval trait. The plague of the age of Pericles was not accompanied by spectral apparitions, or at least the rational Thucydides does not condescend to record such puerilities. When the plague reached its height, 5000, it is said, perished daily, sometimes even 10,000. Justinian himself caught the infection, but recovered. Constantinople was in a pitiable condition. In many houses none remained to bury the dead, and Justinian appointed Theodorus, a referendarius, to provide for the interment of the neglected corpses. The feuds of the Blues and Greens were quenched in the common woe. The attitude of the light and dissolute to religion deserves mention. With the prospect of death before them, they cleansed their ways and piously frequented churches; but when they recovered and felt secure, they plunged headlong into their old amusements, and their last state was worse than the first. Procopius made the generalization that "this pestilence, whether by chance or providential design, strictly spared the most wicked".

The plague aggravated the disastrous condition of the population, which had suffered from the pressure of taxation. It produced a stagnation of trade and a cessation of work. All customary occupations were broken off, and the market-places were empty save of corpse-bearers. The consequence was that Constantinople, always richly supplied, was in a state of famine, and bread was a great luxury.

In 558 there was another outbreak of this pestilential scourge in the East; it lurked and lingered in Europe long after the first grand visitation. In the last years of Justinian it produced a desolation in Liguria which was graphically described by Paul, the historian of the Lombards. The country seemed plunged in a primeval silence.

CHAPTER VII

THE FINAL CONQUEST OF ITALY AND THE CONQUEST OF SOUTH-EASTERN SPAIN

By the fall of Witigis and the capture of Ravenna the conquest of Italy was not completed. There were still germs of patriotism among the Ostrogoths, which the hasty departure of Belisarius left unstifled, to revive and cause many more years of labour to the Roman armies.

The town of Ticinum (Pavia) was still in the possession of the Goths, being held by Ildibad, whom they elected as their new king. The Roman command was divided among several generals, whom Belisarius, destined himself to conduct the Persian war, had left behind. A third factor in the situation was the introduction of the stringent financial system of the Empire, under the direction of a *logothete*. It cannot be said that annexation to the Empire was a blessing to the inhabitants of Italy; it entailed the desolations and miseries of five years of war, followed by the imposition of grinding taxes. These two circumstances, the divided command and the financial system, combined with the dissatisfaction of the Roman soldiers at not receiving the promotions and higher pay to which they were entitled, rendered a revival of Gothic hopes far from impossible. Alexander, the first *logothete*, who was called "Scissors" from his practice of clipping coins, "alienated the minds of the Italians from Justinian Augustus; and none of the soldiers were willing to undergo the hazard of war, but they advanced the cause of the enemy by intentional laziness". The attitude of the soldiers led to the inactivity of the generals; and in the meantime the power of Ildibad, who had been collecting the relics of the Goths and enlisting many dissatisfied Italians, was extending over Liguria and Venetia. The only general who tried to oppose him suffered a severe defeat.

In the following year Ildibad was murdered on account of a private quarrel, and after the short reign of a Rugian, named Eraric, who entered into negotiations with Justinian and dissatisfied his subjects, the hero of the second part of the Gothic war, Baduila or Totila, a nephew of Ildibad, was elected king of the Goths. In the history of this war the names of Witigis and Totila stand out, while that of Ildibad remains in obscurity—is read, and forgotten; but it should be remembered that at a critical juncture he sustained the life of the Ostrogothic nationality and energetically took advantage of the circumstances which favoured such a hope, to revive the cause of his people.

Within a year of Totila's accession the position of Romans and Goths in Italy was reversed. An unsuccessful attempt to take Verona, made by the Roman generals, whom the rebukes of Justinian had stimulated to action, was followed by a Roman defeat in the battle of Faenza, in which a remarkable single combat is said to have taken place between a gigantic Goth and Artabazes, a Persian conspicuous for bravery. Another victory, achieved at Mugillo over John the nephew of Vitalian, laid the centre and south of Italy open to Totila's attack. By the middle of 542 AD he had reduced and imposed taxes on Bruttii, Calabria, Apulia, Lucania, and he had begun the siege of Naples. That city surrendered in 543, and was treated with a spirit of humanity which Totila adopted as a principle of warfare. He put to death one of his praetorian guards (for the Goths had praetorians) who had violated the daughter of a Calabrian. The criminal was a brave and popular man, and a number of distinguished Goths pleaded with Totila to save his life; but the king answered the deputation in a speech in which he laid down that the general policy and principles whereon the Gothic cause depended were involved in this particular case. The behaviour of Totila was all the more conspicuous, as it contrasted with the rapacity and incontinence in which the Roman leaders were at this time indulging.

After his success at Naples Totila undertook the siege of Hydruntum, or Otranto, and prepared also to besiege John, who had shut himself up in Rome. He addressed a sort of manifesto to the Roman senate, in which he appealed to the actual contrast between the government of Theodoric and Amalasantha and that of the Greek *logothetes*; copies of this were posted up in Rome, and in consequence thereof John expelled the Arian clergy from the city.

The hold of the Empire on Italy had thus become extremely precarious. Totila's star was in the ascendant. There was no ability, no energy, no unity on the side of the imperialists. Constantine, the commander at Ravenna, wrote to the Emperor a letter representing the situation, and it was resolved to permit Belisarius to return to the scene of his successes. But Belisarius had changed as well as the situation in Italy. It seems that he had fallen into disgrace at court, and had been saved from punishment by the influence of his wife Antonina with the Empress; but for these transactions we have only the dubious authority of the Secret History. A cloud at all events had fallen over him; he was not allowed to command in the Persian war, as he would have chosen. This personal experience had probably a considerable effect on his spirits; but we must chiefly notice that Justinian did not support him when he set out. The army, including his own special troops, were in Asia, and not permitted to accompany him; he was obliged to scour Thrace to collect, at his own expense, soldiers, whom he afterwards described as a "miserable squad".

When we start with Belisarius on his second expedition to the West, the brightness of his day seems to have gone; in fact, after his departure from Ravenna in 540 we feel that the darkness is upon us, and that the Middle Ages have begun. Belisarius, in the period of his glory, as the champion of the Romana Empire, threw a light as of the ancient world on the scene; but the gloom of his return to Italy, the appearance of Totila, who was a sort of "knight", that king's visit to Benedict, bringing us into contact with the saint whose shadow dominates the medieval centuries—all this gives the impression that the dim ages are beginning.

Belisarius was not invested with the highest rank; he was only *comes stabuli*, count of the stable. He arrived in Italy in the middle of 544, along with Vitalian, the master of soldiers in Illyricum, and took up his quarters at

Ravenna. This was a mistake. Everything was adverse to him, and he did not possess his old energy. In May 545—during the whole intervening year all that had been done was to relieve the besieged garrisons of Hydruntum and Auximum, and to fortify Bisaurum (Besaro)—he was obliged to write to Justinian. His letter is a model of conciseness and directness, with a certain tinge of irony. He asked for three things, if the Emperor wished to affirm Roman dominion in Italy, (1) his own mounted lancers and foot-guards; (2) a large body of Huns and other barbarians; (3) money to pay the troops.

He sent John, the nephew of Vitalian, with this letter, binding him by solemn oath to hasten his return. It will be remembered that John had disobeyed Belisarius in the affair of Ariminum, and had acted on the side of Narses; he is a man who cannot be neglected in the history of the time, for he played a considerable though subordinate part. On this occasion his visit to Byzantium brought him again into close connection with a party politically opposed to Belisarius. He married the daughter of the Emperor's nephew Germanus, and thus allied himself to the interests of the kin of Justinian. Belisarius, on the other hand, had attached himself to the directly opposed interests of Theodora and her relations by the arrangement of a marriage between his daughter Joannina and Anastasius, the grandson of the Empress.

Towards the end of the year, Totila, having taken several important towns in central Italy, including Spolegium, invested Rome, where Bessas was in command, and in the course of a few months reduced it to such extremities of hunger that the chief food of the inhabitants was cooked nettles. At last Bessas, after much importunity, allowed those inhabitants who were useless for fighting to depart.

Meanwhile John had returned from his nuptial festivities with a considerable army and joined Belisarius at Dyrrhachium. The new marriage connection emphasized the opposition of the generals, which was immediately displayed in diverging plans of warfare. The question at issue was the relief of Rome, Belisarius urging immediate action, and John insisting on the preliminary reduction of Calabria and Lucania. A compromise was made; each was to execute his own plan. John recovered the southern provinces without much difficulty, but the undertaking of Belisarius was more difficult, and proved unsuccessful.

The town of Portus, at the mouth of the Tiber, situated on the right bank and facing the fort of Ostia, was occupied by Belisarius, who was accompanied by his wife Antonina. It was all-important to supply the distressed garrison with food as soon as possible, and for this purpose it was necessary to break the boom which Totila had thrown across the Tiber. This boom consisted of long beams connecting, like a bridge, the two banks of the river at a narrow part of the stream. On each bank a wooden tower, manned with brave warriors, was erected to defend the boom. To overcome this obstacle Belisarius invented the following device. Two wide boats were firmly joined together and surmounted by a wooden tower considerably higher than those which dominated Totila's fortification. On the top of the tower was placed a boat filled with pitch, sulphur, rosin, and other combustible substances. Two hundred fast vessels, protected by plank-walls pierced with holes for the discharge of missiles, were laden with corn and manned with brave men. Belisarius embarked himself in one of the vessels, having committed the care of Portus and his wife Antonina to his captain Isaac of Ameria, whom he enjoined not to stir from the place on any pretext. Portus was the only friendly position, on which, in case of need, he could fall back. The Roman ships, tugging the tower with them, sailed up the Tiber without opposition, until, not far from the bridge, they were met by an iron chain, which spanned the river, and some Goths set there to defend it. The Goths were easily scattered and the chain was removed. A firmer resistance was offered at the bridge, but the boat of inflammable materials was dexterously dropped on the tower of the right bank; the structure was enveloped in flames and almost 200 Goths were burnt alive. The arrows of the Romans completed the discomfiture of the enemy.

But the envy of fortune did not permit to Belisarius the success which seemed within his grasp. As he prepared to break the boom, the alarming news arrived that Isaac was taken. It appears that Isaac, hearing a rumour of the success of Belisarius, and desirous of emulating his glory, had disobeyed his orders, attacked Ostia, and been taken prisoner. Belisarius "thinking that all was over with Portus, his wife, and his cause, and that no place of refuge was left to fall back on, lost his presence of mind, a thing which had never befallen him before". He issued orders for a hasty retreat, and when he reached Portus was relieved and exasperated to find that it was a false alarm. The excitement led to a fever which proved almost fatal to the disappointed general.

The blame of the capture of the city, which was achieved through the treachery of some Isaurian soldiers, seems partly to rest with the commandant Bessas, who was so avaricious as to enrich himself by trading in corn with the famished garrison and, engrossed in these practices, forgot his duty. Totila took Rome in the last month of 546 AD.

The behaviour of the Gothic soldiers in the captured city is a curious illustration of the nascent medieval feelings of the time. They were allowed by their king to plunder property and massacre men, but they were strictly prohibited from ravishing women. This prohibition did not rest on feelings of humanity, which would have prevented the worse evil of butchery, it rested on a religious feeling which regarded the interests of the Goths themselves and not those of the possible victims.

The speeches attributed to Totila on the occasion are also noteworthy. In his address to the Goths he repeats a point which he had insisted on before, the contrast between their present position and their position at the beginning of the war; then the Ostrogoths were numerous and rich, now they are few and poor; but then they suffered disaster on disaster, now they gain success after success. The cause of this contrast is that then they had acted unrighteously, while now their conduct is void of reproach; hence a change has taken place in the regard of the Deity. In his address to the Roman senators Totila contrasted in the usual manner the oppression of the "Greeks" with the mild government of the Goths, and doomed them to slavery in return for their deafness to his appeals.

Another notable feature in connection with this capture of Rome was Totila's intention to destroy it, and the argument by which Belisarius, who was then lying ill at Portus, dissuaded him from his design. Belisarius appealed to the judgment that posterity and mankind would pass on the destruction of the Eternal City. He also urged the alternative: if you conquer, Rome preserved will be your best possession; if you are conquered, by the destruction of Rome your claims to clemency will be forfeited.

Totila and all his troops went southward to Lucania, and for forty days Rome was uninhabited. Then the Roman general re-occupied it and repaired the walls and fortifications, which Totila had partially dismantled. Totila had not anticipated this movement, and when he heard the news returned to retake the city. His attack, however, was unsuccessful, and he was obliged to withdraw to the citadel of Tibur.

But the position of Belisarius became untenable, and he was unable to cope with the Goths in the open field. He sailed to Tarentum, and made one last attempt to unite his forces with those of John in order to make a joint attack on the foe, but the attempt miscarried, and Belisarius desired nothing better than to be recalled to Constantinople. He had sent thither his wife, Antonina, to beg for further assistance in men and money; but on the 1st July 548 she lost an advocate by the death of Theodora, and then she requested that her husband should be recalled. Although Belisarius had not been able to conquer Totila, he was, nevertheless, a check on the Gothic operations; and after his recall the power of the Goths began to rise to its highest point. Totila besieged Rome again, and it was again delivered to him by Isaurian treachery; this was the third siege during the war. He occupied and ravaged Sicily, and built a large fleet with which he pillaged the coasts of Sardinia and Epirus. Thus he was now undisputed king of Italy, and possessed a naval power.

During the preceding years Justinian's heart had not been centred on the conquest of Italy; all his thoughts and attention were engrossed in the theological controversy of the "three articles". Nothing was done in 549 and 550, but in 550 an idea was conceived which, if it had been carried out, might have altered to some extent Italian history. Justinian surrendered the design, which Belisarius had momentarily accomplished, of making Italy a province or prefecture governed from New Rome, and formed a new plan—a sort of compromise—to unite the house of Theodoric with his own, so that Gotho-Roman Italy should be governed by a Gotho-Roman line. He appointed his nephew Germanus, who, now that Theodora was no longer alive, was in higher favour, general commander of the Italian armies, with full powers; and Germanus married Matasuntha, the widow of Witigis, and granddaughter of Theodoric. Great enthusiasm prevailed for the expedition of Germanus. The news thereof made the Goths waver in their allegiance to Totila, and the Italians were prepared to welcome him cordially. Numbers of recruits flocked to his standard.

But Germanus was not destined to rule in Italy as a colleague of Justinian. Efficient action in the Italian war was at this time seriously impeded by the ruinous invasions of Slaves and Huns, who depopulated the provinces of Illyricum and threatened the capital. In the early part of 550, while Germanus was making preparations for his Italian expedition, one of these incursions took place, and he received orders to turn aside to protect Thessalonica. He caught fever, and died; and with him perished the prospects of a restoration of the Amal line. After his death a son was born to Matasuntha, Germanus Posthumus, on whom Romanising Goths seem to have built hopes for the future; at least the Gothic history of Jordanes must be placed in the year 551, and it has been most plausibly argued by Schirren that it is a work with a tendency, written to induce Justinian to recognize the infant Germanus as Emperor and ruler of Italy.

In the same year Justinian decided to make a great final effort to reduce Italy and exterminate the Goths, whose very name, we are told, he hated. The problem was to find a general whom all would obey, and Justinian solved it well by the strange choice of a eunuch, seventy-five years old, his grand-chamberlain Narses, the same whose presence in Italy had sown dissensions among Belisarius' officers in 538. By his high position at court and his influence with the Emperor he had immense authority, whereby he could secure united action in the warfare, and he was not stinted, as Belisarius had been, in the matter of funds.

Before Narses arrived two blows had been dealt to Totila, which so damped his spirits that he treated for peace. The Romans held only four places on the eastern coast of Italy, Ravenna, Ancona, Hydruntum, and Crotona. The Goths were besieging Ancona, but when it was already hard pressed, John, the nephew of Vitalian, and Valerian forced them to raise the siege by completely defeating the Gothic fleet off Sinigaglia. This was a severe blow to the naval power of the Goths, the deficiencies of whose sea craft were evident in the battle. The second misfortune was the loss of Sicily, from which they were driven by the Persarmenian Artabanes, and this was followed by the relief of Crotona early in the following year (552). Justinian would not listen to the Gothic proposals for peace. The situation was further perplexed by the attitude of the Franks, who held nearly all northern Italy, and invariably considered the difficulty of the Goths their own opportunity.

Narses' army was chiefly composed of barbarians—Heruls, Lombards, Gepids, Huns, and Persians. His march into Italy, along the coast of Venetia, was opposed by both the Franks, who hated Lombards, and a band of Gothic troops under Teias; but it was successfully accomplished with the help of the ships which coasted slowly round, attending the progress of the army. Narses marched southward without delay, and Totila marched northward to meet him. The scene of the final battle (July or August 552) which decided the fate of Italy is disputed, some placing it near Sassoferrato, on the east side of the Via Flaminia, others near Scheggia, on the west side. Procopius, who was not present, is not sufficiently precise. Two circumstances may be noticed which helped to determine the result. The Romans anticipated the Goths in occupying a small hill which commanded the battlefield, and Totila, who trusted to his cavalry chiefly, made the mistake of enjoining on them to use no weapons but spears. Narses' tactics consisted in strengthening his wings, on which he relied for the victory. The Gothic army was routed, and Totila received a mortal wound, from which he expired at about thirteen miles from the field. In the month of August the bloodstained garments of Totila arrived at New Rome, as a trophy of Narses' success.

After the victory the Lombard auxiliaries displayed their nature by acts of barbarous violence and licence, and it was found necessary to pay them their hire and conduct them out of Italy.

This victory decided the war, but Narses' position was not yet firm. The imperialists in the meantime had taken Rome, and almost all the fortresses had been surrendered by the Gothic commandants. But the remnant of those who were defeated in the battle reunited under the general Teias. Him they elected king, and Narses was forced to fight once more near the Draco, in south Italy. Teias was slain (553), but the battle did not end with his death; it was renewed on the following day. Finally, however, the Goths proposed to conclude the war on condition that they should be allowed to leave Italy, and the proposal was agreed to. A thousand of the vanquished escaped to Pavia.

At this point the Ostrogothic war and the history of Procopius come to an end; but opposition was raised to the establishment of the imperial authority in Italy from another quarter.

Teias had in vain begged the king of the Franks, Theudebald, for assistance in the death-conflict, and had tried to bribe him by presenting him with a large part of the Gothic treasures; but Theudebald had given no succour. Now, however, he intervened, though not directly, by countenancing the Italian expedition of Leutharis and Bucelin, two Alemanni who were at his court. They entered Italy with 75,000 men to oppose the arms of Narses, and many Goths throughout Italy regarded them as deliverers. But others deemed the Romans preferable, as masters, to the Franks, and among those who held this view was Aligern, Teias' brother, who was commander of the still uncaptured fortress of Cumae. He presented the keys of that town to Narses, who had withdrawn to Ravenna. Leutharis and his army were destroyed by a disease due to the climate, and Bucelin was completely defeated near Capua in an engagement, remarkable for a curious incident which threatened Narses with defeat, and, as it turned out, led to his victory. The eunuch punished with death a noble Herul for killing one of his own servants, and the act inflamed all the Heruls with indignation, as they claimed the right of dealing with their servants as they thought fit, without interference. They announced that they would take no part in the battle. This report induced the enemy, feeling assured of an easy victory, to attack their opponents with a careless and imprudent haste. But when Narses, who was quite prepared, called his troops to battle, the Heruls could not bring themselves to persist in executing their threat, and the strong-minded independence of Narses signally triumphed.

Thus the whole land of Italy, including the islands and the Istrian and Illyrian regions, which were connected with it under the old imperial administration, became once more part of the Roman Empire; and Narses was the first exarch or governor of the reconquered peninsula.

CONQUEST OF SOUTH-EASTERN SPAIN.

When he had conquered the Ostrogoths, Justinian proceeded to undertake hostilities against the Visigoths, and attempt to win back Spain as he had won back Italy. Theodoric, the king of the Visigoths, had held aloof from the struggle in the neighbouring-peninsula, and lent no aid to the East Goths, but Theudis, his successor, supported his nephew Ildibad, the Ostrogothic king, and fomented a rising against the Romans in Africa. He saw that the Teutonic kingdoms of the West were threatened by the reviving power of the Empire.

Of the operations of the Romans in Spain we have unluckily no consecutive account; we have only the scattered notices in the Chronicles of Isidore of Seville and John of Biclaro. It seems that, as in the case of the war in Africa and as in the case of the war in Italy, internal dissensions afforded a pretext for Roman interference. Athanagild headed a party which was opposed to King Agila, and this party called in the aid of the Patrician Liberius from Africa. Liberius crossed the straits and subdued the coast of Spain, as the Carthaginians had done in ancient times, and as the Saracens were to do at a later period. Corduba, Spanish Carthage—New Carthage, Carthagena, or Carthago Spartaria, as it was variously called,—Malaga, and Assidonia, with many places on the coast, passed once more into the hands of the Romans.

But the Goths were alarmed at the advance of the Romans in the south; the adherents of Agila patriotically slew him and joined the abler Athanagild, to make common cause against the invader. It was a somewhat parallel case to that of the Romans themselves in Africa in the year 429: there were then two parties in Africa, the party of Boniface and the party of Sigisvult, the general of Placidia; one or both of them called in the Vandal, and then they joined together to make common cause against the stranger. But the stand of the Goths against the Romans was more effectual than that of the Romans against the Vandals. After their first successes the imperialists do not seem to have acquired much more territory; they never penetrated really into the centre of Spain; and the reason was that the Roman Spaniards found the yoke of the Teuton king-lighter than the yoke of the Roman Emperor had formerly been. The heavy taxation, which was always imposed by New Rome, had given her a bad name among the provincials who had passed from under imperial domination and become subjects of Teutonic rulers.

When sixteen years, during which we lose the Spanish provinces from sight, had passed away, and when Justinian no longer reigned, there arose a great king among the Visigoths, by name Leovigild. He set it before him to drive the Romans from the Iberian peninsula, and, though he did not entirely succeed, he materially weakened their power. He recovered Malaga, Assidonia, and even Corduba.

The struggles of the Arian with the Catholic party in the Visigothic kingdom, the discord of Arian Leovigild with his Catholic son Hermenigild, the husband of the Frankish princess Ingundis, led to new hostilities with the Romans; for even as Athanagild had called in the help of Liberius, Hermenigild called in the help of "the Greeks", as the historian of the Franks calls them. Leovigild, however, paralyzed this combination; Hermenigild surrendered, and was sent in exile to Valencia. This happened in 584; and in the same year the arms of the

Visigoths were successful against the third power in the Peninsula, that of the Suevians, whose kingdom embraced Lusitania and Galicia. Suevia was made a province of the Gothic kingdom.

I am here anticipating the chronological order of events; but our knowledge of this chapter of Roman or Spanish history—for it has the two sides—is so small, and the events in this corner are so far removed from the general current of the history of the Empire, that I think it will be more convenient for the reader to have this episode of *Baetica* presented to him in continuity than in disconnected parcels.

At the beginning of the seventh century King Witterich, “a man strenuous in the art of arms, but nevertheless generally unsuccessful”, renewed the policy of Leovigild and the war against the Romans, with whom his predecessor, Reccared, famous in ecclesiastical history, had for the most part preserved peace. Witterich recovered Segontia, a town a little to the west of Gades; and Sisibut fought successfully against the Patrician Caesarius. All the towns which the Romans held to the east of the straits were recovered by the Goths, and the fact was recognized by Heraclius (615). Svinthila completed the work of Leovigild, Witterich, and Sisibut; all the other cities which were still imperial were taken (623), and thus the whole peninsula for the first time became Visigothic, for before Baetica was lost the existence of the Suevian kingdom curtailed the dominion of the Goths in Spain.

CHAPTER VIII

SECOND PERSIAN WAR

(540-545 A.D.)

When Chosroes Nushirvan, after his accession to the Persian throne, contracted the “endless peace” with Justinian, he had little idea what manner of man the Emperor was soon to prove himself to be. Within seven years from that time (532-539) Justinian had overthrown the Vandal kingdom of Africa, he had reduced the Moors, the subjection of the Ostrogothic lords of Italy was in prospect, Bosporus and the Crimean Goths were included in the circle of Roman sway, while the Homerites of southern Arabia acknowledged the supremacy of New Rome. Both his friends and his enemies said, with hate or admiration, “The whole earth cannot contain him; he is already scrutinizing the aether and the retreats beyond the ocean, if he may win some new world”. The eastern potentate might well apprehend danger to his own kingdom in the expansion of the Roman Empire by the reconquest of its lost provinces; and the interests of the German kings in the west and the Persian king in the east coincided, in so far as the aggrandizement of the Empire was inexpedient for both. We can consider it only natural that Chosroes should have seized or invented a pretext to renew hostilities, when it seemed but too possible that if Justinian were allowed to continue his career of conquest undisturbed the Romans might come with larger armies and increased might to extend their dominions in the East at the expense of the Sassanid empire.

Hostilities between the Persian Saracens of Hirah and the Roman Saracens of Ghassan supplied the desired pretext; it may be that Chosroes himself instigated the hostilities. The cause of contention between the Saracen tribes was a tract of land called Strata, to the south of Palmyra, a region barren of trees and fruit, scorched dry by the sun, and used as a pasture for sheep. Arethas the Ghassanide could appeal to the fact that the name *Strata* was Latin, and could adduce the testimony of the most venerable elders that the sheep-walk belonged to his tribe. Alamundar, the rival sheikh, contented himself with the more practical argument that for years back the shepherds had paid him tribute. Two arbitrators were sent by the Emperor, Strategius, minister of finances, and Summus, the duke of Palestine. This arbitration supplied Chosroes with a pretext, true or false, for breaking the peace. He alleged that Summus made treasonable offers to Alamundar, attempting to shake his allegiance to Persia; and he also professed to have in his possession a letter of Justinian to the Huns, urging them to invade his dominions.

About the same time pressure from without confirmed the thoughts of Chosroes in the direction which they had already taken. An embassy arrived from Witigis, king of the Goths, now hard pressed by Belisarius, and pleaded with Chosroes to act against the common enemy. The embassy consisted not of Goths, but of two Ligurians, one of whom pretended to be a bishop; they obtained an interpreter in Thrace, and succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the Romans on the frontiers. Another embassy arrived from Armenia making similar representations, deploring and execrating the Endless Peace, and denouncing the tyranny and exactions of Justinian, against whom they had revolted. The history of Armenia had been certainly unfortunate during the years that followed the peace. The first governor, Amazaspes, was accused by one Acacius of treachery, and, with the Emperor's consent, was slain by the accuser, who was himself appointed to succeed his victim.

Acacius was relentless in exacting a tribute of unprecedented magnitude (£18,000); and some Armenians, intolerant of his cruelty, slew him, and fled, when they had committed the deed, to a fortress called Pharangion.

The Emperor immediately despatched Sittas, the master of soldiers *per Armeniam*, to recall the Armenians to a sense of obedience, and, when Sittas showed himself inclined to use the softer methods of persuasion, insisted that he should act with sterner vigour. A numerous tribe of the Armenians, called Apetiani, professed themselves ready to submit, if the safety of their property were guaranteed, and Sittas sent them a promise to that effect in writing. But unluckily the letter-carrier, not knowing the exact position of the territory of the Apetiani, lost his way in the intricate Armenian highlands; and while Sittas advanced with his troops to receive their submission, the Apetiani were ignorant that their proposal had been accepted, and looked with suspicion on the approaching army. Some of their number fell in by chance with Roman soldiers and were treated as enemies. Sittas, unaware that his communication had miscarried, was indignant that the promised submission was delayed; the Apetiani were put to the sword and their wives and children were slain in a cave. This severity, which might seem almost a breach of faith, exasperated the other tribes and confirmed them in their recalcitrant temper. But though Sittas was accidentally killed in an engagement soon afterwards, they found themselves unequal to cope with the Roman forces, which were then placed under the command of Buzes, and they decided to appeal to the Persian monarch. The servitude of their neighbours the Tzani and the imposition of a Roman duke over the Lazi of Colchis seemed to stamp the policy of Justinian as one of odious enormity.

Accordingly Chosroes, in the autumn of 539, decided to begin hostilities in the following spring, and did not deign to answer a pacific letter from the Roman Emperor, conveyed by the hand of a certain Anastasius, whom he retained an unwilling guest at the Persian court. The war which thus began lasted five years (540-545), and in each year the king himself took the field. He invaded Syria in 540, Colchis in 541, Commagene in 542; in 543 he began but did not carry out an expedition against the northern provinces; in 544 he invaded Mesopotamia; in 545 a peace for five years was concluded.

I. Chosroes Invasion of Syria, 540 AD

Avoiding Mesopotamia, Chosroes advanced northwards with a large army along the left bank of the Euphrates. He passed the triangle-shaped city of Circesium, but did not care to assault it, because it was too strong; while he disdained to delay at the town of Zenobia, named after the queen of Palmyra, because it was too insignificant. But when he approached Sura or Suron, situated on the Euphrates in that part of its course which flows from west to east, his horse neighed and stamped the ground; and the magi, who attended the credulous king, seized the incident as an omen that the city would be taken. On the first day of the siege the governor was slain, and on the second the bishop of the place visited the Persian camp in the name of the dispirited inhabitants, and implored Chosroes with tears to spare the town. He tried to appease the implacable foe with an offering of birds, wine, and bread, and engaged that the men of Sura would pay a sufficient ransom. Chosroes dissimulated the wrath he felt against the Surenes because they had not submitted immediately; he received the gifts and said that he would consult with the Persian nobles regarding the ransom; and he dismissed the bishop, who was well pleased with the interview, under the honourable escort of Persian notables, to whom the monarch had given secret instructions.

Having given his directions to the escort, Chosroes ordered his army to stand in readiness, and to run at full speed to the city when he gave the signal. When they reached the walls the Persians saluted the bishop and stood outside; but the men of Sura, seeing him in high spirits and observing how he was escorted with great honour by the Persians, put aside all thoughts of suspicion, and, opening the gate wide, received their priest with clapping of hands and acclamation. And when all had passed within, the porters pushed the gate to shut it, but the Persians placed a stone, which they had provided, between the threshold and the gate. The porters pushed harder, but for all their violent exertions they could not succeed in forcing the gate into the threshold-groove. And they did not venture to throw it open again, as they apprehended that it was held by the enemy. Some say that it was a log of wood, not a stone, that was inserted by the Persians. The men of Sura had hardly discovered the guile, ere Chosroes had come with all his army and the Persians had forced open the gate. In a few moments the city was in the power of the enemy". The houses were plundered; many of the inhabitants were slain, the rest were carried into slavery, and the city was burnt down to the ground. Then the Persian king dismissed Anastasius, bidding him inform the Emperor in what place he had left Chosroes the son of Kobad.

Perhaps it was merely avarice, perhaps it was the prayers of a captive named Euphemia, whose beauty attracted the desires of the conqueror, that induced Chosroes to treat with unexpected leniency the prisoners of Sura. He sent a message to Candidus, the bishop of Sergiopolis, suggesting that he should ransom the 12,000 captives for 200 lbs. of gold (15s. a head). As Candidus had not, and could not immediately obtain, the sum, he was allowed to stipulate in writing that he would pay it within a year's time, under penalty of paying double and resigning his bishopric. Few of the redeemed prisoners survived long the agitations and tortures they had undergone.

Meanwhile the Roman general Buzes was at Hierapolis. Nominally the command in the East was divided between Buzes and Belisarius; the Roman provinces beyond the Euphrates being assigned to the former, Syria and Asia Minor to the latter. But as Belisarius had not yet returned from Italy, the entire army was at the disposal of Buzes, the *magister militum per Armeniam*.

If we are to believe the account of a writer who was probably prejudiced, this general behaved in the most extraordinary manner. He collected the chief citizens of Hierapolis and pointed out to them that in case of a siege, which seemed imminent, the city would be less efficiently protected if all the forces remained within the walls, than if a small garrison defended it, and the main body of the troops, posted on the neighbouring heights, harassed the besiegers. Following up this plausible counsel, Buzes took the larger part of the army with him and vanished; and neither the inhabitants of Hierapolis nor the enemy could divine where he had hidden himself.

Informed of the presence of Chosroes in the Roman provinces, Justinian despatched Germanus to Antioch, at the head of a small body of three hundred soldiers. The fortifications of the "Queen of the East" did not satisfy the careful inspection of Germanus, for although the lower parts of the city were adequately protected by the Orontes, which washed the bases of the houses, and the higher regions seemed secure on impregnable heights, there rose outside the walls adjacent to the citadel a broad rock, almost as lofty as the wall, which would inevitably present to the besiegers a fatal point of vantage. Competent engineers said that there would not be sufficient time before Chosroes' arrival to remedy this defect by removing the rock or enclosing it within the walls. Accordingly Germanus, despairing of resistance, sent Megas, the bishop of Beroea, to divert the advance of Chosroes from Antioch by the influence of money or entreaties. Megas reached the Persian army as it was approaching Hierapolis, the city abandoned by Buzes, and was informed by the great king that it was his unalterable intention to subdue Syria and Cilicia. The bishop was constrained or induced to accompany the army to Hierapolis, which was strong enough to defy a siege, and was content to purchase immunity from the attempt by a payment equivalent to £90,000. Chosroes then consented to retire without assaulting Antioch on the receipt of 1000 lbs. of gold (£45,000), and Megas returned speedily with the good news, while the enemy proceeded more leisurely to Beroea. From this city the avarice of the Sassanid demanded double the amount he had exacted at Hierapolis; the Beroeans gave him half the sum, affirming that it was all they had; but the extortioner refused to be satisfied, and proceeded to demolish the city.

From Beroea he advanced to Antioch, and demanded the 1000 lbs. with which Megas had undertaken to redeem that city; and it is said that he would have been contented to receive a smaller sum. All the Antiochenes would probably have followed the example of a few prudent or timid persons, who left the city in good time, taking their belongings with them, had not the arrival of six thousand soldiers from Lebanon, led by Theoctistus and Molatzes, infused into their hearts a rash and unfortunate confidence. Julian, the private secretary of the Emperor, who had arrived at Antioch, bade the inhabitants resist the extortion; and Paul, the interpreter of Chosroes, who with friendly intentions counselled them to pay the money, was almost slain. Not content with defying the enemy by a refusal, the men of Antioch stood on their walls and loaded Chosroes with torrents of scurrilous abuse, which would have inflamed less intolerant monarchs than he.

The siege which ensued was short, but the defense at first was brave. Between the towers, which crowned the walls at intervals, platforms of wooden beams were suspended by ropes attached to the towers, that a greater number of defenders might man the walls at once. But during the fighting the ropes gave way and the suspended soldiers were precipitated, some without, some within the walls; the men in the towers were seized with panic and left their posts; and the defense of the city was abandoned except by a few young men, whom an honourable rivalry in the hippodrome had trained in vigour and bravery. The confusion was increased by a rush made to the gates, occasioned by a false report that Buzes was coming to the rescue; and a multitude of women and children were crushed or trampled to death. But the gate leading to the remote suburb of Daphne was purposely left unblocked by the Persians; it was Chosroes' prudent desire that the Roman soldiers and their officers should be allowed to leave the city unmolested; and some of the inhabitants escaped with the departing army. But the young men of the Circus factions made a valiant and hopeless stand against superior numbers; and the city was not entered without a considerable loss of life, which Chosroes pretended to deplore. It is said that two illustrious ladies cast themselves into the Orontes, to escape the cruelties of oriental licentiousness.

It was nearly three hundred years since Antioch had experienced the presence of a human foe, though it suffered frequently and grievously from the malignity of nature. The Sassanid Sapor had taken the city in the ill-starred reign of Valerian, but it was kindly dealt with then in comparison with its treatment by Chosroes. The cathedral was stripped of its wealth in gold and silver and its splendid marbles; all the other churches, many richly endowed, met the same fate, except that of St. Julian, which was exempted owing to the accident that it was honoured by the proximity of the ambassadors' residences. Orders were given that the whole town should be burnt, and the sentence of the relentless conqueror was executed as far as was practicable.

While the work of demolition was being carried out, Chosroes was treating with the ambassadors of Justinian, and expressed himself ready to make peace, on condition that he received 5000 lbs. of gold, paid immediately, and an annual sum of 500 lbs. for the defense of the Caspian gates. While the ambassadors returned with this answer to Byzantium, Chosroes advanced to Seleucia, the port of Antioch, and looked upon the waters of the Mediterranean; it is related that he took a solitary bath in the sea and sacrificed to the sun. In returning he visited Daphne, which was not included in the fate of Antioch, and thence proceeded to Apamea, whose gates he was invited to enter with a guard of 200 soldiers. All the gold and silver in the town was collected to satisfy his greed, even to the jewelled case in which a piece of the true cross was reverently preserved. He was clement enough to spare the precious relic itself, which for him was devoid of value. The city of Chalcis purchased its safety by a sum of 200 lbs. of gold; and having exhausted the provinces to the west of the Euphrates, Chosroes decided to continue his campaign of extortion in Mesopotamia, and crossed the river at Obbane by a bridge of boats. Edessa, the great stronghold of western Mesopotamia, was too secure itself to fear a siege, but paid 200 lbs. of gold for the immunity of the surrounding territory from devastation.¹ At Edessa, ambassadors arrived from Justinian, bearing his consent to the terms proposed by Chosroes; but, in spite of this, according to the Roman historian, the unscrupulous Persian did not shrink from making an attempt to take Daras on his homeward march.

The fortress of Daras, which Anastasius had erected to replace the long-lost Nisibis as an outpost in eastern Mesopotamia, was girt with two walls, between which stretched a space of fifty feet, devoted by the inhabitants to the pasture of domestic animals. The inner wall reached the marvellous elevation of sixty feet, while the towers superimposed at intervals were forty feet higher. A river, descending in a winding and rocky bed, and exempted by nature from all danger of diversion, flowed into the city; and not long before the arrival of Chosroes some physical disturbance of the ground had concealed its point of egress in a newly-formed whirlpool and buried its waters in the mazes of a subterranean passage. Thus, in case of a siege, while the beleaguered were well supplied, the beleaguers stood in sore need of water.

Chosroes attacked the city on the western side, and burned the gates of the outer wall, but no Persian was bold enough to enter the interspace. He then began operations on the eastern side, the only side of the rock-bound city where digging was possible, and ran a mine under the outer wall. The vigilance of the besiegers was baffled until the subterranean passage had reached the foundations of the outer wall; but then, according to the story—which we must relegate to that region of history to which the visions of Alaric at Athens belong—a human or superhuman form in the guise of a Persian soldier advanced near the wall under the pretext of collecting discharged missiles, and while to the besiegers he seemed to be mocking the men on the battlements, he was really informing the besieged of the danger that was creeping upon them unawares. The Romans then, by the counsel of Theodorus, a clever engineer, dug a deep transverse trench between the two walls so as to intersect the line of the enemy's excavation; the Persian burrowers suddenly ran or fell into the Roman pit; those in front were slain, and the rest fled back unpursued through the dark passage. Disgusted at this failure, Chosroes raised the siege on receiving from the men of Daras 1000 lbs. of silver.

When he returned to Ctesiphon the victorious monarch erected a new city near his capital, on the model of Antioch, with whose spoils it was beautified, and settled therein the captive inhabitants of the original city, the remainder of whose days was perhaps more happily spent than if the generosity of the Edessenes had achieved its intention. The name of the new town, according to Persian authorities, was Rumia (Rome); according to Procopius it was called by the joint names of Chosroes and Antioch (Chosro-Antiocheia).

II. *Chosroes invasion of Colchis, and Belisarius' campaign in Mesopotamia, 541 AD*

From this time forth the kingdom of Lazica or Colchis was destined to play an important and tedious part in the wars between the Romans and Persians. This country seems to have been in those days far poorer than it is at present; the Lazi depended for corn, salt, and other necessary articles of consumption on Roman merchants, and gave in exchange skins and slaves; while “at present Mingrelia, though wretchedly cultivated, produces maize, millet, and barley in abundance; the trees are everywhere festooned with vines, which grow naturally, and yield a very tolerable wine; while salt is one of the main products of the neighbouring Georgia”. The Lazi were dependent on the Roman Empire, but the dependence consisted not in paying tribute but in committing the choice of their kings to the wisdom of the Roman Emperor. The nobles were in the habit of choosing wives among the Romans: Gobazes, the sovereign who invited Chosroes to enter his country, was the son of a Roman lady, and had served as a silentiary in the Byzantine palace. The Lazic kingdom was a useful barrier against the trans-Caucasian Scythian races, and the inhabitants defended the mountain passes without causing any outlay of men or money to the Empire.

But when the Persians seized Iberia it was considered necessary to secure the country which barred them from the sea by the protection of Roman soldiers, and the unpopular general Peter, originally a Persian slave, was not one to make the natives rejoice at the presence of their defenders. Peter's successor was Johannes Tzibos, a man of obscure station, whose unprincipled skill in raising money made him a useful tool to the Emperor. He was certainly an able man, for it was by his advice that Justinian built the maritime town of Petra, at a point of the Colchian coast considerably to the south of the mouth of the Phasis. Here he established a monopoly and oppressed the natives. It was no longer possible for the Lazi to deal directly with the traders and buy their corn and salt at a reasonable price; John Tzibos, perched in the fortress of Petra, acted as a sort of retail dealer, to whom both buyers and sellers were obliged to resort, and pay the highest or receive the lowest prices. In justification of this monopoly it may be remarked that it was the only practicable way of imposing a tax on the Lazi; and the imposition of a tax might have been deemed a necessary and just compensation for the defense of the country, notwithstanding the facts that it was garrisoned solely in Roman interests, and that the garrison itself was unwelcome to the natives.

Exasperated by these grievances, Gobazes, the king of Lazica, sent an embassy to Chosroes, inviting him to recover a venerable kingdom, and pointing out that if he expelled the Romans from Lazica he would have access to the Euxine, whose waters could convey his forces against the palace at Byzantium, while he would have an opportunity of establishing a connection with those other enemies of Rome, the Huns of Europe. Chosroes consented to the proposals of the ambassadors; and keeping his real intention secret, pretended that pressing affairs required his presence in Iberia.

Under the guidance of the envoys, Chosroes and his army passed into the devious woods and difficult hill-passes of Colchis, cutting down as they went lofty and leafy trees, which hung in dense array on the steep acclivities, and using the trunks to smooth or render passable rugged or dangerous places. When they had penetrated to the middle of the country, they were met by Gobazes, who paid oriental homage to the great king. The chief object was to capture Petra, the stronghold of Roman power, and dislodge the retail dealer, as Chosroes contemptuously termed the monopolist, Johannes Tzibos. A detachment of the army under Aniabedes was sent on in advance to attack the fortress; and when this officer arrived before the walls he found indeed the gates shut, but the place seemed totally deserted, and not a trace of an inhabitant was visible. A messenger was sent to inform Chosroes of this surprise; the rest of the army hastened to the spot; a battering-ram was applied to the gate, while the monarch watched the proceedings from the top of an adjacent hill. Suddenly the gate flew open, and a multitude of Roman soldiers rushing forth overwhelmed those Persians who were applying the engine, and, having killed many others who were drawn up hard by, speedily retreated and closed the gate. The unfortunate Aniabedes (according to others, the officer who was charged with the operation of the battering-ram) was crucified for the crime of being vanquished by a retail dealer.

A regular siege now began. It was inevitable that Petra should be captured, says our historian Procopius, displaying a curious idea of causes and effects, and therefore Johannes, the governor, was slain by an accidental

missile, and the garrison, deprived of their commander, became careless and lax. On one side Petra is protected by the sea, landwards inaccessible cliffs defy the skill or bravery of an assailant, save only where one narrow entrance divides the line of steep cliffs and admits of access from the plain. This gap between the rocks was filled by a long wall, the ends of which were dominated by towers constructed in an unusual manner, for instead of being hollow all the way up, they were made of solid stone to a considerable height, so that they could not be shaken by the most powerful engine. But oriental inventiveness undermined these wonders of solidity. A mine was bored under the base of one of the towers, the lower stones were removed and replaced by wood, the demolishing force of fire loosened the upper layers of stones, and the tower fell, the Romans stationed in it escaping just in time. This success was decisive, as the besieged recognized; they readily capitulated, and the victors did not lay hands on any property in the fortress save the possessions of the defunct governor. Having placed a Persian garrison in Petra, Chosroes remained no longer in Lazica, for the news had reached him that Belisarius was about to invade Assyria, and he hurried back to defend his dominions.

Belisarius, accompanied by all the Goths whom he had led in triumph from Italy, except the Gothic king himself, had proceeded in the spring to take command of the eastern army in Mesopotamia. Having found out by spies that no invasion was meditated by Chosroes, whose presence was demanded in Iberia—the design on Lazica was kept effectually concealed—the Roman general determined to lead the whole army, along with the auxiliary Saracens of Arethas, into the confines of Persian territory. What strikes us about the campaign is that although Belisarius was chief in command he never seems to have ventured or cared to execute his strategic plans without consulting the advice of the other officers. It is difficult to say whether this was due to distrust of his own judgment and the reflection that many of the subordinate generals were more experienced in Mesopotamian geography and Persian warfare than himself,² or to a fear that some of the leaders in an army composed of soldiers of many races might prove refractory and impatient of too peremptory orders. At Daras a council of war was held; all the officers declared for an immediate invasion except Theoctistus and Ehecithancus, the captains of contingents from Lebanon, who apprehended that the Saracen Alamundar might take advantage of their absence to invade Syria and Phoenicia; but when Belisarius reminded them that it was now the summer solstice, and that it was the Saracen custom to spend sixty days from that date in religious devotion, they withdrew their objection on condition that they were to return to Syria two months thence.

The army marched towards Nisibis, and some murmurs arose when Belisarius, instead of advancing to the walls, halted at a distance of about five miles away. Having justified his action in a speech, he sent forward Peter, and John the duke of Mesopotamia, ordering them to approach within about a mile of the city. He reminded them that the Persian garrison, commanded by the able general Nabedes, would be more likely to attack them at noonday than at any other hour, as the Romans were wont to dine then, and the Persians in the evening. But under the heat of the meridian sun, the soldiers of Peter, yielding to a natural lassitude, laid aside their arms and carelessly employed themselves in eating the cucumbers which grew around. The watchful garrison sallied forth from the city, but as there was more than a mile's distance to traverse, the Romans had time to assume their arms, though not to form in an orderly array. The Persian onslaught was successful, the standard of John was taken, and fifty Romans were slain. But all was not yet lost. Belisarius was hastening to the scene before Peter's messenger had time to reach him; the long lances of the Goths retrieved the slender loss, and 150 Persians strewed the ground. But Nisibis was too strong to be attacked, and the army moved forward to the fortress of Sisaurani, where its assault was at first repulsed with loss. Belisarius decided to invest the place, but as the Saracens were useless for siege warfare, he sent Arethas and his troops, accompanied by 1200 guardsmen, to invade and harry Assyria, intending to cross the Tigris himself when he had taken the fort. The siege was of short duration, for the garrison was not supplied with provisions, and soon consented to surrender; all the Christians were dismissed free, the fire-worshippers were sent to Byzantium to await the Emperor's pleasure, and the fort was levelled to the ground.

Meanwhile the plundering expedition of Arethas was successful, but he played his allies false. Desiring to retain all the spoils for himself, he invented a story to rid himself of the Roman guardsmen who accompanied him, and he sent no information to Belisarius. This was not the only cause of anxiety that vexed that general's mind. The Roman, especially the Thracian, soldiers were not inured to and could not endure the intense heat of the dry Mesopotamian climate in midsummer, and disease broke out in the army, demoralized by physical exhaustion. All the soldiers were anxious to return to more clement districts, and as it was already August, the captains of the troops of Lebanon were uneasy, fancying that Alamundar might be advancing to plunder their homes. There was nothing to be done but yield to the prevailing wish, which was shared by all the generals. It cannot be said that the campaign of Belisarius accomplished much to set off against the acquisition of Petra by the Persians.

III. Chosroes Invasion of Commagene, 542 AD

The first act of Chosroes when he crossed the Euphrates in spring was to send 6000 soldiers to besiege the town of Sergiopolis because the bishop Candidus, who had undertaken to pay the ransom of the Surene captives two years before, was unable to collect the amount, and found Justinian deaf to his appeals for aid. But the town lay in a desert, and the besiegers were soon obliged to abandon the attempt in consequence of the drought. It was not the Persian's intention to waste his time in despoiling the province Euphratensis or Commagene; he purposed to invade Palestine, and plunder the treasures of Jerusalem. But this exploit was reserved for his grandson of the same name, and the invader returned to his kingdom having accomplished almost nothing. This speedy retreat was probably due to the outbreak of the plague in Persia, though the Roman historian attributes it to the address of Belisarius.

Belisarius travelled by post-horses (*veredi*) from Constantinople to the Euphratesian province, and taking up his quarters at Europus on the Euphrates, close to Carchemish, the ancient capital of the Hittites, he collected there the bulk of the troops who were dispersed throughout the province in its various cities. Chosroes was curious about the personality of Belisarius, of whom he had heard so much—the conqueror of the Vandals, the conqueror of the Goths, who had led two fallen monarchs in triumph to the feet of Justinian. Accordingly he sent Abandanes as an envoy to the Roman general, on the pretext of learning why Justinian had not sent ambassadors to negotiate a peace.

Belisarius did not mistake the true nature of Abandanes' mission, and determined to make an impression. Having sent a body of one thousand cavalry to the left bank of the river, to harass the enemy if they attempted to cross, he selected six thousand tall and comely men from his army and proceeded with them to a place at some distance from his camp, as if on a hunting expedition. He had constructed for himself a pavilion of thick canvas, which he set up, as in a desert spot, and when he knew that the ambassador was approaching, he arranged his soldiers with careful negligence. On either side of him stood Thracians and Illyrians, a little farther off the Goths, then Heruls, Vandals, and Moors; all were arrayed in close-fitting linen tunics and drawers, without a cloak or *epomis* to disguise the symmetry of their forms, and, like hunters, each carried a whip as well as some weapon, a sword, an axe, or a bow. They did not stand still, as men on duty, but moved carelessly about, glancing idly and indifferently at the Persian envoy, who soon arrived and marvelled.

To Abandanes' complaint that "the Caesar" had not sent an embassy to his master, Belisarius answered, as one amused, "It is not the habit of men to transact their affairs as Chosroes has transacted his. Others, when aggrieved, send an embassy first, and if they fail in obtaining satisfaction, resort to war; but he attacks and then talks of peace". The presence and bearing of the Roman general, and the appearance of his followers, hunting indifferently at a short distance from the Persian camp without any precautions, made a profound impression on Abandanes, and he persuaded his master to abandon the proposed expedition; Chosroes may have reflected that the triumph of a king over a general would be no humiliation for the general, while the triumph of a mere general over a king would be very humiliating for the king; such at least is the colouring that the general's historian put on the king's retreat. According to the same authority, Chosroes hesitated to risk the passage of the Euphrates while the enemy were so near, but Belisarius, with his smaller numbers, did not entertain the intention of obstructing him, and a truce was made, Johannes, son of Basil, being delivered, an unwilling hostage, to Chosroes. Having reached the other bank, the Persians turned aside to take and demolish Callinicum, the Coblenz of the Euphrates, which fell an easy prey to their assault, as the walls were in process of renovation at the time. This retreat of Chosroes, according to Procopius, procured for Belisarius greater glory than he had won by his victories in Africa and Italy.

But the account of Procopius, which coming from a less illustrious historian would be rejected on account of internal improbability, cannot be accepted with confidence. It displays such a marked tendency to glorify his favourite and friend Belisarius, that it can hardly be received as a candid unvarnished account of the actual transactions. Besides, there is a certain inconsistency. If Chosroes retired for fear of Belisarius, as Procopius would have us believe, why was it he who received the hostage, and how did he venture to take Callinicum? It might be said that these were devices, connived at by Belisarius, to keep up the dignity of a king; but as there actually existed a potent cause, unconnected with the Romans, to induce his return to Persia, namely the outbreak of the plague, we can hardly hesitate to assume that this was its true motive.

IV *The Roman Invasion of Persarmenia, 543 AD*

In spite of the plague Chosroes set forth in the following spring to invade Roman Armenia. He advanced into the district of Azerbiyan (Atropatene), and halted at the great shrine of Persian fire-worship, where the magi kept alive an eternal flame, which Procopius wishes to identify with the fire of Roman Vesta. Here the Persian monarch waited for some time, having received a message that two ambassadors were on their way to him, with instructions from "the Caesar". But the ambassadors did not arrive, because one of them fell ill by the road; and Chosroes did not pursue his northward journey, because a plague broke out in his army. The Persian general Nabedes sent a Christian bishop named Eudubius to Valerian, the Roman general in Armenia, with complaints that the expected embassy had not appeared. Eudubius was accompanied by his brother, who secretly communicated to Valerian the valuable information that Chosroes was just then encompassed by perplexities, the spread of the plague, and the revolt of one of his sons. It was a favorable opportunity for the Romans, and Justinian gave command that all the generals stationed in the East should combine to invade Persarmenia.

Martin was the master of soldiers in the East; he does not appear, however, to have possessed much actual authority over the other commanders. They at first encamped in the same district, but did not unite their forces, which in all amounted to about thirty thousand men. Martin himself, with Ildiger and Theoctistus, encamped at Kitharizon, about four days' march from Theodosiopolis; the troops of Peter and Adolios took up their quarters in the vicinity; while Valerian, the general of Armenia, stationed himself close to Theodosiopolis and was joined there by Narses and a regiment of Heruls and Armenians. The Emperor's nephew Justus and some other commanders remained during the campaign far to the south in the neighbourhood of Martyropolis, where they made incursions of no great importance.

At first the various generals made separate inroads, but they ultimately united their regiments in the spacious plain of Dubis, eight days from Theodosiopolis. This plain, well suited for equestrian exercise, and richly populated, was a famous rendezvous for traders of all nations, Indian, Iberian, Persian, and Roman. About fifteen miles from Dubis there was a steep mountain, on whose side was perched a village called Anglon, protected by a strong fortress. Here the Persian general Nabedes, with four thousand soldiers, had taken up an almost

impregnable position, blocking the precipitous streets of the village with stones and wagons. The ranks of the Roman army, as it marched to Anglon, fell into disorder; the want of union among the generals, who acknowledged no supreme leader, led to confusion in the line of march; mixed bodies of soldiers and sutlers turned aside to plunder; and the security which they displayed might have warranted a spectator in prophesying a speedy reverse. As they drew near to the fortress, an attempt was made to marshal the somewhat demoralized troops in the form of two wings and a centre. The centre was commanded by the Master of Soldiers, the right wing by Peter, the left by Valerian; and all advanced in irregular and wavering line, on account of the roughness of the ground. The best course for the Persians was obviously to act on the defensive. Narses and his Heruls, who were probably on the left wing with Valerian, were the first to attack the foes and to press them back into the fort. Drawn on by the retreating enemy through the narrow village streets, they were suddenly attacked on the flank and in the rear by an ambush of Persians who had concealed themselves in the houses. The valiant Narses was wounded in the temple; his brother succeeded in carrying him from the fray, but the wound proved mortal. This repulse of the foremost spread the alarm to the regiments that were coming up behind; Nabedes comprehended that the moment had arrived to take the offensive and let loose his soldiers on the panic-stricken ranks of the assailants; and all the Heruls, who fought according to their wont without helmets or breastplates, fell before the charge of the Persians. The Romans did not tarry; they cast their arms away and fled in wild confusion, and the mounted soldiers galloped so fast that few horses survived the flight; but the Persians, apprehensive of an ambush, did not pursue.

Never, says Procopius, did the Romans experience such a great disaster. This exaggeration makes us seriously inclined to suspect the accuracy of Procopius' account of this campaign. We can hardly avoid detecting in his narrative a desire to place the generals in as bad a light as possible, just as in his description of the hostilities of the preceding year he manifested a marked tendency to place the behaviour of his hero Belisarius in as fair a light as possible. In fact he seems to wish to draw a strong and striking contrast between a brilliant campaign in 542 and a miserable failure in 543. We have seen reason to doubt the exceptional brilliancy of Belisarius' achievement; and we may be disposed to question the statement that the defeat at Anglon was overwhelming, and the insinuation that the generals were incompetent.

V. Chosroes Invasion of Mesopotamia; Siege of Edessa— 544 AD

His failure at Edessa in 540 rankled in the mind of the Sassanid monarch; he determined to retrieve it in 544. The siege of this important fortress, the key to Roman Mesopotamia, is one of the most interesting in the siege warfare of the sixth century. The place was so strong that Chosroes would have been glad to avoid the risk of a second failure, and he proposed to the inhabitants that they should pay him an immense sum or allow him to take all the riches in the city. His proposal was refused, though if he had made a reasonable demand it would have been agreed to; and the Persian army encamped at somewhat less than a mile from the walls. Three experienced generals, Peter, Martin, and Peranius, were stationed in Edessa at this time.

On the eighth day from the beginning of the siege, Chosroes caused a large number of hewn trees to be strewn on the ground in the shape of an immense square, at about a stone's throw from the city; earth was heaped over the trees, so as to form a flat mound, and stones, not cut smooth and regular as for building, but rough hewn, were piled on the top, additional strength being secured by a layer of wooden beams placed between the stones and the earth. It required many days to raise this mound to a height sufficient to overtop the walls. At first the workmen were harassed by a sally of Huns, one of whom, named Argek, slew twenty-seven with his own hand. This could not be repeated, as henceforward a guard of Persians stood by to protect the builders. As the work went on, the mound seems to have been extended in breadth as well as in height, and to have approached closer to the walls, so that the workmen came within range of the archers who manned the battlements, but they protected themselves by thick and long strips of canvas, woven of goat hair, which were hung on poles, and proved an adequate shield. Foiled in their attempts to obstruct the progress of the threatening pile, which they saw rising daily higher and higher, the besieged sent an embassy to Chosroes. The spokesman of the ambassadors was the physician Stephen, a native of Edessa, who had enjoyed the friendship and favour of Kobad, whom he had healed of a disease, and had superintended the education of Chosroes himself. But even he, influential though he was, could not obtain more than the choice of three alternatives—the surrender of Peter and Peranius, who, originally Persian subjects, had presumed to make war against their master's son; the payment of 50,000 lbs. of gold (two million and a quarter pounds sterling); or the reception of Persian deputies, who should ransack the city for treasures and bring all to the Persian camp. All these proposals were too extravagant to be entertained for an instant; the ambassadors returned in dejection, and the erection of the mound advanced. A new embassy was sent, but was not even admitted to an audience; and when the plan of raising the city wall was tried, the besiegers found no difficulty in elevating their construction also.

At length the Romans resorted to the plan of undermining the mound, but when their excavation had reached the middle of the pile the noise of the subterranean digging was heard by the Persian builders, who immediately dug or hewed a hole in their own structure in order to discover the miners. These, knowing that they were detected, filled up the remotest part of the excavated passage and adopted a new device. Beneath the end of the mound nearest to the city they formed a small subterranean chamber with stones, boards, and earth. Into this room they threw piles of wood of the most inflammable kind, which had been smeared over with sulphur, bitumen, and oil of cedar. As soon as the mound was completed, they kindled the logs, and kept the fire replenished with fresh fuel. A considerable time was required for the fire to penetrate the entire extent of the mound, and smoke began to issue prematurely from that part where the foundations were first inflamed. The besieged adopted a cunning device to mislead the besiegers. They cast burning arrows and hurled vessels filled with burning embers on various parts of the mound; the Persian soldiers ran to and fro to extinguish them, believing that the smoke, which really came from beneath, was caused by the flaming missiles; and some thus

employed were pierced by arrows from the walls. Next morning Chosroes himself visited the mound and was the first to discover the true cause of the smoke, which now issued in denser volume. The whole army was summoned to the scene amid the jeers of the Romans, who surveyed from the walls the consternation of their foe. The torrents of water with which the stones were flooded increased the vapor instead of quenching it and caused the sulphurous flames to operate more violently. In the evening the volume of smoke was so immense that it could be seen as far away to the south as at the city of Carrhae; and the fire, which had been gradually working upwards as well as spreading beneath, at length gained the air and overtopped the surface. Then the Persians desisted from their futile endeavours.

Six days later an attack was made on the walls at early dawn, and but for a farmer who chanced to be awake and gave the alarm, the garrison might have been surprised. The assailants were repulsed; and another assault on the great gate at midday was likewise unsuccessful. One final effort was made by the baffled beleaguers. The ruins of the half-demolished mound were covered with a floor of bricks, and from this elevation a grand attack was made. At first the Persians seemed to be superior, but the enthusiasm which prevailed in the city was ultimately crowned with victory. The peasants, even the women and the children, ascended the walls and took a part in the combat; cauldrons of oil were kept continually boiling, that the burning liquid might be poured on the heads of the assailants; and the Persians, unable to endure the fury of their enemies, fell back and confessed to Chosroes that they were vanquished. The enraged despot drove them back to the encounter; they made yet one supreme effort, and were yet once more discomfited. Edessa was saved, and the siege unwillingly abandoned by the disappointed king, who, however, had the satisfaction of receiving 5000 lbs. of gold from the weary though victorious Edessenes.

In the following year, 545 AD, a peace or truce was concluded for five years, Justinian consenting to pay 2000 lbs. of gold and to permit a certain Greek physician, named Tribunus, to remain at the Persian court for a year. Tribunus of Palestine, the best medical doctor of the age, was, we are told, a man of distinguished virtue and piety, and highly valued by Chosroes, whose constitution was delicate and constantly required the services of a physician. At the end of the year the king permitted him to ask a boon, and instead of proposing remuneration for himself he begged for the freedom of some Roman prisoners. Chosroes not only liberated those whom he named, but others also to the number of three thousand, and Tribunus won the blessings of those whom his word had ransomed and great glory among men.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAZIC WAR (549-556 AD)

The Lazi soon found that the despotism of the Persian fire-worshipper was less tolerable than the oppression of the Christian monopolists, and repented that they had taught the armies of the great king to penetrate the defiles of Colchis. It was not long before the magi attempted to convert the new province to a faith which was odious to the Christianized natives, and it became known that Chosroes entertained the intention of removing the inhabitants and colonizing the land with Persians. Gobazes, who learned that Chosroes was plotting against his life, hastened to ask for the pardon and seek for the protection of Justinian, whose name seemed appropriate to his character when compared with a tyrant whose title, "the Just" (like that of Haroun *Al Raschid*), seemed the expression of a prudent irony. In 549 AD 7000 Romans were sent to Lazica, under the command of Dagisthaeus, to recover the fortress of Petra, which was the most important position in that country. Their forces were strengthened by the addition of a thousand Tzanic auxiliaries. Procopius has warned us against identifying the Tzani with the Colchians, apparently a common mistake in his time. The Tzani were an inland people living on the borders of Pontus and Armenia, and separated from the sea by precipitous mountains and vast solitudes, impassable torrent-beds and yawning chasms.

The acquisition of Colchis pleased Chosroes so highly, and the province appeared to him of such eminent importance, that he took every precaution to secure its retention. A highway was constructed from the Iberian confines through the country's hilly and woody passes, so that not only cavalry but elephants could traverse it. The fortress of Petra was supplied with sufficient stores of provisions, consisting of salted meat and corn, to last for five years; no wine was provided, but vinegar and a sort of grain from which a spirituous liquor could be distilled. The armour and weapons which were stored in the magazines would, as was afterwards found, have accounted five times the number of the besiegers; and a cunning device was adopted to supply the city with water, while the enemy should delude themselves with the idea that they had cut off the supply.

When Dagisthaeus laid siege to the town the garrison consisted of 1500 Persians. The besieging party numbered 7000 Roman soldiers and 1000 Tzani, who were assisted by the Colchians under Gobazes. Dagisthaeus committed the mistake of not occupying the *clisuræ* or passes from Iberia into Colchis, and thereby preventing the arrival of Persian reinforcements. The siege was protracted for a long time, and the small garrison was ultimately reduced to 150 men capable of fighting and 350 wounded or disabled. The Romans had dug a mine under the wall and loosened the foundations; a part of the wall actually collapsed, and John the Armenian with fifty men rushed through the breach, but when their leader received a wound they retired. It appears that nothing would have been easier than to enter the city and overpower the

miserably small number of defenders, but Dagisthaeus purposely delayed, waiting for letters from Justinian. The commander of the garrison protracted the delay by promising to surrender in a few days, for he knew that Mermeroes was approaching to relieve him. Mermeroes, allowed to enter Colchis unopposed with large forces of cavalry and infantry, soon arrived at the pass which commands the plain of Petra. Here his progress was withstood by a hundred Romans, but after a long and bloody battle the weary guards gave way, and the Persians reached the summit. When Dagisthaeus learned this he raised the siege, and marched northwards to the Phasis.

Mermeroes left 3000 men in Petra and provisioned it for a short time. Directing the garrison to repair the walls, he departed himself with the rest of the army on a plundering expedition in order to obtain more supplies. He finally left 5000 men under Phabrigus in Colchis, instructing them to keep Petra supplied with food, and withdrew to Persarmenia. Disaster soon befell these 5000; they were surprised in their camp by Dagisthaeus and Gobazes in the early morning, and but few escaped. All the provisions brought from Iberia for the use of Petra were destroyed, and the passes which admitted the stranger to Colchis were garrisoned.

In the spring of 550 Chorianes entered Colchis with a Persian army, and encamped by the river Hippis, where a battle was fought in which the Romans, under Dagisthaeus, were triumphantly victorious, and Chorianes lost his life. The engagement was notable for the curious behaviour of the Lazi and the bravery of a Persarmenian who fought under the Roman standard. The Lazi protested against associating themselves with their allies in the battle, and insisted on facing the foe foremost and alone, on the ground that they had a greater stake in the event than their protectors, and perhaps thinking that the stress of a graver danger would increase their defective courage. They were allowed to have their way in so far that the Lazic cavalry led the van, but at the very sight of the enemy they turned and fled for refuge to those with whom they had disdained to march in company. The Persarmenian Artabanus, a deserter who had proved his fidelity to the Romans by slaying twenty Persians, exhibited his courage in a conspicuous place between the adverse armies by dismounting and despatching a mighty Persian. These single combats were perhaps a feature in many of the battles of the sixth century; they are certainly a feature in the pages of the historians.

Meanwhile Dagisthaeus was accused of misconducting the siege of Petra, through disloyalty or culpable negligence. Justinian ordered that he should be arrested, and appointed Bessas, who had recently returned from Italy, in his stead. Men wondered at this appointment, and thought that the Emperor was foolish to entrust the command to a general who was far advanced in years, and whose career in the West had been inglorious; but the choice, as we shall see, was justified by the result. The subordinate commanders were Wilgang, a Herul, Benilus the brother of Buzes, Babas a Thracian, and Odonachus (all of whom preceded Bessas to Lazica); and John the Armenian, who had shown his valour at the battle of Hippis.

The first labour that devolved on Bessas was to suppress the revolt of the Abasgi. The territory of this nation extended along the lunated eastern coast of the Euxine, and was separated from Colchis by the country of the Apsilians, who inhabited that ambiguous district between the western spurs of Caucasus and the sea, a district which belongs to Asia, and might be claimed by Europe. The Apsilians had long been Christians, and submitted to the lordship of their Lazic neighbours, who had at one time also held sway over the Abasgi. Like the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, Abasgia was governed by two princes, of whom one ruled in the west and the other in the east. These potentates increased their revenue by the sale of beautiful boys, whom they tore in early childhood from the arms of their reluctant parents and made eunuchs; for in the Roman Empire these comely and useful slaves were in constant demand, and secured a high price from the opulent and luxurious nobles. It was the glory of Justinian to compass the abolition of this unnatural practice; the subjects supported the remonstrances which the Emperor's envoy, himself an Abasgian eunuch, made to their kings; the monarchy, or tyranny, was abolished, and a people which had worshipped trees embraced Christianity, to enjoy, as they thought, a long period of freedom under the protection of the Roman Augustus. But the mildest protectorate tends insensibly to become domination. Roman soldiers entered the country, and taxes were imposed on the new friends of the Emperor. The Abasgi preferred being tyrannized over by men of their own blood to being the slaves of a foreign master, and accordingly they elected two new kings, Opsites in the east and Sceparnas in the west. But it would have been rash to brave the jealous anger of Justinian without the support of some stronger power, and when Xabedes, after the great defeat of the Persians at Hippis, visited Lazica, he received sixty noble hostages from the Abasgi, who craved the protection of Chosroes. They had not taken warning from the repentance of the Lazi, that it was a hazardous measure to invoke the Persian. The king, Sceparnas, was soon afterwards summoned to the Sassanid court, and his colleague Opsites prepared to resist the Roman forces which Bessas despatched against him under the command of Wilgang and John the Armenian.

In the southern borders of Abasgia, close to the Apsilian frontier, an extreme mountain of the Caucasian chain descends in the form of a staircase to the waters of the Euxine. Here, on one of the lower spurs, the Abasgi had built a strong and roomy fastness in which they hoped to defy the pursuit of an invader. A rough and difficult glen separated it from the sea, while the ingress was so narrow that two persons could not enter abreast, and so low that it was necessary to crawl. The Romans, who had sailed from the Phasis, or perhaps from Trapezus, landed on the Apsilian borders, and proceeded by land to Trachea, as the glen was appropriately called, where they found the whole Abasgic nation arrayed to defend a pass which it would have been easy to hold against far larger numbers. Wilgang remained with half the army at the foot of the glen, while John and the other half embarked in the boats which had accompanied the coast march of the soldiers. They landed at no great distance, and by a circuitous route were able to approach the unsuspecting foe in the rear. The Abasgi fled in consternation towards their fortress; fugitives and pursuers, mingled together, strove to penetrate the narrow aperture, and those inside could not prevent enemies from entering with friends. But the Romans when they were within the walls found a new labour awaiting them. The Abasgi fortified themselves in their houses, and vexed their adversaries by showering missiles from above. At length the Romans conceived the idea of employing the aid of fire, and the dwellings were soon reduced to ashes. Some of the people were burnt, others, including the wives of the kings, were taken alive, while Opsites escaped to the Huns. But it must not be thought that the nation was exterminated, as the words of Procopius might lead us to infer. We shall meet the Abasgi again, one hundred and fifty years later, in the days of another Justinian.

Shortly before or shortly after this episode in Abasgia, another episode was enacted in the neighbouring country of Apsilia. Terdetes, a Lazic noble, quarrelled with King Gobazes, and entered into correspondence with the Persians to betray a strong fort called Tzibilon, in Apsilia. When the garrison saw foreign troops approaching under a Lazic convoy they admitted them unhesitatingly, and for a moment it seemed that Apsilia was a Persian dependency. But the Persian leader, seized with a passion for the beautiful wife of the governor, compelled her by force to his embraces. The enraged husband slew the violator and all his soldiers; the Apsilians were fain to reject the supremacy of the Colchians, who had not protected them against the risk of slavery; but the bland words of John the Armenian restored them to their old allegiance.

The truce of five years had now elapsed (April 550), and while new negotiations began between the courts of Byzantium and Ctesiphon, the Romans in Lazica, under the command of Bessas, made another attempt to recover Petra. A new garrison, three thousand strong, had been placed in the fort; the breaches which had been made by Dagisthaeus in the foundations of the wall were filled up with bags of sand, over which thick planed beams were placed to form the basis of a new wall. Bessas bored a mine, as Dagisthaeus had done, under the wall, which was shaken by the removal of the earth beneath; but the layers of the stones were not disarranged, the whole mass supported by the smooth beams sank regularly as if it were purposely lowered by a machine, and the only effect was that the height was reduced. The sinking of the wall overwhelmed the mine; and as the approach to this, the only expugnable, part of the city was an inclined plane, it was impossible to apply the battering-rams, whose heavy frames could only be impelled along a horizontal surface.

It happened that at this time three nobles of the Sabiric Huns visited the Roman camp, in order to receive a sum of money from an envoy of Justinian, who feared to continue his journey to their homes in the Caucasus through a country beset with foes. The cunning of the barbarians profited the Romans in their perplexity and surpassed the skill of civilized engineers. "They constructed such a machine", says the marvelling Procopius, "as within the memory of man never entered into the mind of a Roman or Persian, though in both realms there has never been, nor is now, lacking a plentiful number of engineers, and though in all ages a machine of the kind has been wanted by both peoples for battering fortifications in steep places". The simplicity of the Hunnic invention might have put the engineers to shame. Instead of the perpendicular and transverse beams, which made the regular machine so heavy, a light frame was constructed of woven osier twigs, and covered with skins, so that in appearance it did not differ from the ordinary ram, while its lightness was such that forty men, placed inside, could advance supporting it on their shoulders without inconvenience. The battering beam itself, hung in loose chains and pointed with iron, was of normal construction; in fact the old machines supplied the new frames with their beams.

At each side of these engines, when they were applied to the walls, stood men protected with helmets and cuirasses, and provided with long poles, whose iron hooks removed the stones which the rams had loosened. The besieged hurled from a wooden tower, which they placed on the wall, vessels of sulphur, pitch, and naphtha (oil of Medea) upon the roofs of the machines, and it required all the agility of the men with the poles to remove the flaming missiles before the frames caught fire.

When an appreciable breach had been made in the wall, Bessas, with all his forces, advanced to scale it. The general himself, in spite of his seventy years, was the first to place his foot on the ladder, and in the combat that ensued, of the 2300 Persians who resisted and the 6000 Romans who attacked, there were many slain and very few unwounded. Suddenly a shout was raised, and both sides rushed to the spot, where Bessas lay prostrate on the ground. The Persians attempted to pierce him with their darts, but the guardsmen formed a dense array around their general in the form of a *testudo*, and protected him from hurt. The Romans had paused for a moment and held their breath when they witnessed the fall of Bessas, but soon comprehending that he was not injured they renewed the fray and redoubled their efforts. The master of soldiers, who found himself unable to raise his obese and aged body, weighed down by armour, was dragged slowly to a safe place, and the incident so little affected him that, once more erect, he again essayed to scale the wall. At length the Persians declared themselves ready to surrender, and begged for a short space of time to pack up their belongings; but Bessas, suspecting their intentions, refused to check the assault, and indicated another place under the walls where he would entertain the proposals of those who desired to capitulate. His caution was justified by the fact that the Persians continued to fight.

The situation was changed when another portion of the wall, which had been previously undermined by the besiegers, collapsed. Both the Persians and Romans were obliged to divide their forces, and the superiority of the latter in point of numbers began to tell. At this point John the Armenian, with a few of his countrymen, succeeded in climbing up a precipitous ascent of rock, where the beleaguers could not have hoped and the beleaguered could not have feared that it would prove possible to gain the battlements. The Persian guards were killed, and the venturesome Armenians entered the fort. Meanwhile the battering-rams had continued to play on the walls, and the defenders in their wooden tower had continued to shower inflammable substances from above; but a violent south wind suddenly began to blow, and the tower caught fire from the dangerous materials which were handled by its inmates. These, along with the structure, were consumed in the flames, and their burning corpses fell among their comrades or their adversaries. The Persians were fast giving way; at length the Romans penetrated the breaches, and Petra was taken. Five hundred of the garrison fled to the citadel, seven hundred and thirty were captured alive. Among the Romans who fell in the final assault was John the Armenian, who, as it seems, when he had scaled the wall, attacked the enemy in the rear.

Attempts were made to induce the soldiers who had shut themselves up in the citadel to surrender, but they proved deaf to arguments and menaces. In the pages of Procopius a military orator persuades the reader that it was foolish and culpable in these inflexible men to court an unnecessary death; but the 500 fire-worshippers, if they heard these Christian remonstrances, were not convinced of their cogency. The citadel was fired by the order of Bessas, who expected that at the eleventh hour, with a painful death imminent, the headstrong Persians would yield. He was disappointed; they did not hesitate, before the wondering gaze of the Roman

victors, to perish in the flames. "Then", says the historian, "it appeared how clear Lazica was to Chosroes, in that he had sent the most excellent of all his soldiers to garrison Petra".

One of the first acts of the Romans had been to destroy the aqueduct, but in the course of the siege a Persian prisoner informed them that there was a second pipe invisible to the eye, because it was concealed by stones and earth. This duct was also destroyed, and yet to their astonishment the Romans found when they entered the fortress that it was supplied with water. Chosroes had dug a deep ditch, in which he placed two pipes, one above the other, separated by a layer of clay and stones, and above them a third pipe, which he made no attempt to conceal. The two superior ducts were cut off by the besiegers, to whom the thought never occurred that there might be yet a third channel.

The news of the capture of Petra, which took place in the early spring of 551 AD, reached Mermeroes as he was approaching with a Persian army to relieve it. As there was no other important place south of the Phasis, he retraced his steps in order to cross the river by a ford, and attack Archaeopolis and other fortresses on the right bank, which were occupied by the Romans or the Lazi. The total number of Roman soldiers in Lazica amounted to 12,000. Of these, 3000 were stationed at Archaeopolis, under the command of Babas and Oclonachus; the remaining 9000 were entrenched in a camp at the mouth of the Phasis, with the generals Benilus and Wilgang, and an auxiliary corps of 800 Tzani. The commander-in-chief, Bessas, thinking that he had done enough by capturing Petra, occupied himself in Armenia and Pontus with collecting tribute, instead of following up his success and securing the Iberian frontier.

Of Mermeroes' troops the greater part were cavalry. Eight elephants accompanied the march, and of 12,000 Caucasian Huns who proffered their services, the general, fearing that such a large number might prove unmanageable, accepted the aid of 4000. Having halted on the borders of Iberia to re-erect the fort of Scanda, which the Lazi had demolished, Mermeroes marched towards Archaeopolis; but when he learned that a large division of the enemy was encamped at the mouth of the Phasis, he decided to attack it first, and afterwards storm the city. His way led him past the city walls, and he jeeringly informed the inhabitants that when he had paid a visit to their friends in the camp he would return to them. "If you meet those Romans", they replied, "you will never return to us". But those Romans did not await his approach. Having packed up all the provisions they could take with them, and destroyed the rest, they rowed across to the left bank of the river; the Persians, unable to follow, destroyed their camp, and returned to besiege Archaeopolis.

The chief city of Lazica is situated on a steep hill; mountains impend above it, and the river that descends from their heights flows near its gates. Protected by a wall on either side of a narrow path which runs down to the river-bank, the inhabitants could draw water securely in time of siege. The approaches to the gates in the higher parts of the town were precipitous and obstructed with wood and bramble; but the wall at the base of the hill was easily accessible, though the ground sloped. Mermeroes' plan of action was to attack both the higher and lower places at the same time, and divide the attention of the defenders. There was a corps of auxiliary soldiers in his army called Dilimnites, men who dwelt in the interior parts of Persia, but had never been forced to be the thralls of a Persian monarch. The steep and pathless mountains, which were their homes since remote antiquity, secured them their liberty, but they deigned to serve for pay in the army of the great king. They fought on foot, armed each with a sword, a shield, and three javelins; and they could run as nimbly on the rugged acclivities of a mountain as on a level plain. These mercenaries were told off to harass the besieged on the steep sides of the hill; while the Sabiric Huns were employed to construct light battering-rams, such as their tribesmen had provided for the Romans at Petra. With these engines and the eight elephants, the Persians and Huns exerted all their strength to make an impression on the lower gate, and a thick cloud of arrows almost expelled the Roman defenders from the battlements; while in another place the javelins of the Dilimnites, who fought from behind the bushes, increased the discomfiture of the garrison.

But by a happy inspiration the commanders apprehended in what their sole chance of safety lay, and decided to make a sudden sally on the enemy with all their forces. Just as they were on the point of executing this design, to which they had stimulated the soldiers by an oration, the cry was raised that the corn magazine was on fire. Some of the garrison hastened to the spot and succeeded with difficulty in extinguishing the flames, while the rest, undisturbed by the alarm, poured forth through the opened gate upon their unprepared and astonished antagonists. The Persians had been building on the hope that when a Lazi traitor, who had communicated with Mermeroes, should have set fire to the stores, the Romans would either desert the defense in order to save their corn or submit to the loss of their corn in order to continue the defence. Never imagining that such a small number would have the heart to leave the protection of their walls in the face of an army so superior, the besiegers were scattered in small groups here and there in front of the city; some had only bows, which were useless in hand-to-hand fight, others totally unarmed were carrying battering engines; so that the sudden onslaught of the Romans met with almost no resistance. The confusion was increased when one of the elephants, perhaps wounded, broke into the Persian ranks. The front rows retreated, and the soldiers in the rear, ignorant of the cause, caught the alarm; while the Dilimnites, beholding from above the consternation that prevailed below, fled in panic. In all, four thousand of the enemy fell, including three captains, and four Persian standards were sent to the Emperor. It was said that not less than twenty thousand horses perished in the flight, not from wounds, but from the effects of mere fatigue and want of adequate food.

Having thus failed at Archaeopolis, Mermeroes and his army proceeded to Muchiresis, the most fertile district of Colchis, watered by the river Rheon. Winter was now approaching, and the Persians took up their quarters in the ruins of an old fort called Cutatisium (originally Cotiaem), which they roughly restored; here they commanded the roads to Suania and Scymnia, and could prevent the Lazi from supplying with provisions the neighbouring fort of Uchimerium. But this stronghold was soon delivered into the hands of Mermeroes by the treachery and guile of a Colchian named Theophobius, and having left both in this place and in Cutatisium sufficient garrisons, the general of Chosroes established himself in another fort on the Lazi frontier called Serapanin. During the winter the Persians dominated the land; the Romans skulked in Archaeopolis and near the mouths of the Phasis, while Gobazes and many of the Lazi endured the untold hardships of a Colchian winter's

severity in the recesses of inaccessible mountains, where they were scantily supplied with food. Mermeroes tried to seduce the Lazic king to desert the Romans, but Gobazes had not forgotten that Chosroes had plotted against his life.

Meanwhile, ambassadors had gone to and fro between the Roman and Persian courts; the negotiations had been protracted for eighteen months, and Chosroes' delegate, the arrogant Isdigunas, had enjoyed the generosity of Justinian's court and excited the disgust of his courtiers. At length a new truce of five years was concluded, the terms being that the Romans were to pay two thousand six hundred pounds of gold; but this peace was not to necessitate the cessation of hostilities in Colchis. A contemporary states that there was considerable popular indignation that Chosroes should have exacted from the Empire no less than four thousand six hundred pounds of gold in the space of eleven years; and the Byzantines murmured at the unprecedented respect shown to Isdigunas and his retinue, who were permitted to move about in the city, without a Roman escort, as if it belonged to them.

Nothing of striking importance took place in the campaign of 552. The Persians were successful. Mermeroes expelled Martin and his troops from the strong fort of Telephis by a ruse; the dissemination of a false rumour of his own death, which even the Persian army believed, caused the Romans to relax their vigilance. Both Martin, and Justin (the son of Germanus) who was encamped at Ollaria, about a mile from Telephis, were forced to flee in the confusion of a nocturnal surprise and take up their quarters in the "Island", where the prudence of Mermeroes permitted them to remain in peace. The Island was a tract of ground formed by two rivers and an artificial canal. The Phasis and the less famous Doconus, flowing from widely different quarters of the mountains, gradually approximate their courses, and at length unite their waters about twenty miles from the Euxine. At some distance to the east of their point of union, the Romans had dug a channel connecting them, and thus formed an island, which would have been a triangle but for the irregular curves and twists of the streams.

Mermeroes retired to Iberia to winter, but died in the autumn of disease. His death was a serious loss to Chosroes, for though old and lame, and unable even to ride, he was not only a prudent and brave general, but as unwearied in activity as a youth. Nachoragan was sent to succeed him.

Meanwhile Gobazes, the Lazic king, who had been involved in constant quarrels and recriminations with the Roman commanders, sent a complaint of their conduct to Justinian, giving an account of their recent defeat, and attributing it to their negligence; Bessas, Martin, and Rusticus were specially named. The Emperor deposed Bessas from his command, and banished him temporarily to Abasgia, but he consigned the chief command to Martin, and did not recall Rusticus. This Rusticus was not a general, but an imperial finance official, who had been sent to bestow rewards on soldiers who distinguished themselves in battle. The complaints which the Lazic king had lodged made him more obnoxious to the persons whom he had ventured to accuse; and Martin and Rusticus resolved to remove an inconvenient and jealous critic. To secure themselves from blame, they despatched John, Rusticus' brother, to Byzantium, with the false message that Gobazes was "Medising",—was this ancient term really used in the sixth century outside the pages of the historians? Justinian was surprised and alarmed, but reserved his judgment, and commanded that Gobazes should come to Constantinople.

"What", asked John, "is to be done if he refuses?"

"Compel him to come", replied the Emperor; "he is our subject".

"But if he resist our compulsion", urged the conspirator.

"Then treat him as a tyrant".

"And will he who slays him have nought to fear?"

"Nought, if he act disobediently and be slain as an enemy".

Justinian signed a letter to the same effect, armed with which John returned to Lazica, and the conspirators carried out their intention. Gobazes was invited to assist in an attack on the Persian fortress of Onoguris; and with a few attendants he met the Roman army at the river Chobus. An altercation arose between the king and Rusticus, and on the pretext that the gainsayer of a Roman general must necessarily be a friend of the Persians, John drew his dagger and stabbed Gobazes in the breast. The wound was not mortal, but it was dealt so unexpectedly that it unhorsed the king, who was sitting with his legs round the neck of his steed, and when he attempted to rise from the ground, a blow from the squire of Rusticus killed him outright.

The unfortunate Lazi, not strong enough to revenge the death of their monarch, silently buried him according to their customs, and turned away in mute reproach from their Roman protectors. They no longer took part in the military operations, but hid themselves away as men who had lost their hereditary glory. The indignation which Justin and Buzes felt at the outrage was prudently concealed, as they thought it had been commanded by the Emperor's wisdom. Some months later, when winter had commenced, the Lazi assembled a secret council in some remote and wild Caucasian ravine, and considered the question whether they, should abandon their Roman allies and seek once more the protection and oppression of Chosroes. They fortunately decided not to take the fatal step, and it is worthy of note that the chief motive which induced them to adhere to the Romans was their attachment to the Christian religion. They determined to appeal for justice and satisfaction to the fountain of justice in the Roman Empire, the Emperor himself; and at the same time supplicate him to nominate Tzathes, the younger brother of Gobazes, as the new king of the Lazi. Justinian promptly complied with their demands. Athanasius, one of the most illustrious senators, was immediately sent to Lazica to investigate the circumstances of Gobazes' assassination; and when he arrived he incarcerated both Rusticus and John in the city of Apsarus, pending a trial. In the beginning of spring (553) Tzathes arrived with all the state of a Lazic monarch; and when the Colchians saw the Roman army saluting him as he rode in the splendour of his royal apparel, a

tunic embroidered with gold reaching to the feet, a plain white mantle with a gold stripe, purple shoes, a turban adorned with gold and gems, and a golden crown set with precious stones, they forgot their sorrow and escorted him in a gay and brilliant procession. It was not till the ensuing winter that the authors of the death of the late king were brought to justice and the natives witnessed the solemn procedure of a Roman trial. John and Rusticus were executed, but the implication of Martin in the affair was not quite so clear, and his case was referred to the Emperor, who in 555 deposed him from the command in favour of his own nephew Justin. The secret of Martin's acquittal probably was that he was highly popular with the army and a very skilful general.

Meanwhile the hostilities between the Bemoans and Persians had continued without a pause. The few months that intervened between the death of Gobazes and the inactivity of winter (552 AD) were occupied with the siege of Onoguris, or Stephanopolis—apparently its new name, from a church erected there in honour of the first martyr—which had been fortified by Mermeroes about the time of his unsuccessful siege of the neighbouring Archaeopolis. The Romans were preparing their *spalions* to shake the foundations of the towers, when a Persian was captured, who disclosed, under the compulsion of the lash, the design of his compatriots. Nachoragan, he said, had already arrived in Iberia, and the troops stationed in Muchiresis and Cotaisis were on their way to relieve Onoguris. Buzes and Wilgang the Herul were in favor of proceeding with all the forces (about 50,000) against the advancing Persians before they attempted to besiege the fort: "First frighten away the bees", said Wilgang, "and then gather the honey". But the opposite opinion of Rusticus carried the day; the siege operations began, and a small body of six hundred horse was sent to obstruct the march of the party of relief.

The commanders of the corps of cavalry were Dabragezas, a Wend, and Wiscard or Wisgard, whose name shows that he was a Teuton. It is one of the curious things of history to meet in the sixth century by the banks of the Phasis a general bearing the celebrated name which was borne in the eleventh century by the great Norman, Robert of Apulia; and we are reminded that the mission of the great duke and the task of the obscure captain were essentially of the same kind, to repel the enemies of Christianity and of occidental development from the limits of European Christendom. Robert's chief work was to organize a power, which waged war against the Mohammedan in the Mediterranean; Wisgard helped in his degree to beat back the Fire-worshipper from the coasts of the Euxine.

The horsemen with Wisgard and Dabragezas fell suddenly on the three thousand Persians who had ridden to relieve the fortress and were already near at hand. At first the larger number were confused by the surprise and fled; the announcement of their flight reached the besiegers, who were encouraged to assail the walls with greater boldness and less order; but when the Persians comprehended that a very small division of the whole army of their opponents had advanced against them, they turned suddenly and reversed the position. The Romans fled and the Persians pursued; pursuers and fugitives rushed together into the Roman entrenchments; the besiegers, overwhelmed with astonishment and terror, thought no more of the fortress, and, hardly waiting to discover what had happened, abandoned their camp in haste and disorder. Thus fifty thousand were routed by three thousand.

In the following spring Nachoragan (553) advanced with sixty thousand men to the Island, where Martin and Justin were stationed with their forces. The Romans had placed two thousand federate Sabiric Huns in the neighbourhood of Archaeopolis to harass the enemy; and by a fortunate stratagem they succeeded in slaughtering an immense number of Dilimnites who were sent to surprise them. When he arrived at the Island, the Persian commander, after a short and futile conference with Martin, determined not to remain there, but to march westward and besiege the city of Phasis, the great seaport of Colchis, situated at the mouth of the like-named river. Before the Romans were aware, he had crossed the stream by a bridge of boats, for he purposed to march along the left bank and attack Phasis on the southern side. The Bemoans, having been thwarted in an attempt to send some vessels down the river to the city, left in the Island a small garrison under the charge of Buzes and marched to the defence of Phasis by a different route from that which the enemy had taken.

The walls of Phasis, which were wooden and in some places dilapidated through age, were protected by a palisade and a foss, which was filled with water to the brim. The garrison was thus arranged: at the extreme west, close to the river, Justin, the son of Germanus, was in command; the battlements at the south-western point were occupied by the regiments of Martin; Angilas with Moorish peltasts and lancers, Theodore with his Tzanic infantry, Philomathius with his Isaurian slingers and javelin-men were placed due south; Lombard and Herul troops under Gibros were posted south-east; and in the extreme east, where the river washes the walls, were stationed the forces of the oriental prefecture under Valerian. At both extremities, in close proximity to the stations of Justin and Valerian, were moored large ships, from whose masts huge boats were securely swung; these boats supported large towers manned with soldiers and some bold sailors, who were equipped with bows, with divers sorts of missiles and engines to hurl them. Dabragezas the Wend, and Elmingir, a Hun, sailed to and fro in small double-sterned boats to prevent the ships from receiving any hurt.

The operations began with volleys of arrows, discharged by the Persian archers. Martin had given strict orders that the defenders should not leave their posts; but Angilas and Philomathius, in spite of the protests of Theodore, were provoked into making a sally on the enemy. The Dilimnites, who happened to be posted opposite to the southern point of the wall, quietly awaited the approach of the Isaurians and Moors, whom Theodore with his Tzani reluctantly accompanied; the small number of the rash defenders was easily surrounded; and it only remained for them to retrieve their temerity and win an ambiguous glory by cutting their way, valiantly and hardly, back to the gates.

Meanwhile men had been busily engaged in filling up the foss, so that the battering-ram and the assailants might advance against the walls over level ground. The process was a slow one, although numberless hands were busy, for they had not sufficient earth and stones to fill the ditch completely, and the Romans had previously destroyed all the wood for miles around, so that they could only obtain that material by cutting it in a distant glen. It was not till the fall of evening that the foss had disappeared.

On the ensuing day Martin adopted a felicitous stratagem, by which he succeeded both in confirming the spirits of his soldiers and in spreading apprehensions among the enemy. He convoked the army for the purpose of consulting on measures for the defense of the city. When all were assembled, an unknown person, covered with dust and having the marks of travel about him, burst into the midst, and stating that he had come from Constantinople with an imperial message presented a letter to the general. Martin received it eagerly, but instead of reserving it for private perusal, and without even glancing over it, he read aloud so that all could hear. Perhaps, says the historian, the contents of the document were really different, but at all events the words recited were as follows:

“We send you yet another army, not smaller than that which you have. It is true that if the enemy are more numerous, they do not surpass you in numbers so much as you surpass them in valour; so that the disproportion does not render you unequal. Nevertheless, that they may not be able to boast of superiority even in this one respect, we send you another army, for the sake of honour and display, not because it is necessary. Be of good courage and continue in your work with zeal; for we will not neglect any requisite measures”.

Being asked where the army was, the messenger said that he had left it at the river Neocnus, about ten miles away. Martin feigned indignation, and said that he would never receive the new forces, nor permit that soldiers who had come at the last moment should share the glory and spoil with those who had borne the burden and heat. These sentiments were received with acclamation, and the garrison was animated to exertions more strenuous than ever. The report of the presence of Roman troops at Neocnus reached the Persian camp, and the besiegers trembled at the thought of facing a fresh and unwearied army. A large reconnoitring detachment was sent in that direction on the futile errand of watching for hostile forces that were never destined to come, because they did not exist.

Meanwhile Nachoragan, desiring to anticipate the arrival of the fictitious reinforcements, organized without delay a general attack on the walls, boasting that he would burn the city with all its inmates. The servants and workmen who attended the camp were despatched to the wood to cut timber, and were ordered, when they saw a smoke ascending to heaven in the distance, to learn that Phasis was in flames, and to return without delay that they might assist in hastening the progress of the conflagration. While the Persians were making these preparations, Justin, ignorant of the intended attack, was prompted by a pious inspiration—which, as it happened, proved fortunate in the event—to visit a holy church in the neighbourhood. Thither he rode to worship with 5000 soldiers, and his departure was unperceived by the besiegers, even as their operations were unperceived by him.

The attack began, and the air was soon obscured with arrows and darts, that rained like hail or snow. The wooden walls were hewn with axes wielded by the men in the *spalions*; but the defenders cast from the battlements huge blocks of stone, which broke the sutures of those slender engines, while stones, less immense, hurled from slings, shattered the helmets of the soldiers; and the missiles discharged by the men, who were suspended aloft in the towers attached to the ship-masts, descended with tremendous effect. When the excitement of battle had reached its intensest point, the troops of Justin returned from their pious errand. Perceiving the situation, and convinced that his excursion to the church had been the direct inspiration of God, the general formed his cavalry in order, and raised aloft the standards. The Persians were absorbed in fighting in close proximity to the wall, and Justin's forces, attacking them on the west side, close to the sea, broke their line, and wrought great havoc among them. Filled with alarm, and supposing that their new assailants were the expected army from Neocnus, the enemy began to fall back from their position, and the Dilimnites, who were attacking (as on the previous day) the southern portion of the wall, seeing the confusion from afar off, rushed to the spot, leaving a few of their number behind. Angilas and Theodorus, who on the preceding day had made the unsuccessful excursion, seized the occasion to rush out and put to flight the small remnant of the Dilimnites; but on observing this their companions, who had run westward to assist the hard-pressed Persians, returned to support their fugitive countrymen. The spectacle of the Dilimnites rushing to and fro in this uncertain and disorderly manner communicated alarm to the Persians who were stationed near (in the south-west). Deeming that the behaviour of the bellicose Dilimnites presupposed a real and present danger, they bethought themselves of flight, and their panic reacted on the Dilimnites, unaware that their own conduct was its cause. When all these troops were seen fleeing over the plain, the Romans opened the gates, rushed in pursuit, and harassed the rear of the fugitives. Some of the enemy turned and formed a line, and an irregular battle was fought, in which the left wing of the Persians was completely routed, while the right wing forced the Romans at first to retreat; but the accident of an infuriated elephant turning against the ranks of its masters and maddening their horses, secured for the defenders of Phasis a full victory, and the Persian army was scattered. Nachoragan, stupefied by the unexpected course of events, gave the unnecessary command that all should flee. The loss incurred by his army was estimated at 10,000 men.

Returning from the pursuit, the victors burned the engines of the Persians and all the relics of their leaguer. The unfortunate woodcutters (about two thousand in number), ignorant of all that had passed, when they saw the smoke of the conflagration, returned in haste, as they thought, to share the triumph, and, as they found, to be butchered by the Romans. The corpses of the fallen soldiers yielded a considerable spoil, not only of arms, but of golden necklets and earrings.

The discomfited Nachoragan retreated to Muchiresis, where he left the greater part of his army, and wintered himself in Iberia. All the western districts of Colchis now remained, undisputed, in the hands of the Romans.

The chief event of the following year (554 AD) was the expedition against the Misimiani, a people who lived to the north-east of the Apsilians. They had committed an outrage, which had excited the indignation of the Romans, in the previous spring, but the advance of Nachoragan had necessitated the postponement of revenge. Soterichus, accompanied by his two sons, had travelled from Byzantium with the new Lazic king, Tzathes, in order to distribute sums of money to allied tribes in the vicinity of Mount Caucasus. The Misimiani conceived the

idea that the envoy intended to “betray to the Alans” one of their forts, and make it a centre for receiving the ambassadors of the more distant nations, so that he might not have to undergo the trouble and risk of traversing the Caucasian passes himself. They consequently sent two delegates to complain of the intention which they imputed to him, as he was bivouacking near the fort in question. Soterichus, who looked upon the barbarians with all the disdain of a ruling race, would not tolerate their impertinent remonstrances, and ordered his attendants to chastise them. Beaten with staves, they returned in a half-dead condition to their countrymen, while the Roman lord, thinking no more of the matter, composed himself carelessly to rest, and his sons and all his servants slept without posting a sentry or taking any precautions. The Misimiani, infuriated by the treatment of their representatives, stole to the tents in the middle of the night and slew Soterichus, his children, and almost all the rest; for even after the first alarm had spread, very few of them, heavy as they were with slumber and impeded with blankets, succeeded in escaping.

After this outrage—it can hardly be called anything but an outrage, as it so far exceeded its provocation—the Misimiani felt that they had taken an irretrievable step, and saw that nothing was left but to seek the protection of the great enemy of the Empire. Nachoragan honoured their emissaries with a gratifying reception when they repaired to him in Iberia after his signal defeat at Phasis.

In spring the Romans determined to avenge the death of Soterichus and those who shared his fate. Buzes and Justin were left in the Island to protect Lazica, while four thousand soldiers were sent to the land of the Misimiani. Martin himself was soon to follow them. But when they reached the friendly country of Apsilia, through which their way lay, they found that the Persians had anticipated them, and sent troops to defend the land of their new allies. Not wishing to face the combined forces of the Misimiani and the Persians, the Romans spent the summer in the Apsilian fortresses, waiting until the Persians should retire. They retired on the approach of winter to Iberia and Cotaisis, and as Martin was hindered by illness from assuming the command, the Romans entered the borders of the Misimiani under two leaders of less note. Before proceeding to hostilities they sent an embassy of Apsilians, if perchance the renegade people would consent to submit themselves and restore the money they had taken from the tent of Soterichus. The reply of the Misimiani was the commission of a new outrage; they slaughtered the ambassadors. It might have been thought that after the departure of their allies they would have been glad to avoid the risks of waging war with a superior enemy; but the secret of their confidence lay in the wildness and difficulty of their territory, whose approach was protected by a mountain, which, though not high, was almost perpendicular and provided with only one narrow pass. The Romans, however, crossed it and entered the wide plains, before the dilatory barbarians had taken precautions to defend it. The Misimiani then retreated into a strong fort called Tzachar, or, from its impregnable strength, the “iron” fort.

About forty of the Roman cavalry, who happened to be riding apart from the main body, were suddenly attacked by six hundred of the enemy. The few horse soldiers, all of whom were picked men, ascended a small hill, and performed wonderful deeds of valour, suddenly rushing down on the barbarians and reascending as swiftly to their position on the summit. On the appearance of the rest of the Roman troops on the top of a neighbouring hill, the Misimiani, supposing that the apparent accident was a concerted plan, took flight. The whole army pursued, and only eighty of the six hundred reached the secure refuge of Tzachar.

The Roman commanders, however, were neither harmonious nor energetic; they encamped in the vicinity of the fort, but not near enough to beleague it. Martin, on receiving tidings of the state of affairs, sent John Dacnas (who succeeded Rusticus as the distributor of imperial rewards to brave soldiers) to take the supreme command, and he, on his arrival, immediately instituted a strict blockade of the fortress.

Outside the actual walls of Tzachar, on a neighbouring-rock perched amid precipitous ravines, were some dwellings, accessible only by a secret path. The inhabitants used to descend at night to draw water from a spring at the foot of the hill; and a certain Illus, who, it is hardly necessary to add, was an Isaurian, concealed himself close to the spot, and when the water-drawers ascended followed in their tracks. He noted carefully the direction of the path, and observed that only eight men were set to guard it. The general was informed of the discovery, and on the ensuing night a body of one hundred men made the steep ascent. Illus led the way, and was followed by Ziper, the squire of Marcellinus, after whom came Leontius the son of Dabragezas, and Theodore the captain of the Tzani:

“When they had advanced more than half-way, the foremost saw distinctly the watch-fire burning, and the guards themselves reclining very close to it; seven of them were clearly asleep, and snored as they lay. Only one, leaning on his arm, had the attitude of one awake, and he too was overcome by sleepiness, and his head was heavy; nor was it yet evident what the result would be, as he was constantly nodding and then shaking himself up. At this juncture Leontius slipped in a miry place and fell; the fall broke his shield. At the loud clatter caused thereby all the watch leaped up in a state of terror and sat on their pallets; having drawn their swords they looked about everywhere, craning their necks, but they could not conjecture what it was that had happened. Illuminated themselves by the fire, they could not see the men who were standing in the gloom, and the noise, having fallen on their ears in sleep, was not quite clear or distinct enough to betray its cause, the fall of arms. The Romans, on the other hand, could see every detail of the scene. They halted, and stood as noiseless as if they were rooted to the earth; not the sound of a whisper passed their lips, not the slightest motion agitated their feet; they stood firm and fixed on whatever spot whether a sharp stone or a bramble, they had chanced to step. Had they not done so, and had the sentinels received the least intimation of their presence, a huge stone would certainly have been dislodged and rolled down the steep to crush the advancing party. So they stood without motion of voice or body, even holding in and husbanding their breath ... The barbarians, perceiving no sign of danger, soon returned again to the pleasant occupation of slumber.

“Then the Romans advanced on them in their sleep and slew all, including the half-waking man, as one might call him in jest. Then they proceeded fearlessly and scattered themselves about the streets of the village and the trumpet sounded the battle-call. When the Misimian heard this they were dumbfounded, and, not

comprehending the situation, they arose and prepared to go into their neighbours' houses and assemble together. The Romans met them at the doors of their houses and received them with the salutation of the sword; the slaughter was enormous. Some had already emerged and been despatched, others were just on the thresholds, and others yet were to follow and meet the same doom. The horror had no pause, for all pressed on to reach the street. Even the women, who had risen from their beds and rushed shrieking to the doors, were not spared by the Romans in their anger, but were ruthlessly slaughtered in retribution for the outrage committed by the men. Conspicuous among them was one comely woman, who came with a lighted torch, but even she was pierced in the stomach with a lance and perished pitifully, while one of the Romans seized the brand and set fire to the dwellings, which, built of straw and wood, were soon consumed. The flames mounted so high that the Apsilian nation, and tribes still further off, saw it and learned what had happened" (*Agathias*).

We need not follow the distressing scene further. It is enough to remark that the historian expresses strong indignation at the massacre of the infants, who had no participation in the iniquities of their parents, and regards the reverse which a few hours later befell the invaders as a retribution of this cruelty.

About dawn the victorious party, stained with the blood of their enemies, rested amid the smoldering ruins of the village, thinking it superfluous to set a watch. Five hundred well-armed Misimiani issued from the fort and surprised them in their security; some Romans were slain, and all the rest, rushing in wild consternation down the steep and stony ascent reached the camp with wounds and bruises. After this all thought of holding the rock was abandoned, and the forces of the army were concentrated against the wall of the fort. The foss was filled up, siege machines were set in operation and the garrison was hard pressed. A diversion was caused by an attack on the palisades of the Roman camp; the enemy moved a *spalion* against it, but a javelin cast by a Slavonic soldier, Svarunes, inflicted a mortal wound on the foremost assailant, and caused the collapse of the engine.

Despairing of receiving any assistance from the Persians, and unable to cope with the superior skill and power of the Romans, the Misimiani decided to yield. Their ambassadors implored John Dacnas not to exterminate their race, reminding him that they were Christians, and confessing in accents of repentance their "uncivilized folly"; they had now been punished with more than adequate severity for their transgression. John gladly acceded to their supplication, their hostages were accepted, the money of which the tent of Soterichus had been rifled was restored, and the penitent nation was pardoned. Only thirty men of the Roman army, which immediately returned to Colchis, were killed in this campaign.

Soon after this, apparently in the spring of 555, Martin was superseded in his command in Armenia and Colchis, and Justin appointed in his stead. The term of Justin's command was marked by no hostilities, for Chosroes, who, in consequence of the defeat at Phasis, had flayed alive the general Nachoragan, decided that it would be inexpedient to continue the war in a distant country which the enemy, being masters of the sea, could reach without difficulty, while his own armies were obliged to accomplish a long journey through desert regions. Isdigunas, also called Zich, was sent to Constantinople, and a provisional treaty was concluded on the terms that things were to remain *in statu quo*, the two parties retaining their respective possessions, cities or forts, in Lazica,

I have dwelt on the details of these wars at some length, partly because Gibbon has passed over them lightly as undeserving of the attention of posterity. But the idea of writing history for its own sake was strange to Gibbon, and in any case the operations in Lazica concerned serious interests. The question was at stake whether the great Asiatic power was to have access to the Euxine, and these operations decided that on the waters of that sea the Romans were to remain without rivals.

The conclusion of a fifty years' peace in 562 between Rome and Persia forms the natural termination of this chapter. Peter the Patrician, as the delegate of Justinian, and Isdigunas, as the delegate of Chosroes, met on the frontiers of the realm to arrange conditions of peace. The Persian monarch desired that the term of its duration should be long, and that the Romans should pay at once a sum of money equivalent to the total amount of large annual payments for thirty or forty years; the Romans, on the other hand, wished to fix a shorter term. The result of the negotiations was a compromise. A treaty was made for fifty years, the Roman government undertaking to pay the Persians at the rate of 30,000 aurei (£18,750) annually. The total amount due during the first seven years was to be paid at once, and at the beginning of the eighth year the Persian claim for the three ensuing years was to be satisfied. From the tenth year forward the payments were to be annual. The inscription of the Persian document, which ratified the compact, was as follows

"The divine, good, pacific, ancient Chosroes, king of kings, fortunate, pious, beneficent, to whom the gods have given great fortune and great empire, the giant of giants, who is formed in the image of the gods, to Justinian Caesar our brother".

The style of this address, compared with the most imposing list of Justinian's titles, illustrates the difference between the oriental insanity of an Asiatic despot and the vanity of a Roman Emperor, which, even when it becomes intemperate, remains sane.

It will be instructive to enumerate the articles of the treaty, as they show the sort of questions that arose between the two powers:

(1.) The Persians were bound to prevent Huns, Alans, and other barbarians from traversing the pass of Chorutzon (or Tzur) or that of the Caspian gates with a view to depredation in Roman territory; while the Romans were bound not to send an army to those regions or to any other parts of the Persian territory. (2.) The Saracen allies of both States were included in this peace. (3.) Roman and Persian merchants, whatever their wares, were to carry on their traffic by certain prescribed routes, where custom-houses were stationed, and by no others. (4.) Ambassadors between the two States were to have the privilege of making use of the public posts, and their baggage was not to be subjected to custom duties. (5.) Provision was made that Saracen or other traders should not smuggle goods into either Empire by out-of-the-way roads; Daras and Nisibis were named as the two great

emporium where these barbarians were to sell their wares. (6.) Henceforward the migration of individuals from the territory of one State into that of the other was not to be permitted; but such as had deserted during the war were allowed to return if they wished. (7.) Disputes between Romans and Persians were to be settled—if the accused failed to satisfy the claim of the plaintiff—by a committee of men who were to meet on the frontiers in the presence of both a Roman and a Persian governor. (8.) To prevent dissension, both States bound themselves to refrain from fortifying towns in proximity to the frontier. (9.) Neither State was to harry or attack any of the subject tribes or nations of its neighbour. (10.) The Romans engaged not to place a large garrison in Daras, and also that the magister militum of the East should not be stationed there; if any injury in the neighbourhood of that city were inflicted on Persian soil, the governor of Daras was to pay the costs. (11.) In the case of any treacherous dealing, as distinct from open violence, which threatened to disturb the peace, the judges on the frontier were to investigate the matter, and if their decision was insufficient, it was to be referred to the master of soldiers in the East; the final appeal was to be made to the sovereign of the injured person. (12.) Curses were imprecated on the party that should violate the peace. (13.) The term of the peace was fixed for fifty years.

A codicil to the treaty provided for the toleration of the Christians and their rites of burial in the Persian kingdom. They were to enjoy immunity from the persecution of the magi, and, on the other hand, they were to refrain from proselytizing. One small question remained still undecided, the question of Suania, which both Persians and Romans claimed as a dependency; but, although it continued to form the subject of tedious negotiations, it was not allowed to interfere with the concluding of the peace.

CHAPTER X

THE LATER YEARS OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

Justinian's policy aimed not only at extending the limits of the Empire in the West at the cost of German nations, but also at diffusing his influence among minor peoples and tribes on other frontiers. In fact he pursued an imperial policy, in the modern sense of the term. Lazica became dependent on the Empire, and the appointment of a Lazic king rested with his suzerain the Emperor. The Tzani and the Apsilians occupied a similar position. Conversion to Christianity usually attended the establishment of such relations. Justinian had the glory of superintending the baptism of Gretes, king of the Heruls, and Gordas, king of the Huns, who lived near Bosphorus; he had the privilege of converting the Abassians and the Nobadae to the true religion, and of sending a bishop and clergy to the king of the Axumites. It is recorded that Zamanarzus, the king of the Iberians, came to Constantinople and was admitted to Justinian's friendship, and Theodora presented his wife with pearl ornaments.

An event occurred which increased Roman influence in southern Arabia. Roman merchants bound for the land of Abyssinia were obliged to pass through the kingdom of the Homerites or Himyarites, which was ruled by Damian in the early part of Justinian's reign. Damian adopted the imprudent policy of plundering and slaying the traders who passed through his dominions, and the consequence was that the commerce between the Empire and Abyssinia ceased. Then Adad, the king of Axum (as Abyssinia was called), said to Damian, "You have injured my kingdom"; and they made war. And Adad said, "If I defeat the Homerites, I will become a Christian". He took Damian alive, and subdued the land of Yemen. True to his promise, he besought Justinian to send him a bishop and clergy, and an Abyssinian church was founded.

Less promising converts to Christianity were the Heruls, proverbially notorious for brutish habits and stupidity, who had first sought an asylum with the Gepids, but were soon driven away on account of their intolerable manners. Then admitted into the Empire by Anastasius, they incurred his resentment and chastisement. Justinian made corps of Heruls a standing-part of his army.

In the year 548 four envoys arrived at Constantinople from the Goths of Crimea, who are known as the Tetraxite Goths, to request Justinian to send them a new bishop, as their bishop had died. These Goths were presumably converted in the fourth century, and not joining in the westward movement of the other tribes of their nationality, lived quietly in a secluded nook in the peninsula of Bosphorus and Cherson. Their religion no longer possessed the distinctive marks of Arianism, though originally they were Arians. Procopius says that their religion was simple and pious. Thus in the Crimea, where Justinian had already made the city of Bosphorus an imperial dependency, the Tetraxite Goths acknowledged his supremacy.

There was some reason for the fears of Chosroes, and for the words which Procopius puts into the mouth of the Armenian ambassadors concerning Justinian, "The whole world does not contain him"—and that was in 539. At that time, as the ambassadors said, besides having subdued Africa and Sicily and almost subdued Italy, he had imposed the yoke of servitude on the Tzani and the yoke of tribute on the Armenians; he had set a Roman dux over "the king of the wretched Lazi"; he had sent military governors to the Bosphorites, who were formerly subject to the Huns, and had added a city to his sway; he had made an alliance with the Ethiopians; the Homerites and the Red Sea were included in his rule, and the land of palms. Before he died he had completely reduced Italy, as well as the islands of Corsica and Sardinia, and he had recovered a portion of Spain for the Roman Empire. The Franks, however, ceased to revere the Empire as they had been wont, and began to coin their own gold money

without the Emperor's image, although no other barbarian king, not even the Sassanid, was permitted, according to Procopius, by the conditions of commerce, to impress his own effigy on gold coins.

It has already been noticed that a medieval gloom pervades the second period of this reign, and affects the Emperor, who applies himself more and more to the ecclesiastical side of his policy. The observations of Agathias on this later character, with special reference to military affairs, are instructive:

“When the Emperor conquered all Italy and Libya, and waged successfully those mighty wars, and of the princes who reigned at Constantinople was the first to show himself an absolute sovereign in fact as well as in name—after these things had been achieved by him in his youth and vigour, and when he entered on the last stage of life, he seemed to be weary of labours, and preferred to create discord among his foes or to mollify them with gifts, and so keep off their hostilities, instead of trusting in his own forces and shrinking from no danger. He consequently allowed the troops to decline in strength, because he expected that he would not require their services. And those who were second to himself in authority, on whom it was incumbent to collect the taxes and supply the army with necessary provisions, were infected with the same indifference, and either openly kept back the rations altogether or paid them long after they were due; and when the debt was paid at last, persons skilled in the rascally science of arithmetic demanded back from the soldiers what had been given them. It was their privilege to bring various charges against the soldiers, and deprive them of their food ... Thus the army was neglected, and the soldiers, pressed by hunger, left their profession to embrace other modes of life”.

Thus the decay of the army was one of the chief characteristics of this period. The Asiatic provinces were slowly recovering after the plague; the Balkan provinces were subject to the constant irruptions of barbarians; and all were oppressed by the severe fiscal system, which the execution of Justinian's designs in the West did not permit him to relax. The establishment of monopolies, which was a feature of his policy, aimed at increasing his revenues, without regard to their effects on trade; nevertheless he encouraged commerce, and the wars which were carried on in Persia probably concerned mercantile interests a great deal more than historians indicate. Although John of Cappadocia partially did away with the *cursus imblicus*, the Emperor was active in improving roads and constructing bridges in the provinces, thereby facilitating commerce; but he seems to have made the custom duties at Abydos and at the entrance to the Euxine heavier, and perhaps even farmed this source of revenue.

Justinian's reign is notable in the history of industry for the introduction of silk manufacture into Europe. Certain monks arrived from India and sought an interview with the Emperor. They informed him that, having lived long in Serinda (China), they had learned a method by which silk could be made in the Roman Empire, so that the Romans would no longer be obliged to obtain the precious material through their enemies the Persians. The liberal promises of Justinian induced them to return to India, and they succeeded in bringing back safely eggs of silkworms. Some years later, when the Turks came to the court of Justinian's successor, they were surprised when they were shown the silk manufactories, “for at that time they possessed all the markets and harbors of the Chinese.”

There has probably never been a period in which more public works were executed than the reign of Justinian. New towns were founded, innumerable churches were erected, aqueducts were constructed, bridges were built; cities were fortified, extended, or restored and enriched with new baths and palaces; the mere enumeration of these results of Justinian's activity would fill pages. It may be doubted whether the expenses which he thus incurred would be justified by the rules of a prudent economy; his mania for building certainly furnished a ground of complaint for the party of opposition to use against him. Yet his works, both secular and sacred, were useful, and under ordinary conditions should have contributed to the prosperity of the Empire. New roads and secure bridges facilitated commerce, aqueducts and fortifications provided for the health and the safety of the inhabitants, while the erection of churches by the Emperor tended to strengthen the ties between the provinces and the central government, The enormous outlay on the building of St. Sophia, the creation of Anthemius, needs no justification.

Earthquakes were frequent in the days of Justinian, who did his utmost to alleviate their effects. Antioch suffered in 526, Pompeiopolis in 536, Cyzicus in 543. In 551 there were great physical disturbances in Greece; 4000 inhabitants were engulfed at Patrae. Three years later an earthquake destroyed many cities both in the islands and on the mainland, causing great loss of life. Among the rest, it reduced to ruin Berytus, then “the pride of Phoenicia”, and hardly a trace of that city's splendid buildings was left. Berytus was the seat of a law school, and many educated strangers who had gone thither to study law perished; so that the misfortune was unusually tragic. While the city was being rebuilt, the professors of law lectured in Sidon. This earthquake was so severe that a slight shock was felt even at Alexandria, where the historian Agathias was sojourning at the time. All the inhabitants were terrified at the unwonted sensation, and none remained in the houses. Although the shock was slight, there was some reason for their terror, as the houses at Alexandria were of very unsubstantial structure. The island of Cos suffered more than any other tract of land. Agathias visited it in returning from Alexandria to Constantinople, and found it in a state of utter desolation. Three years later another earthquake visited the region of Byzantium and threatened to destroy the whole city. It was peculiarly severe both in violence and duration, and Agathias gives us a vivid account of its horrors and moral effects. The only victim of distinction was the curator of the palace, Anatolius, who perished by the fall of a marble slab fixed in the wall close to his bed. I mention this for the sake of Agathias' comment. Many people said that it was a providential punishment of Anatolius for acts of injustice and oppression. “I doubt it”, said Agathias, “for an earthquake would be a most desirable and excellent thing if it knew how to discriminate the bad from the good, slaying those and passing these by. But, even granting that he was unjust, there were many more like him, and worse, who escaped unharmed. And besides”, he adds, “if Plato is right, the man who is punished in this life is more fortunate than he who is allowed to live in his sins”.

As Justinian grew old and weak and had no issue, an element which affected political life in Constantinople was the question of the succession to the throne. It led to a sort of party rivalry between the relations of Theodora

and the relations of Justinian; and the difficulty was ultimately solved by the marriage of Sophia, Theodora's niece, with Justin, Justinian's nephew. While she was alive Theodora had looked with disfavour on Justinian's kin. She died in 548 (27th June), and perhaps it was the loss of her that clouded the spirits and depressed the energy of the Emperor in his later years.

The conspiracy which was formed against the life of the Emperor in 548 was of no serious political importance; it was organized by a pair of dissatisfied Armenians, who owed Justinian a personal grudge. Artabanes, the commander in Africa, had overthrown the usurper Gontharis and delivered from his hands the Emperor's niece Praejecta, whose husband Areobindus had been put to death by the tyrant. From gratitude, not from love, Praejecta consented to become the wife of Artabanes, who aspired to an alliance with the imperial house; and the count of Africa hastened to surrender the newly conferred dignity and obtain his recall from Justinian, that he might return to Constantinople, whither Praejecta had preceded him, and celebrate the marriage. He was received with open arms in the capital; he became *magister militum in praesenti* and captain of the *foederati*; his tall and dignified stature, his concise speech, and his generosity won the admiration of all. But an unexpected obstacle to the proposed marriage occurred in the person of a previous wife, whom he had put away many years before. As long as Artabanes was an obscure individual, the lady was contented to leave him in peace and give no sign of her existence; but when he suddenly rose to fame, she determined to assert her conjugal rights, and, as a wronged woman, she implored the aid of Theodora. The Empress, "whose nature it was to undertake the cause of injured women", compelled the unwilling master of soldiers to take his wife once more to his bosom, and Praejecta became the bride of John, the son of Pompeius and grandson of the Emperor Anastasius. Shortly after this the Empress died, and Artabanes immediately put away for the second time his unwelcome wife, but Praejecta was lost to him, and he nourished a grudge against the Emperor.

Had it depended only on himself, Artabanes would never have undertaken any sinister design, but a countryman of his, named Arsaces, a descendant of the Parthian Arsacidae, was animated with a bitter desire of revenge upon Justinian, who had inflicted a comparatively light punishment on him for treacherous correspondence with Chosroes; and he diligently fanned into flame the less eager feelings of Artabanes. He reminded him that he had lost the bride he desired and been obliged to submit to the presence of the wife he hated; he urged the facility of despatching Justinian, "who is accustomed to sit without guards in the Museum, in the company of old priests, till late hours of the night, deep in the study of the holy books of the Christians". Above all, he expressed his conviction that Germanus would readily take part in such a conspiracy. For Boraidēs, the brother of Germanus, had on his death left almost all his property to his brother, allowing his wife and daughter to receive only as much as was legally necessary. But Justinian had altered the will so as to favour the daughter, and this was felt by Germanus, her uncle, as a grievance.

When he had won Artabanes to his plan, Arsaces opened communications with Justin, the eldest son of Germanus. Having bound him by oath not to reveal the conversation to any person except his father, he enlarged on the manner in which the Emperor ill-treated and passed over his relations, and expressed his conviction that it would go still harder with them when Belisarius arrived. He did not hesitate to reveal the plan of assassination which he had formed in conjunction with Artabanes and Chanaranges, a young and frivolous Armenian who had been admitted to their counsels.

Justin, terrified at this revelation, laid it before his father, who immediately consulted with Marcellus, the prefect of the palatine guards, as to whether it would be wise to inform the Emperor immediately. Marcellus, an honourable, austere, and wary man, dissuaded Germanus from taking that course, on the ground that such a communication, necessitating a private interview with the Emperor, would inevitably become known to the conspirators and lead to Arsaces' escape. He proposed to investigate the matter himself beforehand, and it was arranged that Arsaces should be lured to speak in the presence of a concealed witness. Justin appointed a day and hour for an interview between Germanus and Arsaces, and the compromising revelations were overheard by Leontius, a friend of Marcellus, who was hidden behind a cloth screen. The programme of the matured plot was to wait for the arrival of Belisarius and slay the Emperor and his general at the same time; for if Justinian were slain beforehand, the revolutionists might not be able to contend against the military forces of Belisarius. When the deed was done, Germanus was to be proclaimed Emperor.

Marcellus still hesitated to reveal the plot to the Emperor, out of friendship or pity for Artabanes. But when Belisarius was drawing nigh to the capital, he could hesitate no longer, and Justinian ordered the conspirators to be arrested. Germanus and Justin were at first not exempted from suspicion, but when the senate inquired into the case, the testimony of Marcellus and Leontius, and two other officers to whom Germanus had prudently disclosed the affair, completely cleared them. Even then Justinian was still indignant that they had concealed the treason so long, and was not mollified until the candid Marcellus took all the blame of the delay upon himself. The conspirators were treated with clemency, being confined in the palace and not in the public prison. It is to be concluded from the words of Procopius, which are not express, that they were ultimately pardoned.

The policy of Justinian in playing off one barbarian people against another is well exemplified in his dealings with the Cotrigur and Utrigur Huns, who dwelt on the northern shores of the Euxine. It appears that the Gepids called in the help of the former against their neighbours and rivals the Lombards. Twelve thousand Cotrigurs, under the warrior Chiniālus, answered the call, and arrived a year before the truce which existed between the Gepids and their foes had expired. The Gepids persuaded their guests to occupy the interval by invading the provinces of the Empire. Justinian, who was in the habit of allowing large donations both to the Cotriguri and Utriguri, sent a message to Sandichl, the chief of the latter, and chid him for his supineness in allowing his neighbours to advance against the Empire. New gifts induced the Utriguri to march against the land of the invaders, and the Roman allies were reinforced by two thousand Tetraxite Goths. The Cotrigur Huns were defeated with great slaughter in their own territory; their wives and children were led captive beyond the river Tanais, which separated the two countries, and many thousand prisoners, who languished in slavery, were enabled to escape. The invaders then withdrew beyond the Roman borders, having received a sum of money from the Roman captain Aratius; but two thousand Huns, who had fled before the Utrigurs, threw themselves on the

mercy of the Emperor and were graciously allowed to settle in a district of Thrace. The news of this clemency exasperated the Utrigurs; Sandichl sent envoys to remonstrate, but the gifts and soft words of Justinian appeased their resentment.

A great invasion of the Cotrigur Huns, under Zabergan, took place in the last months of 558. The real motive, as Agathias remarks, was the greed of an uncivilized barbarian, though Zabergan cloaked it with the complaint that the Emperor had been friendly with Sandichl, the king of the Utrigur Huns. The invader crossed the frozen Danube, and, passing unopposed through Scythia and Moesia, entered Thrace, where he divided his hordes into three armies. One was sent westward to Greece, to ravage the unprotected country, the second was sent into the Thracian Chersonese to capture the towns of Aphrodisias, Theseus, Ciberis, Sestos, and the ugly little Kallipolis, which belied its name, and to seize ships and cross to Abydos; the third army, consisting of seven thousand cavalry, marched under Zabergan himself to Constantinople. The terrible ravages and cruelties committed by the third and main body are thus described by the contemporary writer Agathias:

“As no resistance was offered to their course, they overran and plundered everything mercilessly, obtaining a great booty and large numbers of captives. Among the rest, well-born women of chaste life were most cruelly carried off to undergo the worst of all misfortunes, and minister to the unbridled lust of the barbarians; some who in early youth had renounced marriage and the cares and pleasures of this life, and had immured themselves in some religious retreat, deeming it of the highest importance to be free from cohabitation with men, were dragged from the chambers of their virginity and violated. Many married women who happened to be pregnant were dragged away, and when their hour was come brought forth children on the march, unable to conceal their throes, or to take up and swaddle the new-born babes; they were hauled along, in spite of all, hardly allowed even time to suffer, and the wretched infants were left where they fell, a prey for dogs and birds, as though this were the purpose of their appearance in the world.

“To such a pass had the Roman Empire come that, even within the precincts of the districts surrounding the imperial city, a very small number of barbarians committed such enormities. Their audacity went so far as to pass the long walls and approach the inner fortifications. For time and neglect had in many places dilapidated the great wall, and other parts were easily thrown down by the barbarians, as there was nought to repel them—no military garrison, no engines of defense, nor persons to employ such. Not even the bark of a dog was to be heard; the wall was less efficiently protected than a pig-sty or sheep-cot. For the Roman armies had not continued so numerous as in the days of ancient Emperors, but had dwindled to a small number, and no longer were sufficient for the size of the State. The whole force should have been six hundred and forty-five thousand fighting men, but actually it hardly amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand. And of these, some were in Italy, others in Africa, others in Spain, others in Colchis, others at Alexandria and in the Thebaid, a few on the Persian frontier (where only a few were needed on account of the peace)”.

The Huns encamped at Melantias, a village on the small river Athyras, which flows into the Propontis. Their proximity created a panic in Constantinople, whose inhabitants saw imminent the horrors of sieges, conflagrations, and famine. The terror was not confined to the lower classes; the nobles trembled in their palaces, the Emperor was alarmed on his throne. All the treasures of the churches, which were scattered in the tract of country included between the Euxine and the Golden Horn, were either carted into the city or shipped to the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus. The undisciplined corps of the Scholarian guards, ignorant of real warfare, who were supposed to defend the gates, did not inspire the citizens with much confidence.

On this critical occasion Justinian appealed to his veteran general Belisarius to save the seat of empire. In spite of his years and feebleness Belisarius put on his helmet and cuirass once more, and he won greater glory among the men of his time by saving New Rome on the Bosphorus than he had won by recovering Old Rome on the Tiber. He relied chiefly on a small body of three hundred men who had fought with him in Italy; the other troops that he mustered knew nothing of war, and they were more for appearance than for action. The peasants who had fled before the barbarians from their ravaged homesteads in Thrace accompanied the little army. He encamped at the village of Chettus, and employed the peasants in the congenial work of digging a wide trench round the camp. Spies were sent out to discover the numbers of the enemy, and at night a large number of beacons were kindled in the plain with the purpose of misleading the Huns as to the number of the forces sent out against them. For a while they were misled, but it was soon known that the Roman army was small, and two thousand cavalry selected by Zabergan rode forth to annihilate it. The spies informed Belisarius of the enemy's approach, and he made a skilful disposition of his troops. He concealed two hundred peltasts and javelin-men in the woods on either side of the plain, close to the place where he expected the attack of the barbarians; the ambuscaders, at a given signal, were to shower their missiles on the hostile ranks. The object of this was to compel the lines of the enemy to close in, in order to avoid the javelins on the flank, and thus to render their superior numbers useless through inability to deploy. Belisarius himself headed the rest of the army; in the rear followed the rustics, who were not to engage in the battle, but were to accompany it with loud shouts and cause a clatter with wooden beams, which they carried for that purpose.

All fell out as Belisarius had planned. The Huns, pressed by the peltasts, thronged together, and were hindered both from using their bows and arrows with effect, and from circumventing the Roman wings. The noise of the rustics in the rear, combined with the attack on the flanks, gave the foe the impression that the Roman army was immense, and that they were being-surrounded; clouds of dust obscured the real situation, and the barbarians turned and fled. Four hundred perished before they reached their camp at Melantias, while not a single Roman was mortally wounded. The camp was immediately abandoned, and all the Huns hurried away, imagining that the victors were still on their track. But by the Emperor's orders Belisarius did not pursue them.

We must now follow the fortunes of the Hunnic troops who were sent against the Chersonese. Germanus, the son of Dorotheus, a native of Prima Justiniana, had been appointed some time previously commandant in that peninsula, and he now proved himself a capable officer. As the Huns could make no breach in the great wall, which shut in the peninsula, and was skilfully defended by the dispositions of Germanus, they resorted to the

expedient of manufacturing boats of reeds fastened together in sheaves; each boat was large enough to hold four men; one hundred and fifty were constructed, and six hundred fully armed soldiers embarked secretly in the bay of Aenus (near the mouth of the Hebrus), in order to land on the south-western coast of the Chersonese. Germanus learned the news of their enterprise with delight, and immediately manned twenty galleys with armed men.

The armament of reed-built boats was easily annihilated, not a single barbarian escaping. This success was followed up by an excursion of the Romans from the wall against the army of the dispirited besiegers; the latter abandoned their enterprise and joined Zabergan, who was also retreating after the defeat at Chettus.

Soon after this the other division of the Huns, which had been sent in the direction of Greece, returned without having achieved any signal success. They had not penetrated farther than Thermopylae, where the garrison of the fort that commanded the pass prevented their advance.

Thus, although Thrace, and presumably also Macedonia and Thessaly, suffered terribly from this invasion, Zabergan was unsuccessful in all three points of attack, owing to the ability of Belisarius, Germanus, and the garrison of Thermopylae. Justinian redeemed the captives for a considerable sum of money, and the Cotrigurs retreated beyond the Danube. But the wily Emperor laid a trap for their destruction. He despatched a characteristic letter to Sandichl, the friendly king of the Utrigurs, whose friendship he had cultivated by periodical presents of money. He informed Sandichl that the Cotrigurs had invaded Thrace and carried off all the gold that was destined to enrich the treasury of the Utriguric monarch. "It would have been easy for us", ran the imperial letter, "to have destroyed them utterly, or at least to have sent them empty away. But we did neither one thing nor the other, because we wished to test your sentiments. For if you are really valiant and wise, and not disposed to tolerate the appropriation by others of what belongs to you, you are not losers; for you have nothing to do but punish the enemy and receive from them your money at the sword's point, as though we had sent it to you by their hands". The Emperor further threatened that, if Sandichl proved himself craven enough to let the insult pass, he would transfer his amity to the Cotrigurs. The letter had the desired effect; the seeds of discord were sown; the Utrigurs were stirred up against their neighbours, and a series of ceaseless hostilities wasted the strength of the two nations.

After the repulse of the Huns, Belisarius lived in high honour at Constantinople, but was perhaps an object of suspicion to Justinian. A conspiracy to murder the Emperor was discovered in November 562, and one of the names mentioned by a culprit who confessed was that of the general, now nearly seventy years old. His age did not serve to acquit him of treasonable designs, and he remained in disgrace for eight months, until July 563, when he was restored to favour. The great Patrician died in March 565,² his wife, Antonina, who had already passed the age of eighty, surviving him; but his riches passed to Justinian, who died in the following November.

CHAPTER XI

JUSTINIAN'S CAESAROPAPISM

The absolutism of Justinian extended to the ecclesiastical world, and in church as well as in state history he occupies a position of ecumenical importance. He was a sort of imperial pontiff, and this Caesaropapism, as it has been called, represents the fulfilment of the policy which Constantius tried and failed to realize.

Justinian's ecclesiastical policy rested on his support of the council of Chalcedon, and thus accorded in principle with the policy by which his uncle Justin had restored unity to Christendom. But this unity was only a unity of the western Church with the chief Church in the East; whereas the East itself was divided. The monophysites were a large and important body, and the Emperor was not content not to make an effort to reconcile this difference, especially as the Empress Theodora was an adherent of the heretical creed. His object was to secure a unity in the Church, which should exclude all sectarianism, and embrace both East and West. Consequently he did not rest in the policy of his uncle Justin; he tried to accomplish what Zeno and Anastasius had failed to accomplish, a conciliation of the Chalcedonians and monophysites.

One of his first acts was to deal a final blow to paganism. He shut up the philosophical schools at Athens, with which Theodosius II had not interfered when he founded the university of Constantinople. The abolition of the Athenian university has two aspects. In the first place, it was the last blow dealt by Christianity to the ancient philosophers and their doctrines, and was one of the acts which mark the reign of Justinian as the terminus of the ancient world. In the second place, it was a measure in which Justinian's design of establishing a unity of belief and thought in the Empire was manifested; and it is to be taken closely with the law that pagans and heretical Christians were not to hold office in either the civil service or the army. His general principle is laid down clearly in a constitution (published shortly before his uncle's death): "All will be able to perceive that from those who do not worship God rightly, human goods also are withheld",—a most concise expression of religious intolerance. It may be observed that in this constitution the Manichaeans are mentioned with special acrimony, and rendered liable to the extreme penalties of the law. It was the instinct of Christianity, which was essentially monistic, though not with Semitic monism, to fight against all forms of dualism as the most odious kind of heresy.

The monophysites held a peculiar position. They were very numerous, and they were supported by the sympathy of the Empress Theodora, who shared their creed. Justinian considered it an important political object to unite them with the orthodox Church, and it was a theological problem to accomplish this—to make concessions to the heretics without abandoning the basis of Chalcedon.

Justinian might have carried this out in the East without much difficulty, if he had been content to sacrifice union with the western Church. But that would have been to undo what Justin had done and he himself had confirmed; and the union of the eastern and western Churches was of primary importance for the restorer of Roman rule in Italy and Africa. His political designs exercised a perceptible control on his ecclesiastical measures.

This was the dilemma that beset every Roman Emperor—quite apart from his personal opinions—ever since the council of Chalcedon. If he chose to attempt to establish unity in the East, he must sacrifice unity with the West, as Zeno and Anastasius had done. If he chose to seek unity with the West, like Justin, he must be satisfied to see his dominions distracted by the bitter opposition of synodites and monophysites. The imperial throne shared by the orthodox Justinian and the Eutychian Theodora was symbolic of the division of the Empire in the matter of theological beliefs.

Justinian's achievement was to overcome this dilemma. He was powerful enough to carry a measure which tended to unity by modifying the synod of Chalcedon without breaking with the Church of Rome.

Apart from their personal opinions—which, while we admit that they co-operated, we must set aside in order to observe the influence of circumstances—the policies of Zeno, Anastasius, and Justin in regard to this problem were natural. To Zeno and Anastasius, who had no thought of recovering power in Italy, the opposition of the bishop of Rome was a matter of smaller importance than division in the Empire. Justin's policy was naturally anti-monophysitic, because it was a reaction against Anastasius; and such a policy implied a renewal of relations with Rome. Justinian's intervention in the political world of western Europe altered the position of the bishop of Rome, and in the fifth Council of Constantinople the Emperor exercised an unprecedented authority, which would have pleased Constantius II.

In 536 AD, by the influence of Theodora, Anthimus, a man of monophysitic opinions, was appointed Patriarch of Constantinople. In the following year Pope Agapetus visited that city on political business, to treat for peace on behalf of Theodahad; it was the second time that an Ostrogothic king had despatched a Pope on a message to an Emperor. Agapetus succeeded in obtaining the deposition of Anthimus, and the election of an orthodox successor, Mennas. That Justinian was not aware of the real opinions of Anthimus, before Agapetus unveiled his heterodoxy, is unlikely, but the supporter of orthodoxy could not refuse to oppose him, once it was made public, and that by the bishop of Rome. Dante represents Justinian as originally holding monophysitic opinions, and owing his conversion to Agapetus.

The controversy of the "three articles", a long chapter in the ecclesiastical history of the sixth century, began in 544, and lasted for eight years. We need not follow its details, but the elements that were involved in it as well as its consequences must be briefly explained. Three points to be noticed are—(1) that it was externally connected with an Origenistic controversy which had disturbed Palestine for some years past; (2) that the difficulty of concluding the question depended on the wavering position of Pope Vigilius; (3) that Justinian's desire to carry his point was at first quickened by the monophysitic leanings of his consort, who died before the dispute was decided.

At Justinian's desire the Patriarch Mennas held a local synod, at which the writings of Origen were condemned. Theodore Ascidas, bishop of Caesarea, a monophysite who believed in the Origenistic theology, did not oppose this sentence, but made a fruitful suggestion to Justinian, of which the apparently exclusive aim was to reunite the monophysites, but which really contained a blow at a prominent opponent of Origen's methods, Theodore of Mopsuestia. The import of this suggestion was that what really repelled the monophysites was not any point of doctrine, but the countenance given by the council of Chalcedon to certain Nestorians.

Accordingly in 544 Justinian promulgated an edict, wherein the Three Articles, which gave the name to the controversy, were enunciated—(1) Theodore of Mopsuestia and his works were condemned; (2) certain writings of Theodoret against Cyril were condemned; and (3) a letter of Ibas, addressed to a Persian and censuring Cyril, was condemned. The council of Chalcedon had expressly acknowledged the orthodoxy of these writings and their authors, and thus the authority of that council seemed called in question, though the edict expressly professed to respect it.

The bishops of the East, including Mennas, signed the edict; but Mennas made his adhesion conditional on the approval of the bishop of Rome, and it is just the attitude of the bishop of Rome that lends an interest to the controversy.

Vigilius had been elevated to the papal see of Rome under circumstances which appear at least unusual. He was at Constantinople when Agapetus died in 537, and his election rested on the support of Theodora, with whom he is said to have made a sort of bargain not to act against the monophysite Anthimus, the deposed Patriarch. Before he arrived at Rome, Silverius had been elected Pope in Italy, and the deposition and banishment of the latter, on the charge of treason, by Belisarius, gave room for suspicion that corrupt dealings were practiced for the benefit of Vigilius.

When Vigilius was called upon to sign the edict of the "three articles" he felt himself in a dilemma. The western Church, especially the Church of Africa, cried out loudly against the document, while Vigilius felt himself under obligations to Theodora and the Emperor. A synod at Carthage went so far as to excommunicate the Pope (549).

At first he refused to sign. When he was at Rome, at a safe distance from the Caesar-Pope, resistance did not seem hard. But Justinian summoned him to Constantinople, where he remained until 554. During this time he wavered between the two forces in whose conflict he was involved—the ecclesiastical opinion of the West and the imperial authority. The latter finally conquered, but not until the Pope had been condemned in the fifth general Council, held at Constantinople in 553, after which he retracted his condemnation of the articles, attributing it to the arts of the devil.

The fifth general Council, it should be observed, has an importance beyond the rather trivial subjects, discussed. Its basis, its agenda, was an edict drawn up by the Emperor; it adopted theological tenets formulated by the Emperor. This is the most characteristic manifestation of Justinianean Caesaropapism.

The election of Pelagius as the successor of Vigilius to the see of Rome is noteworthy, because the Roman Emperor exercised the right of confirming the election, which had belonged to the Ostrogothic monarch. This right gave Justinian an ecclesiastical power of European extent, and introduced an important theory into Christendom. “According to the *Liber Diurnus* (a collection of forms which represents the state of things in those days or shortly after), the death of a Roman bishop was to be notified to the exarch of Ravenna; the successor was to be chosen by the clergy, the nobles of Rome, the soldiery, and the citizens; and the ratification of the election was to be requested in very submissive terms both of the Emperor and of his deputy the exarch”.

Pelagius upheld the three articles of the council, but the unity of the East and the consent of the Pope were purchased at the expense of the unity of the West. Milan and Aquileia would know nothing of the fifth Council, and although the invasion of the Lombards soon drove Milan into the arms of Rome, the see of Aquileia and the bishop of Istria seceded from the Roman Church for more than a hundred and forty years.

In Egypt monophysitism was ineradicable. Alexandria “the Great” was a scene of continual religious quarrels between the Eutychians and the Melchites, as they called the orthodox Catholics. In Syria monophysitism continued under the name of Jacobitism—a name derived from its propagator in the sixth century, Jacob al Baradai, a travelling monk.

The Armenian Church also adopted the Eutychian heresy, and in the ultra-Eutychian form of apthartodocetism, the doctrine that Christ's body was incorruptible. It is curious that the same cause favoured the survival of the two opposite doctrines, Eutychianism and Nestorianism, in Armenia and Persia respectively. The Persian government tolerated Nestorian Christianity in its dominions, and looked with favour on a monophysitic Armenian Church, because both creeds were opposed to the State religion of Byzantium.

I have mentioned apthartodocetism. It obtained a certain notoriety in the last years of Justinian's reign, for the old Emperor adopted the doctrine himself, and enforced it on his subjects by an edict. His death cut short the full execution his last and least Caesaropapistic undertaking.

Among his acts of ecclesiastical autocracy we must mention the edict which raised the see of Prima Justiniana, in his own native province of Dacia Mediterranea, to the rank of an archbishopric (535 *ad*). “Desiring”, this document begins, “to increase in many and divers ways our native land, in which God first granted us to come into this world, which He himself founded, we wish to augment it and make it very great in ecclesiastical rank”. This decree was confirmed in another decree ten years later (545 *ad*). I do not consider it justifiable to say, as ecclesiastical historians sometimes do, that Justinian desired to found a sixth patriarchate; on the contrary, the new archbishop, as I understand the second edict, was to depend on the Pope of Rome, and to hold the same position, for example, as the archbishop of Ravenna.

In regard to the missionary activity which Justinian encouraged for the conversion of heathen nations, I cannot do better than quote the following little-known account of the conversion of the Nobadae:

“Among the clergy in attendance on the Patriarch Theodosius was a proselyte named Julianus, an old man of great worth, who conceived an earnest spiritual desire to Christianize the wandering people who dwell on the eastern borders of the Thebais beyond Egypt, and who are not only not subject to the authority of the Roman Empire, but even receive a subsidy on condition that they do not enter nor pillage Egypt. The blessed Julianus, therefore, being full of anxiety for this people, went and spoke about them to the late Queen Theodora, in the hope of awakening in her a similar desire for their conversion; and as the queen was fervent in zeal for God, she received the proposal with joy, and promised to do everything in her power for the conversion of these tribes from the errors of idolatry. In her joy, therefore, she informed the victorious King Justinian of the purposed undertaking, and promised and anxiously desired to send the blessed Julian thither. But when the king [Emperor] heard that the person she intended to send was opposed to the council of Chalcedon, he was not pleased, and determined to write to the bishops of his own side in the Thebais, with orders for them to proceed thither and instruct the Nobadae, and plant among them the name of synod. And as he entered upon the matter with great zeal, he sent thither, without a moment's delay, ambassadors with gold and baptismal robes, and gifts of honour for the king of that people, and letters for the duke of the Thebais, enjoining him to take every care of the embassy and escort them to the territories of the Nobadae. When, however, the queen learnt these things, she quickly, with much cunning, wrote letters to the duke of the Thebais, and sent a mandatory of her court to carry them to him; and which were as follows: ‘Inasmuch as both his majesty and myself have purposed to send an embassy to the people of the Nobadae, and I am now dispatching a blessed man named Julian; and further my will is that my ambassador should arrive at the aforesaid people before his majesty's; be warned, that if you permit his ambassador to arrive there before mine, and do not hinder him by various pretexts until mine shall have reached you and shall have passed through your province and arrived at his destination, your life shall answer for it; for I shall immediately send and take off your head’. Soon after the receipt of this letter the king's ambassador also came, and the duke said to him: ‘You must wait a little while we look out and procure beasts of burden and men who know the deserts, and then you will be able to proceed’. And thus he delayed him until the arrival of the merciful queen's embassy, who found horses and guides in waiting, and the same day, without loss of time, under

a show of doing it by violence, they laid hands upon him, and were the first to proceed. As for the duke, he made his excuses to the king's ambassador, saying: 'Lo! when I had made my preparations and was desirous of sending you onward, ambassadors from the queen arrived and fell upon me with violence, and took away the beasts of burden I had got ready, and have passed onward; and I am too well acquainted with the fear in which the queen is held to venture to oppose them. But abide still with me until I can make fresh preparations for you, and then you also shall go in peace'. And when he heard these things he rent his garments, and threatened him terribly and reviled him; and after some time he also was able to proceed, and followed the other's track without being aware of the fraud which had been practiced upon him".

"The blessed Julian meanwhile and the ambassadors who accompanied him had arrived at the confines of the Nobadae, whence they sent to the king and his princes informing him of their coming; upon which an armed escort set out, who received them joyfully, and brought them into their land unto the king. And he too received them with pleasure, and her majesty's letter was presented and read to him, and the purport of it explained. They accepted also the magnificent honours sent them, and the numerous baptismal robes, and everything else richly provided for their use. And immediately with joy they yielded themselves up and utterly abjured the errors of their forefathers, and confessed the God of the Christians, saying, 'He is the one true God, and there is no other beside Him'. And after Julian had given them much instruction, and taught them, he further told them about the council of Chalcedon, saying that inasmuch as certain disputes had sprung up among Christians touching the faith, and the blessed Theodosius being required to receive the council and having refused was ejected by the king [Emperor] from his throne, whereas the queen received him and rejoiced in him because he stood firm in the right faith and left his throne for its sake, on this account her majesty has sent us to you, that ye also may walk in the ways of Pope Theodosius, and stand in his faith and imitate his constancy. And moreover the king has sent unto you ambassadors, who are already on their way, in our footsteps".

The Emperor's emissaries arrived soon afterwards, and were dismissed by the king of the Nobadae, who told them that if his people embraced Christianity at all it would be the doctrine of the holy Theodosius of Alexandria, and not the 'wicked faith' of the Emperor.

In his own dominions too the activity of Christian missionaries was necessary, for in the devious recesses of Asia Minor there were many spots, *pagi*, where heathenism survived. It is remarkable that for the conversion of his heathen subjects Justinian employed a monophysitic priest, John of Ephesus, who afterwards wrote an ecclesiastical history in Syriac from the monophysitic point of view. We shall see how the monophysites were persecuted by a zealous Patriarch and an unwise Emperor after Justinian's death. Towards the close of the century, when the heresy was almost exterminated from the Empire, it was revived, as has been already mentioned, by one Jacob al Baradai, who, dressed as a beggar—hence his name "the Ragged"—travelled about in the provinces of Syria and Mesopotamia and organized anew the monophysitic Church. To the reascent monophysites was attached the name of the second founder of the sect; they were called Jacobites.

CHAPTER XII

THE SLAVS

In one respect the history of Byzantium, as the capital of the Roman world, differed little from its history as a Greek republic. Both as the mercantile commonwealth and as the imperial city, it was exposed, with its adjoining territory, to the hostilities of the barbarians of various races who infested the wild and ill-known lands of the Balkan mountains or dwelled on the shores of the Danube. In fact, Polybius' remarks on the favourable site of Byzantium seawards and its unfavourable aspect landwards hold good of its subsequent experiences, and the following passage might be taken as a short summary of one side of Byzantine history:

"As Thrace surrounds the territory of the Byzantines on all sides, reaching from sea to sea, they are involved in an endless and troublesome war against the Thracians, for it is not feasible, by making preparations on a grand scale and winning one decisive victory over them, to get rid once for all of their hostilities; the barbarous nations and dynasts are too numerous. If they overcome one, three more worse than the first arise and advance against their country. Nor can they gain any advantage by submitting to pay tribute and making definite contracts; for if they make any concession to one prince, such a concession raises up against them five times as many foes. For these reasons they are involved in a never-ending and troublesome war. For what is more dangerous than a bad neighbour, and what more dreadful than a war with barbarians? And besides the other evils that attend on war, they have to undergo (to speak poetically) a sort of Tantalean punishment, for when they have diligently tilled their land, which is very fertile, and have been rewarded by the production of an abundant and surpassingly fine crop, then come the barbarians, and having reaped part of the fruits to carry off with them, destroy what they cannot take away. The Byzantines can only murmur indignantly, and endure".

This passage might have been written of the depredations of the Huns, the Ostrogoths, the Avars, or the Slavs.

Of these four peoples, the first three were only comets of ruin in the Balkan peninsula, while the Slavonic peoples, to whose early history this chapter is devoted, probably began to filter into the provinces of Illyricum and Thrace as settlers before the invasions of Attila, and in later times pouring in as formidable invaders, gradually converted those provinces into Slavonic principalities, which, according to the tide of war, were sometimes dependent on, sometimes independent of, the government of Constantinople.

To understand the history of the Haemus countries, the extension of the Slavonic races there, and the campaigns of the Roman armies against the invaders, a general notion of the very difficult and still imperfectly explored geography of Thrace is indispensable.

We may consider Mount Vitos, and the town of Sardica, now Sofia, which lies at its base as the central point of the peninsula. Rising in the shape of an immense cone to a height of 2300 metres, Vitos affords to the climber who ascends it a splendid view of the various complicated mountain chains which diversify the surrounding lands—a view which has been pronounced finer than that at Tempe or that at Vodena. In the group of which this mountain and another named Ryl, to southward, are the highest peaks, two rivers of the lower Danube system, the Oescus (Isker) and the Nisava have their sources, as well as the two chief rivers of the Aegean system, the Hebrus (Maritsa) and the Strymon (Struma).

From this central region stretches in a south-easterly direction the double chain of Rhodope, cleft in twain by the valley of the Nestos (Mesta). The easterly range, Rhodope proper, forms the western boundary of the great plain of Thrace, while the range of Orbelos separates the Nestos' valley from the Strymon valley.

The great Haemus or Balkan chain which runs from east to west is also double, like Rhodope, but is not in the same way divided by a large river. The Haemus' mountains begin near the sources of the Timacus and Margus, from which they stretch to the shores of the Euxine. To a traveller approaching them from the northern or Danubian side they do not present an impressive appearance, for the ascent is very gradual; plateau rises above plateau, or the transition is accomplished by gentle slopes, and the height of the highest parts is lost by the number of intervening degrees. But on the southern side the descent is precipitous, and the aspect is imposing and sublime. This capital difference between the two sides of the Haemus range is closely connected with the existence of the second and lower parallel range, called the Sredna Gora, which runs through Roumelia (region of S. Bulgaria, between the Balkan and Rhodope) from Sofia to Sliven. It seems as if a convulsion of the earth had cloven asunder an original and large chain by a sudden rent, which gave its abrupt and sheer character to the southern side of the Haemus mountains, and interrupted the gradual incline upwards from the low plain of Thrace.

The important chain of Sredna Gora, which is often confounded with the northern chain of Haemus, is divided into three parts, which, following Hochstetter, we may call the Karadza Dagh, the Sredna Gora, and the Ichtimaner. The Karadza Dagh mountains are the most easterly, and are separated from Sredna Gora by the river Strema (a tributary of the Maritsa), while the valley of the Tundza (*Tainaros*), with its fields of roses and pleasantly situated towns, divides it from Mount Haemus. Sredna Gora reaches a greater height than the mountains to east or to west, and is separated by the river Topolnitsa from the most westerly portion, the Ichtimaner mountains, which form a sort of transition connecting the Balkan system with the Rhodope system, whilst at the same time they are the watershed between the tributaries of the Hebrus and those of the Danube. It is in this range too that the important pass of Succi is situated, through which the road led from Constantinople to Singidunum, Sirmium, and Italy.

The river Isker divides the Balkan chain into a western and an eastern half. Of the western mountains, which command a view of the middle Danube, we need only mention the strange region which Kanitz, the Austrian traveller, discovered near the fort of Belgradcik. "Gigantic pillars of dark red sandstone, crowned by groups of trees, rise in fantastic shapes to heights above 200 metres, and, separated by rivulets and surrounded by luxuriant green, they form remarkable groups and alleys, as it were a city changed to stone, with towers, burgs, houses, bridges, obelisks, and ships, men and beasts".

In the central part of the eastern Haemus mountains is the now celebrated pass of Sipka, which connects the valley of the Tundza with the valley of the Jantra (Jatrus), and is the chief route from Thrace into Lower Moesia. Between this spot and the pass of Sliven farther east extend the wildest and most impervious regions of the Balkans, regions which have always been the favorite homes of scammers and klephts, who could defy the justice of civilization in thick forests and inaccessible ravines—regions echoing with the wild songs and romances of outlaw life. Beyond the pass of the Iron Gates (Demir Kapu), connecting Sliven with Trnovo, the range splits itself into three prongs; the north prong touching the river of the Great Kamcija, the middle touching the meeting of the Great and the Little Kamcija, and the southern touching the sea. In this part there are three passes, one of which is reached from Sliven, the other two from Karnabad.

The east side of the great Thracian plain is bounded by the Strandza range, which separates it from the Euxine, and throws out in a south-westerly direction the Tekir Dagh, which stretches along the west of the Propontis, shooting into the Thracian Chersonese and extending along the north Aegean coast as far as the Strymon. The Thracian plain is a flat wilderness, only good for poor pasture.

The oldest inhabitants, of whose existence in the peninsula we know, were a branch of the Indo-European family, which is generally called the Thraco-Illyrian branch, falling as it does into two main divisions, the Thracian and the Illyrian. The Thracians occupied the eastern, the Illyrians the western side of the peninsula, the boundary between them being roughly the courses of the Drave and the Strymon. Any descendants of the Thracians who still survive are to be found among the Roumanians, while the Albanians represent the Illyrians and Epirotes. The Epirotes stood in much the same relation to the Illyrians as the Macedonians stood to the Thracians. Of the numerous Thracian tribes (Odrysians, Triballi, Getae, Mysians, Bessi, etc.), the Bessi or Satri, in the region of Rhodope, remained longest a corporate nation in the presence of Roman influences; they were converted to

Christianity in the fourth century, and in the fifth century they still held the church service in their own tongue. The Noropians, a subdivision of the Paeonians, whose lake dwellings are described by Herodotus, deserve mention, because the name survived in the Middle Ages (nerop'ch, merop'ch) as the name of a class of serfs in the Serbian kingdom. Of the Illyrian tribes the most important were the Autariats, Dardanians, Dalmatians, Istrians, Liburnians. As to the Thracian and Illyrian languages, a general but vague idea can be formed of them by the help of modern Albanese, whence Dalmatia has been explained to mean "shepherd land"; Skodra, "hill"; Bora, "snow" (a mountain in Macedonia); Bessi, "the faithful" (originally the name of priests); Dardania, "land of pears", etc. The difficulty experienced by the Romans in subduing and incorporating in their Empire all these brave mountain tribes is well known.

It must be clearly understood that Latin became the general language of the peninsula when the Roman conquests were consolidated, except on the south and east coastlines of the Aegean, Propontis, and Euxine, where the towns, many of them Greek colonies and all long familiar with Greek, continued to speak that language. That Latin was the language of the greater part of the peninsula there are many proofs. Priscus tells us expressly, in speaking of his expedition to the country of the Huns, that Latin was the language everywhere. The bishops of Marcianopolis used Latin in their correspondence with the council of Chalcedon. At the end of the sixth century words used by a peasant are recorded, which are the first trace of the Roumanian language, which developed in these regions and was born of the union of Latin with old Thracian. The Emperor Justinian, a native of Dardania, speaks of Latin as his own language.

We need not discuss here the wild theories, resting chiefly on accidental similarity of names which may be made to prove anything, that Slavonic races dwelled along with the Thraco-Illyrian from time immemorial; they have been refuted by Jiricek. The pedantic Byzantine custom of calling contemporary peoples by the name of ancient peoples who had dwelt in the same lands led to a misunderstanding, and originated the idea that the Slavonic races were autochthonous.

But if this theory assigns to the presence of the Slaves a too early period, we must beware of falling into the opposite mistake of setting their advent too late. The arguments of Drinov, which are accepted by the historian of the Bulgarians, make it possible that the infiltration of Slavonic elements into the cis-Danubian lands began about 300 *ad*, before the so-called wandering of the nations.

It is probable enough that there were Slaves in the great Dacian kingdom of Decebalus, which was subverted by Trajan. At all events, the Roman occupation of Dacia beyond the Danube for a century and a half between Trajan and Aurelian, left its traces in that country, and also among Slavonic races; for Trajan or Trojan figured prominently in Slavonic legend as the deliverer from the Dacian oppressor, and was even deified. "Bulgarian songs at the present day celebrate the Tzar Trojan, the lord of inexhaustible treasures, for whom burning gold and pure silver flow from seventy wells". Slavonic tradition called the Romans Vlachians, and the first appearance of the Vlachians beyond the Danube was long remembered.

The Slavs doubtless played a considerable part in the frontier wars of the third century, but whether the Carpi, whom Galerius settled along with the Bastarnae in the provinces of Moesia and Thrace (298) were a Slavonic race, as some authorities believe, we cannot be certain. It is possible, however, that Slaves formed part of the large mass of barbarians, 200,000, to whom the Emperor Carus assigned habitations in the peninsula; and there are certainly distinct traces of the existence of Slavonic communities in itineraries composed in the fourth century. There were many generals of Slavonic origin in Roman service in the fifth century, and in the sixth century Procopius has preserved to us many names of Slavonic towns.

We are then, I think, justified in assuming that in the fifth century there was a considerable Slavonic element in the lands south of the Ister, holding the position of Roman *coloni*. They formed a layer of population which would give security and permanence to the settlements of future invaders of kindred race. And here we touch upon what seems a strong confirmation of the conclusion to which stray vestiges lead us, regarding an early Slavonic colonization. The Ostrogoths, who invaded and settled in Italy, held but there but a short time; the duration of Lombard influence in Italy was longer, but not long; the Vandals were soon dislodged from Africa. On the other hand, the Franks held permanent sway in the lands in which they settled, just as Slavonic nations still dominate the countries between the Adriatic and the Euxine. Now the main difference between the conquest of Gaul by the Franks and the conquest of Italy by the Ostrogoths was, that the former had been preceded by centuries of gradual infiltration of Frank elements in the countries to the west of the Rhine, whereas for Theodoric there was no such basis on which to consolidate a Gothic kingdom. The natural induction is that the cause whose presence secured the permanence of the Frank kingdom in Gaul, and whose absence facilitated the disappearance of the Gothic race from Italy, co-operated to render permanent the Slavonic conquests. This induction, of course, is not strict; we have not excluded the possibility of like effects resulting from different causes, and the case of the Visigoths in Spain is an obvious, though explicable, exception. But the fact that we have distinct traces of early Slavonic settlements supplements the defect of the a priori induction. The circumstance that there is no direct mention of such settlements by writers of the time can have little weight in the opposite scale; such things often escape the notice of contemporaries.

The great political characteristic of the Slavonic races was their independence, in which they resembled the Arabs. They could not endure the idea of a monarch, and the communes, independent of, and constantly at discord with, one another, united only in the presence of a dangerous enemy. Owing to this characteristic their invasions cannot have been efficiently organized, and an able general should have been able to cut them off in detachments. The family, governed and represented by the oldest member, was the unit of the commune or tribe; the chiefs of the community, whose territory was called a *zupa*, were selected from certain leading families which thus formed an aristocracy.

The character of the Slavs is described by a Greek Emperor as artless and hospitable; but it was often, no doubt, the artlessness of a heathen barbarian. They practised both agriculture and pasture. Physically they were

tall and strong, and of blond complexion. Women occupied an honourable position, and the patriarchal character of their social life, by which the family was the proprietor and every individual belonged to a family, excluded poverty. Only an excommunicated person could be poor, and therefore to be poor meant to be bad, and was expressed by the same word. In the sixth century their abodes were wretched hovels, and their chief food was millet.

The Emperor Maurice, in his treatise on the art of war, gives us an account of the Slavonic methods of warfare. They were unable to fight well in regular battle on open ground, and thus they were fain to choose mountains and morasses, ravines and thickets, in which they could arrange ambushes and surprises, and bring into play their experience of forest and mountain life. In this kind of warfare skill in archery was serviceable, and they used poisoned arrows. Their weapons in hand-to-hand fight were battle-axes and battle-mallets. Maurice advises that campaigns against them should be undertaken in the winter, because then the trees are leafless and the forests less impenetrable to the view, while the snow betrays the steps of the foe, and the frozen rivers give no advantage to their swimming powers. It was a common device of a hard-pressed Slovene to dive into a river and not emerge, breathing through a reed whose extremity was just above the surface. It required long experience and sharp eyes to see the end of the reed and detect the fugitive.

The Slavs believed in a supreme God, Svarog, the lord of lightning, who created the world out of the sand of the sea; in lesser gods, among whom was reckoned Trajan; and in all sorts of supernatural beings, good and bad (Bogy and Besy); for instance, in *vlkodlaks* or vampires, from which the modern Greek *Vroukolakas* is borrowed, in lake nymphs (*judi*) a sort of long-haired mermaids who draw down fishermen entangled in their locks to the depths below. The most interesting of these beings are the Samovili or Samodivi, who live and dance in the mountains. "They hasten swiftly through the air; they ride on earth on stags, using adders as bridles and yellow snakes as girdles. Their hair is of light colour. They are generally hostile to men, whose black eyes they blind and quaff", but they are friends of great heroes, and live with them as sworn sisters.

Until the last years of the fourth century, when the Visigothic soldiers took up their quarters in the land and exhausted it, the Balkan peninsula had enjoyed a long peace; and after the final departure of Alaric for Italy, it was allowed almost forty years of comparative freedom from the invasions of foes to recover its prosperity. But the rise of the Hunnic monarchy under Attila in the countries north of the Danube meant that evil days were in store for it; and the invasions of the barbarian Attila, a scourge far worse than the raids of Alaric, reduced the plains and valleys of Thrace and Illyricum to uncultivated and desert solitudes, the inhabitants fleeing to the mountains. And when the Hunnic empire, that transitory phenomenon which united many nations loosely for a moment without any real bonds of law or interest, was dissipated, the races which had belonged to it, Germans and Slavs and Huns, hovered on the Danube watching their chance of plunder. The chief of these were the Ostrogoths, who, while they were a check on the Huns and on Germans more uncivilized than themselves, infested the lands of the Haemus, Illyria, and Epirus, until in 588 Theodoric, like Alaric, went westwards to a new home. The departure of the Ostrogoths was like the opening of a sluice; the Slaves and Bulgarians, whom their presence had kept back, were let loose on the Empire, and began periodical invasions. It must be noted that, beside the Ostrogoths, some non-German nations had settled in corners; the Satages and Alans in Lower Moesia, and Huns in the Dobrudza.

I have already mentioned what is known of these invasions in the reign of Anastasius, and how that Emperor built the Long Wall to protect the capital. The invasions continued in the reign of Justinian and throughout the sixth century, but the Bulgarians soon cease to be mentioned, and it appears probable that they were subjugated by the neighbouring Slaves.

No real opposition was offered to the invasions of the barbarians, until Mundus the Gepid, who afterwards assisted in quelling the Nika insurgents, defeated and repelled the Bulgarians in 530. For the following years, until 534, the Haemus provinces enjoyed immunity from the plunderers, owing to the ability of Chilbudius, master of soldiers in Thrace, who was appointed to defend the Danube frontier, and to the measures which were taken for strengthening the fortifications.

Besides the outer line of strong places on the river, an inner line of defence was made in 530, connecting Ulpiana and Sardica. But, in 534 the death of Chilbudius in a battle with the Slaves left the frontier without a capable defender, and the old ravages were renewed. A grand expedition in 540 penetrated to Greece, but the Peloponnesus was saved by the fortifications of the isthmus. Cassandrea, however, was taken, and the invaders crossed from Sestos to the coast of Asia Minor. The havoc wrought in this year throughout Thrace, Illyricum, and northern Greece was so serious that Justinian set about making new lines of defence on an extensive scale, which will presently be described.

Two Slavonic tribes are mentioned at this period, the Slovenes and the Antai or Wends. They did not differ from each other in either language or physical traits; both enjoyed kingless government of a popular nature, both worshipped one God, both were intolerant of the Greek and oriental conception of fate. Procopius relates that about this time hostilities arose between the two tribes, and the Slovenes conquered the Antai; but it has been conjectured that this is an ill-informed foreigner's account of a totally different transaction, namely the reduction of the Slavonic tribes by the Bulgarians. However this may be, it is certain that the Bulgarians (whom Procopius calls Huns), the Slovenes, and the Antai were in the habit of invading the Empire together, and that some bond must have united the two different races. It is to be observed, however, that it is the Slavs who are always in the foreground from this time forth, and that the Bulgarians are almost never mentioned; whence the reverse relation, namely the conquest of the Bulgarians by the Slavs, might seem more probable. Those Bulgarians of the sixth century had, it must be remembered, nothing to do with the foundation of the Bulgarian kingdom, which took place in the seventh century.

In 546 another Slavonic incursion took place, but on this occasion Justinian's principle of "barbarian cut barbarian" came into operation, and they were repulsed by the Heruls. Two years later the Slavs overran Illyricum

with a numerous army, and appeared before Dyrrachium, and in 551 a band of three thousand crossed the Danube unopposed and divided into two parties, of which one ravaged Thrace and the other Illyricum. Both were victorious over Roman generals; the maritime city of Toperus was taken; and the massacres and cruelties committed by the barbarians make the readers of Procopius shudder. In 552 the Slavs crossed the Danube again, intent on attacking Thessalonica, but the terror of the name of Germanus, who was then at Sardica preparing for an expedition to Italy, caused them to abandon the project and invade Dalmatia. At the beginning of Justinian's reign Germanus had inflicted such an annihilating defeat on the Antai that the Slaves looked upon him with fear and awe. The great expedition of Zabergan and the Cotrigur Huns (whom Boesler calls Bulgarians) in 558 was probably accompanied by Slavonic forces.

It is at this point that the Avars, whose empire considerably influenced the fortunes of the Slavs, appear on the political horizon of the West. But as their presence did not affect the Roman Empire until after the death of Justinian, we may reserve what is to be said of them for a future chapter.

The wall of Anastasius had been the first step to a system of fortifications for defending the peninsula. Justinian carried out the idea on an extensive scale by strengthening old and building new forts in Thrace, Epirus, Dardania, Macedonia, Thessaly, and southern Greece.

To protect Thrace there was first of all a line of fifty-two fortresses along the Danube, of which Securisma (or Securisca) and others were founded by Justinian, while the rest were strengthened and improved. South of the Danube, in Moesia, there were twenty-seven strong fortresses. On the Sea of Marmora Rhoedestus was built, a steep and large sea-washed town, while Perinthus (Heraclea) was provided with new walls. The walls that hedged in the Thracian Chersonese were restored. Sestos was made impregnable, and a high tower was erected at Elaius. Further west Aenus, near the mouth of the Hebrus, was surrounded with walls; while north-westward, in the regions of Rhodope and the Thracian plain, one hundred and three castles were restored. Trajanopolis (on Hebrus), Maximianopolis, and Doriscus were secured with new walls; Ballurus was converted into a fortified town; Philippopolis and Plotinopolis, on the Hebrus, were restored and strengthened; while Anastasiopolis was secured by a cross wall.

The middle Danube was in the same way lined with castles and fortified towns, protecting the frontier of Illyricum; the most important were Singidon (Singidunum, now Belgrade), Octavum, eight miles to the west, Pincum, Margus, Viminacium, Capus, and Novae. In Dardania, Justinian's native province, eight new castles were built, and sixty-one of older date restored. When invaders had penetrated this second line of fortresses they entered Macedonia, where a third system of strong defenses obstructed their path. We are told that forty-six forts and towers were restored or built in this district. Among those which were restored may be mentioned Cassandrea, which had been taken by the Slovenes, and among those which were newly built we may note Artemisium in the neighbourhoods of Thessalonica.

From Macedonia an invader might pass either southwards into Thessaly or westwards into Epirus. In Thessaly the fortified towns of Demetrias (the "fetter of Greece"), Thebae, Pharsalus, Metropolis, Gomphi, and Tricca formed a line of works across the country. The walls of Larissa were restored by Justinian, and new towns, Centauropolis, on Mount Pelion, Eurymene, and Caesarea (probably new), testified to the Emperor's anxiety to protect his subjects. If an enemy wished to proceed into Greece, supposing that he had succeeded in entering the Thessalian plains, it was necessary for him to overpower or elude the garrison of two thousand men who were stationed in the fortresses that guarded the memorable defile of Thermopylae. These fortresses were restored and strengthened, the walls were made higher and more solid, the bastions and battlements were doubled, and cisterns were provided for the use of the garrison. The town of Heraclea, not far from Thermopylae, was also the object of imperial solicitude; the Euripus was protected by castles; the walls of Plataea, Athens, and Corinth were renewed, and the wall across the isthmus was solidified and improved by watch-towers. If, on the other hand, the foe turned his course westward, Justinian had secured those regions by erecting thirty-two new forts in the New Epirus, twelve new forts in the Old Epirus, and rehabilitating about twenty-five in each province.

In regard to this elaborate system of fortification, which was a conspicuous and not dishonourable feature of Justinian's reign, we must notice that he adopted an architectural innovation. Old-fashioned fortresses had been content with single towers, the new erections of Justinian were on a larger scale, and were crowned with many towers. It was probably found that the barbarians, who had learned a little about the art of besieging since they came into contact with the Empire, were not baffled by the one-towered battlements, and that stronger forts were necessary.

We cannot hesitate to assume that these measures of Justinian were of great service for resisting the Slavonic and subsequent Avaric invasions. But it must be observed that some of them were intended as barriers not only against external invaders, but also against barbarians who had settled within the boundaries of the Empire. This, we are told expressly, was the case with the renovation of Philippopolis and Plotinopolis. We cannot doubt that these barbarian settlers were Slavs.

CHAPTER XIII

CHANGES IN THE PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

The changes which were made by Justinian in the provincial administration were only of a partial nature, but they are nevertheless important, because they form a stage of transition between the arrangement of Diocletian and the later Thematic system which was developed in the seventh and eighth centuries.

In the earlier system, instituted by Diocletian and Constantine, three points are especially prominent—(1) the separation of the civil from the military administration; (2) the hierarchical or ladder-like principle by which not only the praetorian prefect intervened between the Emperor and the provincial governors, but vicarii or diocesan presidents intervened between the provincial governors and the praetorian prefect; (3) the tendency to break up provinces into smaller divisions.

On the other hand, the Thematic system, of which I shall speak in a future chapter, was characterized by features exactly the reverse. Civil and military administration are combined in the hands of the same governor; the principle of intermediate dioceses has disappeared, as well as the principle of praetorian prefectures; and the districts of the governors are comparatively large.

It is then instructive to observe that, though Justinian made no thoroughgoing change in the system that had prevailed during the fourth and fifth centuries, almost all the particular changes which he did introduce tended in the direction of the later system. In certain provinces he invested the same persons with military, civil, and fiscal powers; he did away with some of the diocesan governors, and he combined some of the small divisions to form larger provinces. These changes were made in the years 535 and 536 *ad*.

(1.) “In certain of our provinces, in which both a civil and a military governor are stationed, they are continually conflicting and quarrelling with each other, not with a view to the benefit, but with a view to the greater oppression of the subjects; so we have thought it right in these cases to combine the two separate charges to form one office, and to give the old name of praetor to the new governor”.

This principle was applied in three cases at the same time (18th May 535). The *praeses* of Pisidia was invested with authority over the military forces stationed in the province, and so likewise the *praeses* of Lycaonia. Each of these officers ceased to be called *praeses*, and assumed the more glorious title of *praetor Justinianus*, which was accompanied with the rank of *spectabilis*. The *vicarius Thraciarum*, or governor of the Thracian diocese, and the master of soldiers in Thrace (officers whose spheres, as experience proved, tended to conflict) were abolished and superseded by a *praetor Justinianus per Thraciam* invested with civil, military, and fiscal powers.

The same principle had been adopted just a month before in the case of the new Justinianean counts of Phrygia Pacatiana and First Galatia. It was adopted two months later in the case of the new Justinianean moderator of Helenopontus and the new Justinianean praetor of Paphlagonia; and in the following year (536) it was applied to the new proconsul of Cappadocia and the proconsul of the recently formed province of Third Armenia.

In Egypt this principle had been practically operative under the old system; in the turbulent district of Isauria the governor (count of Isauria) was invested with both military and civil powers; the duke of Arabia also held the double office. But the point is that these exceptions were recognized as opposed to the general principle, and it was attempted to bring them into accordance with that general principle by the fiction that the count of Isauria, for example, represented two separate persons; he held, as it were, the civil power in his right hand and the military power in his left, and his right hand was not supposed to know what his left hand was doing. Justinian introduced a new principle and a new kind of governor, in whose hands the two functions were not merely put side by side but were organically united. The truth of this is distinctly demonstrated by the fact that he was obliged to reorganize the office of count of Isauria so that the military and civil powers should cohere. It should be noticed that the epithet *Justinianus* is only connected with the titles of such new governors as were vested with the double function. The new *moderator* of Arabia, who was purely a civil officer, did not receive the imperial name.

(2.) In 535 *ad* (15th April) three diocesan governors were abolished. The vicar of Asiana became the *comes Justinianus* of Phrygia Pacatiana, invested with civil and military powers and enjoying the rank of a “respectable”. On the same conditions the vicar of the Pontic diocese became the *comes Justinianus* of Galatia Prima. The count of the East was deprived of his authority over the Orient diocese and, retaining his “respectable” rank, became the civil governor of Syria Prima.

The first change and the third change were permanent, but the abolition of the vicar of Pontica was revoked in 548 *AD*.

(3.) Justinian united the *praesidial* provinces of Helenopontus and Pontus Polemoniacus to form one large province, under the command of a governor entitled *moderator Justinianus*. The new province was called Helenopontus, in preference to the other name, because it seemed fitter to continue to commemorate the name of St. Helen than to adopt a title which not only preserved the memory of a “tyrant” but also suggested war.

In the same way the province of Honorias, which had obeyed a *praeses*, and the province of Paphlagonia, which had obeyed a *corrector*, were welded together; the new province was called Paphlagonia, and the new governor was a *praetor Justinianus*.

These changes were made 16th July 535. In the following year, 18th March, the two provinces of Cappadocia (prima and secunda) were incorporated under the rule of a proconsul entrusted with the civil, fiscal, and military administration.

A curious combination of provinces under a single governor was the so-called prefecture of the Five Provinces. Cyprus and Rhodes, the Cyclades, Caria, Moesia, and Scythia were placed under the administration of a *quaestor exercitui*, who resided at Odessus. It would be very interesting to know the reasons for this strange arrangement, but unfortunately we do not possess an original document on the subject.

In 535 Justinian made a redistribution of the most easterly districts of the old diocese of Pontica. No change had taken place in the two provinces of Armenia, which were marked in the *Notitia* up to this year, except that First Armenia, which had been a *praesidial*, had become a consular province. Justinian formed four provinces in Armenia, partly by rearranging the two old provinces, partly by mutilating the province of Helenopontus, partly by incorporating new territory in the provincial system.

The new First Armenia, which had the privilege of being governed by a proconsul, included four towns of the old First Armenia, namely Theodosiopolis, Satala, Nicopolis, and Colonea, and two towns of the old Pontus Polemoniachus, Trapezus and Cerasus. The once important town of Bazanis or Leontopolis received the name of the Emperor, and was elevated to the rank of the metropolis.

The new Second Armenia, placed under a *praeses*, corresponded to the old First Armenia, and included its towns Sebastea and Sebastopolis. But in lieu of the towns which had been handed over to the new First Armenia, it received Komana, Zela, and Brisa from the new province of Helenopontus.

The province of Third Armenia, governed by a *comes Justinianus* with military as well as civil authority, corresponded to the old Second Armenia, and included Melitene, Arca, Arabissus, Cucusus, Ariarathea, and Comana (Chryse).

Fourth Armenia was a province new in fact as well as in name; it consisted of the Roman district beyond the Euphrates to the east of Third Armenia. It was governed by a consular, and the metropolis was Martyropolis.

One may at first think that Justinian unnecessarily altered the names, and that he might have continued to call the old Second Armenia, whose form he did not change, by the same name. His principle was geographical order. The new trans-Euphratesian province went naturally with the district of Melitene, and therefore the Second Armenia became the Third, because it was connected with what it was most natural to call the Fourth. This connection was real, because the consular of Fourth Armenia was to be in a certain way dependent on the count of Third Armenia, who was to hear appeals from the less important province. In the same way the new First and Second Armenias naturally went together, and therefore it was convenient that the numbers should be consecutive. The *praeses* of Second was dependent to a certain extent on the proconsul of First Armenia.

The elevation of the *praeses* of Phoenicia Libanesia to the rank of a *moderator* and that of the *praeses* of Palestine Salutaris to the rank of a proconsul, with authority to supervise and intervene in the affairs of Second Palestine, illustrate the tendency, which is apparent in most of Justinian's innovations, to raise the rank and powers of minor governments. This went along with the tendency to detract from the powers of the greater governors, like the praetorian prefect of the East, whose office was destined before long to die a natural death, or the count of the East, who had already been degraded to the position of a provincial governor.

In all these reforms the double aspect of Justinian's policy strikes us. He is a great innovator, and yet throughout he professes to revoke ancient names and restore ancient offices. In his constitution on the new praetor of Pisidia he appeals to the existence of the old praetors under the Roman Republic, of Sicily, Sardinia, Spain, etc., and asserts that he is "introducing antiquity with greater splendour into the Republic, and venerating the name of the Romans". He discourses on the antiquity of the Pisidian and Paphlagonian peoples, and does not disdain to introduce mythical traditions. And when he establishes a proconsul in Palestine he defends his constitution not only by the fact that this land was in early time a proconsular province, but by the circumstance that it had ancient memories. Reference is made to the connection of Vespasian and Titus with it, and above all to the fact that there "the Creator of the universe, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God and salvation of the human race, was seen on earth and deigned to dwell in our lands".

The general import of the details which I have given in this chapter is sufficiently clear. From the beginning of the Empire up to the sixth century the tendencies had been to differentiate the civil from the military administration, to break up large into lesser provinces, and to create an official hierarchy. These three tendencies might all be considered modes of a more general tendency to decrease the power and dignity of the individual provincial governor; and though, as a matter of fact, this motive did not historically determine them, yet such was their effect. The reaction began in the reign of Justinian, and an opposite movement set in to integrate the provinces and increase the powers of the governors. The organization of the newly recovered provinces in the West conformed to this principle; the praetor of Sicily and the exarch of Italy were invested with military as well as civil and fiscal powers, and were directly responsible to the Emperor; and the principle was also, though not at first, adopted in Africa. This tendency continued till about the ninth century, about which time some of the large districts, which had been formed in the meantime, began to break up into smaller unities.

CHAPTER XIV

THE GEOGRAPHY OF EUROPE AND THE END OF JUSTINIAN'S REIGN

The events which occurred in the reign of Justinian produced considerable changes in the map of Europe. The kingdom of the Ostrogoths in Italy disappeared, and the kingdom of the Vandals in northern Africa, which though not strictly European was distinctly within the sphere of European politics and may be regarded as European, had also disappeared; Africa and Italy were once more provinces of the Roman Empire. In Spain too the Romans had again set foot, and some cities both east and west of the Straits of Gibraltar, including Malaga, Carthago, and Corduba, acknowledged the sovereignty of Justinian and his successors.

This phenomenon, the recovery by the Roman Empire of lands which it had lost, was repeated again in later times. In each case we may observe three stages. At the beginning of the fifth century, under the dynasty of Theodosius, the Empire was weakened and lost half its territory to Teutonic nations; then under the dynasty of Leo I the reduced Empire strengthened itself internally; and this consolidation was followed by a period of expansion under the dynasty of Justin. Again, in the seventh century the limits of the Empire were further reduced by Saracens and Bulgarians under the dynasty of Heraclius, and internally its strength became enfeebled; then under the house of the Isaurian Leo it regained its vigour in the eighth century; and in the ninth and tenth centuries, under the Macedonian dynasty of Basil, lost territory was reconquered and the Empire expanded. In neither case were all the lost provinces won back, and in both cases the new limits very soon began to retreat again.

If we compare the map of Europe in 565 with the map of Europe in 395 we see that the Romans may be said to have won back the lands which constituted the prefecture of Italy; but this general statement requires two modifications. In the north-east corner provinces which had been included in that prefecture, Pannonia, Noricum, and Rhaetia, remained practically in the possession of barbarians; and in the south-east districts were recovered which had belonged, not to the prefecture of Italy, but to the prefecture of Gaul, namely southeastern Spain, the province of Tingitana which faces it, and the Balearic islands. It might have seemed that the charm of the Roman name and the might of Roman arms, issuing no longer from the city of the Tuscan Tiber but from the city of the Thracian Bosphorus, were destined to enthral Europe again, and that the career of conquest begun by Belisarius would be continued by his successors in the lands once known as "the Gauls" against the Visigoths, the Suevi, the Franks, and the Saxons; but Belisarius and Justinian had no successors. North-western Europe was destined, indeed, to become part once more of a Roman Empire, but a bishop of Old Rome, not an Emperor of New Rome, was to bring this about, two hundred and thirty-five years hence.

The new acquisitions of the Roman Empire were not the only new facts which appear on the face of a historical map. There were other new acquisitions made by the Frank kingdom, the very power which was in future years to erect a rival Roman Empire. During the reign of Justinian the kingdom of the Thuringians, the kingdom of the Burgundians, and the kingdom of the Bavarians were incorporated in the kingdom of the Franks. The once Roman island of Britain, now the scene of wars between its Anglo-Saxon conquerors and the old Britons, had so completely passed out of the sphere of the Empire's consciousness, if I may use the expression, that Procopius relates a supernatural legend of it, as of a mystic land. He calls it Brittia, reserving the old name Britannia for Brittany, and mentions that the king of the Franks claimed some sort of suzerainty over it, and on one occasion attached Angles to an embassy which he sent to Byzantium, in order to show that he was lord of the island. According to the strange and picturesque legend, which Procopius records but does not believe, the fishermen and farmers who live on the northern coast of Gaul pay no tribute to the Frank kings, because they have another service to perform. At the door of each in turn, when he has lain down to sleep, a knock is heard, and the voice of an unseen visitant summons him to a nocturnal labour. He goes down to the beach, as in the constraint of a dream, and finds boats heavily laden with invisible forms, wherein he and those others who have received the supernatural summons embark and ply the oars. The voyage to the shore of Brittia is accomplished in the space of an hour in these ghostly skiffs, though the boats of mortals hardly reach it by force of both sailing and rowing in a day and a night. The unseen passengers disembark in Brittia, and the oarsmen return in the lightened boats, hearing as they depart a voice speaking to the souls.

Two other changes must be noticed which took place in that region of wandering and shifting barbarians on the banks of the Ister. The Lombards dwelled on the left bank of the Ister when Justinian ascended the throne; when Justin II acceded their habitations were in Pannonia, the land of the Drave and the Save. The kingdom of the Gepids, which was bounded on both the south and the west side by the Ister, remained tolerably stationary during the whole reign. But in the latter years of Justinian a new people had established itself to the east of the Gepids, on the lower Ister—the Avars, a Hunnic people who were destined to influence the fortunes of the Balkan peninsula and the Danube countries for the space of less than a hundred years, then to sink into insignificance, and finally to disappear. Their arrival was fatal for the short-lived kingdom of the Gepids, which was crushed, two years after Justinian's death, by the united forces of the Lombards and the Avars.

We may now consider some special points respecting the western conquests of Justinian.

Immediately after the overthrow of the Vandal kingdom Africa was placed under the jurisdiction of a praetorian prefect, and thus rendered co-ordinate with Illyricum and the Orient. The act by which this administrative arrangement was made is preserved in the Codex, and possesses extreme importance for students of the history of the Roman civil service.

The new prefecture included the four provinces which composed the vicariate of Africa in the fourth century, and the privileged province, which was governed then by a proconsul. But in addition to these five provinces it comprised Tingitana, which in old days belonged to the vicariate of Spain, and Sardinia, which belonged to the vicariate of Urbs Roma. Of the seven provinces four were governed by consulars by the new arrangement, Byzacium, Tripolis, Carthago (that is Africa), and Tingitana; of these Tripolis and Tingitana had formerly been under *praesides*, while Africa had been governed by a proconsul who was independent of the *vicarius*. The other three provinces were placed under *praesides*; for Numidia, formerly a consular province, this was a degradation in rank.

The praetorian prefect, whose residence was fixed at Carthago, was to have a bureau of 396 officials. Another constitution which was passed at the same time established military dukes in various provinces.

When the troubles which immediately resulted from the circumstances attending the conquest of Africa had been allayed, the prosperity of the Libyan provinces seems to have revived. The praetorian prefects were endowed with military authority, contrary to the original intention, and afterwards received, vulgarly if not officially, the appellation of exarch; and they were successful in defending their territory against the inroads of the Moors. John, the brother of Pappus, gained such brilliant victories over the Moorish chiefs, two of whom were compelled to attend on him as slaves, that the African poet of the imperial restoration, Flavius Cresconius Corippus, thought himself justified in making him the hero of an eponymous poem, the *Johannis*. Paulus was praetorian prefect of Africa in 552, John (presumably the brother of Pappus) in 558, and Areobindus in 563, but we hear little more of Africa until the reign of Maurice, when the Exarch Gennadius dealt treacherously with the Moors, who had been harassing the provinces, and paralyzed their hostilities.

The new connection of Sardinia with Africa was not unnatural. Like Sicily, it had generally played a part in the dealings of Rome with her enemies in Africa. It had played a part seven hundred and fifty years ago in the Punic wars; it had been connected with the war against the Moor Gildo in the reign of Honorius; recently it had been involved in the fortunes or misfortunes of Africa, and included in the kingdom of the Vandals. It was therefore natural to include it in the new prefecture which was raised on the ruins of that kingdom.

The German power which had established itself in northern Africa had passed away, as the German power which had established itself on the middle Danube was soon to pass away, without leaving any permanent trace of its existence; neither the Gepids nor the Vandals left a historical name or monument behind them, except indeed the old and improbable derivation of Andalusia from Vandalusia prove to be really correct. In this respect the Gepids and the Vandals contrast with the Burgundians and the Thuringians, whose kingdoms were overthrown, but whose names still survive.

It is a common remark that the extermination of the Vandal power by the Romans is a thing to be regretted rather than rejoiced in, and that Justinian removed what might have proved a barrier to the westward advance of the Saracens at the end of the seventh century. I think that this view can be shown to rest on a misconception. In the first place, it is hard to believe that the Vandals would have been able to present any serious resistance to the Arabs; at the end of the fifth century their kingdom was in a state of decline, and it seems probable that it could never have lasted until the end of the seventh century. It seems more probable that if it had not fallen a prey to the Romans it would have fallen a prey to a worse enemy, the Moors; and it seems certain that, even had it escaped Moors as well as Romans, it would have collapsed when the first Saracens set foot on the land. For the domestic condition of the Vandal state must have absolutely precluded all chance of a revival of strength. The kingdom was divided against itself, the native provincials hated their conquerors, who were daily growing more supine and less warlike, and there is no likelihood that an amalgamation would ever have taken place. And, secondly, even granting—what seems utterly improbable—that the Vandals could have held Africa even as effectually as the Romans, it was far more in the interests of European civilization that the Romans should occupy it, for Africa proved the safety of the Empire at one of its most critical moments—the occasion of the dethronement of Phocas; and on the Empire mainly depended the cause of European civilization. But, thirdly, if we entertain the still wilder supposition that the Vandals would really have been able to stem the tide of the Asiatic wave which rolled through Africa to Spain, it is very doubtful whether that would have promoted the interests of Europe; for though the Saracen lords of Cordova were Mohammedans and Asiatics, it cannot be denied that their sojourn in Spain was conducive in a marked degree to the spread of culture in the West.

If we are to indulge in speculations of what might have been had something else not been, we might suppose that no Imperial revival of an expansive nature took place, that the Vandals continued to live at their ease and persecute the Catholics in Africa, and that Ostrogothic kings continued to be the “lords of things”, *domini rerum*, in Italy. Starting with this supposition, it would be natural enough to imagine further that the events of the Punic wars might be repeated; that the Goths of Italy might invade Africa and overthrow the effete Vandal kingdom just as the Romans had overthrown the Carthaginian republic; and that so the Ostrogoths, who were already in southern Gaul neighbours of their kinsmen the Visigoths, might become their neighbours also at the Pillars of Hercules. And thus,—Italy, Sicily, Africa, Spain, and southern Gaul belonging to Visigoths and Ostrogoths,—we can form the conception of a Gothic empire round the western Mediterranean basin, an empire which might have spread northward and eastward like the Roman Empire of old. Such imaginary displacements of fact sometimes serve to illustrate the import of the events which actually took place.

Sicily, which performed the double function of being a stepping-stone to Africa and a stepping-stone to Italy for the “Roman” invaders, was placed soon after its conquest under the government of a praetor, who was endowed with both civil and military authority. Its administration remained, even after the conquest of Italy, independent of the governor, who resided at Ravenna. According to the old order which existed in the fifth century before the reign of Odovacar, Sicily was governed by a consular who was responsible to the vicar of Urbs Roma.

After the partial conquest of Italy by Belisarius the new acquisitions seem to have been placed under a praetorian prefect, on the same basis as Africa, the military and the civil functions being kept distinct. But this arrangement was only temporary, and after the complete and final conquest of the land by Narses the system was adopted of combining the controls of civil, fiscal, and military affairs in the hands of one supreme governor. This principle had already been introduced in many provinces in the East, and had been adopted in Sicily. It is a little strange that it was not immediately adopted in Africa, where, however, the disturbed state of the country soon led to its introduction.

It is evident that a new name was required for the new governor. The title prefect, , from being originally purely military, had come to be associated with purely civil functions, while the title *magister militum* was, on the face of it, purely military. The new, or revived, names which Justinian had given to the governors of provinces in whose hands he united the two authorities, praetor, proconsul or moderator, were manifestly unsuitable for the governor-general of Italy. Italy was a large aggregate of provinces, as large as the prefecture of Illyricum, and it would have been absurd to place its governor on a level in point of title with the praetor of Sicily, the proconsul of Cappadocia, or the moderator of Helenopontus. It was eminently a case for a new name, and accordingly a nondescript Greek name, which was applied to various kinds of officers, was chosen, and the governor of Italy was called the *exarch*; but as he was always a patrician, it was common to speak of him in Italy as the *Patrician*.

We are not informed into what provinces the exarchate of Italy was divided during the fifteen years of its existence before the Lombard invasion. The praetor of Sicily probably remained independent of the exarch, while on the other hand it is possible that the administration of Sardinia may have been separated from Africa, and, like her sister island Corsica, connected with Italy. We may say that the district governed by the exarch corresponded very closely to the joint dioceses of Italy and Illyricum; and we may suppose that, as in Africa, the old distribution of provinces was in the main adopted. In regard to these provinces, it is important to observe that the signification of the word Campania had altered as long ago as the fourth century, and now comprised Latium. Rome herself, however, was perhaps even at this time, as she certainly was in the eighth century, included not in Campania, but in Tuscia, as Etruria was now called. In old days men spoke of the Tuscan Tiber; in the Middle Ages men could speak of Tuscan Rome.

The circumstance that Romans not living at Latin Rome and regarded by the Italians as strangers should have conquered Italy is one of the curiosities of history. The Romans, Romaioi, who came with Belisarius were looked upon as Greeks, and spoken of with a certain contempt by the provincials as well as by the Goths. They were not, however, all Greek-speaking soldiers, a very large number were barbarians; but it is probable that very few spoke Latin. Nevertheless it might be said that they represented a Latin power, for the native language of the Emperor Justinian was Latin. He often opposes "our native tongue" to the "common Hellenic speech", and laws were promulgated in Latin as well as in Greek. Latin Italy was not yet out of touch with the Roman Empire. Yet nothing illustrates more clearly the fact that the Empire was becoming every year more Greek in character than the history of its Italian dependencies. It succeeded in Hellenizing the southern provinces, and it was just these provinces that remained longest subject to its authority.

The Greek characteristics of the Empire under Justinian are calculated to suggest vividly the process of ebb and flow which is always going on in the course of history. Just ten centuries before, Greek Athens was the bright centre of European civilization. Then the torch was passed westward from the cities of Hellenism, where it had burned for a while, to shine in Latin Rome; soon the rivers of the world, to adapt an expression of Juvenal, poured into the Tiber. Once more the brand changed hands; it was transmitted from the temple of Capitoline Jupiter, once more eastward, to a city of the Greek world—a world, however, which now disdained the impious name "Hellenic", and was called "Romaic". By the shores of the Bosphorus, on the acropolis of Graeco-Roman Constantinople, the light of civilization lived, pale but steady, for many hundred years, longer than it had shone by the Ilissus, longer than it had gleamed by the Nile or the Orontes, longer than it had blazed by the Tiber; and the church of St. Sophia was the visible symbol of as great a historical idea as those which the Parthenon and the temple of Jupiter had represented, the idea of European Christendom. The Empire, at once Greek and Roman, the ultimate result to which ancient history, both Greek history and Roman, had been leading up, was for nine centuries to be the bulwark of Europe against Asia, and to render possible the growth of the nascent civilization of the Teutonic nations in the West by preserving the heritage of the old world.

CHAPTER XV

BYZANTINE ART

An account of the reign of Justinian would be incomplete without a chapter on the architectural works of his reign and the school of the Christian Ictinus, Anthemius of Tralles; and this leads us to speak of "Byzantine" art in general. "Romaic" art, one might think, would be a more suitable name to distinguish it from "Romanesque", which developed in the West on parallel lines and out of the same elements; for so-called Byzantine art was not confined to Byzantium, and "Byzantine" has no right to a wider signification.

In the first place, it may be observed that the antagonism of Christians to ancient art has often been misrepresented. Christians, like pagans, loved to decorate their houses with statues; the Christian city of Constantine was a museum of Greek art. In the fourth century, at all events, little trace is left of the earlier prejudice against pictures and images which was derived from the Semitic cradle of the new religion. Christians adopted old mythological ideas, and gave them an interpretation agreeing with the conceptions of their creed. The representations of Christ as the Good Shepherd, which were so common, were closely connected with the Greek type of Hermes Kriophoros; and in the catacombs we find an Orpheus-Christ. The nimbus that surrounds the head of a saint in Christian paintings was derived from the pictures of heathen gods of light; the rape of Proserpine is portrayed on the tomb of Vibia. With such symbolism we may compare the habit of dedicating churches on the sites of temples to some Christian saint who offered some similitude in name or attribute to the god who had been worshipped in the old temple. A church of St. Elias often replaced a sanctuary of Apollo the sun-god, on account of the Greek name Helios; and temples of Pallas Athene might be converted into shrines of the Virgin. It was the same clinging to old forms, in spite of their inconsistency with the new faith, that induced the Phrygians to call themselves Chrestianoï instead of Christianoï, and to speak of Chrestos instead of Christos. In architecture and all branches of art the Christians had to accept and modify pagan forms; just as they employed the materials of Greek and Roman temples, especially the columns, in building their churches.

The two kinds of art which come before us at this period pre architecture and mosaic. Sculpture had practically died out with the old Greek spirit itself. For in the first place there was no longer any comprehension of the beauty of the human form; the days of the gymnasia had passed away; and in the second place taste had degenerated, and men sought and admired splendour of effect rather than beauty of form. So it was that colossal pillars like that of Marcian, which seem imposing because they are monstrous, had become popular; and for the statues of Emperors and others, which were still executed, precious metals or showy substances like porphyry were selected in preference to marble. In addition to these circumstances there was another reason which tended to render sculpture obsolete. Christians had adopted the basilica as the most usual form of their places of worship, and it was evident that plaques or mosaics could fill the walls better. Work in mosaic was more permanent, more costly, and more brilliant than painting, and many splendid specimens are still preserved, especially in the churches of Ravenna and Thessalonica.

The basilica and the rotunda were the chief forms of Christian churches in the fourth and fifth centuries. In each case there were problems to be solved. In the basilica the architect was met by the difficulty of combining the Roman arch with the Greek column. In the case of the rotunda it seemed desirable to associate the dome with other than circular buildings; and of this problem two solutions were attempted. In the tomb of Galla Placidia at Ravenna we see the circular surrendered for a cruciform plan, and the cupola rising from the four corners. On the other hand the Byzantines enclosed the circular building in a square one, leaving a recess in each of the four angles, as in the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus in Constantinople, and the church of San Vitale at Ravenna. The dome was ultimately to be united with rectangular buildings, but this union was peculiarly Byzantine. The practice of placing a dome over part of a rectangular edifice was seldom adopted in the western architecture of those days.

The problem of uniting the arch with the column weighed especially upon the architect of basilicas. It was solved first at Salona in the peristyle of Diocletian's palace, as has been shown by Mr. Freeman, whose own words it will be well to quote. "To reach anything like a really consistent and harmonious style the problem was to find some means by which the real Roman system of construction might be preserved and made prominent, without casting aside a feature of such exquisite beauty as the Greek column, especially in the stately and sumptuous form into which it had grown in Roman hands. The problem was to bring the arch and column into union—in other words, to teach the column to support the arch. It strikes us that in the palace at Spalato we may see a series of attempts at so doing, a series of strivings, of experiments, one of which was at last crowned with complete success. Of these experiments some would seem to have been already tried elsewhere; of the successful one we know of no example earlier than Diocletian ... The arch was set over the column, but it was made to spring from the continuous entablature or from the broken entablature, or, as in the case of the Venetian windows, the entablature itself was made to take the form of an arch. All these attempts were more or less awkward ... but in the peristyle the right thing was hit upon; the arch was made to spring bodily from the capital of the column, and was moulded, not with the fine mouldings of the entablature, but with those of the architrave only ... The germ of Pisa and Durham and Westminster had been called into life".

The method by which the architects at Ravenna endeavoured to mediate between the column and the arch constitutes a special feature of early Byzantine architecture. It was evident that the entablature was but an awkward link between arch and capital, and the Ravennate architects relinquished it for a new form, a kind of super-capital called by the French *dossieret*. This is a reversed blunted pyramid with sides either convex or concave, the decoration generally consisting of monograms, crosses, or acanthus leaves in very low relief. It is seldom found as a plain block. In Ravenna one pillar in the church of Sta. Agatha has a plain square block between arch and capital, and we find similar blocks represented in the mosaics of San Apollinare Nuovo on the pillars of the palace of Theodoric. This new feature is a distinct step on the development of art called Byzantine; the horizontal structure and all its connections are being abandoned in favour of arches. This link between arch and column is a special feature of Ravenna, but we find it in the churches of St. Demetrius, the Holy Apostles, and Eski Djouma at Thessalonica, and elsewhere.

The architecture of Ravenna falls naturally into three periods, the age of Galla Placidia, the age of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, and the age of Justinian. San Giovanni in Fonte remains as an exquisite relic of the *Ucclesia Ursiana* built before the age of Placidia. Two churches built by Placidia herself were San Giovanni Evangelista and Sta. Croce. The former building now consists almost entirely of restorations; of the original work, executed to fulfil a vow made by the Empress when saved from a storm at sea, nothing remains but the pillars in the nave. Opposite Sta. Croce is the small dark church of SS. Nazario e Celso, built as a mausoleum by Placidia, and containing her own tomb. This building is in the form of a cross with neither nave nor pillars, adorned with arches and cylindrical vaults, and lined with mosaics. The walls outside are crowned by pediments with antique

horizontal cornices. We see here an interesting example of the antique and Byzantine styles blended, and for the first time a cupola placed upon a four-cornered building. The palace of the Laurelwood (*Lauretum*), built by Placidia and her son Valentinian, in which Theodoric slew Odovacar, no longer exists.

In the second period, the reign of Theodoric, was built one of the finest Byzantine basilicas, San Martino in Caelo Aureo, now called San Apollinare Nuovo. The date of the "Rotunda of Theodoric" is not unchallenged, and the remains of his palace, now the front of the Franciscan cloister, have perhaps some claim to be considered genuine, although the palace represented in the mosaics of San Apollinare points to a more antique style. Of the original San Martino only the nave remains, and in its gorgeous mosaics may be seen a further development of Byzantine art. Traces of the antique survive in some parts of the ornamentation and in the quasi-Corinthian capitals. No entirely new type of capital is seen in Byzantine architecture before the reign of Justinian; and until then the new art continued to use with more or less modification the old forms. In San Martino the Corinthian form is changed by a considerable widening at the top, and resembles the funnel shape of later Byzantine capitals. The wall veil of both sides of the nave is covered with mosaics; on one side is represented a line of martyrs going forth from Ravenna to the presence of Christ, and on the Mother a procession of virgins, clad in white, with palms in their hands, issuing from Classis, to offer adoration to the Virgin, who is waiting to receive them. In the representation of Ravenna the palace of Theodoric is conspicuous.

Two large and beautiful buildings erected in the reign of Justinian make that period remarkable in Ravennate architecture, the famous octagon San Vitale, the model of Charles the Great for the cathedral of Aachen, and San Apollinare in Classe, one of the most important basilicas in existence. The church of San Vitale was begun under the archbishop Ecclesius before Italy had been reconquered by the Romans; the building was executed by Julian Argehtarius, the Anthemius of Ravenna; and the church, completed after the imperial restoration, was dedicated by bishop Maximianus in 546. It is octagon in shape, and covered with a dome. To the east stretches a long choir, and seven semicircular niches break the walls of the seven other sides. A large portion of the interior is cased in elabs of veined marble of various colours. The apse, which is adorned with fine mosaics, is Byzantine in shape, semicircular within and three-sided without, and on either side is a semicircular chapel. The central mosaic represents the sacrifice of Isaac, while on either side is a picture, most suitable to decorate a building which may be considered the monument of the imperial restoration in Italy. On one side is represented Justinian in gorgeous apparel accompanied by the archbishop Maximianus, and attended by priests and officers; and on the opposite side another mosaic shows the Empress Theodora, also in magnificent attire, glittering with pearls and gems, and surrounded by her maidens. Justinian carries a casket and Theodora a goblet, probably containing thank-offerings to be placed on the altar. The original entrance to the building was on the west, but is now walled up, and the narthex, or, as it was called in Ravenna, the "ardica", is enclosed in the cloister. The columns have capitals of a new form, some funnel shaped, resembling the impost blocks, others basket shaped and adorned with network.

San Apollinare in Classe was begun under bishop Ursicinus, 534 *ad*, and completed and consecrated by Maximian in 549. In plan this great church is like the other basilicas of Ravenna. It has three naves, spanned on each side by arches supported by twelve columns. The pillars, now deep sunken in the floor, many standing in water, rest on Attic bases, very various in form. Their basket-shaped capitals are decorated with acanthus. The narthex is a striking feature of the building, being remarkably high and broad. On the wall veil of the naves above the arches are mosaic medallions representing the archbishops of Ravenna.

A few years before the foundations of the church of San Vitale were laid, a cathedral was built at Parentium, on the peninsula of Pola, by Euphrasius. To the artistic interest of this edifice is joined an historical association, derived from the fact that Euphrasius was appointed bishop of Parentium by Theodoric but built his cathedral after the city had passed into the hands of the Romans. Thus the stately building and its founder suggest the transition from the Ostrogothic to the Justinianean period. The cathedral is thus described by Mr. Jackson: "The church of Euphrasius is a specimen of the Byzantine style at its best. Classic tradition survives in the basilica plan, the long drawn ranks of serried marble pillars, and in the horizontal direction of the leading lines. But the capitals with their crisply ruffled foliage, emphasized by dark holes pierced with a drill which recall the fragility and brilliance of the shell of the sea echinus, belong to a new school of sculpture, and the massive basket capitals which are found among them as well as the second capital or impost block which surmounts them all, were novelties in architecture at the time of their erection. These buildings belong to the best school of Byzantine art, and were erected at the same period as those at Ravenna and Constantinople, which they resemble in every detail; and in the church of Parenzo especially one might imagine oneself in the ancient capital of the exarchs".

In the churches of Thessalonica we find the new art in its perfection, especially in its most original and peculiar development, the adorning of the domes with mosaic. The date of many of the churches of Thessalonica is uncertain, and modern specialists are much at variance on the subject. In some cases the buildings themselves afford evidence of great antiquity; for example, the atrium in the nave of St. Demetrius once contained a fountain, which points to the custom of ablution practised by Christians only in the earliest times, and the mosaic pictures in St. George's church of saints who lived before the time of Constantine suggest an early period. The theory, too easily adopted by travellers, that many of these churches were built on the sites of heathen temples has been contradicted and almost disproved by recent research.

Of the more ancient buildings in Thessalonica the churches of St. Demetrius and St. George are the most remarkable. The church of St. Demetrius is a basilica erected in honour of the saint early in the fifth century. The columns of the nave, of *verde antico* marble, are Ionic, and the carefully executed capitals might be called Corinthian but for the eagles with which they are adorned. The *dosserets*, which surmount the capitals, are marked with crosses, sometimes in the middle of foliage. The only decoration of this church consists of coloured marbles, and the effect is more temperate than if it were also embellished with mosaics.

The ancient church of St. George belongs to the class of circular buildings called "tholi", most of which are supposed to have been erected in the early part of the fourth century. It is probable that the dome, which even in

the time of Constantine was used in Christian architecture, was adopted from Persian and other oriental buildings. The opening at the top of the dome was convenient as an issue for the smoke of the fire-worshippers, while the followers of a mystic cult appreciated the gloom; for originally the cupola was lit from the top, as in the Pantheon at Rome. The octagon built by Constantine at Antioch was the model for numerous churches in the East. The entire decoration of the church of St. George consists of mosaics, and the eight pictures in the dome are perhaps the greatest work of the kind in existence. In these eight pictures are represented rich palaces, in a fantastic style, resembling those painted on the walls of Pompeii; columns ornamented with precious stones; pavilions closed by purple curtains floating in the wind, upheld by rods and rings; arcades without number, friezes decorated with dolphins, birds, palm-trees; and modillions supporting cornices of azure and emerald. In the centre of each of these compositions is a little octagonal or circular house, surrounded by columns and covered by a cupola; it is screened off by low barriers, and veils conceal the interior. A lamp suspended from the ceiling indicates its character; it is the new tabernacle or sanctum sanctorum of the Christians. A remarkable feature of this church are the eight quadrilateral chapels formed in the thickness of the walls at equal distances from one another. Some of these niches are ornamented with mosaic pictures of birds, flowers, and baskets of fruit.

The era of Justinian was the golden age of Christian art, and St. Sophia, its most perfect achievement, still remains, a wonder displaying all the resources of the new art, and a perpetual monument of the greatness of the Emperor and of the genius of Anthemius of Tralles. Of this master Agathias gives the following account:

“The city of Tralles was the birthplace of Anthemius, and he practised the art of inventions, by which mechanics, applying the abstract theory of lines to materials, fabricate imitations and, as it were, images of real things. In this art he excelled greatly and reached the highest point of mathematical science, even as his brother Metrodorus in so-called philology. I would certainly felicitate their mother on having brought into the world a progeny replete with such various learning, for she was also the mother of Olympius, who studied law and practised in the courts, and of Dioscorus and Alexander, both skilful physicians. Dioscorus lived in his native city, where he gave many remarkable proofs of his skill, and Alexander dwelt in Rome, having received an honourable call thither. But the fame of Anthemius and Metrodorus spread everywhere and reached the Emperor himself, on whose invitation they came to Byzantium and spent the rest of their lives there, and gave remarkable proofs of their respective talent. Metrodorus educated many noble youths, instructing them in his honourable branch of learning, and instilling diligently a love of literature in all. But Anthemius contrived wonderful works both in the city and in many other places which, I think, even if nothing were said about them, would suffice of themselves to win for him an everlasting glory in the memory of man as long as they stand and endure”.

The church dedicated by Constantine to the Divine Wisdom (*Ayia Sophia*) was twice burnt down, first in the reign of Arcadius, and again in the reign of Justinian during the Nika revolt. Forty days after the tumult had subsided the ruins were cleared away by order of the Emperor, and space was provided for a new church to be built on a much larger scale than the old. To Anthemius was entrusted the great work, and Isidore of Miletus and Ignatius were his assistants. The ancient temples of Asia and Greece were robbed of their most beautiful columns, and costly marbles, granite, and porphyry were brought from distant places, from Egypt, Athens, and the Cyclades, as well as from Proconnesus, Cyzicus, and the Troad. The length of the building is 241 feet, the breadth 224 feet; the ground plan represents a Greek cross, and the crowning glory of the work, the aerial dome, rises 179 feet above the floor of the church. Thus here, for the first time, the cupola is united on a large scale with a cruciform building. The dome is lit by forty windows built into the hemisphere itself, and rests lightly on four strong arches supported by massive pillars; its weight is lessened as much as possible by the use of light materials. On the east and west are two large half-domes, each lit by five windows. The oval shape of the nave is determined by these half-domes. At either side of the apse there is a smaller side-apse, and on the west, where the narthex corresponds to the apse, there are similar recesses. Two contemporary writers, Paul the Silentiary and Procopius the historian, were impressed with the marvellous brilliance of the interior owing to the skilful arrangement of the windows. “It is wonderfully filled with light and sun rays, you would say the sunlight grew in it”. The enclosing walls of the building are built of brick concealed under a coating of marble, and the interior presents a brilliant spectacle of costly marbles, porphyry, jasper, and mosaics, which adorn the walls and cupolas.

In the apse, between four silver columns, were placed the seats of the Patriarch and the priests, also of silver, and a barrier, 14 feet high, of the same metal, separated the *bema* from the nave of the church. This barrier contained the three sacred doors, and, resting on twelve columns, was a frieze, with medallions, on which amidst adoring angels were represented the Virgin, the Apostles, and the Prophets. A circular shield in the centre bore a cross and the united monograms of the Emperor and Empress. Before the barrier stood the golden altar supported by golden pillars, and over it the silver ciborium. The *solea*, immediately in front of the *bema*, and occupying the eastern extremity of the nave, contained seats for the lesser clergy: and in front of the *solea* was the *ambo*, a semicircular tribune approached by marble steps and covered with a pyramidal roof, borne by eight pillars and decorated with gems and precious metals. This tribune, under the eastern side of the central dome, was reserved for the singers and readers, and contained the coronation chair of the Emperor.

The aisles are separated from the nave and the four side-apses by arcade of pillars, and the upper rooms are domed. Of the hundred columns which adorn St. Sophia and form its stately arcades, the greater number are of green Thessalian marble (*verde antico*), and were the spoil of pagan temples. The eight large green columns in the nave were taken from the temple of Diana at Ephesus, and the eight columns of dark red Theban porphyry in the four side-apses originally stood in the temple at Heliopolis, whence Aurelian brought them to Rome; but, as the gift of a Roman lady, they were destined, with other spoils of paganism, to adorn a Christian church. Their capitals present an infinite variety of form. They are of Proconnesian marble, and were manufactured in Byzantine workshops; they transgress in shape and execution the traditions of classic art. They lack, however, a characteristic feature of earlier Christian architecture, the *dosseret* or impost block; Anthemius discarded the stilt. The larger and richer capitals are decorated with acanthus, palm leaves, or monograms, deeply cut, and, like the marble friezes, are generally gilt; the smaller capitals are plain, and in shape like a die blunted at the corners. The bases of the pillars (of the usual Attic form) the capitals and the cornices are of marble, chiefly white, but sometimes light grey. The pavement is of dark grey veined marble, chosen no doubt by the architect in pleasing

contrast to the rich and varied colour of the interior, with its slabs of many-tinted marbles, its profuse gilding, and brilliant mosaics.

There are nine entrances to the body of the church from the narthex, a narrow hall running across the whole extent of the building, and having at each end lofty vaulted halls. The space under the western semicupola communicates with the narthex by three doors, of which the largest in the centre was called the "king's door"; the west front of the narthex is coated with Proconnesian marble, and its upper story, connected with the rooms above the broad side-aisles, forms the *gynaikitis*, or women's gallery. Seven doors lead from the narthex into the outer narthex(exonarthex), a space enclosed by halls open from within, and vaulted and adorned with mosaic. In this court, where now stands a Turkish fountain and marble basin, stood a covered phiale (fountain), and in the niches of the walls were twelve lions' heads from which flowed a continuous stream of pure water.

Five years and eleven months after the laying of the foundations, St. Sophia was completed and consecrated by the Patriarch (26th December 537). Procopius thus describes it: "The church turned out a beautiful sight, colossal to spectators, and quite incredible to hearers; it was raised to a heavenly altitude, and like a ship at anchor, was eminent above the other edifices, overhanging the city".

When Anthemius saw his own handiwork in its stately strength towering over the city, or lingered under the mysterious firmament of the dome, he may have gloried in the success of his labours. One would think that the words used of Giotto in the cathedral at Florence might well have been said of Anthemius by a Politian of the Justinianean age: "His name shall be as a song in the mouths of men"; and yet how unfamiliar nowadays is the name of Anthemius.

St. Sophia became a model for the whole Christian world, and was copied in all large towns during the sixth and following centuries. Among these lesser churches dedicated to the Divine Wisdom the cathedral of Thessalonica holds the first rank. It is certainly of the school of Anthemius, and was probably contemporary with the great St. Sophia. The mosaics in the dome are of the very best school, and preserve to some extent the traditions of Roman art. The hemisphere of the apse is adorned with a mosaic picture of the Virgin, seated and holding the infant Christ. Either this design or a colossal figure of Christ was invariably chosen to decorate the hemisphere of Byzantine apses.

It has been already mentioned that sculpture in its classical form had died out, but smaller branches of the art were practised by the Byzantines. The reliefs on the Golden Gate and on the Pillars of Theodosius and Arcadius were not contemptible, and until the end of the fourth century gems were carved and coins struck in the antique style. After that period the workmanship of coins is inartistic and roughly-executed, and the art of carving gems declines. Chief among the smaller branches of sculpture was ivory carving, especially in the form of diptychs, which it was customary to present to the senate and the consuls, also to churches, and they were much used as new year's gifts. Their value was sometimes increased by the name of some celebrated divine carved upon them, or by the consecration of an inscribed prayer. The bishop's chair in the cathedral at Ravenna is a beautiful example of carved ivory.

Painting, however, had superseded all other forms of decorative art, and even in the sculptured adornments and reliefs of the new style the influence and features of painting may be traced in the grouping and general execution of the designs. The writers of this period make frequent mention of paintings in molten wax, a method described in the famous handbook of Mount Athos.

The illumination of manuscripts was a branch of art much cultivated by the Byzantines. M. Lenormant thus describes the famous *Codex Rossanensis*:

"Rossano possesses in the archives of its cathedral one of the most precious and incontestably genuine monuments of Byzantine art of the period before the Iconoclasts, and probably of the age of Justinian. I mean the manuscript known to the learned by the name of *Codex Rossanensis*, and whose existence MM. Oscar von Gebhardt and Adolf Harnack have recently been the first to discover. It is a magnificent volume, composed of 188 leaves of purple-tinted vellum, a foot long, on which the gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark are written in large silver letters in the form of rounded uncials ... But what lends to the Greek gospels of Rossano such great interest is the twelve large miniatures, which are still preserved, a last relic of rich illustrations which have been for the most part unhappily destroyed. Each of these miniatures occupies a whole page and is divided in two parts, the upper containing a subject from the gospels, and the lower four half-length figures of the prophets who foretold the event, each accompanied by the words of his prophecy. The paintings are certainly of the same date as the text, namely the sixth century. The execution is remarkable, the drawing compact, the composition clear and simple, the design exquisite, and the style antique".

In the use of symbols, a striking feature in Christian art, we observe the most frequent blending of pagan and Christian ideas. The Byzantines adopted the Greek custom of personifying nature, and in many instances classical forms were introduced, even in church paintings. In a Ravenna mosaic of the baptism of Christ, the Jordan is personified, and Theodoric represented himself on the gate of his palace, standing between two figures symbolizing Ravenna and Rome. The personifications of Victory and Fortune, Nike and Tyche, are frequent and familiar, and the gnostic sects employed a more intricate symbolism of abstract ideas on their engraved gems and inscriptions on metal. Numerous symbols were used for Christ and God the Father, and display a curious adoption of antique forms; and the resemblance borne by the representations of Christ on early Christian tombs to *Sol Invictus* and Serapis is remarkable. On Christian gravestones we find the letters D. M., D. M. S., and T. K., which suggest the *Dis manibus sacrum* of the ancients. Perhaps the consecrated ground hallowed the pagan words, just as gems with images of heathen gods were sanctified by a Christian inscription or the monogram of Christ, and were countenanced by the Church.

Thus in the development of Christian art the old classic traditions had been gradually abandoned, or remained only in allegory and mixed symbolism. The models of Greece and Rome became relics of the old world, curiosities to adorn museums. A new religion had displaced pagan mythology and philosophy, and naturally found an expression in new forms of art. And this new art, born in the atmosphere of triumphant Christianity, reached its perfection in Justinian's church of the Divine Wisdom, which still looks across the Bosphorus upon the sands of Chalcedon.

CHAPTER XVI

NOTES ON THE MANNERS, INDUSTRIES, AND COMMERCE IN THE AGE OF JUSTINIAN

The population of Constantinople at the beginning of the sixth century has been calculated at about a million. The greatest city in Europe, as it continued to be throughout the Middle Ages, and at the same time situated on the borders of Asia, it was full of Gepids, Goths, Lombards, Slaves, and Huns, as well as orientals; Abasgian eunuchs and Colchian guards might be seen in the streets. The money-changers in this mercantile metropolis were numerous, and probably lived in the Chalkoprateia, which in later times at least was a Jews' quarter. But the provincial subjects were not encouraged to repair to the capital except for strict purposes of business; and their visits were looked upon with such jealous eyes that as soon as their business was completed they were obliged to return home with all haste.

In the urban arrangements of Constantinople, for the comfort of whose inhabitants the Emperors were always solicitous, the law of Zeno, which provided for a sea prospect, is noteworthy. The height of the houses built on the hills overlooking the sea was regulated in such a way that the buildings in front should not interfere with the view from the houses behind. Besides the corn, imported from Egypt, which was publicly distributed to the citizens in the form of bread, the chief food of the Byzantines was salted provisions of various kinds—fish, cheese, or ham. Wine was grown in the surrounding district, and there was a good vegetable market. Of public amusements there was no lack. As well as the horse-races in the hippodrome, there were theatrical representations and ballets; and it is probable that troupes of acrobats and tight-rope dancers often came from Asia. A theatre, called by the suggestive name of "Harlots", is mentioned and recognized by the pious Justinian without a censure or a blush. Combats of men with wild animals, which had been abolished by the mild and heterodox Anastasius, were once more permitted under the orthodox and severer dynasty of Justin. Curious animals and prodigies were exhibited and attracted crowds; we hear, for example, of a wonderful dog which had the power of distinguishing the characters and conditions of human beings. This animal, whose inspiration was more formidable than if it had been mad with hydrophobia, singled out the courtesan, the adulterer, the miser, or the woman with child; and when the rings of a multitude of spectators were collected and cast before it in a heap, it returned each to the owner without making a mistake.

The conversation which took place in the hippodrome on the eve of the Nika sedition, while it illustrates the political life of the time, is also interesting and important as an example of the language then spoken at Byzantium, and altogether is sufficiently noteworthy and curious to deserve reproduction. In many places, however, the meaning is obscure. It was customary to permit the factions on special occasions to state their grievances to the Emperor. The demarch was the mouthpiece of the deme, and a *mandator* or herald replied for the sovereign.

Demarch of Greens. Long may you live, Justinian Augustus! *Tu vincas.* I am aggrieved, fair lord, and cannot endure the oppression, God knows. I fear to name the oppressor, lest he be increased and I endanger my own safety.

Mandator. Who is he? I know him not.

Demarch of Greens. My oppressor, o thrice august! is to be found in the quarter of the shoemakers.

Mandator. No one does you wrong.

Demarch of Greens. One man and one only does me wrong. Mother of God, let him never raise his head!

Mandator. Who is he? We know him not.

Demarch of Greens. Nay, you know best, o thrice august! who it is that oppresses me this day.

Mandator. We know not that any one oppresses you.

Demarch of Greens. It is Calapodius, the spathar (guardsman), who wrongs me, o lord of all!

Mandator. Calapodius is not in power.

Demarch of Greens. My oppressor will perish like Judas; God will requite him quickly.

Mandator. You come, not to see the games, but to insult your rulers.

Demarch of Greens. My oppressor shall perish like Judas.

Mandator. Silence, Jews, Manichaeans, and Samaritans!

Demarch of Greens. Do you disparage us with the name of Jews and samaritans. The Mother of God is with all of us.

Mandator. When will ye cease cursing yourselves.

Demarch of Greens. If any one denies that our lord the Emperor is orthodox, let him be anathema, as Judas.

Mandator. I would have you all baptized in the name of one God.

The Greens (tumultuously). I am baptized in One God.

Mandator. Really, if you won't be silent, I shall have you beheaded.

Demarch of Greens. Every person is anxious to be in authority, to secure his personal safety. Your Majesty must not be indignant at what we say in our tribulation, for the Deity listens to all complaints. We have good reason, o Emperor! to mention all things now. For we do not even know where the palace is, nor where to find any public office. I come into the city by one street only, sitting on a mule; and I wish I had not to come then, your Majesty.

Mandator. Every one is free to move in public, where he wishes, without danger.

Demarch of Greens. I am told I am free, yet I am not allowed to exhibit my freedom. If a man is free but is suspected as a Green, he is sure to be publicly punished.

Mandator. Have ye no care for your lives that ye thus brave death?

Demarch of Greens. Let this (green) colour be once uplifted—then justice disappears. Put an end to the scenes of murder, and let us be lawfully punished. Behold, the fountain is overflowing; punish as many as you like. Verily, human nature cannot tolerate the two things together (to be murdered by the Blues and to be punished by the laws). Would that Sabbates had never been born, to have a son who is a murderer. The sixth murder has taken place in the Zeugma; the victim was a spectator in the morning, in the afternoon, o lord of all! he was butchered.

Demarch of Blues. Yourselves are the only party in the hippodrome that has murderers among their number.

Demarch of Greens. When ye commit murder ye leave the city in flight.

Demarch of Blues. Ye shed blood for no reason. Ye are the only party here with murderers among them.

Demarch of Greens. o lord Justinian! they challenge us and yet no one slays them. Who slew the woodseller in the Zeugma, o Emperor?

Mandator. Ye slew him.

Demarch of Greens. Who slew the son of Epagathus, Emperor?

Mandator. Ye slew him too, and ye throw the blame on the Blues.

Demarch of Greens. Now have pity, o Lord God! The truth is in jeopardy. I should like to argue with them who say that affairs are managed by God. Whence comes this misery?

Mandator. God is incapable of causing evils.

Demarch of Greens. God, you say, is incapable of causing evils? Who is it then who wrongs me? Let some philosopher or hermit explain the distinction.

Mandator. Accursed blasphemers, when will ye hold your peace?

Demarch of Greens. If it is the pleasure of your Majesty, I am content, albeit unwillingly. I know all—all, but I say nothing. Goodbye, Justice! you are no longer in fashion. I shall turn and become a Jew. Better to be a "Greek" than a Blue, God knows.

Demarch of Blues. I hate you, I can't abide the sight of you,—your enmity harasses me.

Demarch of Greens. Let the bones of the spectators be exhumed!

[Exeunt the Greens.]

It will be noticed that in this dialogue the spokesman of the oppressed faction began with humble complaints; and the scene ended with open defiance. When the Greens marched out of the hippodrome, the Emperor sitting in the cathisma was left for a few moments alone with the Blues; but they quickly followed their enemies, and street conflicts ensued.

If we pass from these stray details of external life to consider the morality of the age, we are confronted on the one hand by the stern laws of Justinian for the repression of what he considered immorality, and his clement laws for the encouragement of reformation; on the other hand by a remarkable picture, painted by a secret hand, of the vice that prevailed in all classes of society. These data are not in opposition, for moral legislation presupposes the prevalence of immorality.

Two laws testify to the solicitude of Justinian for the liberty and protection of women. The earliest of them, issued in 534, made it illegitimate for any person to constrain a female, whether a freewoman or a slave, to appear against her will in a dramatic or orchestric performance. By the same act it was illegal for a lessee to prevent an actress from throwing up her theatrical engagement at any moment she pleased, and he was not even entitled to demand from her securities the money pledged for the fulfilment of her broken engagement. The duty or privilege of seeing that this law was carried out was assigned to the bishops as well as to the civil governors, against whose collusion with the managers of theatres episcopal protests may have been often necessary. It was also enacted that the profession of the stage, which in this age was almost synonymous with the trade of prostitution, should form no let or hindrance to the contraction of a legal marriage with the highest in the land. This liberation from disabilities of a degraded but necessary class is generally supposed to have been prompted by a personal episode in the life of the Emperor himself, whose wife Theodora seems to have been once an actress at Antioch.

The other law was published in the following year, and addressed to the citizens of Constantinople. It deals with the practice of enticing young girls away from their homes in order to hire them out for immoral purposes. It is best to quote a portion of Justinian's constitution on the subject:

"The ancient laws and former Emperors have regarded with extreme abhorrence the name and the trade of a brothel-keeper, and many laws have consequently been enacted against such. We have increased the penalties already defined, and in other laws have supplied the omissions of our predecessors. But we have been lately informed of iniquities of this kind which are being carried on in this great city, and we have not overlooked the matter. For we discovered that some persons live and maintain themselves in an outrageous manner, making accursed gain by abominable means. They travel about many countries and districts, and entice poor young girls by promising them shoes and clothes, and thus entrapping them, carry them off to this fortunate city, where they keep them shut up in their dens, supplying them with a miserable allowance of food and raiment, and place their bodies at the service of the public and keep the wretched fees themselves. And they draw up bonds by which girls bind themselves to this occupation for a specified time, nay, they even sometimes ask the money back from the securities [if a girl escapes]. This practice has become so outrageous, that throughout almost the whole of this imperial city and its suburbs over the water [at Chalcedon and Pera], and, worst of all, in close proximity to churches and saintly houses, dens of such a kind exist; and acts so iniquitous and illegal are perpetrated in our times that some persons, pitying the girls, desired to deliver them from this occupation and place them in a position of legal cohabitation, but the procurers did not permit it. Some of these men are so unholy as to corrupt girls under ten years old, and large sums of money have been given to buy off the unfortunate children and unite them in a respectable marriage. This evil, which was formerly confined to a small part of the city, has spread throughout its whole extent and the circumjacent regions. We were secretly informed of this some time ago, and as our most magnificent praetors, whom we commissioned to investigate the matter, confirmed the information, we immediately determined to deliver the city from such pollution".

This preamble is followed by prohibition of these abuses; procurers are banished from the Empire, and especially from the imperial city. It would appear from this law that all disorderly houses were rendered absolutely illegal, and that the only form of prostitution countenanced by law was that of women who practised it on their own account.

Another constitution of the same year, also addressed to the people of Constantinople, deals with the "heavier" or "diabolical" forms of licentiousness, and with the crime of blasphemy. Two bishops who rashly tasted of the Dead Sea fruit were subjected to a painful and shameful punishment by the inexorable Justinian, who adopted the principle that according to the scriptures whole cities as well as guilty individuals were reduced to ruin by the wrath of God in consequence of similar transgressions. The use of blasphemous expressions and imprecations is forbidden with equal severity, and the imperial notion of the law of causation is illustrated by the remark that on account of crimes of this kind "famines and earthquakes and plagues" visit mankind. We may finally mention the enactment of Justinian which suppressed gambling with dice, and other games of hazard.

It is hardly possible to say much here of the curious evidence afforded by the Secret History on the subject of contemporary morals. The delicacy or affectation of the present age would refuse to admit the authority and example of Gibbon as a sufficient reason or valid excuse for rehearsing the licentious vagaries ascribed to Theodora in the indecent pages of an audacious and libellous pamphlet. If the words and acts which the writer attributes to Theodora were drawn, as doubtless is the case, from real life—from the green-rooms of Antioch or the bagnios of Byzantium—it can only be remarked that the morals of those cities in the sixth century did not differ very much from the morals of Paris, Vienna, Naples, or London at the present day. The story of Antonina's intrigue with Theodosius, which is quite credible and was probably derived from back-stair gossip, contains nothing more enormous than might be told of exalted personages in any court at any period of history.

There is no side of the history of societies in the remote past on which we are left so much in the dark by extant records as their industry, their commerce, and their economy; and as these departments of life were

continually affecting politics, their neglect by contemporary writers renders a reconstruction of political history always defective and often impossible. The chief technical industries carried on at Constantinople seem to have been as follows:—(1) The manufacture of silk fabrics was practised on a large scale before the production of the material was introduced by the two monks, as narrated in a previous chapter. Once the Romans were no longer dependent on the oriental nations for its production and importation, it is to be presumed that the manufacture of the fabric, which must have become considerably cheaper, was carried on on a much more extensive scale. (2) The domestic utensils used by the

Byzantine citizens were of glazed pottery, of black or grey colour, and were made at Byzantium. Glass was imported from Egypt, which in old days used to supply Rome. (3) The extensive use of mosaics in the decoration of Christian churches and rich men's palaces made the manufacture of the coloured pebbles quite a lucrative trade. (4) The symbolism of the Christian religion gave rise to a new art, and the shops of crucifix-makers were probably a feature of Constantinople. Crosses were made of all sorts of materials, gold, silver, precious stones, lychnites, or ivory. The carving of religious subjects in ivory was an associated branch of this trade. (5) The art of the jeweller was doubtless in great requisition in the luxurious capital, and the pearls which decorate Theodora in the mosaic portrait in San Vitale at Ravenna indicate the style of the imperial court. (6) The implements of war, the arms of the soldiers, and the engines used in siege warfare were manufactured at Constantinople, and stored in a public building called the Mangana.

All these arts flourished in the imperial city, and made it an active industrial centre. In regard to the commercial relations of the Empire, it will be well to quote the words of Finlay, who made a special study of this side of its history:

“Several circumstances, however, during the reign of Justinian contributed to augment the commercial transactions of the Greeks, and to give them a decided preponderance in the Eastern trade. The long war with Persia cut off all those routes by which the Syrian and Egyptian population had maintained their ordinary communications with Persia; and it was from Persia that they had always drawn their silk and great part of their Indian commodities, such as muslins and jewels. This trade now began to seek two different channels, by both of which it avoided the dominions of Chosroes; the one was to the north of the Caspian Sea, and the other by the Red Sea. This ancient route through Egypt still continued to be that of the ordinary trade. But the importance of the northern route, and the extent of the trade carried on by it through different ports on the Black Sea are authenticated by the numerous colony of the inhabitants of central Asia established at Constantinople in the reign of Justin II. Six hundred Turks availed themselves, at one time, of the security offered by the journey of a Roman ambassador to the Great Khan of the Turks, and joined his train. This fact affords the strongest evidence of the great importance of this route, as there can be no question that the great number of the inhabitants of central Asia who visited Constantinople were attracted to it by their commercial occupations.

The Indian commerce through Arabia and by the Red Sea was still more important; much more so, indeed, than the mere mention of Justinian's failure to establish a regular importation of silk by this route might lead us to suppose. The immense number of trading vessels which habitually frequented the Red Sea shows that it was very great.

Finlay goes on to make some instructive observations on the decline of Egypt and the importance of the Jews.

“In the reign of Augustus, Egypt furnished Rome with a tribute of twenty millions of *modii* of grain annually, and it was garrisoned by a force rather exceeding twelve thousand regular troops. Under Justinian the tribute in grain was reduced to about five millions and a half *modii*, that is eight hundred thousand *artabas*; and the Roman troops, to a cohort of six hundred men. Egypt was prevented from sinking still lower by the exportation of its grain to supply the trading population on the shores of the Red Sea. The canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea afforded the means of exporting an immense quantity of inferior grain to the arid coasts of Arabia, and formed a great artery for civilization and commerce”. The Jews seem to have increased in numbers about the beginning of the sixth century. Finlay accounts for this increase “by the decline of the rest of the population in the countries round the Mediterranean, and by the general decay of civilization in consequence of the severity of the Roman fiscal system, which trammelled every class of society with regulations restricting the industry of the people ... The Jews, too, at this period, were the only neutral nation who could carry on their trade equally with the Persians, Ethiopians, Arabs, and Goths; for, though they were hated everywhere, the universal dislike was a reason for tolerating a people never likely to form common cause with any other”.

As for the Greeks, they “maintained their superiority over the other people in the Empire only by their commercial enterprise, which preserved that civilization in the trading cities which was rapidly disappearing among the agricultural population”. Barbarian monarchs, like Theodoric, used often to support the Jews in order to “render their country independent of the wealth and commerce of the Greeks”.

A writer at the beginning of the seventh century, Theophylactus Simocatta, gives a description of the empire of Taugast, which has been identified with China; the intercourse with the Turks, which began in the reign of Justin II, brought the far East closer to the Roman Empire. He praises the wise laws which prevail in Taugast, and mentally contrasts the luxury of Byzantium with the law which forbids the Taugastians to wear silver or gold, while he attributes to Alexander the Great the foundation of the two chief towns of their realm. Syrian missionaries seem also to have kept up a connection between China and the West; we read that “in the seventeenth year of the period Cheng kuan (=643) the king of Fulin, Po-to-li [Po-to-li = the Nestorian Patriarch of Syria, Pulin = the countries in the East once under Roman sway], sent an embassy offering red glass and other articles. Tai-tsung favoured them with a message under his imperial seal, and graciously granted them presents of silk”.

BOOK IV

THE
HOUSE OF JUSTIN

PART II

THE
COLLAPSE OF JUSTINIAN'S SYSTEM

CHAPTER I

JUSTIN II AND TIBERIUS II

WE have seen that the Roman Imperium under Justinian reached the absolutism to which it had always tended, and Justinian realized that Caesaropapism at which the Christian Emperors had been continually aiming. It has been pointed out that Justinian accomplished his great achievements by means of an artificial State system, which maintained the Empire in equilibrium for the time; but it was only for the time. At his death the winds were loosed from prison; the disintegrating elements began to operate with full force; the artificial system collapsed; and the metamorphosis in the character of the Empire, which had been surely progressing for a long time past, though one is apt to overlook it amid the striking events of Justinian's busy reign, now began to work rapidly and perceptibly.

Things which seemed of comparatively secondary importance under the enterprising government of Justinian, engage the whole attention of his successors. The Persian war assumes a serious aspect, and soon culminates in a struggle for life or death; the Balkan peninsula is overrun by Avars and Slaves; and consequently the Empire cannot retain any real hold on its recent conquests in Italy and Spain. Thus the chief features of the reigns of Justin, Tiberius, and Maurice are: the struggle against the Persians, with whom the Romans become less and less able to cope, the sufferings of Illyricum and Thrace at the hands of Hunnic and Slavonic barbarians, the conquests of the Lombards in Italy, and the change in the political position of the Emperor, whose power sensibly declines. The general disintegration of the Empire reaches a climax in the reign of Phocas (602-610), and the State is with difficulty rescued from destruction and revived by the energy and ability of Heraclius.

In reading the history of the later years of Justinian we are conscious of a darkness creeping over the sky; the light that had illuminated the early part of his reign is waning. This change had become perceptible after the great plague. But after the death of Justinian the darkness is imminent; the Empire is stricken as it were with paralysis, and a feeling of despondency prevails; the Emperors are like men grappling with hopeless tasks. We are not surprised that an idea possessed men's minds that the end of the world or some great change was at hand; it expressed the feeling that the spiritual atmosphere was dark, and the prospect comfortless. "He that is giddy thinks the world turns round".

I.

Justin II

A struggle for the succession between the relations of Justin and those of Theodora had at one time seemed probable, but it had been forestalled by the alliance of the two families in the person of Justin, a nephew of the Emperor, and Sophia, a niece of the Empress. Justin held the position of *curopalates*, which we might translate "mayor of the palace", and on his uncle's death was at once recognized by the senate. The panegyric of the African poet Corippus, written in four books of Latin hexameters, *de laudibus Justinii Augusti minoris*, giving a coloured account of the circumstances of the Emperor's accession, had probably a political intention. Justin required a trumpet.

According to the narrative in the poem of Corippus, which we may assume to represent, with sufficient accuracy, what actually happened, Justin was wakened before daybreak by the Patrician Callinicus, who announced that Justinian was dead. At the same time the senate entered the palace buildings, and proceeding to a beautiful room overlooking the sea, whither Justin had already repaired, found him conversing with his wife Sophia. Callinicus, as the spokesman of the senate, greeted Justin as the new Augustus, virtually designated by the late Emperor as his successor. All then repaired to the imperial chambers, and gazed on the corpse of the deceased sovereign, who lay on a golden bier. Justin is represented as apostrophising the dead, and complaining that his uncle left the world at a critical moment: "Behold the Avars and the fierce Franks, and the Gepids and the Goths (Getae, probably meaning the Slaves), and so many other nations encompass us with wars". Sophia ordered an embroidered cloth to be brought, on which the whole series of Justinian's labours was wrought in gold and brilliant colours, the Emperor himself in the midst with his foot resting on the neck of the Vandal tyrant.

In the morning Justin and his wife proceeded to the church of St. Sophia, and made a public declaration of the orthodox faith. Returning to the palace, Justin assumed the royal robes and ornaments, and was raised on a shield lifted by four guardsmen, after which ceremony the Patriarch blessed him and placed the diadem on his head. The Emperor then delivered an inaugural speech from the throne, in which he enunciated his intention to pursue the principles of piety and justice, and regretted that important departments of the administration had been neglected or mismanaged in the last years of Justinian, who in his old age was careless of such matters, and cold to the things of this life. After this oration, the senate in due form adored the new Emperor.

Then, attended by the senators and court, Justin proceeded to the hippodrome, and took his seat in the cathisma. When the jubilant greetings of the people, who had taken no part in his actual elevation, had subsided, the Emperor delivered another oration, exhorting the populace to be peaceable and orderly, and announcing his intention to assume the consulship and honour the following year with his name.

Suddenly the benches which lined each side of the hippodrome were emptied, and crowds of people made their way to the space in front of the cathisma. They presented to the Emperor bonds for loans which his uncle had contracted, and implored or demanded to be repaid. Justin in his speech to the senators had signified his

purpose of liquidating these debts, and he now commanded that the money should be paid on the spot. The scene is graphically described by the obsequious pen of Corippus. This popular act was followed by another example of clemency, and many prisoners were released at the prayers of their kinsfolk. Corippus seems to imply that the prisons were entirely emptied, and takes pains to justify a hardly justifiable act.

The poet goes on to describe the obsequies of Justinian, the beauties of the imperial palace, and the reception of the Avaric ambassadors, but we need not follow him further. The Emperor appointed his son-in-law Baduarius, who had married his daughter Arabia, to the post of curopalates, which his own accession had rendered vacant.

The accession of Justin was not wholly unendangered or unstained with blood. A conspiracy of two senators was detected and punished, and the Emperor's namesake Justin, the son of his cousin Germanus, was put to death in Alexandria as a dangerous and perhaps designing relation. The influence of Sophia may have been operative here, for enmity and jealousy had always prevailed between her aunt Theodora and the family of Germanus.

Sophia had the ambition, without the genius, of her aunt Theodora. Like her, she had been originally a monophysite. But a bishop had suggested that the heretical opinions of her husband and herself stood in the way of his promotion to the rank of Caesar; and accordingly the pair found it convenient to join the ranks of the orthodox, on whom they had before looked down as "synodites". It is perhaps to be regretted that Sophia was not content to induce her husband to alter his opinions and to retain her own faith. The administration of an orthodox Emperor and a monophysitic Empress had worked well in the case of Justinian and Theodora; the balance of religious parties had been maintained, so that neither was alienated from the crown. It is probable that if Sophia had remained satisfied with *One Nature*, the persecution of monophysitic heretics, which disgraced the latter half of Justin's reign, would not have taken place, and the eastern provinces would have been less estranged from the central power.

When Justin came to the throne he decided to make a fresh start and abandon the unpopular system of his uncle, as is clearly indicated in the poem of Corippus. An opportunity of taking a first step in this direction was offered almost immediately by the arrival of an embassy of Avars to demand the payments which Justinian's policy was accustomed to grant. Justin boldly refused to concede these payments any longer, and his refusal was the signal for a series of ruinous depredations, which prepared the way for a complete change in the population of the Illyrian provinces. This resolution of Justin was a direct break with a vital part of the Justinianean system, and was perhaps not unwise, for money payments could have hardly restrained the Avars and Slaves much longer from invading the Cis-Danubian countries. It was a popular act, because it seemed brave, and might lead to the possibility of lightening the burden of taxation.

Justinian's religious doctrines in his last years had been erratic, and he was stigmatized as a heretic. In this respect, too, Justin's accession signalized a reaction. He published a manifesto to all Christians strictly orthodox, from whom he expressly excluded the friends of one nature. But at this time he did not purpose to do more than withdraw the light of his countenance from the party which had, in recent years at least, been contented with Justinian. A monophysite expressly acknowledges that for the first six years of his reign Justin was mild and peaceable in his religious policy.

Circumstances necessitated the reaction which Justin's reign inaugurated, but they equally necessitated the failure of this attempt at a new policy. Justin was not a strong man, and the circumstances of the time were strong and inexorable. He was completely unsuccessful, as he owned before he died, and his mind was probably diseased long before he became undoubtedly insane. We can measure his want of success by the fact that even the orthodox did not approve of him; and ecclesiastical historians are prepared to forgive much for the grace of the two natures. Evagrius speaks of him in harsh terms, charging him with avarice and profligacy, and with trafficking in ecclesiastical offices. And he seems to have resorted to many modes of raising money which were not calculated to make his rule beloved; for though he wisely remitted a burden of arrears which could not be profitably exacted, he levied on ship-cargoes taxes, which brought in large sums, and also taxed the bread which was publicly distributed in the capital and called "political (or civil) loaves".

But the state of the Empire was such that popularity could only have been obtained by an almost unwise generosity, such as that by which Tiberius afterwards won general affection; and such a policy would have ultimately aided rather than arrested the forces of disintegration. The disintegration took place in two different ways.

(1) On the one hand the imperial power was no longer absolute. The Emperor found himself face to face with a number of wealthy and influential aristocrats, whose power had increased so much in the declining years of Justinian that they were almost able to assume an independent attitude.

History shows us that the maintenance of law is least secure when aristocratic classes become predominant; turbulence waxes rife, attempts to override the rights of inferiors are sure to take place, and the only safeguard is a strong monarchical authority. Now this evil prevailed in the days of Justin. The noble lords were turbulent and licentious, and while Justin made praiseworthy efforts to enforce the law at all costs, there was, doubtless, a constant struggle, in which Justin was generally obliged to compromise; and we can thus understand a bitter allusion in a speech which he delivered on the occasion of Tiberius' elevation to the rank of Caesar. He bade Tiberius beware of the lords, who were present at the ceremony, as of men who had led himself into an evil plight.

Justin's desire to enforce the maintenance of justice, and the corruption with which he had to contend, are illustrated by an anecdote. The prefect of the city was a man who, knowing Justin's anxiety to protect the oppressed, had proposed himself for the post, and had promised that if he received for a certain time full powers,

unrestricted by any privilege of class, the wronged individuals who were always addressing appeals to the throne would soon cease to trouble the sovereign. One day a man appeared before the prefect and accused a person of senatorial rank. The accused noble did not vouchsafe to notice the prefect's summons, and, on receiving a second citation, attended a banquet of the Emperor instead of appearing in court. During the feast the prefect entered the banqueting-hall of the palace, and addressed the Emperor: "I promised your Majesty to leave not a single oppressed person in the city within a certain time, and I shall succeed perfectly in my engagement if your authority come to my aid. But if you shelter and patronize wrongdoers, and entertain them at your table, I shall fail. Either allow me to resign or do not recognize the wrongdoers". The Emperor replied: "If I am the man, take me". The prefect, thus reassured, arrested the criminal, tried him, found him guilty, and flogged him. The plaintiff was recompensed amply. It is said that people were so terrified by this example of strictness that for thirty days no accusations were lodged with the prefect

(2) At the same time the bonds which attached the provinces of the Empire to the centre, and thereby to each other, were being loosened; and it is important to notice and easy to apprehend that this change was closely connected with the diminution of the imperial authority. For that authority held the heterogeneous elements together in one whole; and if the position of the Emperor became insecure or his hand weak, the centrifugal forces immediately began to operate. Now, it is to be noted that certain changes introduced by Justinian, which from one point of view might seem to make for absolutism, were calculated to further the progress of the centrifugal tendency if it once began to set in. I refer to the removal of some important rungs in the ladder of the administrative hierarchy; the abolition of the count of the East and the vicarius of Asiana. These smaller centres had helped to preserve the compactness of the Empire, and their abolition operated in the reverse direction.

A remarkable law of Justin (568 AD) is preserved, in which he yields to the separatist tendencies of the provinces to a certain extent. This law provided that the governor of each province should be appointed without cost at the request of the bishops, landowners, and inhabitants of the province. It was a considerable concession in the direction of local government, and its importance will be more fully recognized if it is remembered that Justinian had introduced in some provinces the practice of investing the civil governor, who held judicial as well as administrative power, with military authority also. It is a measure which sheds much light on the state of the Empire, and reminds us of that attempt of Honorius to give representative local government to the cities in the south of Gaul, a measure which came too late to cure the political lethargy which prevailed.

The estrangement of the eastern provinces from the crown was further increased by the persecutions of heretics, which began about the year 572. The Emperor fell under the influence of the Patriarch, John of Sirimis (a place near Antioch), and to have been induced by him to make a new attempt at unifying the Church by means of persecution. The procedure against the Samaritans (572 AD) was so effective that that important people became quite insignificant. The monophysitic monks and nuns were expelled from their monasteries and convents, fleeing "like birds before the hawk". John of Ephesus, a monophysite, describes in his ecclesiastical history the details of this persecution. We may take as an example the case of Antipatra and Juliana, two noble ladies attached to the monophysitic faith. They were confined in a monastery at Chalcedon, and, because they would not accept the formula of the orthodox, were obliged to wear the dress of nuns, were shorn of their hair, and were "made to sweep the convent, and carry away the dirt, and scrub and wash out the *latrinae*, and serve in the kitchen, and wash the candlesticks and dishes, and perform other similar duties". Unable to endure these hardships, they submitted in form to the Chalcedonian communion. This, however, is said to have been a very mild case. The measure which the monophysites most resented was the annulling of the orders of their clergy. The Patriarch of Constantinople had hereby a welcome opportunity for interfering with the dioceses of Antioch, Alexandria, and Cyprus over which he desired to exercise a jurisdiction like that which the bishop of Rome possessed over the see of Thessalonica, for example, or the see of Ravenna.

In the year 574 the Emperor became a hopeless and even dangerous lunatic, and his vagaries were the talk of Constantinople. It was necessary to place bars on his windows to prevent him from hurling himself down, and in his fits he used to bite his chamberlains. The only charm by which they could then quiet his fury was the words, "The son of Gabolo is coming"—a reference to Harith, king of a tribe of Arabs. When he heard this exclamation he was cowed at once. His favourite amusement was to sit in a little waggon, which his attendants used to draw about in the palace chambers, and a musical instrument was constantly played in his presence to calm his temper.

Sophia did not feel equal to carrying on the government without male assistance, especially as the Persian war was pressing the realm hard. Her representations of the unfortunate state of things in the capital had, it is said, induced Chosroes to grant a temporary peace, but the renewal of the war was certain at a near date, while the Avars were unceasing in their hostilities. A firm hand at the reins was indispensable. Accordingly, in the last month of 574, in one of his sane intervals, Justin, at her instance, created Tiberius, the count of the *excubiti*, a Caesar. On this occasion he delivered an unexpectedly candid and repentant speech, which made a deep impression on contemporaries.

"Know, he said, that it is God who blesses you and confers this dignity and its symbols upon you, not I. Honour it, that you may be honoured by it. Honour your mother, who was hitherto your queen; you do not forget that formerly you were her slave, now you are her son. Delight not in the shedding of blood; take no share in murder; do not return evil for evil, that you may become like unto me in unpopularity. I have been called to account as a man, for I fell, and I received according to my sins; but I shall sue those who caused me to err at the throne of Christ. Let not this imperial garb elate thee as it elated me. Act to all men as you would act to yourself, remembering what you were before and what you are now. Be not arrogant, and you will not go wrong; you know what I was, what I became, and what I am. All these are your children and servants—you know that I preferred you to my own blood; you see them here before you, you see all the persons of the administration. Pay attention to the army; do not encourage informers, and let not men say of thee, 'His predecessor was such and such'; for I speak from my own experience. Permit those who possess to enjoy their property in peace; and give unto those who possess not".

The Patriarch then pronounced a prayer, and when all had said Amen, and the new Caesar had fallen at the feet of the Augustus, Justin said, "If you will, I live; if you will not, I die. May God, who made heaven and earth, place in your heart all that I have forgotten to tell you".

But although Sophia approved and promoted the elevation of Tiberius to the rank of Caesar and the position of regent, she was determined to retain all her authority and sovereignty as Augusta, and above all she would not consent to the presence of another queen in the palace. Justin, with the good-nature of a man, suggested that Ino, the wife of Tiberius, should reside with him, for "he is a young man, and the flesh is hard to rule"; but Sophia would not hear of it. "As long as I live", she said, "I will never give my kingdom to another", words that breathe the spirit of the great Theodora. Accordingly, during Justin's lifetime Ino and her two daughters lived in a house near the palace in complete retirement. The wives of noblemen and senators were much exercised in their minds whether they should call upon the wife of the Caesar or not. They met together to consider the important question, but were afraid to decide to visit Ino without consulting the wishes of Sophia. When they asked the Empress, she scolded them sharply; "Go, and be quiet", she said, "it is no business of yours". But when Tiberius was inaugurated Emperor in September 578, a few days before Justin's death, he installed his wife in the palace, to the chagrin of Sophia, and caused the new Augusta to be recognized by the factions of the circus. It is said that a riot took place in the hippodrome, as the Blues wished to change her pagan name to "Anastasia". while the Greens proposed "Helena". Anastasia was adopted as her imperial name.

II.

Tiberius II.

The independent reign of Tiberius Constantine (for he had assumed with the purple a new name) lasted only four years. Although during his regency the administration was in his hands, yet the influence of Sophia over the occasionally sane Justin had been a considerable limit on his powers and scope of action; for the Empress was determined to be queen in more than name. The limitation of the powers of Tiberius when he was only Caesar are fully apparent from the mere fact that Sophia and Justin retained the management of the exchequer in their own hands. Sophia judged, and not without reason, that the young Caesar was inclined to be too lavish with money; and her prudence withheld from him the keys of the treasury, while he was granted a fixed allowance. After the death of Justin, he did not delay to emancipate himself from her dictation, and she is said to have set afoot several conspiracies to dethrone him. It is related that she suborned Justinian, the son of Germanus, who had won laurels in the East, to join in a plot against Tiberius; but this treason was discovered in time. The clemency of the Emperor pardoned Justinian, but his "mother" was deprived of her retinue and subjected to a strict supervision.

It was thought that of all men Tiberius was the man, had he lived longer, to have checked the forces of dissolution that were at work, and placed the Empire on a new basis. Yet what we know of him hardly justifies such a conclusion. The fact that he was thoroughly well intentioned, and the fact that he was very popular, combined with the circumstance that his reign was prematurely ended by death, have pre-possessed men strongly in his favour. No charges can be brought against him like those that have been brought against his predecessor Justin or his successor Maurice. But, notwithstanding, I think it may be shown that he did as much harm as good to the Empire, and that he was not in any way the man to stem the tide.

The chief services rendered to the State by Tiberius consisted in the care which he bestowed upon strengthening the army and his attention to military matters. In this important department he had able supporters in Justinian, the son of Germanus, who is recorded to have revived the discipline of the army, which was beginning to relax, and in Maurice, who became Emperor afterwards. "We are told that Tiberius expended large sums of money in collecting troops, and it deserves to be specially noticed that in the last year of his reign he organized a body of 15,000 foederati, which may be perhaps looked upon as the original nucleus or form of the bodyguard which in later centuries was called Varangian. Maurice was appointed general of this company, with the title "Count of the Federates".

But though he might have made a very good minister of war, Tiberius did not make a good Emperor. It was natural that his first acts should be reactionary, as Justin's government had been extremely unpopular. He removed the duty on the "political bread", and remitted a fourth part of the taxes throughout the Empire. Had he been contented with this he might deserve praise, but he began a system of most injudicious extravagance. He gratified the soldiers with large and frequent *Augustatica*, and he granted donations to members of all the professions—scholastics or jurists (a very numerous profession), physicians, silversmiths, bankers. This liberality soon emptied the treasury of its wealth. "What use", cried Tiberius, "is this hoarded gold, when all the world is choking with hunger?", a sentiment which was hardly relevant, as his generosity benefited the rich and not the hungry. The result was that by the end of the first year of his reign he had spent 7200 lbs. of gold, beside silver and silk in abundance; and before he died he was obliged to have recourse to the reserve fund which the prudent economy of Anastasius had laid by, to be used in the case of an extreme emergency. And, notwithstanding these financial difficulties, he laid out money on new buildings in the palace.

The consequence of this recklessness was that when Maurice came to the throne he found the exchequer empty and the State bankrupt. He was thus, by no fault of his own, compelled to be extremely parsimonious; and his scrupulous economy rendered him unpopular, while it endeared, by the force of contrast, the memory of the deceased, who had been really the cause of the perplexing situation. There is considerable reason, I think, to remove Tiberius from his pedestal.

Nor did his reign lack the distinction of a persecution of heretics; and yet his pleasant and easy fiscal system secured him such general popularity that even the monophysites were disposed to excuse him from the blame of the persecution, because he was so much occupied with wars. But his persecution of the Arians will perhaps reflect little credit on him in the eyes of humanity. When he enlisted Goths to compose his corps of foederati, they urged

the modest demand that a church for holding Arian services should be granted to them. The bigots of Constantinople were furious at this impious prayer, and there arose a sedition of such formidable aspect that Tiberius, in order to quell it, resorted to the device of commanding or permitting a general persecution of the Arians, that he might thereby be acquitted of having entertained any intention of granting such an outrageous request.

Theophylactus, the historian of Maurice, remarked in praise of Tiberius that "he preferred that his subjects should share the imperial authority with him to their being tyrannically governed like slaves". The natural comment is that these two modes of State economy do not exhaust the alternative courses open to Tiberius; but this remark has a deeper historical significance. The point is not the preference of Tiberius; the point is that the imperial power was drifting away from its old moorings at the promontory of absolutism.

Maurice returned from Persia in the summer of 582, to find the Emperor sick unto death, and to be elected by him to reign in his stead. The ceremony was performed on the 5th of August. There were present not only the Patriarch (John the Paster) and the chief ecclesiastics, the guards of the palace, the aulic officials and senators, as in the case of Justin's accession, but also the "more distinguished men of the people", by which must be meant the demarchs and prominent persons in the circus factions. In his oration on this occasion Tiberius expressed a hope that his fairest funeral monument might be the reign of his successor. A marriage was arranged between Maurice and Constantina, Tiberius' younger daughter; and thus Maurice, as being the son-in-law of Tiberius, who was the adopted son of Justin and Sophia, may be regarded as belonging to the dynasty of Justinian. Eight days later Tiberius expired in the palace of Hebdomon, outside the walls.

CHAPTER II

MAURICE

Two years after his accession, a son was born to Maurice (4th August 584), whom he named Theodosius, in memory of Theodosius II, the last Emperor who had been born in the purple. This event is said to have been the cause of great rejoicing, and when Maurice appeared in the hippodrome the people shouted, "God grant thee well, for thou hast freed us from subjection to many". This illustrates the fact that a feeling of uncertainty and apprehension always prevailed in the Roman Empire when there was no apparent heir marked out by birth; men dreaded a struggle for sovereignty. In regard to the question how far the principle of heredity was acknowledged, it is important to observe that there is no case of a difficulty arising as to the accession of an Emperor's legitimate son; he was always acknowledged to be the rightful successor. Maurice occupied the throne for twenty years. During all that time the Empire was harassed by the troublesome hostilities of the Avars and Slavs, and for the first ten years of his reign the wearisome war with Persia was protracted. His great difficulty was want of money, which produced want of public confidence; and the unavoidable parsimony, which he was forced to practice, naturally won for him the repute of avarice and meanness; he was said to have a diseased appetite for gold. Soon after his accession he was obliged to purchase a temporary peace from the Avars, whom he was not prepared to oppose, by paying a considerable sum from the almost exhausted treasury. Perhaps the impecuniousness which pressed hard on him during the first years of his reign habituated him to a spirit of parsimony, which he continued to exhibit when circumstances both admitted and demanded a less scrupulous economy. It is certain that he attempted several times to retrench in the pay or commissariat of the army; serious mutinies were the consequence; and this unwise policy was one of the chief causes of his fall.

Evagrius, a contemporary ecclesiastical historian, says that Maurice was moderate, self-willed, and keen-witted. He showed his self-will in his operations at Arabissus, which by no means tended to increase his popularity. Though a Roman by descent, he was born at Arabissus in Cappadocia, and he cherished such a curious love for this insignificant place (as Justinian had done for his birthplace in Dardania) that he determined to convert it into a splendid city, and began elaborate buildings, in spite of his parsimonious proclivities. When the buildings were considerably advanced, an earthquake destroyed them, and the self-will of Maurice, who had a touch of the Roman passion for building, caused them to be begun all over again. To this strange affection of Maurice for his remote birthplace was joined a strong attachment to his kinsmen, whom he was anxious to advance into high places. He made his father Paul president of the senate, he gave all his relations rich palaces, and he divided the large property of Justin's brother Marcellus between Paul his father and Peter his brother.

He was also "moderate". His moderation appears especially in his ecclesiastical policy, for he completely rejected the practice of persecution adopted by his two predecessors, and passed a law that schismatics should not be compelled to conform. It is hard to say, however, whether the credit of this ought not to be ascribed to the Patriarch Johannes rather than to Maurice; we cannot be sure that if the former had urged persecution, the latter would not have acquiesced. For it is worthy of note that at this period the Emperors, feeling that their authority rested on an insecure footing, formed close alliances with the Patriarchs, who possessed immense influence with the people. Justin was prepared to adopt the ecclesiastical policy of John of Sirimis, Tiberius was ready to support Eutychius, and now we find Maurice standing fast by John Nестeutes in his contest with the see of Rome. It was the aim of the patriarchs of Constantinople to hold the same position in eastern Christendom that the bishop of Rome was acknowledged to hold in universal Christendom. In order to accomplish this aim they had two problems to solve. One problem was to reduce the large independent sees of the East, Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, under the jurisdiction of Byzantium; the other problem was to prevent the interference of the Pope in

the affairs of the East and thereby induce him to acknowledge the Patriarch of Constantinople as a pontiff of ecumenical position like his own. The first of these objects was directly aimed at, as we are expressly told, in the persecutions organized by John of Sirimis; the second was essayed by John the Faster, who assumed the title of "Ecumenical bishop". Gregory the Great, who occupied the chair of St Peter from 590 to 604, was horrified and grieved at such presumption. He wrote a friendly letter of expostulation on the subject to Maurice, in which he said that he was "compelled to cry aloud and say, *o tempora! o mores!*". He also wrote a letter to the Empress Constantina, for he understood the art, which popes, bishops, and priests so easily learn, of bringing female influence into play. To the Empress he expressed his conviction that John's assumption of the title *universal* was a clear indication that the times of Antichrist were at hand. His argument that Maurice ought to interfere in the matter is impressive. No one, he says, can govern on earth rightly except he knows how to handle divine things; and the peace of the State depends on the peace of the whole Church. It is this peace, not any personal interest, that he himself is defending; it is this peace that John is troubling, by interfering with the established economy of Christendom. It consequently behoves Maurice, in the interests of the State, to inhibit the proceedings of his Patriarch. Maurice, however, was not convinced by the reasons of the Pope, but sympathized thoroughly with John's claims to ecumenical dignity. Hence a breach ensued between the Emperor and the Pope, and the latter complains that Maurice, touching another matter, had the indecency to call him "fatuous".

We may date the long struggle between the sees of Rome and Constantinople, which culminated in the final schism of 1055, from the reign of Maurice and the pontificate of Gregory I.

Maurice gives us the melancholy impression of a prince who, possessing many good qualities and cherishing many good purposes, was almost completely ineffectual. The army detested, and pretended to despise him, and the disaffection prevalent in the capital presented a favourable opportunity for revolution. In the year 599 he refused to ransom 12,000 captives from the chagan of the Avars, who consequently put them to death; and this refusal, which perhaps seems inhuman, increased the detestation in which he was held. Theophylactus, in his panegyric history of the reign of Maurice, does not mention the matter, and his silence suggests that he did not feel able to palliate the act; but it has been conjectured that many of the prisoners were probably deserters, and in any case it is evident that it was not to save money, but to punish soldiers who had been mutinous and intractable, that Maurice acted as he did. It was an impolitic measure, and two years later he attempted another measure, which under the circumstances was equally impolitic, and illustrates that self-will which Evagrius ascribes to him. He issued commands that the army which was defending the Balkan provinces should winter in the trans-Danubian lands of the Slovenes, in order to save supplies. This led to a rebellion. Peter, the general, was placed in a disagreeable predicament between the peremptory behests of his brother the Emperor and the undisguised dissatisfaction of the army. When the matter came to a crisis at Securisca, the soldiers positively refused to cross the river, and raising the centurion Phocas on a shield, they conferred on him the title of captain (*exarch*).

When the news of the revolt reached Maurice he did not allow it to be published, but with an air of security which he was far from feeling he celebrated a series of equestrian contests in the hippodrome, and made light of the rumours which had reached the city concerning the military insurrection. His heralds or *mandatores* bade the demes not to be alarmed or excited by an unreasonable and unimportant disorder in the camp; at which proclamation the Blues shouted, "God, o Emperor! who raised you to the throne, will subdue unto you every conspirator against your authority. But if the offender is a Roman, ungrateful to his benefactor, God will subject him unto you without shedding of blood".

Three days later Maurice summoned to the palace Sergius and Cosmas, the demarchs of the green and blue factions respectively, and inquired the numbers of the members of their demes. Sergius counted fifteen hundred Greens, while on the list of Cosmas there were only nine hundred Blues. The object of Maurice's inquiries was to form the demesmen into a garrison for the protection of the city against the army, which was already advancing under the leadership of Phocas. They were set to guard the walls of Theodosius.

It is difficult to grasp the exact cause of this revolution and the intrigues which underlay it; but the following points may be emphasized. In the first place, there was not at the outset any intention of elevating Phocas to the throne; he was merely elected general of the rebellious army. In the second place, it was the purpose of the army to depose Maurice and elect a new Emperor, perhaps Theodosius, the son of Maurice, or Germanus, Theodosius' father-in-law. In the third place, the declaration of disloyalty on the part of the army was followed up in Constantinople by the movement of a disaffected party, on whose co-operation the military ringleaders had probably calculated. In the fourth place, the demes play an important part in this movement, and Maurice seems to have acted imprudently in arming them.

While the citizens and the sovereign were in a state of expectancy and anxiety as to the events which a few days might bring about, it happened that the young Emperor Theodosius and his father-in-law Germanus were hunting outside the walls of the city, near a place called Callicratea. A messenger suddenly accosted Theodosius and gave him a letter, purporting to come from the army. The contents of the letter were a request that either he or Germanus should assume the reins of government; "the forces of the Romans will no longer have Maurice to reign over them". The sportsmen were accompanied by an imperial retinue, and the incident of the letter soon reached the ears of Maurice, who immediately summoned his son. On the morning of the second day after this occurrence Germanus was admitted to the presence of the Emperor, who, with tears in his eyes, charged him with being the prime promoter of the whole movement. Not only the letter, but the ambiguous fact that the ravages of the mutineers in the neighbourhood of the city had diligently spared the horses of Germanus, seemed to the suspicious monarch sure proofs of guilt. The accused indignantly denied the charge, but the Emperor either was not or feigned not to be convinced. Theodosius, who had been present at the interview, secretly admonished his father-in-law that his life was in danger, and Germanus betook himself to the asylum of the church erected by Cyrus to the Mother of God. Towards sunset the Emperor sent the eunuch Stephanus, the tutor of the young princes, to persuade the suppliant to leave the altar, but members of the household of Germanus, who had attended him to the church, drove the tutor forth ignominiously. Under the cover of night Germanus stole to the

surer refuge of the altar of the great church. In the meantime Maurice flogged his son, whom he accused of also tampering with treason. He then sent a body of guards to drag Germanus from St. Sophia, and a large multitude of indignant citizens gathered round the portals of the church. Germanus was at length persuaded to leave the altar, but as he approached the door a man named Andrew cried out: "Back to the shrine, Germanus, save thy life! An thou goest, death is in store for thee". These ominous words arrested the steps of Germanus, and repenting of his imprudent submission, he returned to the safety of the altar. The populace meanwhile loaded the name of the Emperor with execrations and abuse, calling him a *Marcionist*, a term which implied not only impiety but folly. As the uproar increased, the demesmen, who were stationed on the walls under the command of Comentiolus, were excited by the significant sounds of tumult and sedition; they left their posts, and soon gave the menaces of the crowd a definite direction. The object of their fury was the house of Constantine Lardys, the praetorian prefect of the East, one of the most illustrious senators in the Empire and a trusted friend of the Emperor; it was burned down.

When the revolt had reached this point, Maurice dressed himself in the apparel of a private individual, and along with his wife Constantina, his children, and the faithful minister, whose house was even then in flames, embarked in a vessel which lay moored by the private stairs of the palace. The imperial fugitives reached the church of Autonomos the Martyr, on the bay of Nicomedia, and the distress of a nocturnal flight was aggravated for Maurice by a severe attack of gout, a disease to which the luxurious inhabitants of Constantinople were peculiarly liable. As soon as they reached the shore of Asia, Theodosius was despatched to Persia to supplicate the assistance of Chosroes II for the Emperor, who had assisted that monarch in his own hour of necessity.

It seemed possible that Germanus might be raised to the throne, and in that case the revolution might have been bloodless; but the rivalry of the factions decided that it was not to be so. He had always been a partisan and patron of the Blues, but it was now important for him to gain the united support of both factions, especially as the Greens were numerically stronger. Accordingly he opened negotiations with Sergius, the demarch of the Greens, and promised to favour them in case he were elected. The demarch communicated this proposal to the managing committee of his party, but they met it with a decided refusal. The Greens were convinced that Germanus would never really abandon the Blues. Recognizing, then, that he had no chance of realizing his ambitious aspiration, Germanus embraced the party of the winner, the centurion Phocas, to whom members of the green faction were already hastening to present their allegiance.

The question arises whether Germanus cherished any treasonable ambition before the suspicion of the Emperor fell on him, or did this suspicion first arouse in him the hope as well as the fears of a conspirator. The narrative of Theophylactus naturally suggests the latter alternative, but does not exclude the former. Another point, which must remain obscure, is whether the letter received by Theodosius really expressed the wishes of the army, or was a device of Phocas, intended to awaken the suspicions of Maurice. The fact that the news of its arrival reached the ears of Maurice so soon, coupled with the probability that Theodosius did not communicate its contents to any one save Germanus, suggests that the intention of the epistle was not what it seemed. If this conjecture is right, it will go far to establish the innocence of Germanus; for the object of Phocas must have been to divide the camp of his opponents by sowing discord between Germanus and Maurice.

The Greens, who had gone forth from the city to meet Phocas, found him at Rhegium, and persuaded him to advance to Hebdomon. Theodore, one of the imperial secretaries, whose presence at Rhegium is not explained by our authorities, was sent to the city to bid the senate and the Patriarch proceed to Hebdomon for the purpose of crowning Germanus, in whose interests Phocas still pretended to be acting. The name of Germanus moved the senators and the Patriarch Cyriacus; they hastened to the designated spot, only to see the diadem placed on the head of Phocas, amidst the acclamations of the demes, in the church of St. John the Baptist. On the morrow the new Emperor entered the city, carried in an imperial litter drawn by four white horses, and his progress was marked by showers of golden coins among the people. Horse races celebrated his entry; on the following day he bestowed the usual donations on the soldiers, and his wife Leontia was crowned Augusta.

On the occasion of the coronation of Leontia an incident occurred which indicated that the seat of Phocas was not yet secure. An important part of these ceremonies consisted in the procession from the palace to the great church, and it was customary for the various demes to post themselves at certain stages in the course of the processions, and to utter certain formulae or exclamations as the Emperor or imperial party passed. In certain cases the Emperor used to stop and receive the homage of the demes. The station of each deme was prescribed by custom, but on this occasion a dispute arose between the Greens and the Blues. The Greens desired to make their station in the portal of the palace called Ampelios, and there receive the Empress with the appropriate shouts of applause, but their jealous rivals objected to this arrangement as contrary to precedent. A tumult ensued, and Phocas sent out Alexander, who had made himself conspicuous in the revolt against Maurice, to calm the strife. Cosmas, the demarch of the Blues, entered into argument with the imperial emissary, and Alexander, with the insolence of an Emperor's friend, heaped abuse on the demarch, and even pushed him aside so roughly that he fell. Thereupon the insulted Blues gave vent to their wrath in ominous words, "Begone! understand the situation, Maurice is not yet dead!"

The appearance of the usurper quieted the dispute of the factions, but the words that the Blues had spoken sank into the heart of Phocas, and he decided that the death of Maurice and the extinction of Maurice's children were necessary to his own safety. Accordingly, on the morrow he sent Lilius over to Chalcedon to carry out this decision. In the harbour at Eutropius the four sons of Maurice were first slain, in their father's presence, and the Emperor, adopting the attitude of a philosopher or of a resigned Christian, is reported to have said: "Thou art just, Lord, and just is thy judgment". An incident took place which illustrates the faithfulness of a nurse and the steadfastness of an Emperor. The nurse concealed one of the imperial infants, and presented a child of her own to the sword of the executioner; but the sovereign was as superior as the servant to the promptings of nature and declared the fraud Theodosius, the eldest son, did not escape the fate of his father and brothers. He had only reached Nicaea when Maurice, assuming a temper of dignified resignation, gave up all thoughts of struggling, and, disdaining to beg for the assistance of Chosroes, recalled his son. But the report gained ground and was

afterwards made use of by the enemies of Phocas, that Theodosius, having reached Persia safely, had wandered to Colchis and ended his life in desert places. This report seemed to have some basis from the fact that Theodosius was not slain at the same time as his father. Phocas had entrusted Alexander with the task of removing both the prince and Constantine Lardys, who had taken refuge in churches, and it was said that Alexander was bribed by Germanus not to slay his son-in-law. Three distinguished men are mentioned as having shared the fate of their august master; Comentiolus "the general of Europe!", George the lieutenant of Philippicus, and Praesentinus the *domesticus* of Peter.

It is important to notice the part that the factions of the hippodrome played in this revolution; they strike us as suddenly reasserting a suppressed existence. There was still a strong spirit of rivalry; and although the Blues were obliged to acquiesce in the coronation of Phocas, they were not friendly to him. Both parties were opposed to the government of Maurice, but they were not at one touching the question who should be his successor.

Here a conjecture may be put forward as to the significance of this opposition of the demes to Maurice. Finlay acutely suggested that the observation of Evagrius, that Maurice installed an aristocracy of reason in his breast and expelled the democracy of the passions, contains a significance below the surface, and was intended as a hint at the circumstance that Maurice had allied himself with that aristocracy, which, as I said before, was endangering and limiting the extent of the imperial power. However this may be, there is no doubt that Maurice maintained his position as long as he did through the support of those men, of whose pernicious influence Justin had bitterly complained. Now, it seems almost certain that in this respect the attitude of Tiberius differed from that of Justin and from that of Maurice. Tiberius took Justin's advice to heart and assumed a position independent, as far as was possible, of the nobles, whose power was dangerously and unhealthily increasing. But in order to render himself independent of this class he was obliged to depend on another; and the organized demes of the hippodrome were an obvious resort. I conjecture, therefore, that he gave them and their leaders a political influence which they had not possessed since the revolt of 532.

Thus Tiberius and Maurice tried to meet the danger which was threatening the imperial power in divergent ways. Tiberius opposed the influence of the aristocrats by making an Alliance with the demes, while Maurice tried to overcome the peril by an unnatural bond with the forces that were tending to undermine the throne, and thereby placed himself in opposition to both the army and the people. This difference partly explains the popularity of Tiberius and the unpopularity of Maurice, who seems to have been by temperament inclined to a certain aristocratic exclusiveness.

In support of these remarks I may add that in their light the observation of Theophylactus that Tiberius desired that his subjects should rule along with him, has a special point the expression is strong and must mean more than the influence of court officials. Moreover, as a matter of fact Tiberius recognized the demarchs and others as possessing political status. Further, the words of Evagrius about Maurice, in accordance with Friday's explanation, will be still more speaking; the expulsion of the democracy of passion will have the definite meaning that Maurice abandoned this democratic policy of Tiberius. Moreover, the important part that the factions played in the revolt of 602 seems to presuppose a considerable revival of their political power and almost a reorganization since they had been crushed under the rule of Justinian; and this reorganization I would attribute to the policy of Tiberius.

The testament of Maurice, which he had drawn up in the fifteenth year of his reign, on the occasion of a severe illness: was found more than eight years after his death, at the beginning of the reign of Heraclius. The document possesses a considerable interest, for Maurice had conceived the design of adopting the Constantinian policy of dividing the Empire among his children. The fatal results to which this had led in the case of the sons of Constantine did not deter him. He assigned New Rome and "the East" to his eldest son Theodosius; Old Rome, Italy, and the western islands to his second son Tiberius; while the remaining provinces were to be sliced up among his other sons, and Domitian of Meliten was appointed their guardian. This intention to recur to in fourth-century practice is worthy of note; and but for the revolution it might have been carried out.

CHAPTER III

THE PERSIAN WAR (572-591 AD)

THE peace which Justinian and Chosroes had ratified in 562, although the long term of fifty years was fixed for its duration, was of necessity doomed to be short-lived, because its basis was a payment of money, and neither party had entertained any expectation that it would last long. The Roman government was fully determined to renew the war, when the first ten years, for which term they made the stipulated payment in two sums, had expired; and Chosroes, though he would have been glad to protract the peace, was indisposed to make any concessions.

And so, as we might expect, the relations between the Empires during the first seven years of Justin are strained; they collide in numerous ways, and causes for hostility accumulate. During the first few years fruitless negotiations are carried on, in regard (1) to the cession of Suania to Rome, and (2) to the claims of the Persophil Saracens of Hirah to subsidies from the Roman Emperor, and these haggling negotiations tended to produce ill feeling and dissatisfaction which more important circumstances soon brought to a crisis.

One of these circumstances was the interference of Persia in the affairs of the kingdom of Yemen, in south Arabia. Yemen had been reduced under the sway of an Abyssinian dynasty, with which the Roman Emperor was always on friendly terms. Saif, a descendant of the native Homerite kings, intolerant of the yoke of the strangers, sought refuge at the court of Chosroes, and by Persian assistance Yemen was conquered and the Homerite dynasty, in the person of Saif, restored. But Saif reigned only for a short time; his government was a failure; and Chosroes set a Persian marzpan (or margrave) over the country, which was placed in somewhat the same relation to Persia as the exarchate of Ravenna to Constantinople. But the Homerites found that the little finger of the marzpan was thicker than the loins of an Abyssinian prince, and sent an embassy to New Rome to beg for assistance.

In 571-572, when the term of ten years was approaching its close and a new payment would soon be due, another appeal to the Emperor, which he was only too ready to entertain, rendered an outbreak of war with Persia probable. Persarmenia, which was in a constant state of actual or intermittent rebellion, as the Christian population could not remain happy under Persian domination, appealed to the Emperor of the Romans in the name of their common religion; he accepted their allegiance, and, when Chosroes remonstrated, replied that Christians could not reject Christians.

These relations with two peoples over which Chosroes exercised jurisdiction, and especially the protection accorded by the Emperor to the Persarmenian, were important causes of the ensuing war. But with these yet another cause concurred in producing the result. This was a newly formed relation of alliance with the Turks, who now for the first time appear in the West. They were gradually taking the place of the Ephthalite Huns, whom they had made their tributaries,— those Huns who had been such formidable neighbours to Persia. The Chinese silk commerce and the trade on the Caspian, which had been hitherto monopolized by the Huns, were passing into their hands.

The Turks sent an embassy to the Byzantine court at the end of 568 or early in 569. They had previously tried to enter into commercial relations with Persia, but the Persian king had a wholesome horror of Turks, and did not wish his subjects to have any dealings with them. He poisoned some of their ambassadors, so that they should not come again. Then Dizabul, khan of the Turks, determined to seek an alliance with the Roman Empire, which seemed to offer special advantages, as its inhabitants used more silk than any other nation. Justin received the embassy kindly, and sent back Roman ambassadors in the autumn to see the Turkish chagan and conclude a treaty. These negotiations did not please Persia, and attempts were made by that power to waylay the ambassadors on their journey back to Byzantium.

The dominion of Dizabul was not a kingdom; it was an empire whose sovereign held sway over four subject kingdoms and received tribute from other peoples, as for instance from the Ephthalites. This empire threatened now to become formidable to Persia, just as the Avars (who, once the subject of these very Turks, had revolted and migrated to the West) had become formidable to the Romans. In fact the Roman Empire and the Persian kingdom were in very similar circumstances. The former was placed between the Avars and the Persians, just as the latter was placed between the Turks (on the north) and the Romans.

The new allies of Justin were anxious that the forces of Persia should be occupied with a war on the western frontier, and did all they could to induce Justin to renounce the peace of fifty years.

Any one of the causes mentioned might have been insufficient to produce a rupture, but all together were irresistible, and accordingly, when the time came for paying the stipulated annuity, Justin refused (572). The war which ensued lasted for twenty years; and its conclusion was due to the outbreak of a civil war in Persia. We may conveniently divide it into two parts, the death of Chosroes Nushirvan in 579 forming the point of division. The meagre accounts of the operations which we possess present little interest and much difficulty.

(1) Marcian, a senator and patrician, perhaps a cousin of Justinian, was appointed general in 572, and arrived in Osroene at the end of summer. Nothing took place in this year except an incursion of three thousand Roman hoplites into Arzanene. In 573 Marcian gained a great victory at Sargathon, but failed to take Nisibis, which he had blockaded. It was not for this failure alone that Marcian was deposed and Acacius appointed in his stead; a curious complication with the Saracens of Ghassan seems to have led to the recall of the general. Harith, king of Ghassan, died and was succeeded by Mondir; and Kabus, king of the rival Saracens of Hirah, seized the opportunity to invade the Ghassanid dominion. But Mondir, having collected an army, defeated the invader, and followed up his success by invading the territories of Kabus, over whom he gained yet another victory. After these successes he ventured to address a letter to the Roman Emperor, with a request for money, and this presumption inflamed the indignation of Justin. The Emperor indited two letters, one to Mondir full of soft words and promises, the other to Marcian ordering him to assassinate the king of Ghassan. Through some mistake the missives were interchanged, and Mondir read with surprise and consternation the warrant for his own destruction. "This is my desert", he said bitterly. Full of resentment, he vowed vengeance against the Romans. At this juncture the Persians and Persophil Saracens invaded Syria and laid it waste as far as Antioch, but Mondir stood aloof, like Achilles, and retired into the desert. Justin bade the generals try to conciliate him, but he would not receive them. He held aloof for three years, at the end of which term he entered into communication with Justinian, the son of Germanus, whose honourable character had won men's confidence; and by his means a reconciliation was effected.

The invasion of Syria just referred to took place under the leadership of Adormahun (Adarmanes), and the country, as has been said, was devastated up to the walls of Antioch. The city of Apamea was committed to the flames. Syria seems to have been entirely undefended; for thirty years the inhabitants had been exempt from hostile attacks, and had consequently become so unmanly and unaccustomed to the sights of war that they were unable to take measures for their own defence. The captives who were led away to Persia are said to have numbered two hundred and ninety-two thousand.

From these captives Chosroes is recorded to have selected two thousand beautiful virgins, and ordered them to be handsomely adorned like brides and sent as a present to the chagan of the Turks. Two marzpanes and a body of troops were appointed to escort them to the land of the barbarians, and received express orders to travel at a leisurely pace. The virgins were dejected for their souls' sakes, because they could no longer hope to receive religious instruction, and they revealed their longings for death to other Syrian captives. When they had arrived within fifty leagues of the Turkish frontier, they came to a great river, and agreed among themselves to die rather than to pollute themselves with heathen ways and lose their Christianity. "Before our bodies are defiled by the barbarians and our souls polluted and death finally overtake us, let us now, while our bodies are still pure, and our souls free from heathendom, in the name and trusting to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, offer unto him in purity both our souls and bodies by yielding ourselves up now to death, that we may be saved from our enemies and live for evermore. For it is but the pain of a moment which we have to endure in defense of our Christianity and for the preservation of our purity in body and soul". As the virgins were never allowed to be alone, they asked their conductors for permission to bathe in the river: "We are ashamed to bathe if you stand by and look on". The permission to bathe and the seclusion which they requested were granted, and the whole company of virgins rushed suddenly into the water and were drowned. The Persians saw them floating and sinking, but were unable to rescue them.

This example of Christian martyrdom, as it may be called, and of overpowering dread of the Turkish minotaur, so many centuries before he had set foot in Europe, is recorded only by John of Ephesus.

It seems that Marcian was recalled and Acacius sent to the East at the beginning of 574. When the Romans abandoned the siege of Nisibis, Chosroes swooped down upon Daras and besieged it, using against its walls the engines which the Romans had left behind them at Nisibis. But it was not easily taken, and the Persians almost despaired. Finally, over-confidence produced remissness in the garrison, and after a siege of six months the city passed into the hands of the Persians, about seventy years after its foundation by Anastasius. Thus Chosroes now held the two great fortresses of eastern Mesopotamia, Nisibis and Daras.

Besides these disasters, other difficulties beset the Roman government. It was perplexed by the hostilities of the Avars on the Danube and it was embarrassed by the mental aberration of the Emperor. Sophia was driven to write a letter of entreaty to Chosroes, and as her request was supported by a sum of 45,000 pieces of gold, she obtained the respite of a year's truce (spring 574 to spring 575). As Justin's malady increased, Tiberius was made regent, or rather subordinate co-regent with Sophia, and although the new caesar had no intention of bringing the war to a conclusion, he saw that it was absolutely necessary to gain time and prolong the cessation of hostilities. Accordingly, when the truce had expired, a peace was made for three years, not applying, however, to the war in Persarmenia, on condition that the Romans paid 30,000 pieces of gold annually. For the following three years (576, 577, 578) therefore the war was confined to Persarmenia.

Justinian, the son of Germanus, was appointed commander of the armies and repaired to Armenia (576). Chosroes advanced in person, intending to invest Theodosiopolis, but finding that it was too strong he proceeded westward, and, entering the Roman provinces, marched in the direction of Caesarea in Cappadocia through the country included between the Euphrates and the Lycus. The Romans marched to obstruct his advance in the Antitaurus mountains, in the north-east corner of Cappadocia, but when they approached Chosroes made a northward movement against Sebaste, which he took and burned. But he obtained no captives in that town, for when the rumour spread that the Persians were coming, all the inhabitants of those districts fled. Finding himself in serious difficulties in a hostile and mountainous country, and apparently not supported in the rear, Chosroes began to retreat. But he was not allowed by Justinian to depart with impunity; the Romans pressed on, and the Persians were forced to fight against their will. The battle was fought somewhere between Sebaste and Melitene, probably in the valley of the river Melas, and its details are described or invented by a rhetorical historian. It resulted in a complete victory for Justinian; Chosroes was forced to flee from his camp to the mountains, and leave his tent furniture, with all the gold, the silver, and the pearls which an oriental monarch required even in his campaigns, a prey to the conqueror. The booty, it is said, was immense.

The routed Persians grumbled at their lord for conducting them into this hole in the mountains, and Chosroes with difficulty mollified their indignation by an appeal to his grey hairs. Then the Sassanid descended into the plain of Melitene and burned that city, which had no means of resisting his attack. In the meantime, it may be asked, how was the Roman army occupied? It would seem that there was nothing to prevent the Romans from following the defeated and demoralized Persians, and at least hindering the destruction of Melitene, if they did not annihilate the host. This loss of opportunity is ascribed by a contemporary to the envy and divisions that prevailed among the Roman officers.

After the conflagration of Melitene, Chosroes retired towards the Euphrates, but he received a letter from the Roman general, reproaching him for being guilty of an unkingly act in robbing and then running away like a thief. The great king consented to accept offer of battle, and awaited the arrival of the Romans. The adversaries faced one another until the hour of noon; then three Romans rode forth, three times successively, close to the Persian ranks, but no Persian moved to answer the challenge. At length Chosroes sent a message to the Roman generals that there could be "no battle today", and took advantage of the fall of night to flee to the river. The Romans pursued and drove the fugitives into the waters of the Euphrates. More than half of the Persian army was drowned; the rest escaped to the mountains. It is said by Roman historians that Chosroes signalized these reverses by passing a law that no Persian king should ever go forth to battle in person.

Thus the campaign of 576 was attended with good fortune for the Romans, notwithstanding the destruction of Sebaste and Melitene. Nor were the events to the west of the Euphrates the only successes. Roman troops penetrated into Babylonia, and came within a hundred miles of the royal capital; the elephants which they carried off were sent to Byzantium.

The following year, 577, opened with negotiations for peace, which Chosroes, dispirited by his unlucky campaign, was anxious to procure. His general, Tamchosro, however, gained a victory over Justinian in Armenia. The Romans, in consequence of their successes, had become elated and incautious, and the Persians suddenly approached, surprised, and routed them. The victors, it is said, lost 30,000 men, the vanquished four times as many, so that the battle must have been an important affair. Encouraged by the change of fortune, Chosroes no longer desired peace, and the negotiations led to no result.

A pious historian considers that this reverse was a retribution on the Roman soldiers for their irreligious behaviour in Persarmenia, a district where there were many Christian settlers. When the Roman army invaded it, Christian priests came out to meet them with the holy Gospels in their hands, but no reverence was shown to their pious supplications. The worst outrages were committed, without distinction of creed. The soldiers seized infants, two at a time, by their legs, and tossing them up in the air caught the falling bodies on the points of their spears; monks were plundered, hermits and nuns were tortured, if they could not or would not produce gold and silver to satisfy the greed of the depredators. This imprudent behavior produced a reaction against Roman rule among the Christians of Persarmenia; twenty thousand immediately went over to the Persians,—all in fact except the princes, who escaped to Byzantium.

After this defeat Maurice, who held the office of *comes excubitorum* which Tiberius had filled before his investiture as Caesar, was sent to the East with full powers, and Gregory, the praetorian prefect, accompanied him to administer the military fiscus. Having collected troops in Cappadocia, his native province, Maurice assembled the generals and captains at Kitharizon, a fortress near Martyropolis, and assigned to each his part. Tamchosro, the Persian general in Armenia, employed a stratagem to put the Romans off their guard. He wrote to the troops at Theodosiopolis, bidding them prepare for battle on a certain day, and in the meantime he left Armenia and invaded Sophene, devastating the country about Amida and thus violating the peace, which had not yet expired. Maurice retaliated by carrying his arms into Persian territory; he overran Arzanene, and penetrated into the province of Corduene, which no Roman army had entered since the days of Jovian. He did not, however, occupy any country except Arzanene; his invasion was the same sort of blow to Persia that the expedition of Adormahun in 573 had been to the Empire. More than ten thousand captives were taken, of whom most were Christian Armenians, and a large number were located in Cyprus, where lands were allotted to them. Thus the current of Persian success has now been finally stopped.

There is no doubt that the successes of Chosroes had been due to the bad condition and the disorganization of the Roman army, and the tide began to change when the generals Justinian and Maurice assumed the command in the East. Justinian reformed the degenerate discipline of the soldiers, and Maurice, who, though he had not enjoyed the advantage of a military training, had made a special study of warfare and afterwards wrote a book on Strategic, did much for the reorganization of the army. As an example of the kind of reform which Maurice found necessary, I may notice that he was obliged to re-introduce the custom of entrenching a camp; the laziness and negligence of soldiers and officers had, it seems, come to such a pass that they dispensed with the foss as a useless expenditure of labour.

(2) The turn which affairs had taken would certainly, as Menander remarks, have led to a peace, and that on term tolerably favourable to the Romans, but for the death of the aged Chosroes in spring 579, a few months after the death of Justin (December 578). His son and successor Hormisdas, whose character has been painted in dark colours, rejected the proposals which Tiberius made, and Maurice continued a career of partial success, which culminated in the important victory of Coustantina in 581. It must be also observed that Tiberius purchased peace from the Avars for 80,000 aurei in order to throw all the energies of the Empire into the Persian war. Events on the Ister and events on the Euphrates constantly exerted a mutual influence.

The year 579 was marked by the invasion of Media by a portion of the Roman army. In the following year, 580, Maurice combined forces with the Saracen king Mondir (Alamundar) for a grand invasion; but disputes arose between the Roman and the Saracen leaders in the neighbourhood of Callinicum; Mondir is said to have acted treacherously, and the expedition failed. Adormahun had harried Osroene, leaving not so much as a house standing, and had written to Maurice and Mondir, "Ye are exhausted with the fatigue of your march; don't trouble yourselves to advance against me. Rest a little, and I shall come to you". And he was allowed to retreat, says the historian, although 200,000 men were eating at the Emperor's expense. In 581 the Romans gained a great victory at Constantina.

When Maurice became Emperor, in the following year, he adopted the precedent of his predecessors and ceased to be a general. He appointed John Mystacon ("the Moustachioed") commander of the eastern armies, and the year 583 was marked by a defeat of the Romans in a battle on the river Nymphius, the Persians being led by a general entitled the kardarigan. The defeat was mainly due to enmity between John and a captain named Kurs, who was appointed to command the right wing, and disloyally took no part in the engagement.

At the beginning of 584 John Mystacon was deposed from his command as not sufficiently energetic, and was succeeded by Philippicus, the husband of Gordia the Emperor's sister. In autumn Persia was invaded and the pursuit of the kardarigan was eluded, but nothing of consequence occurred. Early in 585 Philippicus invaded Arzanene, but he was soon obliged by sickness to retire to Martyropolis and entrust the command temporarily to a captain named Stephanus; but this year, like the preceding, was unmarked by any important event.

In the spring of 586 Philippicus, who had visited Byzantium during the winter, was met at Amida by Persian ambassadors, who had come to urge the conclusion of a peace, for which they expected the Romans to

pay money. But the Romans had lately experienced no reverses, and therefore disdained the offer. The operations of this year took place in the neighbourhood of the river of Arzamon and the mountain of Izal. The Romans commanded the banks of the river, and as water was procurable from no other source in these regions, it was expected that, if the Persians advanced to the attack, thirst would be a powerful ally. But the Persians loaded camels with skins of water and advanced confidently, intending to attack the Romans on Sunday. Philippicus, informed on Saturday of their approach, suspected their design and drew up his army in array for fighting in the plain of Solachon. The right wing was commanded by Vitalius; the left wing by Wilfred (Iliphredas), governor of Emesa; the centre by Philippicus and his lieutenant Heraclius, the father of that Heraclius who was afterwards Emperor. On the Persian side, the centre was commanded by the kardarigan; Mebodes faced Wilfred; and Aphraates, a nephew of the kardarigan, opposed Vitalius. The Roman troops were encouraged by the elevation of a flag adorned with a picture of Christ, which was believed not to have been made by hands; it was known as a "theandric image". On the other hand the Persian general resorted to the desperate measure of destroying the water supply, in order that his soldiers might feel that life depended on success.

The battle was begun by the advance of the right Roman wing, which forced back the Persian left and fell on the baggage in the rear. But, occupying themselves with the plunder, the victors allowed the fugitives to turn and unite themselves with the Persian centre, so that the Roman centre had to deal with a very formidable mass. Philippicus, who had retired a little from the immediate scene of conflict, resorted to a device to divert the troops of Vitalius from their untimely occupation with the baggage. He gave his helmet to Theodore Ilbinus, his spear-bearer, and ordered him to strike the plunderers with his sword. This device produced the desired effect; the soldiers thought that Philippicus himself was riding about the field, and returned to the business of battle. The left wing of the Romans was completely successful, and the routed Persians fled as far as Daras. But in the centre the conflict raged hotly for a long time, and it was believed by the Christians that a divine interposition took place to decide the result in their favour. The kardarigan fled to an adjacent hill, where he starved for a few days, and then hastened to Daras, whose inhabitants refused to receive a fugitive.

After the victory of Solachon, Philippicus invaded Arzanene. The inhabitants of that district concealed themselves in underground dwellings, and were dug out like rats by the Romans, who discovered them by the tell-tale subterranean sounds. Here Heraclius, who had been sent with a small force in the company of two Persian deserters, who undertook to point out a locality favourable for establishing a fortress, fell in with the kardarigan, but succeeded in eluding his superior forces by a dexterous retreat. A messenger was sent to Philippicus, who was besieging the fortress of Chlomari, to apprise him of the approach of the enemy; and he ordered the trumpet to be sounded, to recall all the troops who were scouring the surrounding country. The kardarigan soon arrived, and the Persians and Romans found themselves separated by a large ravine, which prevented an immediate battle. At night the Persians, marching round this ravine, encamped behind the Romans, and apparently occupied such a dominant position on the hill that it would have been impossible to continue the siege of Chlomari. On the following night in the first watch the Roman camp was suddenly alarmed by the departure of the general, whose conduct seems quite inexplicable, as the Persian forces led by the kardarigan were no match for his own, and there appears to have been no imminent danger. The soldiers followed him in confusion, with difficulty finding their way through the darkness of a moonless night; and if the enemy had known the actual state of the case the army might have easily been annihilated. But the movement was so unaccountable that the Persians suspected a stratagem, and did not leave their camp during the night. The fortress of Aphumon, whither Philippicus had made his way, received the Romans, who, harassed by the arrows of the slowly following Persians, arrived during the forenoon, and consoled themselves by deriding the general. The whole army retreated to Amida, the Persians still following and harassing, but not venturing on a general battle.

Philippicus did not carry on in person any further operations during this year, but his second in command, the able officer Heraclius, invaded and wasted the southern regions of Media. In the spring of 587 Philippicus consigned two-thirds of his forces to Heraclius, and the remaining third to Theodorus of Kabdis and Andreas, a Saracen interpreter, with instructions to harass the territory of the enemy by incursions. The general himself again suffered from illness, and was unable to take the field. Both Heraclius and Theodorus were successful; each of them laid siege to a strong fortress, and both fortresses were stormed.

In winter Philippicus set out for Constantinople, leaving Heraclius in charge of the army, but before he reached Tarsus he learned that the Emperor had signified his intention of appointing Priscus commander-in-chief instead of himself. In spring, accompanied by Germanus the bishop of Damascus, Priscus arrived at Monokarton, where the army was stationed. It was usual for a new general on his arrival to descend from his horse, and, walking between the rows of the marshalled army, honour them with a salutation. Priscus neglected this ceremony; and a dissatisfaction which had been long brewing among the soldiers burst out into open mutiny. This dissatisfaction was caused, not only by the deposition of Philippicus, who was popular among the troops, notwithstanding his strange flight in 586, but by an unpopular innovation of Maurice, who ordained that the rations of the soldiers should be reduced by one-quarter. The injudicious haughtiness or indifference of Priscus offended the soldiers, already disposed to murmur; and the camp became a scene of disorder. Priscus was thoroughly frightened, and resorted to the expedient of sending Wilfred to march through the camp with the holy theandric standard in his hands; but such was the excitement that the mystic symbol was received with contumely and stones. The general escaped, not unwounded, to the city of Constantina, where he had recourse to the services of a physician; and he despatched letters to the governors of the surrounding cities and forts, with reassurances that the soldiers would not be deprived of any portion of what they were in the habit of receiving. He likewise sent a messenger to the camp at Monokarton, to announce that the Emperor had changed his mind and that the rations would not be diminished. The old bishop Germanus went on this mission, but the soldiers meanwhile had elected an officer named Germanus, not to be confounded with the bishop, as their general. The representations of the prelate were not listened to, and the soldiers urged the inhabitants of Constantina to lespel Priscus.

Informed of these events, Maurice recalled Priscus and reappointed Philippicus, but the mutineers were not satisfied, and refused to submit to the command of their former general. The Persians meanwhile attacked Constantina; but the provincial commander Germanus, who seems to have acted through constraint rather than

inclination, induced a thousand men to accompany him, and relieved the menaced city. He then restored order so far as to enable him to organise a company of four thousand for the invasion of Persia, and at the same time Aristobulus, an emissary of Maurice, succeeded by gifts and promises in mollifying the exasperated troops. While Philippicus, diffident and uncertain, was still at Hierapolis, a battle was fought at the “City of the Witnesses”—to adopt the style of our historian Theophylactus—and the Romans obtained a brilliant victory.

Early in 589 the Persians captured Martyropolis by the treachery of a certain Sittas, who introduced four hundred Persians into the city on the plea that they were deserters to the Romans, while the truth was that he was himself a deserter to the barbarians. Philippicus surrounded the city, but Mebodes and Aphraates arrived with considerable forces, and the Romans were defeated. Thus Martyropolis passed into the hands of the Persians.

At this juncture Comentiolus succeeded Philippicus, and almost immediately after his assumption of the command he worsted the enemy in an important battle near Nisibis, which was fatal to the general Aphraates, and it is specially mentioned that Heraclius performed signal acts of valour. In the Persian camp rich spoils were obtained.

In the same year the Roman arms won minor successes in the northern regions of Albania. Persia had been encompassed by several dangers at the same time. Arabs invaded Mesopotamia from the south, the Turks threatened in the north, and in the north-west the Chazars poured into Armenia and penetrated to Azerbiyan. The general Varahran was victorious in an expedition against the Turks, and was then sent to Suania, but as he returned thence he was twice defeated by Romanus in Albania on the banks of the Araxes.

But now the course of events in Persia took a turn which proved decidedly favourable to the Romans, and led to a conclusion of the war. Hormisdas deposed Varahran from the command in consequence of his ill success in Albania, and is said to have insulted him by sending him the garment of a woman and a distaff. This story may be true, but we cannot help remembering that it was told long ago of a Cypriote king and a queen of Cyrene, and in recent years of Sophia and Narses. Varahran revolted against the unpopular monarch, and the result of the civil war was that (September 590) Hormisdas was slain, and the rebel was proclaimed king. The second act of the drama was the contest between Chosroes Eberwiz, a son of Hormisdas, and the usurper, which by the help of Roman arms was decided in favour of the legitimate heir. Chosroes fled for refuge to Roman territory, and sent an appeal for help to the Roman Emperor. The difficulties in which Persia was involved offered an excellent opportunity to New Rome, and Chosroes was fully conscious of this fact. We are informed that the ambassadors who bore Chosroes' letter used thirteen arguments to persuade Maurice; and especially worthy of notice, even if it be due, not to the brain of Chosroes, but to the pen of Theophylactus, is the argument drawn from the example of Alexander the Great. The Persian empire was at this moment implicated in such serious difficulties that it seemed by no means a chimerical idea or an impossible undertaking for the Roman “Republic”, in spite of its degenerate condition, to make an attempt to reduce the Persian kingdom beneath its sway. Consequently the envoys of Chosroes are represented as being at pains to point out that while Alexander had subdued Persia, he had not succeeded in forming a lasting empire; his vast dominion had been broken up among his successors. The nature of men, the ambassadors are reported to have observed, makes it impossible that a single universal kingdom, reflecting the unity of the divine government, should exist on earth.

This contemporary comparison of a possible undertaking on the part of the Emperor Maurice with the actual undertaking of Alexander more than nine centuries before is interesting. We pause, as we read Theophylactus, and reflect that this ‘Romaic’ Empire, ruling chiefly over lands which had submitted to the sway of Alexander—Macedonia, Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt,—and Greek not Latin in its speech, was in a stricter sense the successor of Alexander's empire than the Roman Empire had been when it reached to the northern seas. It was as if the spirit of Alexander had lain dissolved in the universal spirit of Rome for seven hundred years, and were now once more precipitated in its old place, changed but recognisable.

Maurice was not emulous of Alexander's glories and dangers; the Roman Empire at that moment had not the heart to aspire to new conquests. He undertook to restore Chosroes to the throne of the Sassanids, on condition that Persarmenia and eastern Mesopotamia, with the cities of Daras and Martyropolis, should be ceded to the Romans. The terms were readily accepted, and two victories gained at Ganzaca and Adiabene sufficed to overthrow the usurper and place Chosroes II on the throne (591).

The peace was concluded, Maurice withdrew his troops from Asia to act against the Avars in Thrace, and for ten years, as long as Maurice was alive, the old enmity between “ome and Persia slept.

A word must be said of the state of Persia under the rule of Chosroes Nushirvan, whose reign extends over nearly half of the sixth century, and may be called the golden or at least the gilded period of the monarchy of the Sassanids. It was a period of reforms, of which most seem to have been salutary. In order to prevent the local tyranny or mismanagement of satraps, who were too far from the centre to be always under the king's eye, he adopted a new administrative division, which was perhaps suggested to him by the Roman system of prefectures. He divided Persia into four parts, over which he placed four governors, whose duty was to keep diligent watch over the transactions of the provincial rulers. And for greater security he adopted the practice of periodically making progresses himself through his dominions. He was greatly concerned for the maintenance of the population, which seems to have been declining, and he employed two methods to meet the difficulty; he settled captives in his dominions, and he enforced marriages. He introduced a new land system, which was found to work so well that after the fall of the Sassanid monarchy the Saracen caliphs adopted it unaltered. But perhaps his most anxious pains were spent on the state of the army, and it is said that when he reviewed it he used to inspect each individual soldier. He succeeded in reducing its cost and increasing its efficiency. Like Peter Alexiovitch or Frederick the Great, he encouraged foreign culture at his court, he patronized the study of Persian history, and caused a *Shahnameh* (Book of the kings) to be composed. Of his personal culture, however, the envy or impartiality of Agathias speaks with contempt, as narrow and superficial; on the other hand, he has received

the praises of an ecclesiastical historian. "He was a prudent and wise man", writes John of Ephesus, "and all his lifetime he assiduously devoted himself to the perusal of philosophical works. And, as was said, he took pains to collect the religious books of all creeds, and read and studied them, that he might learn which were true and wise and which were foolish. ... He praised the books of the Christians above all others, and said, "These are true and wise above those of any other religion".

CHAPTER IV

SLAVS AND AVARS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

THE great Slavonic movement of the sixth and seventh centuries was similar in its general course to the great German movement of the fourth and fifth. The barbarians who are at first hostile invaders become afterwards dependent, at least nominally dependent, and christianized settlers in the Empire; and as they always tend to become altogether independent, they introduce into it an element of dissolution. Slavs too are employed by the Romans for military service, though not to such an extent as were the Germans at an earlier date.

This resemblance is not accidental; it is due to the natural relations of things. But it is curiously enhanced by the circumstance that just as the course of the German movement had been interrupted or modified by the rise of the Hun empire of Attila in the plains which are now called Hungary, so the course of the Slavonic movement was modified by the establishment of the Avar empire, in the latter half of the sixth century, in the same regions. And as the power of the Huns, after a brief life, vanished completely, having received its death-blow mainly from Germans, so the power of the Avars, after a short and formidable existence, was overthrown early in the seventh century by the Slavs, for whom the field was then clear. The remnant of the Avars survived in obscure regions of Pannonia until the days of Charles the Great

The Avars probably belonged to the same Tartaric group as the Huns of Attila. In the last years of Justinian's reign, about the time of the invasion of the Cotrigurs, they first appeared on the political horizon of the West. They had once been tributaries of the Turk in Asia, and having thrown off his authority had travelled westward; but we are assured that they had no right to the name of Avars, and that they were really only Wars or Huns, who called themselves Avars, a name of repute and dread, in order to frighten the world. These pseudo-Avars persuaded Justinian to grant them subsidies, in return for which they performed the service of making war on the Utrigurs, the Zali, and the Sabiri. But while Justinian paid them, and they professed to keep off all enemies from Roman territory, their treacherous designs soon became apparent; they invaded Thrace (562), and refused to accept the home which the Emperor offered them in Pannonia Secunda. In this year Bonus was stationed to protect the Danube against them, as Chilbudius in former times had protected it against the Slavs.

At first the Avars were not so formidable as they afterwards became. They harried the lands of the Slavs (Antae) who dwelled beyond the Danube, but they did not venture at first to harry the lands of the Romans. When Justin refused to continue to pay the subsidy granted by Justinian, they took no steps for redress, and, turning away from the Empire, directed their arms against the Franks and invaded Thuringia, a diversion which had no consequences.

But now a critical moment came, and a very curious transaction took place which had two important results. The Lombard king Alboin made a proposal to Baian, the chagan or king of the Avars, that the two nations should combine to overthrow the kingdom of the Gepids, over whom Cunimund then reigned. The conditions were that the Avars should receive half the spoil and all the territory of the Gepids, and also, in case the Lombards secured a footing in Italy, the land of Pannonia, which the Lombards then occupied. The last condition is curious, and, if it was more than a matter of form, remarkably naive; the Lombards must have known that, in the event of their returning, they would be obliged to recover their country by the sword. The character of the Gepids seems to have been faithless; but the diplomacy of Justinian had succeeded in rendering them comparatively innocuous to the Empire. Justin now gave them some half-hearted assistance; but they succumbed before the momentary combination of Avars and Lombards in the year 567.

The two results which followed this occurrence were of ecumenical importance: the movement of the Lombards into Italy (568), and the establishment of the Avars in the extensive countries of the Gepids and Lombards, where their power became really great and formidable, and the Roman Empire had for neighbours a Hunnic instead of a German people.

The chagan, Baian, was now in a position to face the Roman power and punish Justin for the contemptuous rejection of his demands. From this time forward until the fall of the Avar kingdom there is an alternation of hostilities, and treaties, for which the Romans have to pay. At the same time the Balkan lands are condemned to suffer from constant invasions of the Slavs, over whom the Avars acquire an ascendancy, though the relation of dependence is a very loose one. At one time the Avars join the Romans in making war on the Slaves, at another

time they instigate the Slavs to make war on the Romans; while some Slavonic tribes appear to have been occasionally Roman allies. The Slavs inhabited the larger part of the broad tract of land which corresponds to modern Walachia; while the Avar kingdom probably embraced most of the regions which are now included in Hungary.

The great object of the Avars was to strengthen their new dominions by gaining possession of the stronghold of Sirmium, an invaluable post for operations against the Roman provinces. As, however, Bonus held it with a strong garrison, they could not think of attacking it, and were obliged to begin hostilities by ravaging Dalmatia. An embassy was then sent to Justin demanding the cession of Sirmium, and also the pay that Justinian used formerly to grant to the Cotrigur and Utrigur Huns, whom they had subdued. It is to be observed that they claimed to be looked upon as the successors of the Gepids. Their demands were refused; but when Tiberius, who afterwards became Emperor, was sent against them and suffered a defeat, the disaster led to the conclusion of a treaty, which seems to have been preserved for the next few years, and the Romans paid 80,000 pieces of gold.

We may notice that in these transactions a difference is manifest between the policy of Justin and the would-be policy of Tiberius. Justin is bellicose, and refuses to yield to the Avars, whereas his general is inclined to adopt the old system of Justinian and keep them quiet by paying them a fixed sum. We may also notice a circumstance, which we might have inferred without a record, that the Haemus provinces, over which a year seldom passed without invasions and devastations, were completely disorganised and infested by highwaymen. These highwaymen were called *scamars*, a name which attached to them for many centuries; and shortly after the peace of 570 they were bold enough to waylay a party of Avars.

For the next four years we hear nothing of Avar incursions, nor is anything recorded of the general Tiberius. We may suppose that he resided at Constantinople, ready to take the field in case of need; and in 574, when the enemy renewed their importunities for the cession of Sirmium, he went forth against them, and was a second time defeated. Before the end of the year he was created Caesar, and, as he determined to throw all the forces of the realm into the Persian war, he agreed to pay the Avars a yearly tribute of 80,000 pieces of gold.

But now the Slavs, who for many years seem to have caused no trouble to the Romans, began to move again, and in 577 no less than a hundred thousand poured into Thrace and Illyricum. Cities were plundered by the invaders and left desolate. As there were no forces to oppose them, a considerable number took up their abode in the land and lived at their pleasure there for many years. It is from this time that we must date the first intrusion of a Slavonic element on a considerable scale into the Balkan peninsula.

It was a critical moment for the government, and the old policy of Justinian, which consisted in stirring up one barbarian people against another, was reverted to. An appeal for assistance was made by John the prefect of Illyricum to the chagan of the Avars, who had his own reasons for hostility towards the unruly Slaves, and he consented to invade their territory. The Romans provided ships to carry the Avar host across the Ister, and the chagan burned the villages and ravaged the lands of the Slaves, who skulked in the woods and did not venture to oppose him.

But Baian had not ceased to covet the city of Sirmium, and the absence of all the Roman forces in the East was too good an opportunity to lose. In 579 he encamped with a large army between Singidunum (Belgrade) and Sirmium, pretending that he was organizing an expedition against the Slaves, and swearing by the Bible as well as by his own gods that he entertained no hostile intention against Sirmium. But he succeeded in throwing a bridge over the Save and came upon Sirmium unexpectedly; and as there were no provisions in the place, and no relief could be sent, the city was reduced to such extremities that Tiberius was compelled to agree to its surrender (581). A peace was then made, on condition that the Avars should receive 80,000 aurei annually.

The loss of Sirmium is a turning-point in the history of the peninsula, as it was the most important defence possessed by the Romans against the barbarians in western Illyricum. The shamelessness of the Avaric demands now surpassed all bounds. When Maurice came to the throne he consented to increase the tribute by 20,000 pieces of gold, but in a few months the chagan demanded a further increase of the same amount, and this was refused. Thereupon (in summer 583) the Avars seized Singidunum, Viminacium, and other places on the Danube, which were ill defended, and harried Thrace, where the inhabitants, under the impression that a secure peace had been established, were negligently gathering in their harvest. Elpidius, a former praetor of Sicily, and Comentiolus, one of the bodyguard, were then sent as ambassadors to the chagan, and it is recorded that Comentiolus spoke such "holy words" to the Lord Baian that he was put in chains and barely escaped with his life. In the following year (584) a treaty was concluded, Maurice consenting to pay the additional sum which he had before refused.

It was, however, now plain to the Emperor that the Avars had become so petulant that payments of gold would no longer suffice to repress their hostile propensities, and he therefore considered it necessary to keep a military contingent in Thrace and modify the arrangement of Tiberius, by which all the army, except garrison soldiers, were stationed in Asia. Accordingly, when the Slavs, instigated by the Avars, invaded Thrace soon after the treaty, and penetrated as far as the Long Wall, Comentiolus had forces at his disposal, and gained some victories over the invaders, first at the river Erginia, and afterwards close to the fortress of Ansinon in the neighbourhood of Hadrianople. The barbarians were driven from Astica, as the region was called which extends between Hadrianople and Philippopolis, and the captives were rescued from their hands.

The general tenor of the historian's account of these Slavonic depredations in 584 or 585 implies that the depredators were not Slaves who lived beyond the Danube and returned thither after the invasion, but Slaves were already settled in Roman territory. Comentiolus' work consisted in clearing Astica of these lawless settlers. It is a vexed question whether the Slavs also settled in northern Greece and the Peloponnesus as early as the reign of Maurice. There is evidence to show that the city of Monembasia, so important in the Middle Ages, was founded

at this time on the coast of Laconia, and it seems probable that its foundation was due to Greek fugitives from the Slavs, just as Venice is said to have been founded by fugitives from the Huns.

In autumn (apparently 585) the peace was violated. The chagan took advantage of the pretext that a Scythian magician, who had indulged in carnal intercourse with one of his wives and was fleeing from his wrath, had been received by Maurice in Constantinople. The Emperor replied to the Avar demonstrations by imprisoning the chagan's ambassador Targitios in Chalcis, an island in the Propontis, for a space of six months, because he presumed to ask for the payment of money while his master was behaving as an enemy.

The provinces beyond the Haemus, Lower Moesia, and Scythia, were harried by the Avars, indignant at the treatment of their ambassador (586). The towns of Ratiaria, Dorostolon, Zaldapa, Bononia,—there was a Bononia on the Danube as well as in Italy and on the English Channel,—Marcianopolis, and others were taken, but the enterprise cost the enemy much trouble and occupied a considerable time. Comentiolus was then appointed general, perhaps *magister militum per Illyricum*, to conduct the war against the Avars.

CAMPAIGN OF 587.

The nominal number of the forces under the command of Comentiolus was 10,000; but of these only 6000 were capable soldiers. Accordingly he left 4000 to guard the camp near Anchialus, and divided the fighting men into three bands, of which the first was consigned to Martin, the second to Castus, and the third he led himself. Castus proceeded westward towards the Haemus mountains and the city of Zaldapa, and falling in with a division of the barbarian army, cut it to pieces. Martin directed his course northwards to Tomi, in the province of Scythia, where he found the chagan and the main body of the enemy encamped on the shore of a lake. The Romans surprised the chagan's camp, but he and most of the Avars escaped to the shelter of an island. Comentiolus himself accomplished nothing; he merely proceeded to Marcianopolis, which had been fixed on as the place of rendezvous for the three divisions. When the six thousand were reunited they returned to the camp, and taking with them the four thousand men who had been left there, proceeded to a place called Sabulente Canalin, whose natural charms are described by Theophylactus, in the high dells of Mount Haemus. Here they awaited for the approach of the chagan, who, as they knew, intended to come southwards and invade Thrace. It would appear that the spot in which the Romans encamped was close to the most easterly pass of Mount Haemus.

In the neighbourhood of Sabulente there was a river which could be crossed in two ways, by a wooden bridge, or, apparently higher up the stream, by a stone bridge. Martin was sent to the vicinity of the bridge to discover whether the Avars had already crossed, while Castus was stationed at the other passage to reconnoitre, and, in case the enemy had crossed, to observe their movements. Martin soon ascertained that the barbarian host was on the point of crossing, and immediately returned to Comentiolus with the news. Castus, having crossed to the ulterior bank, met some outrunners of the Avars, and cut them to pieces; but instead of returning to the camp by the way he had come, he pressed on in the direction of the bridge, where he expected to fall in with Martin. He was not aware that the foe were already there. But the distance was too long to permit of his reaching the bridge before nightfall, and at sunset he was obliged to halt. Next morning he rode forward and suddenly came upon the Avar army, which was defiling across the bridge. To escape or avoid observation seemed wellnigh impossible, but the members of the little band instinctively separated and sought shelter in the surrounding thickets. Some of the Roman soldiers were detected and were cruelly tortured by their captors until they pointed out where the captain himself was concealed in the midst of a grove. Thus Castus was taken prisoner by the enemy.

The want of precision in the narrative of the historian and the difficulty of the topography of the Thracian highlands make it impossible to follow with anything like certainty the details of these Avaric and Slavonic invasions. The chagan, after he had crossed the river, divided his army into two parts, one of which he sent forward to enter eastern Thrace by a pass near Mesembria. This pass was guarded by 500 Romans, who resisted bravely, but were overcome. Thrace was defended only by some infantry forces under the command of Ansimuth, who, instead of opposing the invaders, retreated to the Long Wall, closely followed by the foe; the captain himself, who brought up the rear, was captured by the pursuers.

The other division of the Avars, which was led by the chagan himself, probably advanced westward along that intermediate region which lies between the Haemus range and the Sredna Gora, and crossed one of the passes leading into western Thrace.

Comentiolus, who had perhaps also moved westward after the chagan along Mount Haemus, descended by Calvomonte and Libidourgon to the region of Astica. It was on this occasion, perhaps as they were defiling along mountain passes, that the baggage fell from one of the beasts of burden, and the words, "torna torna fratre" (turn back, brother), addressed by those in the rear to the owner of the beast, who was walking in front, were taken up along the line of march and interpreted in the sense of an exhortation to flee from an approaching enemy. But for this false alarm the chagan might have been surprised and captured, for he had retained with himself only a few guards, all the rest of his forces being dispersed throughout Thrace. Even as it was, the Avars who were with him fell in unexpectedly with the Roman army, and most of them were slain.

After this the forces of the Avars were recalled and collected by their monarch, who for the second time had barely escaped an imminent danger. They now set themselves to besiege the most important Thracian cities. They took Moesian Appiaria, but Diocletianopolis, Philippopolis, and Hadrianopolis withstood their assaults.

An incident characteristic of those days determined the capture of Appiaria. A soldier named Busas, who happened to be staying in the fortress, had gone out to hunt, and "the huntsman became himself a prey". The Avars were on the point of putting him to death, but his arguments induced them to prefer the receipt of a rich ransom. Standing in front of the walls, the captive exhausted the resources of persuasion and entreaty, enumerating his services in warfare, and appealing to the compassion of his fellow-countrymen to redeem him from death; but the garrison of the town, under the influence of a man whose wife was reputed to have been

unduly intimate with Busas, were deaf to his prayers. Indignant at their callousness, the captive did not hesitate to rescue his own life by enabling the Avars to capture the town, and at the same time he had the gratification of avenging himself on the unfeeling defenders of Appiaria. He instructed the ignorant barbarians how to construct a siege-engine, and by this means the fortress was taken.

While the enemy were besieging Hadrianople, Maurice appointed to the post of general in Thrace John Mystacon, who had formerly commanded in the Persian war; and Mystacon was assisted by the ability and valour of a captain named Drocton, of Lombard origin. In a battle at Hadrianople the Avars were routed, and compelled to retreat to their own country. Shortly before this event Castus had been ransomed.

The misfortunes of the army of Comentiolus and the capture of Castus seem to have produced a spirit of insubordination in the capital, and increased the unpopularity of Maurice. Abusive songs were circulated, and though the writer of the panegyric history of this reign makes light of the persons who murmured, and takes the opportunity of praising the Emperor's mildness in feeling, or at least showing, no resentment, yet the mere fact that Theophylactus mentions the murmurs proves that they were a notable signification of the Emperor's unpopularity, especially as the events which caused the discontent were not directly his fault.

During 588 the provinces of Europe seem to have enjoyed rest from the invaders, but in 589 Thrace was harried by Slavs, and apparently Slavs who lived permanently on Roman soil.

The position of affairs was considerably changed when in the year 591 peace was made with Persia, and Maurice was able to employ the greater part of the forces of the Empire in defending the European provinces. He astonished the court by preparing to take the field himself, for an Emperor militant had not been seen since the days of Theodosius the Great. The nobles, the Patriarch, his own wife and children, assiduously supplicated him to give up his rash resolve; but Maurice was firm in his determination. His progress as far as Anchialus is described by the historian of his reign; but when he arrived there the tidings that a Persian embassy was awaiting him recalled him to the capital, and his speedy return seems to have been also caused by signs and portents.

This ineffectual performance of Maurice, who had never been popular with the army, discredited him still more in the eyes of the troops; they had now a plausible pretext for regarding him with contempt. He was skilled in military science, and wrote a treatise on tactics; but henceforward the soldiers doubtless thought that he might be indeed a grand militarist "who had the whole theory of war in the knot of his scarf", but that certainly his "mystery in stratagem" was limited to theory.

I may mention an incident which occurred in the progress of Maurice, and which transports us for a moment to the habitations of a curious, if not fabulous, people on the Baltic Sea. The attendants of the Emperor captured three men who bore no weapons, but carried in their hands musical instruments. Being questioned by their captors, they stated that they were Slavs who dwelled by the "western ocean". The chagan of the Avars had requested their people to help him in his wars, and these three men had been sent as envoys by the ethnarchs or chiefs of their tribes, bearing a message of refusal. Their journey had occupied the almost incredible period of fifteen months. The chagan had prevented them from returning home, and they had resolved to seek refuge with the Roman Emperor. They had no arms, because the territory in which they lived did not produce iron; hence their occupation was music, which, they said, was much more agreeable, and they lived in a state of continual peace. We are not told what subsequently became of these extraordinary Slaves, except that Maurice, struck with admiration at their splendid stature, caused them to be conveyed to Heraclea.

When Maurice returned to Byzantium he was waited on not only by a Persian embassy but by two envoys, Bosos and Bettos, of a king of the Franks, who proposed that the Emperor should purchase his assistance against the Avars by paying subsidies. Maurice consented to an alliance, but refused to pay for it.

During the last ten years of Maurice's reign hostilities were carried on both with the Avars and with the Slaves. As the narrative of our original authority, Theophylactus, is in some points chronologically obscure, it will be most convenient to treat it in annual divisions.

(1) 591 *ad*—The operations of the Avars began at Singidon, as the Greeks called Singidunum, on the Danube. Having crossed the river in boats constructed by the labour of subject Slavs, the host of the barbarians laid siege to the city, but when a week had passed and Singidon still held out, the chagan consented to retire on the receipt of two thousand aurei, a gilt table, and rich apparel. It will be remembered that the capital of Upper Moesia had been captured by the Avars in 583; we must presume that they did not occupy it, for in that case its recapture by the Romans would certainly have been mentioned by the historian.

The chagan then directed his course to the region of Sirmium, where, with the help of his Slavonic boatbuilders, he crossed the Save; thence marching eastwards he approached Bononia on the fifth day. The chief passage of the Timavus (Timok) was at a place called Procliana, and here the advance guard of the Avars was met by the Roman captain Salvian with a thousand cavalry. Maurice had appointed Priscus "General of Europe", and Priscus had selected Salvian as his captain or "under-general". A severe engagement took place, in which the Romans were victorious; and when on the following morning eight thousand of the enemy advanced under Samur to crush the small body of Salvian, the Avars were again defeated. The chagan then moved forward with his whole army, and Salvian prudently retreated to the camp of Priscus, of whose movements we are not informed.

Having remained some time at Procliana, the Avars came to Sabulente Canalin, and thence, having burnt down a church in the vicinity of Anchialus, entered Thrace, about a month after they had crossed the Danube. Drizipera, the first town they besieged in Thrace, is said to have been saved by a miracle, and, having failed here, the enemy marched to Heraclea, where the general of Europe was stationed. Priscus seems to have gradually fallen back before the advancing enemy, and now, when an engagement at length took place, he was routed. Retreating with the infantry to Didymoteichon, he soon shut himself up in the securer refuge of Tzurulon, where

he was besieged by the chagan. In order to drive away the barbarians, the Emperor adopted an ingenious and successful stratagem. A letter was written, purporting to come from the Emperor and addressed to Priscus, in which the general was informed that a large force had been embarked and sent round by the Black Sea to carry captive the families of the Avars left unprotected in their habitations beyond the Danube. This letter was consigned to a messenger, who was instructed to allow himself to be captured by the enemy. When the alarming contents of the letter, whose genuineness he did not suspect, became known to the chagan, he raised the siege and returned as speedily as possible to defend his country, having made a treaty with Priscus, and received, for the sake of appearance, a small sum of money. In autumn Priscus retired to Byzantium, and the troops took up their winter quarters in Thracian villages.

(2) 592 AD—This year was remarkable for a successful expedition against the Slavs beyond the Ister, who, under the leadership of Ardagast, had been harrying Thrace. The Emperor had at length come to the conclusion that the invaders should be opposed at the Danube, and not, as the practice had been for the last few years, at the Haemus. Priscus, who continued to hold the position of commander-in-chief, and Gentzon, who had the special command of the infantry, collected the army at Heraclea and marched to Dorostolon, or Durostorum, which is now Silistria, with the intention of crossing the river and punishing the Slavs in their own country. At Dorostolon, Koch, an ambassador of the Avars, arrived in the Roman camp, and remonstrated with Priscus on the appearance of an army on the Danube after the treaty which had been made at Tzurulon. It was explained that the expedition was against the Slavs, not against the Avars, and that the Slavs had not been included in the treaty. Having crossed the Ister, Priscus surprised the camp of Ardagast at midnight, and the barbarians fled in confusion. Ardagast himself was almost captured, for in his flight he was tripped up by the stump of a tree; but, fortunately for him, the accident occurred not far from the bank of a river. Plunging in its waves, perhaps remaining under water and breathing through a reed as the amphibious Slavs were wont to do, he eluded pursuit.

This victory was somewhat clouded by a mutiny in the army. When Priscus declared his intention of reserving the best of the spoils for the Emperor, his eldest son, and the rest of the imperial family, the soldiers openly showed their displeasure and disappointment at being put off with the refuse of the booty, or perhaps receiving none at all. Priscus, however, succeeded in soothing them, and three hundred soldiers, under the command of Tatimer, were sent with the spoils to Byzantium. On their way, probably in Thrace, they were assailed by a band of Slavs as they were enjoying the relaxation of a noontday rest. The plunderers were with some difficulty repulsed, and fifty were taken alive. It is plain that these marauders belonged to the Slaves who had permanently settled in Roman territory.

Priscus meanwhile sent his lieutenant Alexander across the river Helibakias to discover where the Slavs were hiding. At his approach the barbarians fled to a safe retreat in a difficult morass, where they could defy the Roman troops, who were almost lost in attempting to penetrate the marsh. The device of setting fire to the woody covert in which the fugitives were concealed failed on account of the dampness of the wood. But a Gepid Christian, who had associated himself with the Slavs, opportunely deserted and came to the aid of the foiled Alexander. He pointed out the secret passage which led into the hiding-place of the barbarians, who were then easily captured by the Romans. The obliging Gepid informed his new friends that these Slavs were a party of spies sent out by the King Musokios, who had just learned the news of the defeat of Ardagast; and when Alexander returned triumphantly with his captives to Priscus, the crafty deserter, who was honoured with handsome presents, arranged a stratagem for delivering Musokios and his army into the hands of the Romans. The Gepid proceeded to the presence of the unsuspecting Musokios and asked him for a supply of boats to transport the remnant of the Slavonic army of Ardagast across the river Paspirion. Musokios readily placed at his disposal 150 monoxyles and thirty oarsmen, and he crossed the river. Meanwhile Priscus, according to the preconcerted arrangement, was approaching the banks, and at midnight the Gepid stole away from the boatmen to meet the Roman army, and returned to the river with Alexander and two hundred soldiers. At a little distance from the bank he placed them in an ambush, and on the following night, when the time was ripe, and the barbarians, heavy with wine, were sunk in slumber, the Romans issued from their hiding-place, under the conduct of the Gepid. The signal agreed on was an Avaric song, and the soldiers halted at a little distance till their guide had made sure that all was safe. The signal was given, the boatmen were slaughtered as they slept, and the boats were in the possession of the Romans. Priscus transported three thousand men across the river, and at midnight Musokios, who, like his boatmen, was heavy with the fumes of wine—he had the excuse of celebrating the obsequies of a brother—was surprised and taken alive. The massacre of the Slaves lasted till the morning. But for the energy of the second officer, Gentzon, this success might have been followed by a reverse; the sentinels were careless, and some of the Slaves who escaped rallied and attacked the victors. Priscus gibbeted the negligent guards.

At this juncture Tatimer arrived with an imperative message from the Emperor, that the army should remain during the winter in the Slavonic territory. The unwelcome mandate would certainly have been followed by a mutiny on this occasion, and perhaps the events of 602 would have been anticipated by ten years, if the commander had been another than Priscus, who had always shown dexterity in managing intractable soldiers. Priscus did not comply with the wishes of Maurice; he broke up his camp and crossed the Ister. Hearing that the chagan of the Avars, indignant at the successes of the Romans, was meditating hostilities, he sent Theodore, a physician, as an envoy to the court of the barbarian. Theodore is said to have reduced to a lower key the arrogant tone of the chagan by relating to him an anecdote about Sesostris, and the barbarian said that all he asked was a share in the spoil which had been won from the Slavs. Priscus, in spite of the protests of the army, complied with the demand and sent him five thousand captives. For this “folly” he incurred the resentment of the Emperor, who some time previously had determined to depose Priscus and appoint his own brother Peter to the command in Europe.

(3) 593 AD—The new general, Peter, proceeded by Heraclea and Drizipera (Drusipara) to Odessus, where the army accorded him a kind reception. But unfortunately he was the bearer of an imperial mandate, containing new dispensations, highly unwelcome to the soldiers, concerning the mode in which they were to be paid. The whole amount of the stipend was to be divided into three portions, of which one was to be delivered in clothes, another in arms, and the third in money. When the general read aloud the new ordinance all the soldiers with

one accord marched out of the camp, leaving the general alone with the paper in his hands, and took up their quarters at a distance of about half a mile. But Peter was the bearer of other imperial commands also, which were of a more acceptable character, and he decided, by communicating these immediately, to calm the wrath of the soldiers at this attempt to cheat them of their pay. The angry troops were holding a seditious assembly, and loading the name of Maurice with objurgations, when Peter appeared and, procuring silence, informed them from an elevated platform, that the Emperor whom they reviled had resolved to release from service and to support at the public expense those soldiers who had exhibited special bravery and conspicuously endangered life and limb in the recent campaigns; and that he had also decreed that the sons of those who had fallen in battle were to be enrolled in the army list instead of their parents. At these tidings resentment was turned into gratitude, and the Emperor was extolled to the heavens. It is not stated, but it seems highly probable, that the new arrangement in regard to the mode of payment was not pressed; we are only told that Peter sent an official account of these occurrences to the Emperor.

Three days later the army moved westward to Marcianopolis, and on reaching that city Peter sent forward a reconnoitring body of one thousand cavalry under Alexander. These soon fell in with a company of six hundred Slavs, driving waggons piled up with the booty which they had won in depredations at the Moesian towns of Akys, Zaldapa, and Scopis. As soon as they saw the Romans, their first care was to put to death the male prisoners of military age; then, making a barricade of the waggons, they set the women and children in the enclosed space, and themselves stood on the carts brandishing their javelins. The Roman cavalry feared to approach, lest the darts of the enemy should kill the horses under them; but their captain Alexander gave the command to dismount. The engagement which ensued was decided by the valour of a Roman soldier who, leaping up on one of the waggons, felled with his sword the Slavs who were nearest him. The barricade was then dissolved, but the barbarians were not destroyed themselves until they had slain the rest of their captives.

About a week later Peter, who lingered in this region perhaps for the pleasures of the chase, met with an accident in a boar hunt. The furious animal suddenly rushed upon him from a thicket, and in turning his horse he sprained his left foot, which collided with the trunk of a tree. The severe sprain compelled him to remain for a considerable time longer in the same place, to the disgust and indignation of Maurice, who seems to have regarded the cause as a pretext, and wrote chiding letters to his brother. Stung by the imperial taunts, Peter ordered the army to move forward, intending to cross the Danube and invade the territory of the Slavs, even as Priscus had invaded it in the preceding year. But two weeks later a letter from Maurice enjoined on him not to leave Thrace—Thrace is here used in the sense of the Thracian diocese, including Lower Moesia and Scythia—because it was reported that the Slaves were contemplating an expedition against Byzantium itself. Peter accordingly proceeded to Novae, passing on his way the cities of Zaldapa and Iatrus and the fortress of Latarkion. The inhabitants of Novae gave the general a cordial reception, and induced him to take part in the feast of the Martyr Lupus, which was celebrated on the day after his arrival.

On quitting Novae, Peter advanced along the Danube by Theodoropolis and Securisca—or, as it was generally called, Curisca—to Asemus, a city which had been always especially exposed to the incursions of the barbarians from beyond the river, and had therefore been provided with a strong garrison. A circumstance occurred here, which illustrates the quarrels that probably often arose between cities and generals, and which also shows that the firm temper of the men of Asemus had not changed since the days when they defended their city with triumphant valour against the Scythian host of Attila. Observing the splendid men who composed the garrison of Asemus, Peter determined to draft them off for his own army. The citizens protested, and showed Peter a copy of the privilege which had been granted to them by the Emperor Justin. Peter, bent on carrying his point, cared little for the imperial document, and the soldiers of the garrison prudently took refuge in a church. Peter commanded the bishop to conduct them from the altar, and when the bishop declined to execute the invidious task, Gentzon, the captain of the infantry, was sent with soldiers to force the suppliants from the holy place. But the solemnity of the church presented so forcibly the deformity of the act which he was commanded to commit, that the captain made no attempt to obey the order, and Peter deposed him from his office. On the morrow a guardsman was sent to hale the disobedient bishop to the camp, but the indignant citizens assembled and drove the officer out. Then, shutting the gates, they extolled Maurice and reviled Peter, who deemed it best to leave the scene of his discomfiture without delay.

It is to be presumed that the army advanced westward; but we are merely told that a few days later a thousand horsemen were sent forward to reconnoitre. They fell in with a party of Bulgarians equal in number to themselves. These Bulgarians, subjects of the Avars, were advancing carelessly, confiding in the peace which existed between the chagan and the Emperor. But the Romans assumed a hostile attitude, and when the Bulgarians sent heralds to deprecate a violation of the peace, the commander sent them to appeal to Peter, who was still about a mile behind the reconnoitring party. Peter brooked as little the protest of the Bulgarians as he had brooked the protest of the men of Asemus, and sent word that they should be cut to pieces. But, though the barbarians had been unwilling to fight, they defended themselves successfully and forced the aggressors to flee; in consequence of which defeat the Roman captain was stripped and scourged like a slave. When the chagan heard of this occurrence he sent ambassadors to remonstrate with Peter, but the Roman general feigned complete ignorance of the matter and cajoled the Avars by plausible words.

At this point the narrative of the historian who has preserved the memory of these events suddenly transports us, without a word of notice, into a totally different region,—into the country beyond the Danube, where Priscus had operated successfully in 592. And he transports us not only to a different place, but to a different time; for, having recorded the ill success of Peter and his deposition from the command, he makes it appear, by a chronological remark, that these events took place at the end, not of 593, but of 597. We are thus left in the dark concerning the events of 594, 595, and 596; while as to 597, we know that Peter was commander of the army, we know some of the details of an expedition against the Slavs beyond the Danube, and it appears probable that in this year the Avars invaded the Empire and besieged Thessalonica. From a Latin source we know that in 596 the Avars made an expedition against Thuringia.

(4) 597 AD.—At the point where we are first permitted to catch sight of the operations of Peter in Slavonia, as we may call the territory of the Slavs, he is sending twenty men across an unnamed river to spy the movements of the enemy. A long march on the preceding day had wearied the soldiers, and towards morning the twenty reconnoiters lay down to rest in the concealment of a thicket and fell asleep. Unluckily Peiragast, the chief of a Slavonic tribe, came up with a party of riders and dismounted hard by the grove. The Romans were discovered and taken, and compelled to reveal the intentions of their general as far as they knew them. Peiragast then advanced to the ford of the river and concealed his men in the woods which overhung the banks. Peter, ignorant of their proximity, prepared to cross, and a thousand soldiers, who had reached the other side, were surprised and hewn in pieces by the enemy, who rushed forth from their lurking places. The general then determined that the rest of the army should cross, not in detachments, but in a united body, in the face of the barbarians who lined the opposite bank. Standing on their rafts in midstream, the Roman soldiers received and returned a brisk discharge of missiles, and their superior numbers enabled them to clear the bank of the Slavs, whose chief, Peiragast, was mortally wounded. As soon as they landed they completely routed the retreating adversaries, but want of cavalry rendered them unable to continue the pursuit. To explain this circumstance, we may conjecture that the thousand men who had crossed first and were slain by the Slavs were a body of horse.

On the next day the guides lost their way, and the army wandered about unable to obtain water. They were obliged to appease their thirst with wine, and on the third day the evil was aggravated. The army would have been reduced to extreme straits if they had not captured a barbarian, who conducted them to the river Helibakias, which was not far off. The soldiers reached the bank in the morning and stooping down drank the welcome element. The opposite bank was covered with an impenetrable wood, and suddenly, as the soldiers were sprawling on the river margin, a cloud of darts sped from its fallacious recesses and dealt death among the helpless drinkers. Retreating from the immediate danger, the Romans manufactured rafts and crossed the river to detect the enemy, but in the battle which took place on the other side they were defeated. In consequence of this defeat Peter was deposed and Priscus appointed commander in his stead.

Of the circumstances which led to the attack of the Avars on Thessalonica in this year we are left in ignorance. For the fact itself our only authority is a life of St. Demetrius, the patron saint of Thessalonica, who on this occasion is said to have protected his city with a strong arm. As this work is, like most lives of saints, written rather for edification than as a record of historical fact, we are not justified in using it further than to establish that the Avars besieged the city and were not successful, and that the ordinary evils of a siege were aggravated by the fact that the inhabitants had recently been afflicted by a plague.

In the period of history with which we are dealing we are not often brought into contact with the rich and flourishing city of Thessalonica, the residence of the praetorian prefect of Illyricum. It is not that Thessalonica has been always exempt from sieges and disasters, but it so happens that during the period from the death of Theodosius to the end of the eighth century it enjoyed a remarkably untroubled existence. Just before the beginning of this period its streets were the scenes of the great massacre for which Ambrose constrained Theodosius the Great to do penance at Milan,—an event of which a memorial remained till recently in Salonica, a white marble portico supported by caryatids, called by the Jews of the place “Las incantadas”, the enchanted women. And a century after the close of this period, in the year 904, the city endured a celebrated siege by the Saracens; while in later times it was destined to suffer sorely from the hostilities of Normans (1185) and of Turks (1430), under whose rule it passed. In the seventh and eighth centuries the surrounding districts were frequently harried by the Slavs who had settled in Macedonia, but with the exception of the siege in 597 and three successive sieges in the seventh century (675-680 AD), the city of Demetrius was exempted from the evils of warfare. Its prosperity is indicated by the fact that it was always a headquarters for Jews, and at the present day Jews are said to form two-thirds of the population.

(5) 598 AD—The two chief events of this year were the relief of Singidunum, which was once more besieged by the Avars, and their invasion of Dalmatia.

Priscus collected his army in the region of Astica in Thrace, and discovered that the soldiers had become demoralised under the ungenial command of Peter; but his friends dissuaded him from reporting the matter to the Emperor. Having crossed the Danube, he proceeded to a town known as Upper Novae, and was met by ambassadors from the chagan, to whom he explained his presence in those regions by the circumstance that they were good for hunting. Ten days later news arrived that the Avars were besieging Singidunum, with the intention of transporting the inhabitants beyond the Ister, and Priscus hastened to its relief. Encamping provisionally in the river-island of Singa, from which the adjacent town derives its name, the general sailed in a fast dromon to Constantioli, where he had an unsatisfactory interview with the chagan. Returning to Singa, Priscus ordered his forces to advance against the besiegers of Singidunum, who speedily retired. The walls of the city, which were unfit to stand a serious siege, were strengthened.

About ten days after this the chagan proceeded to invade the country of Dalmatia. He reduced the town of Bonkeis, and captured no less than forty forts. Priscus despatched a captain named Gudwin, whose German nationality is indicated by his name, with two thousand infantry, to follow the Avaric army. Gudwin chose bypaths and unknown difficult routes, that he might avoid inconvenient collisions with the vast numbers of the invaders. A company of thirty men, whom he sent forward to observe the movements of the enemy, were fortunate enough, as they lay hidden in ambush at night, to capture three drunken barbarians, from whom they learned something of the dispositions of the hostile army, and especially the fact that two thousand men had been placed in charge of the booty. Gudwin, delighted at obtaining this information, concealed his men in a ravine, and as the day dawned suddenly fell upon the guardians of the spoils from the rear. The Avars were cut to pieces, and Gudwin returned triumphantly with the recovered booty to Priscus.

We are told that after these events the chagan desponded, and that for more than eighteen months, from about the early summer 598 to the late autumn of 599, no hostilities were carried on in the Illyrian and Thracian lands.

(6) 599 AD—The chagan invaded Lower (or Thracian) Moesia and Scythia, and Priscus, learning that he intended to besiege the maritime town of Tomi, hastened to occupy it. The siege began at the end of autumn and lasted throughout the win

(7) 600 AD—In spring the Roman garrison began to feel the hardships of famine. When Easter approached, Priscus was surprised at receiving a kind message from the chagan, who offered to grant a truce of five days and to supply them with provisions. This unexampled humanity on the part of an Avar was long remembered as a curiosity. On the fourth day of the truce a messenger from the chagan requested Priscus to send his master some Indian spices and perfumes. Priscus willingly sent him pepper, which was still as great a delicacy to the barbarians as it had been in the days of Alaric and Attila, Indian leaf, cassia, and spikenard; “and the barbarian, when he received the Roman gifts, perfumed himself, and was highly delighted”. The cessation of hostilities was protracted until the Easter festivities were over, and then the chagan raised the siege.

Meanwhile, as Priscus was shut up in the chief town of Scythia, the Emperor had commissioned Comentiolus to take the field in Moesia. The chagan advanced against him and approached the city Iatrus, on the river of the same name, where the general had taken up his quarters. In the depth of night Comentiolus sent a message to his adversary, challenging him to battle on the following day, and at the same time commanded his own army to assemble in fighting array early in the morning. But the soldiers did not comprehend that this order signified a real battle, and, under the false impression that their commander's purpose was merely to hold a review, they appeared in disorder and defectively equipped. Their surprise and indignation were great when, as the rising sun illumined the scene, they beheld the army of the Avars drawn up in martial order. The enemy, however, did not advance, and they had time to curse their general and form in orderly array. But Comentiolus created further confusion by a series of apparently unnecessary permutations; changing one corps from the left wing to the right, and removing some other battalion from the right wing to the left. The right wing fled, and there was a general flight, but the Avars did not pursue. During the following night Comentiolus made provision for his own escape, and next morning left the camp on the pretext of hunting. At noon the army discovered that their general had deserted them, and hastened to follow him. But they were pursued by the Avars, who occupied a mountain pass or *cleisura*,— perhaps the Sipka pass,—and the Romans, now leaderless, were not able to force a passage until many were slain. When Comentiolus appeared before the walls of Drizipera he was driven away with stones and taunts, and was obliged to pass on to Byzantium. The fugitive troops, with the barbarians close at their heels, arrived soon afterwards at Drizipera, and the Avars sacked the city.

But the triumph of the chagan was soon turned into mourning. A plague broke out in his army, the plague of the *bubo*, and seven of his sons who had accompanied the expedition died on the same day. Meanwhile the citizens of Byzantium were so much alarmed at the menacing proximity of the Avar army, before which Comentiolus had fled, that they entertained serious thoughts of migrating in a body to Chalcedon. Maurice first manned the Long Wall with infantry and with companies formed of members of the blue and green factions, and then, by the advice of the senate, sent an ambassador to the chagan. When Harmaton arrived at Drizipera he found the great barbarian in the throes of parental grief, and was obliged to wait ten days ere he could obtain an audience in the tent of mourning. Soothing words with difficulty induced the Avar to accept the gifts of an enemy, but on the following day he consented to make peace, as his family affliction had rendered him indisposed for further operations. He bitterly accused Maurice of being the peacebreaker, and the Roman historian admits the charge.

The terms of the peace were these: the Ister was acknowledged by both parties as the frontier between their dominions, but the Romans had the privilege of crossing it for the purpose of operating against the Slavs; twenty thousand aurei were to be paid by the Romans to the Avars.

It was on this occasion that Maurice refused to ransom twelve thousand captives from the chagan, who consequently executed them all. The author of the panegyrical history of Maurice makes no reference to the matter, and his silence is remarkable. He would certainly have mentioned it if he could have made any apology for this unpopular act of Maurice.

The Emperor had no intention of preserving the peace, and unblushingly commanded his generals, Priscus and Comentiolus, to violate it. Comentiolus had been reappointed commander, notwithstanding the complaints of the soldiers concerning his recent behaviour. The generals joined their forces at Singidunum, whither Priscus seems to have proceeded after the siege of Tomi, and advanced together down the river to Viminacium (Kastolatz). The chagan, meanwhile, learning that the Romans had determined to violate the peace, crossed the Ister at Viminacium and invaded Upper Moesia, while he entrusted a large force to four of his sons, who were directed to guard the river and prevent the Romans from crossing over to the left bank. In spite of the barbarians, however, the Roman army crossed on rafts and pitched a camp on the left side, while the two commanders sojourned in the town of Viminacium, which stood on an island in the river. Here Comentiolus is said to have acted the part of a *poltroon*, according to a now exploded derivation of the word (*pollice truncus*). He employed a surgeon's lancet to mutilate his hand, and thereby incapacitated himself for action. His poltroonery was probably conducive to the success of Roman arms, for Priscus, untrammelled by an incompetent colleague, was able to win a series of signal triumphs.

Unwilling at first to leave the city without Comentiolus, Priscus was soon forced to appear in the camp, as the Avars were harassing it in the absence of the generals. A battle was fought which cost the Romans only three hundred men, while the ground was strewn with the corpses of four thousand Avars. This engagement was followed by two other great battles, in which the strategy of Priscus and the tactics of the Roman army were brilliantly successful. In the first, nine thousand of the enemy fell, while the second was fatal ten fifteen thousand, of whom the greater part, and among them the four sons of the chagan, perished in the waters of a lake, into which they were driven by the Roman swords and spears.

Such were the three battles of Viminacium, fought on the left bank of the Danube. But Priscus was destined to win yet greater victories and to vanquish the chagan himself, who, unable to recross the river at Viminacium, had returned to his country by the region of the Theiss (Tissos). Thither Priscus proceeded, and, a month after his latest victory at Viminacium, he defeated the forces of the barbarians on the banks of the Theiss. He then sent four thousand men to the right bank of that river to reconnoitre the movements of the enemy. This was the territory in which the kingdom of the Gepids had once flourished, and certain regions of it were still inhabited by people of that nation, living in a state of vassalage under the Avars. The reconnoitring party came upon three of their towns, and found the inhabitants engaged in celebrating a feast. Before the dawn of day, when the barbarians were overcome by their debauch, the Romans fell upon and slew thirty thousand; it seems, however, doubtful whether all these were Gepids. A few days later the enemy had assembled another army, and another battle was fought on the banks of the Theiss. Three thousand Avars, a large number of Slavs, and other barbarians were taken alive; an immense number were slain by the sword; many were drowned in the river. The captives were sent to Tomi, but Maurice was weak enough to restore them to the chagan without a ransom.

When winter approached, Comentiolus proceeded to Novae, and thence, having with considerable difficulty procured a guide, followed the road, or rather the path, of Trajan to Philippopolis.

(8) 601 AD—Comentiolus, who had wintered at Philippopolis and proceeded to Byzantium in spring, was again appointed commander, but the summer was marked by no hostilities. In August, Peter the Emperor's brother was created "General of Europe". Having remained for some time at Palastolon on the Danube, he proceeded to Dardania, for he heard that an army of Avars, under a captain named Apsich, was encamped at a place in that province called the Cataracts. After an ineffectual interview between the Avar commander and the Roman general, the former retreated to Constantiola and the latter withdrew to Thrace for the winter.

(9) 602 AD—No martial operations took place during spring, but in summer Gudwin, the officer second in command to Peter, invaded the land of the Slavs beyond the Ister and inflicted terrible slaughter upon them. One Slavonic tribe, the Antae (or Wends), were allies of the Romans, and the chagan accordingly sent Apsich against them by way of a reply to the invasion of Gudwin. We are not informed whether Apsich was successful, but it is recorded that about the same time a large number of Avars revolted from their lord and sought the protection of Maurice.

The last scene in the reign of Maurice has been related in a previous chapter; and at this point our historian, Theophylactus, concludes his work. As no other writer continued where he left off, we hear no more of the Avars and Slavs for sixteen years. Of their doings during the reign of Phocas and the first eight years of the reign of Heraclius our scanty authorities are silent, with the exception of the single notice that in the second year of Phocas the tribute to the Avars was raised. We can, however, entertain no doubt that the Balkan provinces were subjected to sad ravages during the disorganisation which prevailed in the reign of Phocas and the consequent paralysis from which the Empire suffered in the first years of Heraclius. The hostilities of Asiatic enemies were generally wont to have an effect on events in the vicinity of the Danube, and the barbarians can hardly have been disposed to miss such an unrivalled opportunity as was offered to them when Asia Minor was overrun by the Persians.

CHAPTER V

THE LOMBARDS IN ITALY

The character of the medieval history of Italy was decided in the sixth century. We can hardly overrate too highly the importance of its reconquest by Justinian, which brought it into contact again with the centre of Graeco-Roman civilization. The tender hotbed plant of Theodoric's Ostrogothic *civilitas*, which had never looked really promising, had perished before a bud was formed; the thing intermediate between barbarism and high civilisation was put away; and the future development of Italy was to result from the mixture of centuries between the most rude and the most refined peoples dwelling side by side.

The extirpation of the Ostrogoths was almost immediately followed by the invasion of the Lombards; the whole land was imperial for a space of but fifteen years (553-568). These two events, the imperial conquest and the Lombard conquest, possessed a high importance not merely for Italy but for the whole western world. The first secured more constant intercourse between East and West, the second promoted the rise of the papal power.

After the battle in which the allied Avars and Lombards destroyed the monarchy of the Gepids (567 AD), Alboin, the Lombard king, with an innumerable host, including many nationalities, even Saxons, advanced from Pannonia to the subjugation of Italy (568 AD). The greater part of northern Italy, Venetia, and Gallia Cisalpina, of which a large region was afterwards to be called permanently by the name of the new conquerors, had no means of defence. Milan was occupied without resistance; and in these regions the invaders were perhaps supported by a remnant of the Ostrogoths. Pavia, the ancient Ticinum, destined to be the capital of the new Teutonic kingdom,

held out. The exarch Longinus, who had succeeded Narses, could do little more than make Ravenna and the Aemilia secure. The bishop of Aquileia had fled to Grado, and Honoratus, the bishop of Milan, to Genoa, but Ticinum defended itself so long and so firmly that the irritated Lombard is said to have vowed that he would massacre all the inhabitants. But when the place was taken after a siege of three years, he relented and chose it for his capital. Milan and Ticinum were the cities which Alboin was destined to possess; Ravenna, the Aemilia, and the Pentapolis stood out against the invaders, and Ravenna was probably not even attacked by them. Alboin himself did not penetrate farther south than Tuscany, but his nobles, with bands of followers, pressed forward and formed the duchies of Spolegium and Beneventum. Most of the towns in these districts were totally undefended; the walls of Beneventum had been destroyed by Totila; and thus the conquests were effected without difficulty. The name Zotto, and he is little more than a name, is well known as that of the first duke of Beneventum; he ruled for twenty years, and as his successor Arichis was appointed in 591, the foundation of the duchy of Beneventum is fixed to 571. At first small, the duchies of Spolegium and Beneventum soon expanded at the expense of their Roman neighbours, and the dukes were afterwards able to maintain a position independent of the Lombard kings, in consequence of their geographical separation from the northern duchies by the strip of Roman territory which extended from Rome to the lands of the Pentapolis.

King Alboin was slain in 573. Fate is said to have overtaken him by the hands of his second wife Rosamund, the Gepid princess, who cherished feelings of revenge towards her lord on account of the death of her father Cunimund, and a dark legend has associated itself with her name. The existence of a king was not a necessary element in a Lombard's political vision; royalty could easily be dispensed with. Accordingly, after the short reign of Clepho, Alboin's successor, the dukes did not elect a new sovereign, and for about eleven years there was no central Lombard power. But in 584 the invasions of the Franks compelled the dukedoms to form a united resistance, and necessitated the renewal of the kingly office for the purpose of this unity. Autharis, Clepho's son, was elected king. At the same time the Emperor Maurice appointed a new exarch, Smaragdus, to succeed Longinus.

For a moment it seemed possible that the Lombard power in Italy might be extinguished in the cradle. The activity of Smaragdus succeeded in forming a great coalition against the invaders (588 AD); the Franks and the Avars united with the Romans for their destruction. But the Franks were not really earnest supporters of the Roman cause; and the enterprise came to nothing. A year or two later we find the ambassadors of the Franks at Constantinople, attempting to induce Maurice to make them grants of money.

In 590 Agilulf succeeded Autharis. He conquered the eastern parts of northern Italy which were still ruled by the exarch; especially the cities of Patavium and Cremona, in the east. The Lombard conquests were not accomplished as rapidly as is sometimes represented, not as rapidly by any means as the conquest of the Vandals in Africa. It was not till the reign of Rotharis (636-652) that the coast of Liguria and the city of Genoa were won. The conqueror of Liguria is now celebrated as the compiler of the Lombard code of laws; but he also deserves to be remembered as the victorious combatant on the banks of the Scultenna (Tanaro), where the exarch and the Romans suffered a great defeat (642 AD). After this the geographical limits of the Romans and Lombards altered but little; towns were taken and retaken, but the general outline of the territories remained the same.

The exarchate of Ravenna, including the Pentapolis and the Aemilia, naturally maintained itself, as the imperial power was concentrated there. Rome, although in a state of sad decline and often hard pressed, was able to keep the Lombards at bay, chiefly through the exertions of the Popes, who possessed influence over the Lombards themselves. Naples and Amalfi also remained imperial, and the land of Bruttii, for a moment occupied by the Teutons, was soon won back by the Empire. In the north, Venice and Istria were under the immediate jurisdiction of the exarch of Ravenna.

It is apparent that the imperial possessions tended to break up into three groups. Venice, Grado, and Istria, the nucleus of the future sovereignty of Venice, formed a group by themselves in the north; the exarchate of Ravenna, with which Rome was both administratively and territorially connected, formed a group in the centre, although Rome tended to become independent of the exarch; Naples sometimes seemed to belong to this group, and at other times to fall in with the southern group, which comprised Sicily, Calabria, and Bruttii.

The distribution of the Lombards corresponds, and each group fulfils its special function. (1) The northern group includes Pavia, the royal residence, the duchies of Bergamo, Brescia, Friuli, Trent, etc., and Tuscany: this group was associated more especially with the Lombard kings, for in it they possessed a real as well as a nominal jurisdiction. Its function was to oppose the Frank invasions in the north-west and to threaten the exarchate, while on the dukes of Friuli in their march-land devolved the defence of Lombardy against the Slavs and Avars, who pressed on the frontier. (2) The Lombard territory in central Italy was the duchy of Spolegium, which endeavoured to extend its limits to the north at the expense of the Pentapolis and to the west at the expense of Rome. This duchy tended to join Tuscany and include the isthmus of land which lay along the Flaminian road between Rome and the Adriatic. (3) In the south, the duchy of Beneventum included almost all the territory east of Naples and north of Consentia. But this description of the geographical demarcation of Lombard and Roman territory is not sufficient to explain the relations of the powers. There are two facts which should be emphasized, as having exercised a decisive influence on the development of Italy. The first is, that the Lombards were a military nation with no aptitude for cultivating the soil. They consequently at first left the landowners in possession of their land, exacting from them a tribute of one-third of the produce, but afterwards occupied a third of the land themselves, employing of course slave labour. The result was that no violent change was produced in the character of the population. The other fact was the wide extent of the possessions of the Church, the patrimony of St. Peter; but to understand the importance of this we must consider the development of the papal power, which the kingdom of the Lombards largely effected, and become acquainted with Pope Gregory I, the greatest figure in Europe at the end of the sixth century.

The greatness of Gregory I is due to the fact that he gathered up and presented in a new form and with new emphasis the most lively religious influences that had operated in the Latin world, namely the theological system

of St Augustine and the monastic ideal of St. Benedict; and that, on the other hand, he seized and made the most of the gracious opportunities which the time offered for increasing and extending the influence of the Roman see.

The events of his life peculiarly fitted him for achieving these results. From the diverse characters of his parents he inherited both a capacity for worldly success and a spiritual temperament; his father was a civil magistrate in Rome and his mother Silvia was a saint. He studied law with a view to a secular career, but his leisure hours were spent in reading Jerome and Augustine. The inner voice triumphed in the end, for, when he attained the high dignity of prefect of the city (574), the circumstances of state and the gilded pomp which surrounded him struck him with a sort of terror; he felt that the temptations lurking in them might assail and win; and he fled, as if from foes, to the shelter of cloister life, having broken with the world by spending the patrimony of his father on the foundation of seven monasteries. But the ascetic rigors to which he zealously submitted himself began to harm his health, and Pope Pelagius, kindly interfering, caused him to leave his cell and enter the ranks of the clergy, and sent him as an *apocrisiarius*, or nuncio, to Constantinople, where he remained for six years (579-585). On his return to Rome he became abbot of the monastery which he had himself founded there, and it was at this time that he observed the Anglo-Saxon slaves in the market-place and conceived the idea of a mission for the conversion of Britain. He had made all the necessary preparations to set out for that obscure island, which had already become a land of fable to the inhabitants of the Empire, but was prevented from carrying out his intention by Pope Pelagius, to whom he was far too useful to be lost. Pelagius died in 590, and Gregory was unanimously elected to succeed him, but sorely, it appears, against his own will. It is a remarkable coincidence that the contemporary Patriarch of Constantinople was also forced unwillingly to accept his chair, and that he also, like Gregory, practised the most rigorous asceticism; and yet that John Jejunator tenaciously clung to the title "Ecumenical", while Gregory won for the Roman bishop a more ecumenical position than he had ever held before. In these men there seems to have been a real union of pride in their office with personal humility.

From this sketch it will be seen that Gregory had three different experiences. He had the experience of civil affairs, he had the experience of monastic life, he had the experience of ecclesiastical diplomacy. Thus he was peculiarly fitted to carry on the various forms of activity which the papal dignity and the difficult circumstances of Italy rendered possible; and his strong nature, of somewhat coarse fibre, was well adapted to contend with and take advantage of the troubled times. We may consider, in order, his relation to the Lombards, his position in western Christendom, his relation to the Emperor, his theological and literary work.

The hands of the Roman Emperors, Justin, Tiberius, and Maurice, were so full with the wearisome Persian and Avaric wars that they had no money or men to send to the relief of Italy. The exarch could do little, for though he was invested with military as well as civil authority, his attention was chiefly confined to the collection of taxes. While the Pope was naturally concerned for the defence of Rome in the first place, his concern extended also to the rest of Italy, especially to the southern provinces. It was Pelagius, and not the exarch of Ravenna, who sent entreaties for assistance to the Emperors. One of the missions assigned to Gregory when he was apocrisiarius was to obtain aid against the Lombards; but Tiberius was unable to send succor, and advised the Pope either to buy off the enemy, or by a bribe to persuade the Franks to invade Cisalpine Gaul. Shortly after this the Franks were induced to undertake three successive invasions; but these came to nothing, as no intelligent co-operation was carried out between the invaders and the military forces of the exarchate.

In the year in which Gregory became Pope, Autharis died, and his widow, the Bavarian Theudelinda, married Agilulf, who became the new king. Agilulf was an Arian, but Theudelinda was a Catholic, and Gregory possessed so much influence over her that her husband allowed their son to be baptized into the Catholic faith and ceased to place the Catholics in his realm under any disabilities. Thus in Gregory's time the see of Rome and the Lombard court were generally on very good terms, although on one occasion (593) Agilulf threatened Rome, and it was necessary to buy him off. The Pope was the mediator of a peace between Pavia and Ravenna in 599.

Thus it was not the king of Lombardy who was a thorn in the side of the Pope, but the dukes of Beneventum and Spolegium. The former pressed on the Roman territory in the south, the latter pressed on it in the east. Now, while it was of course necessary to defend Rome and other important cities against Lombard aggressions, it was also extremely desirable for the Popes to be at peace with the Lombard rulers, as the lands of the Church were scattered through their dominions. Thus the Pope had a far greater interest in maintaining peace than the exarchs, who had no pledges in the hands of the enemy. This circumstance was apparent when, in 592, Gregory concluded a peace with the duke of Spoleto, who was threatening Rome; and the Emperor Maurice called him "fatuous" for so doing.

Gregory practically managed all the political and military affairs in the south of Italy, though this was strictly the duty of the exarch. He appointed the commanders of garrisons and provided for the defence of cities; and in this activity not only were his early secular training, and his experience in public affairs, of service, but the fact that he had been a civil functionary in Rome must have secured for him considerably greater power and influence with the people than he could otherwise have possessed. The Pope's practical experience aided him in administering "the patrimony of Peter", to which I have already referred. This was an important matter, as the large possessions of the Church were one of the chief means of supporting and extending the papal power. Nor were these possessions confined to Italy; the Church owned property in north Africa, in Gaul, and in Dalmatia. The income from these lands enabled Gregory to take measures for the defence of Rome, to give the monthly distributions of bread and money to the poor, to ransom captives taken in war. He was therefore extremely careful in watching over economy of the Patrimony, which was placed in the hands of ordained clergy called *rectores* or *defensores*; and he used to inquire into the minutest details.

In Spain, in Gaul, and in Africa the influence of Rome was considerably increased under Gregory, while the conversion of Britain extended the limits of western Christendom. Leander, the bishop of Seville, who was a warm supporter of Gregory, induced Reccared, the Visigothic king, whom he had converted from Arianism to Catholicism, to send to the bishop of Rome an announcement of his conversion, accompanied by the guerdon of

a gold cup, as an offering to St. Peter. In Gaul Gregory exercised considerable indirect influence, and the bishop of Arles acted as a sort of vicar or unofficial representative. The exertions of the Pope were successful in suppressing or lessening many abuses, such as simony and persecution of the Jews; and he maintained a correspondence with the celebrated Queen-mother Brunhilda. Brunhilda's acts are supposed to have secured her an honourable place among the Jezebels of history, but Pope Gregory felt great joy over her "Christian spirit". It is certainly futile to assume, with Gregory's defenders, that he was ignorant of the contemporary history of the courts of Paris and Soissons, because very small connection subsisted then between Italy and France; nor, on the other hand, can the correspondence be regarded as either surprising or damning. Brunhilda was liberal in endowing churches and religious institutions; she was sympathetic and helpful in Gregory's missionary enterprises; she was Roman in her ideas. If her political conduct was not irreproachable, she had thrown much in the counter scale; if she was a fiend, she was certainly a fiend angelical. When we take into account the ideas of that age, in which heresy was looked on as the deadliest sin and religious zeal as efficient to cancel many crimes, it is hardly to be wondered that Gregory treated Brunhilda with respect.

In Africa Gregory had far greater authority than in Gaul, where he had no official position. Not only were the bishops of Carthage and Numidia his ardent supporters and useful instruments, but the exarch Gennadius, who had earned a fair fame by delivering his provinces from the Moorish hordes who vexed it, favoured and encouraged the increase of the Pope's influence. A regular, system was introduced of appealing to the see of Rome as the supreme ecclesiastical court.

The relations of Gregory to the Emperor Maurice, whose subject he was, were not untroubled by discord, and in the extension of his ecclesiastical jurisdiction the Pope sometimes came into collision with the Emperor. In Dalmatia, for example, a certain Maximus was elected bishop of Salona. Gregory forbade his consecration, and Maximus appealed to Maurice, who espoused his cause. Then Gregory forbade him to perform the episcopal offices, but Maurice continued to support Maximus in his contempt of the papal commands. As Gregory had no means of enforcing his will, he consulted his dignity by transferring the matter to Maximian, the bishop of Ravenna, and Maximus, as directed, betook himself thither. He was there convinced of his fault and confessed that he had "sinned against God and against Pope Gregory".

Gregory's quarrel with the Patriarch of Constantinople has been already referred to, and in this affair too the Pope came into collision with the Emperor. It has also been mentioned that there was discord between them on the matter of Gregory's relations to the Lombards. A law of Maurice which prevented soldiers from shirking service by entering monasteries was yet another cause of dispute. The consequence was that the relations between Gregory and Maurice were strained; Gregory was inclined to attribute all the evils which beset the Empire to the iniquity of the Emperor, and he was so unspeakably relieved by the death of Maurice that he could not restrain the voice of jubilation. He looked upon Phocas, whose name became in the eastern part of the Empire a "common nayword and recreation" for all that is abominable, as a public deliverer to whom the thanksgiving of the world was due; and his congratulatory letter to Phocas, wherein he says that "in heaven choirs of angels would sing a gloria to the Creator", may still be read.

This is a page in Gregory's correspondence which, like his letters to Brunhilda, has been made a subject for sectarian controversy. Protestants seize hold of it as a glaring blot in the Pope's character, while Catholics are at pains to defend him on the plea that he knew nothing either of Phocas personally or of the circumstances under which he had assumed the crown. It has been especially urged that there was no apocrisiarius at Constantinople at the time to inform him of the details, and that he had merely heard the bare fact that Phocas had succeeded Maurice. Here again we have no proof of the extent of the Pope's information; but it seems gratuitous to assume that he knew nothing of the details. Such an assumption would not be made in the case of any one but a saint; the ground for the exception being that the character of a saint is inconsistent with the authorship of a letter in which the perpetrator of such acts as those of Phocas is not merely acknowledged but eulogised. But we must remember the ideas which were prevalent at the time; when we are at a house of entertainment in the sixth or seventh century we must be particularly careful not to reckon without our host. Maurice was, in the eyes of Gregory, a pestilence to the Empire and a foe to the Church; his death was a consummation eminently to be desired; and he who should achieve such a consummation was a person devoutly to be blessed. There seems therefore no reason to suppose that Gregory was not aware that the feet of Phocas, as he ascended the throne, were stained with innocent blood; he looked upon the acts as a political necessity, for which it would have been hardly fair to condemn the new Emperor. On the other hand, we need not suppose that Gregory was influenced by any ulterior motive to speak insincerely in his letter, or that he aimed at flattering Phocas into commanding the Patriarch of Constantinople to discard the obnoxious ecumenical title. This ensued; but we need not assume that it was compassed by insincerity on the part of the Pope.

Thus Gregory with consummate dexterity took advantage of all the means that presented themselves to put the papal power on an independent footing, and win for it universal recognition in the West. But it is especially important to observe how the double rule in Italy contributed to the realization of the Pope's ambition. If there had been no Lombard invasion, if Italy had been the secure possession of the Roman Empire, Gregory would have been at the mercy of the Augustus of Byzantium and would have had no power to act independently. On the other hand, the presence of the imperial power was equally important; it would have been still more disastrous to become the subject of the Lombard king. Thus the independence of the Popes was struck like a spark between the rival temporal powers that divided Italy.

If we turn to his more specially religious work, we find that Gregory exerted a far-reaching influence over the future life of the Church. He had himself been deeply moved by the monastic ideal of St. Benedict, of whom he wrote a biography; and he assiduously endeavoured to make salutary reforms in cloister life. He firmly suppressed those vagrant monks, whom the sanctity of a religious dress could not always shield from the obnoxious name of *beggars*. He forbade youths under eighteen years to take the vows, nor would he permit a married man to enter a monastery without his wife's express consent. He relieved monks of all mundane cares by instituting laymen to look after the secular interests of the religious establishments.

The clergy (*clerus*), whom he was careful to dissociate completely from the monastic profession, were the object of still more solicitous attention. His *Regula pastoralis*, or manual of duties for a bishop, became and remained for centuries an authority in the Church and an indispensable guide for bishops. The celibacy of the clergy was his favourite and most important reform, and even in Gaul he was able to exert influence in that direction. The reforms in the liturgy which have been attributed to him are doubtful; but the introduction of the solemn Gregorian chant instead of the older less uniform Ambrosian music has rendered his name more popularly known than any of his other achievements.

In doctrine he followed the respectable authority of the founder of Latin theology, St. Augustine. But theology was the Pope's weak point; here the coarse fibres of his nature are apparent, his want of philosophy, his want of taste. Take, for example, his theory of the redemption. Influenced by familiarity with the ideas of Roman law, men were prone to look on the redemption as a sort of legal transaction between God and the devil, in which the devil is overreached. Gregory, true to the piscatorial associations of the first bishop of Rome, presents this idea in a new, definite, and original form. It is easy to identify leviathan in Job with the Evil One; and once this identification is made, it is obvious that the redemption must have been a halieutic transaction, in which God is evidently the fisherman. On his hook he places the humanity of Jesus as a bait, and when the devil swallows it the hook pierces his jaws.

Consistent with the coarseness displayed in this grotesque conception, which is put forward earnestly, not as a mere play of imagination, was his unenlightened attitude to literature and classical learning, in which he went so far as to despise grammar; and this trait of his character is brought out in the twelfth-century legends, which ascribe to him the destruction of the Palatine library and other acts of vandalism. The superstitious love of miracles and legends, exhibited in every page of his works, may be added to complete a superficial sketch.

The great historical importance of the pontificate of Gregory I consists in the fact that he placed the Roman see in a new position and advanced it to a far higher dignity than it had previously enjoyed. The germ of the papal power, which so many circumstances combined to foster and increase, lay in the position of the Pope as a defender of the people against temporal injustice and misery. This idea is expressly recognised by Cassiodorus, the secretary of Theodoric. It was on the same principle that the bishops influenced the election of the *defensores civitatis* and co-operated with them. Justinian in 554 sent standards of coins, measures, and weights to the Pope and the senate, thus recognising that the activity of the bishop of Rome was not limited to affairs of religion and morals. But Gregory the Great was the first pontiff who made temporal power an object of aspiration, and took full advantage of the opportunities which were offered. Pope Pelagius (555-560) had called in the assistance of military officers against bishops who resisted his authority, but Gregory appointed civil and military officers himself. He nominated Constantius tribune of Naples when that city was hard pressed by the Lombards, and entrusted the administration of Nepi, in southern Tuscany, to Leontius, a *vir clarissimus*. He made peace on his own account with the Lombards when they were at war with the imperial representative, and asserted that his own station was higher than that of the exarch. At the same time he would not tolerate interference in temporal affairs on the part of any subordinate dignitary of the Church, whether bishop or priest, and, like Pelagius, he used the arm of lay authority to suppress recalcitrant clergy.

During the seventh century, for it is convenient to anticipate here the only remarks that have to be made on the subject, no great Pope arose, no Pope of the same power as Gregory I; yet his example was not forgotten. Honorius (625-638), the *dux plebis* as he is called in an inscription, consigned the government of Naples to the notary Gaudiosus and the master of soldiers Anatolius, and instructed them in what manner they were to govern. We shall see that during the disputes with the monotheletic Emperors of Constantinople the soldiers at Rome always espoused the cause of the Popes against the exarchs.

CHAPTER VI

THE EMPIRE AND THE FRANKS

We have become acquainted with the internal decline of the Empire from the death of Justinian to the fall of Maurice, we have followed the course of the wars with Persia and witnessed the depredations of the Avars and Slaves in the Balkan peninsula, and we have seen how the Lombards wrested half of the Italian peninsula from its Roman lords. We must now learn the little that is to be known of the relations of the Empire to the Merovingian kings of Gaul; and our evidence, although fragmentary, is quite sufficient to show not only that the Roman Empire still maintained its position as the first state in Europe, and that New Rome was regarded as the centre of civilization, but that the Merovingians still acknowledged a sort of theoretical relation of dependence on the Emperors.

Chlotar, son of Chlodwig, survived his brothers, and was sole king of Gaul for a short time before his death. He died in 561, and his four sons, Sigibert, Chilperic, Charibert, and Gunthramn, divided Gaul into four kingdoms, even as their father and uncles had divided it fifty years before after the death of Chlodwig. In 574

Sigibert, who ruled in Austrasia (formerly the kingdom of Theoderic), sent an embassy to Justin. The two envoys, Warmar a Frank and Firminus a Gallo-Roman of Auvergne, sailed to Constantinople, and were successful in obtaining from Justin what their master sought; what this was we are not informed. In the following year they returned to Gaul.

Some years later, probably at the end of 578 after the death of Justin, Chilperic sent ambassadors to New Rome. The object of this embassy was, I conjecture, to congratulate the new Emperor Tiberius on his accession. The ambassadors did not return to the court of Chilperic until the year 581; the delay seems to have been partly due to a shipwreck which they suffered near Agatha, on the coast of Spain. They brought back gold coins, each weighing no less than a pound, sent by the munificent Tiberius as a present to Chilperic. On the obverse was an image of the Emperor with the legend, round the edge, *tiberii constantini perpetui avgusti*, while on the reverse were represented a chariot and charioteer, with *gloria romanorum*. These coins and many other ornaments, which the envoys had brought, were shown by Chilperic to the historian Gregory of Tours.

It is remarkable that, while Chilperic and Sigibert thus maintained friendly relations with the Empire, we never hear of Gunthramn sending embassies to Constantinople. Now, the interests of Gunthramn and the interests of the lords of Austrasia collided. When Sigibert died, his son Childebert was a mere child, and his widow Brunhilda carried on the government. Brunhilda was a Visigothic princess, and had received a Roman education; she had, therefore, a leaning towards the Roman Empire, and maintained a friendly intercourse both with New Rome and with Old Rome. Gunthramn was not on good terms with his sister-in-law; presuming on the youth of his nephew and the rule of a woman, he had seized cities which had belonged to Sigibert, and was determined to retain them.

This then is the situation at the accession of Maurice. Brunhilda, the queen of Austrasia, is friendly to the Empire and at enmity with Gunthramn, the king of Burgundia, who maintains apparently no relations with the Empire. It is plain that it would be advantageous for Maurice to have a friend or a vassal in the south of Gaul instead of Gunthramn, and that such a change would also please Brunhilda. Accordingly, we are not surprised to find that both Maurice and Brunhilda support the enterprise of a pretender to wrest Burgundy from Gunthramn.

This pretender was named Gundovald, and he fancied himself, whether truly or not, to be the son of Chlotar I. He had been born in Gaul, carefully nurtured, and received a liberal education; his hair fell in tresses down his back, as it was worn by sons of kings; and he was presented by his mother to Childebert as the son of Chlotar, and therefore Childebert's nephew. "His father hates him", she said, "so do you take him, because he is your flesh". Then Chlotar sent a message to his brother demanding the boy, and Childebert did not refuse to send him. Gundovald's hair was shorn by the order of his reputed father, who repudiated the relationship. From this time until the death of Chlotar he supported himself by painting the walls and domes of sacred buildings. After the death of Chlotar he found a refuge with Charibert, whom he regarded as his brother. His hair grew long again, but, probably after Charibert's death, Sigibert summoned him to his court, and having caused him to be tonsured, sent him to Koln. Gundovald fled from Koln to Italy, where he was received by the exarch Narses, and married a wife, by whom he had two sons. From Italy he proceeded to Constantinople, where the Emperors Justin and Tiberius accorded him a kind welcome, and he abode there for several years, treated as a royal refugee.

Gunthramn Boso, a general of Gunthramn, king of Burgundy, arrived at Constantinople and informed Gundovald of the situation in Gaul. The only representatives of the house of Chlodwig were the childless Gunthramn, the child Childebert, and Chilperic, whose family was dying out. It seemed an excellent opportunity for Gundovald to claim a share in the heritage of his father Chlotar, and Boso invited him to return to Gaul: "Come", he said, "for all the chief men of the kingdom of King Childebert invite you, and no one has dared to breathe a word against you. For we know that you are the son of Chlotar, and there is left in Gaul none able to rule his kingdom, unless you come". Having assured himself of the good faith of Boso by exacting oaths from him in twelve different sanctuaries, and having bestowed gifts upon him, Gundovald set sail for Massilia, where he was received by the bishop Theodoras. Massilia nominally belonged to both Burgundy and Austrasia, but at this time Gunthramn's power was preponderant there. The sympathies of the bishop, however, were with Brunhilda and Childebert, and he therefore welcomed Gundovald, whom they had invited.

Although no Roman ships or Roman soldiers had accompanied Gundovald from Constantinople to support him in his attempt to establish himself on a throne in Gaul, yet there is no doubt that Maurice looked with favour on his enterprise, and assisted him with ample sums of money. He arrived at Massilia with large treasures, of which the perfidious Boso robbed him. Gunthramn of Burgundy considered the arrival of Boso due to a definite scheme on the part of the Roman Emperor to reduce the kingdom of the Franks under the imperial sway; and he arrested bishop Theodorus on the charge that he co-operated in this scheme by receiving the "stranger" Gundovald.

From Marseilles Gundovald proceeded to Avignon, where he was received by the Patrician Mummolus, who embraced his cause. But Boso, having betrayed the man whom he had invited to Gaul, and robbed him of his treasures, returned to his loyalty to Gunthramn, and led an army against Mummolus. The Burgundians, however, were vanquished, and Gundovald, who had withdrawn to an island on the sea-coast, returned to the city of Avignon. Two important dukes, Desiderius and Bladastes, embraced the pretender's cause; and after Chilperic's death, in 584, the arms of Gundovald and his supporters won many important towns in south-western Gaul, including Tolosa and Burdigala. But his success depended ultimately upon the support of Austrasia, and when Childebert made peace with Gunthramn the cause of Gundovald was lost. He was deserted by his adherents, and delivered by Mummolus into the hands of Gunthramn's army. Boso killed him by hurling a stone at his head, and his corpse was treated with contumely by the soldiers. Such was the end of the pretender Gundovald, who seems to have been commissioned by the Emperor Maurice to wrest southern Gaul from Gunthramn in somewhat the same way as the great Theoderic was commissioned by Zeno to wrest Italy from Odovacar.

The peace between Gunthramn and Childebert did not interfere with the relations between the court of Metz and the court of Byzantium. Maurice sought the help of the Austrasian forces against the Lombards of Italy, and for that purpose sent fifty thousand solidi to Childebert or Brunhilda. He also adopted Childebert as a son, even as Justinian had adopted Theudebert. Childebert crossed the Alps with a large army, but the Lombards hastened to submit themselves before he had time to strike a blow, and induced him with gifts and promises of loyalty to return to his kingdom. When Maurice heard that he had made peace with the Lombards he sent ambassadors to demand back the money from Childebert, who had not fulfilled his part of the bargain; but Childebert, confiding in his strength, did not even deign to reply.

No less than four times did the king of Austrasia, urged by the importunities of his "father" the Emperor Maurice, set forth against the lords of northern Italy, but each time he accomplished nothing. In the year 586, two years after his first expedition, the incessant demands of the imperial envoys that he should either perform his promise or repay the money, induced him to lead an army against Italy; but dissensions among the generals compelled him to return, probably before he had reached the Alps, and he made peace with Autharis, king of the Lombards, to whom he also promised his sister Chlotsuinda in marriage. But in 588 he promised the same lady to Reccared, king of the Goths, who had been converted recently to the Catholic faith, and determined once more to cross the Alps and co-operate with the exarch of Ravenna in driving the Lombards from Italy. This time the Lombards and Franks met in battle, and the forces of Childebert suffered a terrible defeat.

The letter of Maurice, in which he reproaches Childebert for his half-heartedness after this failure, is preserved, and Childebert again crossed the Alps in 590 with an army commanded by no fewer than twenty dukes. The fourth expedition was little more successful than the other three. The Romans failed to co-operate with the Franks; the Lombards diligently avoided hazarding a battle; and ultimately disease broke out in the army of Childebert, and compelled him to return to Transalpine Gaul.

But the question of warring together against the Lombards was not the only cause of the embassies which passed between the courts of New Rome and Austrasia. Childebert had a sister, Ingundis, who married Hermenigild, son of Leovigild, king of the Visigoths. Ingundis and her husband were adherents of the Catholic faith, and they both endured persecution at the hands of the Arian king. It was in vain that they placed themselves under the protection of the "Republic" in southern Spain; Leovigild captured Hermenigild and threw him into prison. Ingundis, with her infant son Athanagild, resolved to seek at New Rome the protection which the Republic could not afford her at Seville (Hispalis). She died on her journey, but Athanagild reached Byzantium and was reared as a Roman by the care of Maurice. What ultimately became of this Visigothic prince is not known, but in the year 590 we find his grandmother Brunhilda, herself originally a Visigothic princess, and his uncle Childebert begging Maurice to send the boy to Gaul. Maurice probably regarded him as a useful hostage for the loyalty of the Austrasian king; but though we have the letters of Brunhilda and Childebert concerning the restitution of Athanagild, the reply of Maurice has not been preserved. Childebert left no stone unturned to induce Maurice to comply with his wish. He wrote not only to Maurice himself, but to all the persons at Constantinople who possessed influence at court, including Paul the Emperor's father, Theodore the master of offices, John the quaestor, Magnus the curator (of the palace), Italica a patrician lady, Venantius a patrician. Moreover, Brunhilda wrote both to Maurice and to the Empress Anastasia. We have also the letters of Brunhilda and Childebert to Athanagild. All these epistles were carried to New Rome by ambassadors, of whom the spatharius Gripo seems to have been the chief, and the tone of this correspondence illustrates the lofty position which the Roman Emperor held in the eyes of the western nations. The majesty of the Emperor was still considered something far higher than all German royalties. Childebert's letter to Maurice begins thus: "The King Childebert to the glorious pious perpetual renowned triumphant Lord, ever Augustus, my father Maurice, Emperor." The Emperor, on the other hand, adopts the following form of address, which may be given in the original Latin:

"In nomine Domini nostri Dei Jesu Christi Imperator Caesar Flavius Mauritius Tiberius fidelis in Christo mansuetus maximus beneficus pacificus Alamannicus Gothicus Anticus Alanicus Wandalicus Herulicus Gypedicus [Gepaedicus] Africus pius felix inclytus victor ac triumphator semper Augustus Childeberto viro glorioso regi Francorum."

Like Justin II, Maurice adopts all the pompous titles of his great predecessor Justinian; they were part of the inheritance. He is fully conscious that he is the greatest sovereign in Europe, or even in the world, and the kings of the West acknowledge that they owe him homage and deference as Roman Emperor. In the economy of the Empire the king of the Franks is only a *vir gloriosus*.

CHAPTER VII

THE LANGUAGE OF THE *ROMAIOI* IN THE SIXTH CENTURY

It will not be inappropriate to give some account of the Greek language as it was spoken by the Romans of the fifth and sixth centuries and written by their historians. It is to be observed that in the year 400, when Gaul and Spain were still Roman, the Greek-speaking people in the Empire were in a minority, and the official language of the Empire was still purely Latin. In the year 500, when not only Gaul and Spain, but Africa and even Italy (practically if not theoretically) had been lost, the Empire was a realm of Hellenic speech with the exception of

Illyricum, and though Latin was still the official language, the Emperors often issued their constitutions in Greek. When Africa, Italy, and the western islands were recovered, the Latin element was once more considerable, but not so considerable as the Greek. Justinian, although Latin was his native tongue, as he often states with a certain pride, issued most of his constitutions, which were to have effect in the Greek-speaking part of the Empire, in the Greek language. An official of the civil service in the sixth century complains that a knowledge of Latin is no longer as valuable as it used to be, inasmuch as it is being superseded by Greek in official documents. By the end of the sixth century Latin had ceased to be the imperial tongue.

This disuse of Latin had a considerable effect on the vocabulary of the Greek language. Official or technical Latin terms, for which there were no equivalents ready to hand, had already made their way into Greek speech, but no one would have ventured to use them in writing without an apology. But once they were regularly employed in the imperial constitutions, they became as it were accredited; they began to lose their foreign savour, and were no longer looked on as strangers; prose-writers no longer scrupled to use them.

But we must carefully distinguish between three kinds of Greek. There was (1) the vulgar spoken language, from which modern Greek is derived. Its idiom varied in different places; the Greek spoken in Antioch, for example, differed to some extent from that spoken in Byzantium or that spoken in Alexandria. Antiochian Greek may have been influenced by Syriac, as Syriac was certainly influenced by Greek. There was (2) the spoken language of the educated, which, under the influence of the vulgar tongue, tended to degenerate. There was (3) the conventional written language, which endeavoured to preserve the traditions of Hellenistic prose from the changes which affected the oral "common dialect". We may take these three kinds of Greek in order.

(1) Of the vulgar dialect, such as it was spoken at Byzantium in the sixth century, a specimen has been preserved in the dialogue which took place in the hippodrome between the Emperor and the green faction shortly before the revolt of Nika. From this and from stray words which are preserved by historians or inscriptions, we see that it is already far on its way to becoming what is called Romaic; in fact it was already called Romaic. A sixth-century inscription in Nubia proves that the word *neron* was then used for "water", whence comes the modern Greek *nepó*.

Besides the strange vocabulary, derived partly from Latin and partly from local Greek words, changes are taking place in the grammar and syntax. Terminations in *-ion*, for example, are becoming corrupted to *-in*: the perfect tense and many prepositions and particles are falling into disuse.

(2) That the language of educated people was different from that of the vulgar, and approximated to the written language, is proved by a passage in Menander. It was, nevertheless, subject to the same tendencies, as is fully demonstrated by the fact that these very tendencies soon affected written prose and changed Hellenistic into Byzantine literature. Graecized Latin words must have been used even more by the higher classes than by the lower; a super elegant writer at the beginning of the seventh century employs *familía* (familia) without a line of apology. These Latinisms were chiefly adopted in matters appertaining to Roman law, to the imperial administration, or to warfare. There were also many new colloquial usages of old words, which the purism of Procopius or Agathias would not have countenanced. The adjective *oreos*, for instance, meant nothing more than "fair" or "pretty"; *ponó* meant "I am ill", and *Kindenévo* was used in the special sense of being sick unto death ... It was some time, doubtless, before unsightly forms like *évala* were adopted from the mouths of the common people, but the perfect and pluperfect tenses were soon relegated to the speech of the pedant and the prose of the man of letters; the old variety of particles and prepositions was replaced by a baldness and monotony of expression which correspond to the more simple constructions that came into use; *ean* was used with the indicative mood.

(3) It has been already pointed out that the Greek historians of the fifth and sixth centuries wrote in a traditional prose style, handed down by an unbroken series of Hellenistic writers from Polybius, and, although it underwent some modifications, differing less from the style of Polybius than the style of Polybius differs from the style of Xenophon. Olympiodorus seems to have been the only writer who ventured to introduce words and phrases from the spoken language, and thus his writings may be considered, in point of style, a mild anticipation of the chronicles of Malalas and Theophanes.

Procopius and Agathias and Menander could not, indeed, avoid the necessity of sometimes introducing technical or official Latin words which had become current in spoken Greek, but they always considered themselves bound to add an apologetic "so-called" or "to use the Latin expression". As a rule, however, they employ periphrases, and avoid the use of such titles as praetorian prefect, magister militum, or *comes largitionum*. Even the word "indiction" is considered undignified, and rendered by such a circumlocution as "the fifteen-year circuit". It would be interesting, if we had more data, to trace the reciprocal influences exerted on each other by the spoken language of the higher classes and the conventional prose.

This conventional prose never ceased to be written until the fifteenth century. Laconicus Chalcocondyles and George Phrantzes are, as far as their Greek is concerned, lineal descendants of Polybius. There was indeed a break from the middle of the seventh century to the end of the eighth, from Theophylactus to Nicephorus the Patriarch, but even during this period of historiographical inactivity the conventional Greek was employed by theological writers.

It is natural that in the sixth century, when the Roman Empire was losing its Latin appearance and assuming a Greek complexion in language, and in other respects too, the word "Roman" should have become elastic and ambiguous. In Greek writers *Romaioi* generally means all the subjects of the Empire; but it is also used of the inhabitants of Old Rome; and it is even used of the ancient Romans as opposed to the "modern" Romans of the Empire. All these usages will be found in Procopius. Again, the expression "Romaic language" may signify one of two things. It sometimes means Latin and sometimes it means Greek. In the former case it is opposed to Greek, whether spoken or written; in the latter case it is spoken Greek opposed to written Greek.

Written Greek is called the “language of the Hellenes”; and, as applied to language, the word “Hellenic” has escaped the opprobrious religious meaning which had become attached to the name “Hellên”. Procopius for the most part speaks of “Latin” and not of “Romaic”; the latter term was fast becoming fixed in its application to the language which was spoken at New Rome. It should be noticed that Romaic never came to be synonymous with Hellenic; writers could never lose the consciousness of the vast gulf which separated the conventional language of written prose, which they often fondly imagined to be Attic, from the language of daily life. By the end of the sixth century *Romaic* has become equivalent to the language of the *Romaioi*; it is no longer used for the language of the *Romani*. This is apparent from its use in Theophylactus Simocatta. We are often startled in the pages of this writer by meeting the word *Latini*, and reading that the Latins were carrying on operations in Mesopotamia or Thrace. The affected historian uses the word as synonymous with *Romaioi*. The Latin name had once meant the *populus Romanus*; in Theophylactus it meant the *populus Romaioi*. Virgil or Livy might have spoken of Latins warring on the Euphrates or the Danube; at a much later time we are accustomed to speak of the Latins at Constantinople or in Palestine; but it is strange to find the “Latins” commanded by Priscus and Philippicus—names indeed that suggest Old Rome—at the end of the sixth century. But if Theophylactus uses Latin in a forced sense as the equivalent of *Romaic*, he uses *Romaic* in its natural sense and not as an equivalent of Latin. And when a word which he calls *Romaic* happens to be of Latin origin, he does not desire to convey that fact to the reader, but only to indicate that it is a word of the vulgar language, which cannot be introduced into prose by a dignified writer without an apologetic explanation.

It is interesting to observe how, while Greek words were told off to serve as the equivalents for Latin words connoting purely Roman things or relations, in other cases the Latin words were naturalized and assumed a Greek garb. Thus at a very early stage of the relations between Rome and Greece *ípatos* became the technical word for consul, and *andipatos* for proconsul. *Eparchos* was adopted to express prefect, and *eparchia* was used in the double meaning of province or prefecture. On the other hand, *comes* was introduced as *kómis*, and declined as a Greek noun (gen. *kómitos*)...

The fates of the words *Hellene* and *barbarian* are extremely curious. Originally they were conjugate terms; the world was divided into Hellenes and barbarians. The course of history, the diffusion of Christianity, and the influence of the Roman Empire brought it about that each became the conjugate of something quite different. *Hellene* came to mean a non-Christian or a pagan, and thus was opposed to *Christian*: while *barbarian* came to be opposed to *Romaioi*. It will be remembered that in the plays of Plautus, taken from Greek originals, a Roman was spoken of as a barbarian. It may be noticed, as a curious freak of usage, that the Latin word for pagan, *paganus*, made its way into the Greek language, but in a different sense; *paganikós* was used of secular as opposed to sacred or holyday things, and especially of everyday as opposed to festal apparel.

When *Hellene* received its new theological meaning, what word, it may be asked, was used to denote the Greeks as opposed to the Latins? The answer seems to be that the need of such a word was not much felt, and whenever occasion demanded there was the word *Graecus* to fall back on. But all the Greeks were *Romaioi*, they formed no nation; and no subject of the Empire belonged to a class called “Greek”; he belonged to such and such a province, or to such and such a city.

After Justinian the Roman Emperors ceased to speak either in private or in public life the tongue that was spoken at Old Rome. The official language had already become practically Greek; we can trace this tendency in the Code of Theodosius, where we find no vestige of the purism of Claudius, who would not admit a Greek word in an edict; but in the Code of Justinian it is no longer a mere tendency. Yet this official Greek is full of Latinisms, and until the last day of the Roman or Romaic Empire memories of its origin from Latin Rome survived in its language.

CHAPTER VIII

LITERATURE OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

When the gods of Greece were hurled from heaven by the God of Christianity, Athens was left for two hundred years as a “hill retired” on which their votaries could stand apart “in high thoughts elevate”, reasoning of Providence and fate. But this inner circle could not resist for ever the atmosphere that encompassed it; this quietistic negation of the prevailing spirit could not last. And so, when Justinian in 529 AD commanded that the schools of Athens should be closed, we can hardly suppose that he anticipated by many years their natural death.

Proclus must be looked on as the last link in the chain of Greek philosophy; he was the last philosophical genius, the last originator of a system. But the seven professors who were ranged round the deathbed of philosophy, and who, despairing of pursuing their studies conveniently within the Empire, betook themselves to Persia, have won a place in the recollection of posterity by their curious and somewhat pathetic experiences. All seven were Asiatics, and had a high reputation; the most celebrated were Simplicius of Cilicia and Damascius of Syria, a Neoplatonist. Exaggerated rumours had represented to them Chosroes as a sort of royal philosopher, if not the ideal of Plato, yet equal at least to Julian or Marcus Aurelius, and they formed golden dreams of riving in an enlightened kingdom, a place like heaven, in which thieves do not break through and steal. They were

disappointed. Among the subjects of Chosroes they found human nature as near the ground as in the lands which they had left, and on the throne they found a man who affected higher culture, but was really ignorant. Disillusionized, they returned to the Roman Empire; it was more tolerable to them to be put to death among Roman Christians than to be lords among the Persian fire-worshippers. Chosroes, however, rendered them a service. In the peace of 532 AD he bargained with Justinian for the personal safety of the seven philosophers, whom he could not persuade to remain at his court.

A thinker who deserves the name of a philosopher, although he wrote professedly in the interests of Christian theology, was Johannes Philoponus, who lived in the sixth century and was a contemporary of Simplicius. In his early years he wrote a book against Aristotle's doctrine that the world is eternal, to which attack Simplicius wrote a reply. He also composed a work, still extant, on the eternity of the world, arguing against the demonstrations of Proclus. The noteworthy point is that he met the pagan theories on their own ground, and attempted to construct the world from the indications of reason alone, without help from revelation. His position was that reason of itself leads to the doctrines of Christianity. In another direction, however, he propagated nominalistic opinions which endangered a cardinal dogma of the Church. His logical theories may be considered as a sort of link between the nominalism of Antisthenes the Cynic and the nominalism of the medieval school of Roscelin; and he consistently applied his logic to the Trinity in a way that threatened the divine unity. He may be looked upon as a forerunner of the Christian philosophers of the Middle Ages, such as Michael Psellus in the East and the schoolmen in the West. He introduced the application of Aristotelianism to Christianity.

The Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes, an Egyptian monk who visited the East' at the beginning of Justinian's reign, is interesting not only for the light which it throws on the state of southern Asia, but also for its cosmological speculations. The problem was to explain the position of the earth in the universe and determine its shape, so as not to conflict with foregone theological suppositions. The rising and setting of the sun were of course the chief difficulties. The notion of Lactantius, Augustine, and Chrysostom touching the Antipodes was that it was a place where the grass grew downwards and the rain fell up. Cosmas looked on the earth as a flat parallelogram whose length from east to west was twice as great as its breadth from north to south. This parallelogram, according to his view, is enclosed by walls on which the firmament rests, and the sun and the moon and the stars move underneath this firmament. In the northern part of the earth there is a very high mountain, round which the sun and other heavenly bodies move; this explains day and night, as the mountain conceals the sun and stars from view when they are on the other side. In the same plane as the earth, but beyond its confines, lies the place where man dwelled before the Deluge.

The difference in spirit between the fifth century and the sixth is perhaps most evident in the sphere of history. As a rule, the historians of the fifth century are either pronounced Christians or pronounced pagans; as a rule the historians of the sixth century are neither pronounced Christians nor pronounced pagans. Procopius and Agathias, nominally Christians, allow Christian conceptions to have no influence over their historical views, and Menander writes in the same spirit.

PROCOPIUS

Procopius of Caesarea, the secretary of Belisarius and the historian of his campaigns, wrote a history of the Persian, Vandalic, and Gothic wars, which, while it is arranged in geographical divisions after the fashion of Appian, has its unity in a central figure, the hero Belisarius. Procopius has been compared both to Herodotus and to Polybius. He has been compared to Herodotus on account of his love of the marvellous, which, however, did not eliminate his love of historical truth, such as he conceived it; and if Herodotus' care for truth can be called in question, that of Procopius can certainly not be doubted, notwithstanding the fact that his friendship with Belisarius has often biased him. Like Herodotus also, he gives us much ethnographical information. He has been compared to Polybius because he explains the course of history by reference to *Tyche*, Fortune, or to the divinity that shapes our ends. Tyche continually interferes with the plans of men, and the final cause of their foolish acts is "to prepare the way for Tyche". He attributes envy to this deity. It would be interesting to know how he conceived the relation of Tyche to the divine principle, and whether he was a sceptic in regard to a scheme or a final cause of the universe. Did he believe that chance corrects chance?

And yet he professes faith in Christianity. He tells us that he believes that Jesus was the Son of God for two reasons, because he committed no sins, and on account of the miracles which he performed. The second reason is characteristic of a lover of the marvellous. He does not think of questioning the truth of the record; the only question for him is whether the miracles as recorded point to the divinity of the operator. But this acceptance of the Christian creed does not affect his views of history. He practically permits the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to rest idly like the gods of Epicurus, careless of mankind; he is not influenced by the Christian views of history introduced by Eusebius. In fact Procopius was at core, in the essence of his spirit, a pagan; Christianity, assented to by his lips and his understanding, was alien to his soul, like a half-known foreign language. He could not think in Christian terms; he was not able to handle the new religious conceptions; he probably felt wonder, rather than satisfaction, at the joys that come from Nazareth. And we may safely say that it was just this pagan nature, deeper perhaps than that of the aggressive Zosimus, that made him such a good historian. He is almost worthy to be placed beside Ammianus. He attended Belisarius in his campaigns and kept a diary, from which he afterwards composed the eight books of his History. He adopted a geographical arrangement, and so placed the two Persian wars together, although the Vandalic war and the first period of the Gothic war intervened. We have thus the record of an eye-witness who kept a diary, as is especially plain in his description of the sailing of the expedition against the Vandals. Of the history of events in which he did not himself assist as a spectator or actor he gives us scant information. He is not satisfactory as to the causes of the Gothic war or as to the intrigues in Constantinople which affected the career of Belisarius. But these are just the deficiencies to be expected in an eye-witness who concentrates all his interest on the part of the drama which he sees himself, and in a contemporary who is unable to obtain a complete view of the situation.

Procopius is not out of touch with his own age, like Tacitus or Zosimus; although, on the other hand, he is not enthusiastic about it, like Polybius or Virgil. He is able to appreciate the greatness of Justinian, and his ardent admiration of Belisarius sometimes damages the credit of his statements. The book on Edifices, which he wrote later than his history, is a monument in honour of Justinian's vast activity, and there is no reason to consider it an insincere work, although it was perhaps written to order.

The History of Procopius, which closes with 550 AD, was continued by Agathias of Myrrina, a skolasticus or lawyer, who wrote five books embracing the history of seven years (552-558). They contain an account of the end of the Gothic war and describe the invasion of Zabergan, but are mainly occupied with the Perso-Colchian wars, and supply us with some important details about early Sassanid history, which the writer obtained from Persian records through the medium of his friend Sergius, who, as an interpreter, was skilled in the Persian language.

AGATHIAS

Like Procopius, Agathias was a Christian, and, like Procopius, he did not permit his professed religion to influence his historical conceptions. We should never have known from his history that he was not a pagan; but some of his epigrams apprise us of his Christianity. He does not, however, refer events to the leading of *Tyche*; he usually speaks of the divine principle, to which he attributes the exercise of retribution. In telling of the plague which destroyed the army of Leutharis in Italy, he observes that some wrongly ascribe it to the corruption of the atmosphere; others, also erroneously, placed its cause in a sudden change from the hardships of war to the luxury of rest and pleasure. The real cause, according to him, was the unrighteousness of the victims, which brought down divine wrath upon their heads.

He has a firm belief in free will, and this is a point of difference between his view and that of Procopius. Procopius emphasises *Tyche*; Agathias emphasises free will. Speaking of wars, he will ascribe them neither to the divine principle, which is in its nature good and not a friend of wars, nor yet to fate or to blind astral influences. "For", he says, "if the power of fate prevail, and men be deprived of the power of volition and free will, we shall have to consider all advice, all arts, all instruction as idle and useless, and the hopes of men who live most righteously will vanish and bear no fruit". He, therefore attributes wars to the nature of men, and believes that they will continue to occur as long as the congenital nature of men remains the same.

He professes to have a strict ideal of what history should be. It should be useful for human life, and not merely a bare uncritical relation of events, which would be little better than the fables told by women in their bowers over their spinning. It should be true, irrespective of persons. Both he and Procopius are distinctly conscious of the obligation to truth. Agathias blames previous historians for their careless inaccuracy, for their distortion of facts to flatter kings and lords, as if history were not different from an encomium, and for their tendency to revile or disparage the dead.

Agathias, like Thucydides, has a high idea of the vast importance of the age in which he lived. "It happened in my time that great wars broke out unexpectedly in many parts of the world, that movements and migrations of many barbarous nations took place. There have been strange issues to obscure and incredible actions, random turns of the scales of fortune. Races of men have been overthrown, cities enslaved and their inhabitants changed. In a word, all human things have been set in motion. In view of this, it occurred to me that it would not be quite pardonable to leave these mighty and wonderful events, which might prove of profit and use to posterity, unrecorded".

He was not content with his profession. He describes himself, in accents of complaint, sitting from early morn to sunset in the "Imperial Porch" poring over his briefs and legal documents, feeling a grudge against his clients for disturbing him, and still more vexed if clients did not appear, as he depended on the emoluments of his profession for the necessaries of life. He had thus little leisure to devote to literary pursuits, such as writing epigrams or making researches in Persian history; and literary composition, he tells us, was his favourite occupation.

MENANDER

Menander of Constantinople studied for the bar, but he had as little taste as Agathias—whom he admired and probably knew—for spending his days in the Imperial Porch. As however, unlike Agathias, he had money at his disposal, a profession was not inevitable; so he cast aside his law books and adopted the idle life of a "man about town". He took an interest in horseraces and the excitement of the colours, that is the blue and green factions. He was fond of theatrical ballet-dancing, and he confesses that in the wrestling schools he often stripped off all sense and all sense of decency along with his dress. After this candid confession of wickedness and "wild oats", he informs us that the taste for letters displayed by the Emperor Maurice, who used often to spend a great part of the night in discussing or meditating on questions in poetry and history, infected himself, and caused him to reflect that he might do something better than loiter about. Thus Maurice appears as a lover of literature who not only patronised but stimulated; and this character is confirmed by the testimony of Theophylactus. The only work which the Emperor is known to have composed is the treatise in twelve books on military science. Accordingly, Menander determined to continue the history of Agathias cut short by that writer's death. He carried it down to the last year of Tiberius, 582 AD, and he formed his style on the model of Agathias. Only fragments of his history remain, but they give us a favourable impression of the writer.

Almost the same period as that covered by Menander was dealt with in the history, also lost, of Theophanes of Byzantium, who began with the year 566 and ended with 581. He wrote in the last years of the sixth century.

JOHANNES THE LYDIAN

Justinian himself was a man of culture, who occupied himself with profound studies without allowing them to relax his firm grip of the helm of State. He presents an example of the polymathy which was characteristic of the sixth and the two preceding centuries, and of which Boethius, as we shall see, was a typical example in the West. He composed treatises on theological controversies which are still extant, but we must suppose that he also patronised literature in general, even though on religious grounds he shut up the schools of Athens, whose open paganism was a manifest scandal in the Christian world. We know that he engaged the services of writers to compose poems or histories in praise of his own deeds. The book on Edifices of Procopius is a work of this kind, and it is possible that the book on offices written by Johannes Lydus was partly inspired by Justinian.

As most of the literary men of the time were educated for the legal profession and many of them entered the civil service, it is worthwhile to give a short biographical account of Johannes (known as Lydus, the Lydian), from whose pen three treatises are wholly or partially extant. Born at Philadelphia of noble provincials in easy circumstances, he went to Constantinople in his youth for the purpose of making a career. He learned philosophy, and read Aristotle and Plato under the direction of a pupil of the great Proclus named Agapius, of whom a versifier said in an unmetrical line, "Agapius is the last, but yet the first of all".

He had been for a year a clerk in a civil service office, when he obtained the post of shorthand writer in the staff of his townsman Zoticus of Philadelphia, who had been appointed praetorian prefect. This post proved lucrative. He won 1000 gold solidi in a single year. A relation, who was in the same office as he, and Zoticus the prefect were useful friends, and did him a good office in procuring him a rich wife, who had a dowry of 100 pound weight in gold and was also remarkable among her sex for her modesty. Johannes wrote an encomium on Zoticus for which he received a golden coin for every line, which seems a liberal reward to literary merit, and indicates that the bad poets of the time might count on distinguished patronage. Having steadily advanced through all the grades of the service, in which his excellent knowledge of Latin, a rare accomplishment then in Constantinople, must have stood him in some stead, he reached the rank of *cornicularius* at the age of sixty (in 551). But the service was declining owing to a diminution of the tribute received and for other reasons, and Lydus found that the emoluments long looked forward to with expectant confidence, which should have been at a minimum 1000 solidi, proved absolutely nil. In bitterness of mind at this disappointment he composed the book on Offices, in which he gives an account of the civil service and explains its decline.

Of his personal treatment by the Emperor he could not complain. Justinian had engaged him, perhaps in the early part of his reign, to compose a panegyric on himself and also a history of the Persian wars. At the end of John's career Justinian wrote a letter to the prefecture, in which he dwelled on his rhetorical excellence, his grammatical accuracy, his poetical grace, his polymathy, and went so far as to say that his labours illuminated the language of the Romaioi. He praised him for having spent time on study, although a civil servant, and enjoined the prefect to reward him at the public expense, and confer dignities upon him in recognition of his eloquence. The prefect, on receiving the letter, assigned Lydus a place in the Capitolium or Capitoline Aule, that is, a lecture-room in the university buildings, where he might give public instruction, presumably in rhetoric. Pecuniarily, however, he was passed over as though he had never performed public services; on the other hand, he received honour and consideration from the Emperor, and enjoyed the leisure of a quiet life. He retired to the peace of his library, having served the State for more than forty years, feeling himself very ill used, and probably soured in temper. In religion the complexion of Lydus was doubtful; sometimes he speaks like a pagan, sometimes like a Christian, so that one is not quite sure when he is speaking in earnest; but, Christian or pagan, he was superstitious.

Poetry was dead; the epigrams of Agathias and the composition in hexameters on the church of St. Sophia do not deserve the name; and few of the verses would satisfy "the scrupulous ear of a well-flogged critic". We may admit, however, that the iambic lines in the style of late Attic comedy, which Agathias prefixed to this book of epigrams, are not quite unworthy of a writer of new comedy, and that the hexameters which follow, in praise of Justinian's Empire, are written with some spirit in spite of their affectation. Agathias tells us that in his boyhood he was chiefly addicted to heroic verse, and "loved the sweets of poetical refinements". This expression could hardly apply to Homer; his luscious models must have been the Alexandrine writers, Theocritus, Callimachus, and the rest, or recent composers like Nonnus, as may be also inferred from the works which he wrote under this inspiration, a collection of short poems in hexameters called *Dafniaká*, consisting of erotic stories and "other such witcheries". In complete satisfaction with himself and the poetical flights of his youth, Agathias, having given an account of his poems, is unable to contain his enthusiasm, and suddenly breaks out: "For veritably poetry is something divine and holy". Its votaries, as Plato would say, are in a state of fine frenzy. When we think of the productions of the fine frenzy of the writer himself, this outburst is sufficiently amusing.

The description of St. Sophia and the inaugural poem on the opening of the cathedral, to which the description is annexed, breathe the enthusiasm of flattery, in which the flatterer, Paul the Silentiary, was perhaps himself in earnest. The first eighty lines, written in iambs and consisting of a glorification of Justinian, were intended to be recited in the palace. Then follow more iambs to be recited in the Patriarch's residence, beginning thus: "We come to you, sirs, from the home of the Emperor to the home of the Almighty Emperor, the deviser of the universe, by whose grace victory cleaves unto our lord". And this approximation of God to the Emperor, suggesting a comparison between them, occurs frequently. Speaking with conventional modesty of his own verses, the author says that they will not be judged by "bean-eating Athenians, but by men of piety and indulgence, in whom God and the Emperor find pleasure". This contempt for the ancient Athenians is a touch of characteristic Christian bigotry, and, if I may hazard the conjecture, is intended as a laudatory allusion to Justinian's measure of sweeping away the decrepit survival of Attic culture and exclusiveness in 529.

The iambs are succeeded by hexameters which begin with the praise of peace and the boast of the superiority of New to Old Rome, where Paul does not lose an opportunity of comparing Justinian to the Deity. It would be wearisome to follow the poem to its close. Its chief interest consists in its architectural information, which has been encased in a metrical dress with some ingenuity.

CASSIODORUS

When we turn to the Latin literature of the sixth century the most prominent figure that meets us is Cassiodorus, the statesman of Theodoric and his successors (born about 480). Starting as an assistant in the bureau of his father, who had served as a finance minister under Odovacar and held the praetorian prefecture under Theodoric, he was fortunate enough to win the Gothic king's notice, while yet a mere subaltern, by a panegyric which he pronounced on him on a public occasion. Theodoric, who immediately recognized and welcomed his talent, appointed him to the post of quaestor, allowing him to dispense with all the grades of the civil service. The quaestorship was an office in which scope was given for literary talents, and Cassiodorus took full advantage of the opportunity. The letters which he wrote for Theodoric, along with those which he composed during subsequent reigns, were collected by him shortly before he retired from public life and published in a still extant collection under the title of *Variae Epistolae*. Under Amalasantha, Theodoric's daughter, under Theodahad the student of Plato, and Witigis the thorough Goth, Cassiodorus held the exalted post of praetorian prefect. About the year 539, not long before the capture of Ravenna by the Romans, he retired after forty years of public service, to his birthplace Squillace in Bruttii, a charming spot for which he entertained a romantic affection. He founded there two monasteries, of which one, up in the hills, was for the men who were uncompromisingly austere, while the other, down below, built beside a fish-pond, and hence called vivarium, was for those monks who took that less strict and more cheerful view of the spiritual life of the cloister which characterised western monasticism once it had grown independent of its oriental origin.

Here Cassiodorus made a new departure, which, quiet and unostentatious as it was, has led to incalculably fruitful results for the modern world. This new departure consisted in occupying the abundant leisure of the monks with the labour of multiplying copies of Latin texts. To this simple but brilliant idea of taking advantage of the unemployed energy that ran to seed in monastic society for the spread and transmission of learning, both profane and sacred, we owe the survival of the great bulk of our Latin literature. There was a chamber, called the scriptorium or "writing-room", in the monastery, in which the monks used to copy both pagan and Christian texts, working by the light of "mechanical lamps", *mechanicas lucernas*, whose peculiarity was that they were self-supplying, and measuring their time by sun-dials or water-clocks.

The style of Cassiodorus accords only too well with the principle stated by himself in the preface to his letters. "It is adornment alone", he says there, "that distinguishes the learned from the unlearned". He thus candidly takes pride in what is the characteristic of all ages of decadence, a love of embellishment for its own sake. He finds it impossible to state a simple or trivial fact in simple words. He essays to raise triviality to the sphere of the dignified and solemn; he succeeds in making it appear ridiculous. He will not allow the simple to wear the grace of its own simplicity. Nothing is more curious and amusing, though it soon becomes wearisome, than the correspondence of Theodoric in Cassiodorian dress, each epistle posing as it were in tragic cothurni and trailing a sweeping train.

Thus in the letters which describe the duties of the various ministers of state and other public officers, the quaestor makes it his object to give a tincture of poetry to functions, which in themselves suggest neither very solemn nor very poetical associations. He reminds the prefect of the corn-supplies that Ceres herself discovered corn, and that *panis*, "bread", may be derived from the great god Pan. The prefect of the police he apostrophises thus: "Go forth then under the starry skies, watch diligently with all the birds of night, and as they seek food in the darkness, so do thou hunt therein for fame". To the count of the port of Rome he cries: "Excellent thought of the men of old to provide two channels by which strangers might enter the Tiber, and to adorn them with two stately cities which shine like lights upon the watery way!".

These examples of his manner are more favourable to him than many others that might be selected; I have purposely avoided quoting passages in which he out-Cassiodores Cassiodorus. Yet, though this manner has its amusing side, it may be said that Cassiodorus had really that sort of nature which, removing "the veil of familiarity" from common and trivial things, finds in them a certain dignity and feels a reverence for them; and that he unsuccessfully tried to express this feeling by using grandiloquent and embellished language, a feat in which Pindar was successful when, for example, he called a cloak "a healthy remedy against weary cold."

As an instance of the far-fetched and frigid conceits which were popular in that age, I may quote the words used by Cassiodorus of monks engaged in copying the sacred writings: "The fast-traveling reed writes down the holy words, and thus avenges the malice of the wicked one, who caused a reed to be used to smite the head of the Saviour".

It is interesting to record the attention paid by Cassiodorus to the beautiful binding of his books, and the biblical language in which he justifies it is characteristic of his age. It is meet, he says, that a book should be clothed in a fair dress, even as the guests were arrayed in wedding garments in the New Testament parable.

Beside the letters, Cassiodorus wrote (1) a treatise on the soul in which its relation to the body is treated with a delicate touch of paganism that reminds us of Hadrian's *hospes comesque corporis*; (2) the *Historia Tripartita*, a compilation from Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, and a history of the Goths from which Jordanes drew; (3) various theological works; (4) an educational work on the *Arts and Disciplines of the Liberal Letters*; (5) a treatise, composed in his ninety-third year, on orthography, intended as a guide to the monks at Squillace in their spelling. Thus the influence of Cassiodorus and the traditions of culture and accuracy which he established at Squillace formed a counterpoise to that spirit, represented by Pope Gregory I, which regarded grammar as trivial and culture as superfluous, or even a temptation; a spirit which soon launched the Church into the waters of ignorance and barbarism.

BOETHIUS

Another prominent figure in the reign of Theodoric, but who did not, like Cassiodorus, enjoy a happy old age amid the ruins of his country, was Boethius the Patrician, whose unfortunate end is veiled to a certain degree in obscurity. We know not what were the real motives for his condemnation, passed formally by the Roman senate, and his subsequent execution (524 AD). Charges were brought against him of astrological magic, stigmatized as a serious crime by the Theodosian Code, but it is evident that these were only pretexts. He seems to have been suspected of taking part in a conspiracy; yet the silence of Cassiodorus, as Mr. Hodgkin justly insists, is ominous for the fame of the Gothic king. The blow seems to have fallen quite unexpectedly on Boethius and his affectionate father-in-law Symmachus, who had the reputation of being a “modern Cato”, and who shared the fate of his son-in-law.

In prison under the pressure of this sudden calamity, which burst like a peal of thunder on the calm course of his life,—justifying the saying of Solon, that the happiness of a man’s life must not be asserted till after his death,—Boethius composed the work which has immortalized him, *the Consolation of Philosophy*. He did not lay the world under such a great obligation of gratitude as Cassiodorus; and yet this work was better known and more read throughout the Middle Ages, although it completely ignores Christianity, than any of Cassiodorus’ writings. It was translated into Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred, and into English by Chaucer.

Boethius was an Aristotelian, and he employed his leisure in translating works of Aristotle into Latin. It was partly through these translations that Aristotelianism was accessible to the students of the Middle Ages; and thus the two chief literary men at the beginning of the sixth century, Cassiodorus and Boethius, made each in his way contributions of vast importance to the culture of medieval and modern times. Cassiodorus may be considered to have secured the survival of Latin literature, as was explained above, while Boethius laid the foundations for Scholasticism. Boethius and Johannes Philoponus were the realist and the nominalist respectively of the sixth century.

The Latin of Boethius is far superior to the Latin of Cassiodorus. It is elegant, but not exaggerated through an extravagant love of embellishment. In fact he had the faculty of taste, which even in the lowest stages of decadence distinguishes good and bad writers, and of which Cassiodorus was almost destitute.

The *Consolatio Philosophiae* has a considerable charm, which is increased by the recollection of the circumstances under which it was composed. A student who, maintaining indeed a lukewarm connection with politics, had spent most of his days in the calm atmosphere of his library, where he expected to end his life, suddenly found himself in the confinement of a dismal prison with death impending over him. There is thus a reality and earnestness in his philosophical meditations which so many treatises of the kind lack; there is an earnestness born of a real fervent need of consolation, while at the same time there is a pervading calm. The lines of poetry, sometimes lyrical, sometimes elegiac, which break the discussion at intervals, like organ chants in a religious service, serve to render the calmness of the atmosphere distinctly perceptible.

The problem of the treatise is to explain the “unjust confusion” which exists in the world, the eternal question how the fact that the evil win often the rewards of virtue and the good suffer the penalties of crime, can be reconciled with a “deus, rector mundi”. If I could believe, says Boethius, that all things were determined by chance and hazard, I should not be so puzzled. We need not follow him in his discussion of the subject, which of course is unsatisfactory—did it really satisfy him?—and need only observe that in one place he defines the relation of fate to the Deity in the sense that fate is a sort of instrument by which God regulates the world according to fixed rules. In other words, fate is the law of phenomena or nature, under the supreme control of the highest Being, which he identifies with the Summum Bonum or highest good.

But the metaphysical discussion does not interest the student of literature so much as the setting of the piece and things said incidentally. Boethius imagines his couch surrounded by the Muses of poetry, who suggest to him accents of lamentation. Suddenly there appears at his head a strange lady of lofty visage. There was marvellous fluidity in her stature; she seemed sometimes of ordinary human height, and at the next moment her head seemed to touch heaven, or penetrated so far into its recesses that her face was lost to the vision. Her eyes too were unnatural, brilliant and transparent beyond the power of human eyes, of fresh colour and unquenchable vigour. And yet at the same time she seemed so ancient of days “that she could not be taken for a woman of our age”. Her garments were of the finest threads, woven by some secret art into an indissoluble texture, woven, as Boethius afterwards learned, by her own hands. And on this robe there was a certain mist of neglected antiquity, the sort of colour that statues have which have been exposed to smoke. On the lower edge of the robe there was the Greek letter *P*, from which stairs were worked leading upwards to the letter *TH* (*Theoritiki*, Pure Philosophy). And her garment had the marks of violent usage, as though rough persons had tried to rend it from her and carried away shreds in their hands. The lady was *Philosophia*; she bore a sceptre and parchment rolls. She afterwards explained that the violent persons who had rent her robe were the Epicureans, Stoics, and other late schools; they succeeded in tearing away patches of her dress, fancying severally that they had obtained the whole garment. *Philosophia*’s first act is to drive out the Muses, whom she disdainfully terms “theatrical strumpets”, and she makes a remark, with which many perhaps who have sought for consolation in poetry will agree, that it “accustoms the minds of men to the disease but does not set them free”.

The description of the lady *Philosophia* has a considerable aesthetic value. The conception of her robe resembling marble statues discoloured by smoke, is a really happy invention to suggest that antique quaintness which the Greeks expressed with the word *epifnis*.

But the most striking feature of the *Consolatio* is the interspersion of the prose dialogue with poems at certain intervals, which, like choruses in Greek tragedy, appertain, though more closely than they, to the preceding argument. Thus the work resembles in form Dante’s *Vita Nuova*, where the sonnets gather up in music the feelings occasioned by the narrated events. These poems, which betray the influence of Seneca’s plays, have all a charm of their own, and metres of various kinds are gracefully employed.

This idea of the mind, vexed by the cares of earth, leaving its own light and passing “into outer darkness”, *in externas tenebras*, would be a suitable illustration of the spiritual meaning of the outer darkness spoken of in the New Testament. Another poem, constructed with as much care as a modern sonnet, sings of the “love that moves the sun and stars”, an idea best known to modern readers from the last line of Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, but which is as old as Empedocles. In another place we have an anticipation of Shelley’s “nought may endure but mutability”.

As an example of poetical tenderness, quite Virgilian, I may quote two lines of a stanza, where the author is illustrating the return of nature to itself by a caged bird, which, when it beholds the greenwood once more, spurns the sprinkled crumbs—

silvas tantum maesta requirit,

silvas tantum voce susurrat

Immediately after this poem Boethius proceeds thus: “Ye too, o creatures of earth! albeit in a vague image, yet do ye dream of your origin”,—a felicitous expression of pantheism.

I must not omit to notice the delicate feeling for metrical effect which Boethius displays in the poem on the protracted toils of the siege of Troy and the labours of Hercules. It is written in Sapphic metre, but the short fourth lines are omitted until the end. The effect of this device is that the mind and voice of the reader continue to travel without relief or metrical resting-place until all the labours are over and heavenly rest succeeds in the stars of the concluding and only Adonius—

superata tellus

sidera donat.

The age was so poor in works of pure literary interest that I have gladly lingered a little over the *Consolatio* of Boethius. It remains to add that he wrote short books on Christian theology, and must therefore have been professedly a Christian. This religion, however, did not influence his pagan spirit, just as it left Procopius untouched; and it was probably the theological subtleties that interested him and not the spirit of the faith. He was a very accomplished man, acquainted with a diversity of subjects; polymathy, as I said before, was a characteristic of the time. As well as a philosopher and a poet, he was a musician, he was learned in astronomy, he was fond of inventive science, like the Greek architect Anthemius. It would appear, indeed, that scientific studies were fashionable in the sixth century; natural science was a favourite subject of Cassiodorus.

If the church of San Vitale at Ravenna is the great monument of the imperial restoration in Italy, the poems of Flavius Cresconius Corippus may be considered the monument of the imperial restoration in Africa. He is not known, indeed, to have chosen the victories of Belisarius as the subject of a special work, but in his *Johannis* and in his *de laudibus Justinii*, which have been mentioned in previous chapters, joy over the fall of the Vandal and the restoration of Africa to the Empire is expressed in strong and sometimes effective language.

BOOK V

THE
HOUSE OF HERACLIUS

CHAPTER I

PHOCAS I

The reign of Phocas the Thracian, which lasted for eight years, was the realisation of that dreaded something whose approach had long been felt. The calamities which Tiberius and Maurice had been spared closed in round the throne of Phocas, who is himself represented to have been the most baleful calamity of all. The Empire sank into the lowest depths of degradation and misery, and it seemed that nothing short of some divine miracle could restore it to wellbeing.

By contemporaries Phocas was regarded as a fell monster, without a palliating virtue or a redeeming grace, and the character which he has transmitted to history is that of a "remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain." The abnormal wickedness of his mind is said to have been reflected in a peculiarly repulsive exterior, and he produces the impression of a hideous nightmare brooding over an exhausted and weary realm.

Whatever may have been his character, the short chronicle of his reign is a chronicle of misfortunes, anarchy within and hostility without; and we never feel quite sure that we have fathomed the depth or measured the breadth of these misfortunes, for the chroniclers seem to have avoided dwelling on the reign as if it were a sort of plague spot.

Chosroes made the dethronement and death of Maurice a pretext for declaring war; he posed as the avenger of his friend and benefactor. But it must not be imagined that this was anything more than a pretext. The renewal of the old quarrel between East and West must not be laid to the charge of Phocas, though we hold him answerable, at least partially, for the inadequate defence of the Empire. That the acts of Phocas were not the real cause of the war is proved by two things,— by the express statement of a contemporary historian, hostile to Phocas, that Chosroes' holy plea was hypocritical,¹ and by the fact that, some time before the death of Maurice, the Sassanid had become restless and an outbreak of war had been with difficulty avoided.

To meet the threatened Persian invasion the hopes of the Romans rested on the able general Narses, whose name was so much dreaded or respected by the enemy that Persian children trembled when they heard it pronounced. But not only to the enemy was he an object of terror; his ability and reputation awakened the suspicion and fears of Phocas. He revolted and occupied Edessa; he even urged the Persians to begin hostilities³; and the Emperor was obliged to divide his forces to contend against two foes (603 AD.) Narses was finally lured by false promises of reconciliation to present himself in Byzantium, and Phocas was not ashamed or afraid of committing him to the flames. This affair was fortunate for Chosroes, as Narses was the only Roman commander at the time who possessed military talent. Both the general Germanus and the general Leontius had been severely defeated by the Persians; the former had died of a wound, the latter had been thrown into chains by the indignant Emperor; and the protection of Christendom against the fire-worshippers was consigned to Domentziolus, a nephew of Phocas. If the Emperor had been endowed with any political ability he might have made Narses his friend and thereby saved Syria.

A peace was concluded with the Avars and an increase of the yearly tribute granted (604 AD.) in order to render the troops of Illyricum and Thrace available for the war in Asia. But the tide of success had set in for the Persians, who after some smaller successes had gained an important victory over Leontius at Arzamon. Their ravages continued during the following year, and in 606 Daras was once more lost to the Romans, western Mesopotamia and Syria were overrun by the enemy in two successive years, and countless Roman captives were scattered among the provinces of Persia. But in 608 the danger was brought nearer to the careless inhabitants of the capital; for, having occupied Armenia and Cappadocia, Paphlagonia and Galatia, the army of the fire-worshippers advanced to the Bosphorus, showing mercy in the march to neither age nor sex, and encamped at Chalcedon, opposite to Constantinople. And thus, says the historian, there was "tyranny" both inside and outside the city.

In the affair of Narses, Phocas had shown political ineptitude. At a later period he showed himself yet more inconceivably inept. In Syria there was always a spirit of disaffection, more or less widely spread, towards the orthodox Byzantine government, for Syria was a country full of Jews as well as heretics of divers kinds. This spirit demanded, in time of war, singularly delicate manipulation on the part of the government; but Phocas conceived the ill-timed idea of constraining all the Jews to become Christians. The consequence of this policy was a great revolt of the Hebrews in Antioch; Christians were massacred, and a cruel and indecent punishment was inflicted on the Patriarch Anastasius. Bonosus, a creature of Phocas, who was created count of the East and sent to put down the rising, cast out all the Jews from the city (610 AD.), but the affair shows how favourable was the political situation of the Syrian provinces for the aggressions of the Persians. The Persian general, Shahr Barz, "raged by land and sea" (we are told by the Armenian historian Sepeos); "he transported handsome Roman villas, along with their inhabitants, to Persian soil, and commanded his architects to construct towns in Persia on the model of the destroyed cities. He called one of these towns Antioch the Renowned." Both in Syria and in Egypt there seems to have prevailed a chronic anarchy; all the smouldering feuds of parties had burst into flame; Blues and Greens made the streets of Alexandria and Antioch the scenes of continual bloodshed.

In Constantinople, to which the activity and apprehensions of the Emperor were chiefly confined, the deepest dissatisfaction had prevailed since the death of Maurice. Conspiracy followed conspiracy, but Phocas dexterously maintained his seat, equally skilful in detecting and merciless in punishing the conspirators. The patricians, who were most closely attached to Maurice, namely Peter his brother, Comentiolus, and Lardys, were at once executed, while Philippicus (Maurice's brother-in-law) and Germanus were compelled to assume clerical

orders. Priscus, on the other hand, the able commander who had conducted the campaigns against the Slaves and Avars, and had been so often superseded by the incapable friends of Maurice, was an adherent of Phocas, who was further supported by his brother Domentziolus¹ and by Bonosus.

During the first three years of this reign the intrigues of the enemies of Phocas revolved round Constantina, the widow of Maurice, who with her three daughters had been placed in strict confinement, while the hopes of the dissatisfied and the fears of the usurper were kept alive by the false and carefully fostered rumour that Theodosius—the Theodosius who should have been Theodosius III—was not dead, but was wandering in the far East. Germanus, the father-in-law, and Constantina, the mother of Theodosius united their energies to set on foot a conspiracy, in which a large number of leading men took part. Two distinct attempts were made to achieve the overthrow of Phocas. The first of these failed, because the Emperor was popular with the more powerful faction, which had helped to set him on the throne. The Greens reviled the name of Constantina in the hippodrome, and the bribes which Germanus offered to their demarchs were rejected. Constantina and her daughters, who were in readiness for the expected insurrection, took refuge in St Sophia, and the influence of the Patriarch Cyriacus protected them with difficulty from the wrath and violence of Phocas. They were immured in a monastery, and Germanus was compelled to wear the tonsure.

But the relations of Maurice still maintained their treasonable projects, and after the lapse of more than a year (in 605) organised a plot against the life of Phocas, which would probably have succeeded but for the treachery of one Petronia, who acted as the bearer of the correspondence between Constantina and Germanus. Constantina was put to the torture, and the names of many distinguished patricians, noble lords, and high officials were revealed; chief among whom was Theodorus, the praetorian prefect of the East. He was sentenced to be cudgelled to death, and sundry modes of rendering death hideous were discovered for the other conspirators. Constantina, her three daughters,² and her daughter-in-law were executed, as well as Germanus.

This formidable conspiracy must have tended to make Phocas yet more suspicious, and consequently more tyrannical; while the bloodshed which ensued seemed to stamp him as a sanguinary tyrant, and rendered him far more unpopular than before. An alienation soon came about between him and the *comes excubitorum* Priscus, on whom he had bestowed his daughter Domentzia in marriage; and, strange to say, the origin of this alienation is attributed to an accidental occurrence which took place during the nuptial festivities. The marriage was celebrated in the palace of Marina,⁴ and an equestrian contest was held in honour of it. The chiefs of the blue and green factions, supposing that the marriage had a certain political significance and that Priscus might be looked upon as the probable successor to the throne, took upon themselves in a rash moment to place laurelled images of the bride and bridegroom beside those of the Emperor and Empress on pillars in the hippodrome. But the suggestion misliked Phocas; he investigated the matter, and ordered the demarchs to whom it was traced to be put to death. The people, however, begged them off, but Phocas was never satisfied that Priscus had not been privy to the treasonable act. This occurred in 607. In the following year Priscus opened a correspondence with Heraclius, the exarch or Patrician of Africa and in the series of circumstances that brought about the fall of Phocas this was the first.

Since Gennadius had quelled the turbulent Moors, Africa had been the most prosperous and favoured spot in the Roman Empire; and from Africa, if from anywhere, men might expect salvation to come. The arts of peace flourished, and the happiness of peace was experienced under the beneficent rule of the Patrician Heraclius, whom we have already met as a general of Maurice in the East. The exarch, in the security of distant Carthage, was able to defy the Emperor with impunity and to discontinue communications with Constantinople; and in the meantime, perhaps, he and his brother Gregorius were maturing plans and making preparations for an expedition against the detested tyrant. It was not till two years later that, urged by the importunities of Priscus and the pressing entreaties of the senate, who could tolerate the distempered state of things no longer, and were powerless to change it without help from the provinces, he despatched an armament which at length delivered New Rome from the watchful tyranny of Phocas.

The few notices which have come down to us show clearly the exasperation and despondency which prevailed among residents in the capital. A pestilence and its twin-sister a famine desolated the city during the same year in which the Asiatic enemy was advancing on Chalcedon; and in connection with this we must remember that no supplies were available from Africa, and that in the following year the disaffection in Egypt may have increased the starvation in Constantinople. The result was a sedition, and the disloyalty of the Byzantines was openly displayed. His own party, the Greens, insulted Phocas at the games, and told him that he had lost his wits. The infuriated monarch commanded Constans, the prefect of the city, to slay or mutilate the contumacious offenders and not to hold his hand. These punishments were the signal for a general riot in the streets; the offices of the prefect and the prisons were burnt down, and the prisoners were loosed from their cells. Then Phocas issued a mandate to the effect that the green faction should no longer have political status.

The deliverance that came from Africa at the end of 610 was perhaps hastened by personal interests of the exarch. Phocas had discovered that Epiphania, the wife of the exarch, and Eudocia, the betrothed of his son, were residing in Constantinople, and he placed them in the monastery of the New Repentance under strict confinement. This was partly an act of vengeance, but partly also a measure of prudence, to secure hostages in case Heraclius should become positively hostile.

The exarch was now old, and had himself no wish to return to the murky Byzantine atmosphere, even for a throne; but he organised an expedition which had a somewhat romantic character. He prepared an armament of "castellated vessels," manned with Moors, which he consigned to the care of his son Heraclius; and he equipped an army of cavalry to proceed along the coasts of Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Asia, under the command of his nephew Nicetas, the son of Gregorius. The agreement was made that whichever of the two cousins reached Constantinople first and slew Phocas was to be rewarded by the crown. It was plain that, except the elements were adverse to Heraclius, Nicetas had no chance, while on the other hand he ran no risk. There was a certain dramatic appropriateness in this assignation of routes,—that Heraclius, the man of genius, should take the short and

perilous way, and that Nicetas, the man of respectability, should plod on the firm earth. The elements conspired to favour the man of genius, who felt confident of success because he possessed a mystical picture of the Virgin, not made with hands, but carried down by angels from heaven. On one of the last days of September or one of the first days of October 610, he cast anchor at Abydos, and learned from the "count of Abydos" the situation of affairs in the capital. Officials who had been banished by the tyrant flocked to his standard, and with no uncertain hope he continued his course to Heraclea and hence to the island Kalonymos. The city was defenceless. The guards and a regiment of soldiers called Bucellarii were at the disposal of Priscus, who was eagerly awaiting the African army, and on 3d October Phocas saw with despair the ships of the deliverer passing Hebdomon, and slowly approaching the harbour of Sophia. The Greens set fire to the building of the Caesarian harbour, which they had been enlisted to defend, and it was plain from the situation that the knell of Phocas had knolled. A naval engagement took place on Sunday, 4th October; the men of Phocas retreated, and then the Emperor, who had returned to the palace, was abandoned completely. The circumstances of his death are uncertain. The story is that on Monday a certain Photius (curator of the palace of Placidia), who owed Phocas a grudge for having placed him in the ludicrous and painful position of a deceived husband, rushed into the palace, and, stripping the victim of his imperial robes, dragged him from his hiding-place to the presence of Heraclius. A short dialogue took place between the fallen and the future Emperor.

"Is it thus," asked Heraclius, "that you have governed the Empire?"

"Will you," replied Phocas, "govern it better?"

This epigrammatic and pregnant question of Phocas was his best defence, and there was more than one grain of truth contained in it. But at the moment it seemed to the conqueror merely the sneer of a doomed criminal, though in later years it may have often recurred to him in a new light.

In his wrath, according to one account, he kicked the tyrant and caused him to be hewed in pieces on the spot "as a carcase fit for hounds," while another record intimates that Phocas fell a victim to the eager vengeance of the circus factions. Domentziolus, Bonosus, and Leontius the treasurer perished with him, and the corpses were burned in a place called Bous.

The impression left by the Emperor Phocas is that of a shapeless monster, a suitable head for the shapeless anarchy that beset the Empire. Yet in Italy a statue was erected (608 AD.) in his honour by the exarch Smaragdus, and the quiet condition of the Roman provinces there is mentioned with satisfaction in a loyal inscription. It might be said that this honour had a double sense; and that Phocas was really thanked for his inability to interfere.

On the 5th October 610, Heraclius was proclaimed Augustus by the senate and the people, and crowned by the Patriarch Sergius.

CHAPTER II

HERACLIUS (610-622 A.D.)

The Roman Empire in the reign of Justinian might be compared to one making ready to set forth on a wild and dangerous night journey. We saw how the shades closed round it, and how it utterly lost itself in marshes and dark woods under Justin, Tiberius, and Maurice. It then falls unawares into the power of a fell giant, and for eight years, under Phocas, languishes in the dungeons of his castle. Heraclius is the knight-errant who slays the giant and delivers the pining captive. Or, to speak in the language of the time, he is the Perseus who cuts off the Gorgon's head.

But the mere death of the oppressor did not dispel the horrors of darkness which encompassed the Empire around, and the deliverer had now a far harder thing to achieve. He must guide the rescued but still forlorn State through the pitfalls and perils of the dolorous fields which lay round about it. He found the sinews of the Empire paralysed, Europe overrun by Slaves, Asia at the mercy of the Persians; he found demoralisation prevailing in every place and in every class. The breath of fresh air which was wafted with him from the healthful provinces of Africa, and gave for a moment a pleasant shock to the distempered city of Byzantium, was soon lost in the close and choking atmosphere; and it was a question whether Heraclius would really be able to govern much better than Phocas.

For the situation was eminently one that demanded a man of strong will more than a man of keen intellect. The first thing was to gain the confidence of the people, and for this purpose sheer strength of character was necessary. Until the physician had won the confidence of the patient, it was impossible for him to minister with efficacy to the distempered frame. Heraclius was in the vigour of his manhood when he came to the throne, about thirty-six years old. But he does not appear to have been endowed with that strength of character which is always masterful and sometimes wilful. A very ingenious psychological analysis of his character was made by a French historian, and is worthy of attention. Starting with the triple division of the mind into will, intellect, and

sensibility, M. Drapeyron defines the perfect man, the Greek of the best age, as one in whom these three faculties are in perfect equilibrium. All less favoured ages produce men in whom one or other faculty predominates and upsets the balance; Heraclius, for example, was one in whom sensibility was more powerful than intellect and intellect more powerful than will. He adduces many passages from the contemporary "poet" George of Pisidia, who was an intimate friend of Heraclius, to prove the impressionable temperament of the Emperor. The merit of this analysis is that it seems to explain things apparently inconsistent and unaccountable in his life. Everyone who reads the history of Heraclius is met by the problems : how did the great hero of the last Persian war spend the first ten years of his reign? and why did he relapse into lethargy after his final triumph? The assumption that his will was naturally weak and his sensibility strong offers a way of explanation. For a strong sensibility under the influence of a powerful impression may become a sort of inspired enthusiasm, and, while it lasts, react upon the will. The inspiration, on this theory, did not move Heraclius for ten years; then it came, and, when the object was attained, passed away again, leaving him exhausted, as if he had been under a mesmeric influence. From this point of view one naturally compares him with his- contemporary Mohammed, the difference being that in the Arabian enthusiast the disproportion between the will' and the sensibility was less.

That Heraclius had a capacity for enthusiasm, which found vent in the only channel then open to enthusiasm, namely religious exaltation, cannot be questioned; that he had, like most of his contemporaries, a mystical or superstitious belief in portents and signs is most certain; and that he had an excitable temperament is probable enough. But we do not altogether require M. Drapeyron's plausible and subtle analysis to explain the conduct of the Emperor in the early years of his reign. The first absolute condition of success was to gain public confidence. And as he was not a man who could do this by sheer force of character, he could only effect it by tact, wariness, and patience. The machine of the State was out of order, all the bells were jangled, and in the midst of the difficult complications Heraclius was obliged to feel his way slowly. When we read that the Persians were encamped at Chalcedon in 609 and that the first campaign of Heraclius was in 623, we are fain to imagine that he must have gone to sleep for more than ten years "in the lap of a voluptuous carelessness". It seemed as if the new Perseus had been himself gorgonised by the face of the dead horror. But we must glance more closely at the difficulties which surrounded him.

In the first place, a serious limit was imposed on the activity of the Emperor by the power of the aristocracy, which since the last days of Justinian had become a formidable rival to the throne. Both Maurice and Phocas adopted the plan of attaching a special group of ministers to their persons, and thus forming an imperial party which in case of necessity might act against refractory patricians. This group would naturally include the Emperor's kinsmen. Maurice made his father Paulus chief of the senate, and his brother Peter, in spite of military incapacity, general. Phocas created his brother Domentziolus curopalates and subsequently general; and it may be conjectured that Leontius, the Syrian treasurer, was a relative of his wife Leontia. Heraclius followed the example of his predecessors. He too assigned the post of curopalates to his brother Theodorus; and Theodorus and his cousin Nicetas formed the nucleus of an imperial party. This circumstance aroused an opposition with which it was necessary for the Emperor to deal warily. He appointed Priscus (the son-in-law of Phocas), who had invited him to Europe, to command the army stationed in Cappadocia. But Priscus was not content with the new Emperor, nor with his own share in the fruits of the revolution, and his conduct exhibited tokens of dubious loyalty. Heraclius decided to act with a judicious caution, and proceeded in person to Caesarea, the chief town of Cappadocia, in order to sound the sentiments of the suspected general. Priscus at first feigned to be ill; but Heraclius saw him before returning to Byzantium, and it is said that, while the Emperor was imperturbably gentle, the general almost openly insulted him. "The Emperor," he said, "has no business to leave the palace for the camp." But Heraclius was biding his time. He asked Priscus to be the godfather of his son Constantine, and the general came to Constantinople. Before an assembly, in which the Church, the nobility, and the demes were represented, Heraclius judged Priscus from his own lips, and compelled him to take the vows of monasticism.

This was a distinct triumph for the Emperor, and an important advantage gained, for the sympathies of all classes seem to have been enlisted on his side. It was to assure himself of this support that he had proceeded in the matter with such diplomatic caution. The possessions of Priscus, it may be added, were divided between Theodoras and Nicetas, a circumstance which, among other indications, shows that they were looked upon as the supports of the throne. Gregoria, the daughter of Nicetas, was betrothed to the infant Constantine.

An incident is recorded which illustrates the general demoralisation, the power of the patricians, and the cautious manner in which the Emperor was obliged to feel his way and gain step by step on the prevailing anarchy. Not far from Constantinople lived two neighbours, a patrician named Vutelinus and a widow with several children. A field on the borders of their lands, which both claimed, gave rise to a dispute, and Vutelinus employed an armed band of servants to assert his rights. The household of the lady offered resistance, and one of her sons was beaten to death with clubs. Then the lady set out for the capital, bearing the bloodstained garment of her son in her hand, and as the Emperor rode forth from the palace she seized the bridle of his horse, and cried out, "If you avenge not this blood, according to the laws, may such a lot befall your own sons." The Emperor concealed the sympathy and indignation which he felt, and dismissed her, merely saying that he would consider the matter at some seasonable time. His apparent indifference seemed to her a refusal to execute justice, and her despairing grief as she was led away moved the Emperor more deeply. In the meantime her appeal frightened Vutelinus, and he concealed himself in Constantinople. But one day Heraclius, who knew his appearance, espied him in the hippodrome, and caused him to be arrested. He was tried, and condemned to be beaten to death by his servants in the same way as the widow's son had been slain; the unwilling executioners were then to suffer death themselves.

We may mention another incident which shows that during the reign of terror a sort of oriental barbarity had crept into the Roman Empire and demoralised public feeling. Heraclius lost his wife Eudocia two years after his accession, and as the funeral procession passed through the streets, and the inhabitants were watching it from their windows, it happened that a servant-maid spat just as the corpse, carried on an open bier, was passing, and "the superfluity" fell on the robes of the dead Empress. It will hardly be credited that the girl was sacrificed on the tomb. We are not told what Heraclius thought of the matter.

Other difficulties which surrounded Heraclius were the want of money and the want of an efficient army. His close connection with Africa probably assisted him at first and rescued the financial department; but all reserve funds were exhausted; Asia, infested by the enemy, must have been almost unproductive as a source of revenue, and the lands of Hlyricum and Thrace, and perhaps Greece, were at the mercy of Slavonic invaders. Africa, the south-west of Asia Minor, Egypt, and Italy must have been the chief sources of income. But the poverty of the treasury is proved by the bankruptcy which prevailed some years later, when Heraclius was preparing for his great expedition.

It is impossible to arrive at a certain conclusion as to the forces which were available when Heraclius came to the throne. We only know that the army was inefficient, and that of the soldiers who had served in the reign of Maurice and revolted against him only two were alive at the time of the death of Phocas. Priscus commanded an army in Cappadocia, and 'this army seems to have been attached in a special manner to his own person; perhaps he had raised it himself. For when he became a monk by enforced constraint the Emperor showed marked consideration to his soldiers, and said, "You were till now the servants of Priscus, today we have made you the servants of the Empire." This army and the troops which Heraclius and Nicetas had brought with them from Africa are the only field forces of whose actual existence we are certain.

Thus difficulties bristled about Heraclius on all sides,—a corrupt administration of justice, an inadequate army, an ill-filled treasury, which the fresh aggressions of the Persians made annually emptier. These things demanded reform; and the limits impressed on the Emperor by the power of the patricians, as well as the prevalent demoralisation in all classes, made reform necessarily tardy, notwithstanding the best intentions.

Without supposing Heraclius to have been a John-a-dreams, we can well understand how, with such a prospect before him, he may not have been anxious to ascend the throne, and would not have envied Priscus or Nicetas the diadem; we may suspect that, as he reflected on the rottenness of the time, he often regretted deeply that he was "born to set it right."

He seems to have found a compensation in domestic life for the comfortless duties of politics; and, as these personal matters had some important political bearings, we must not omit to notice them. His marriage with the delicate Eudocia was celebrated on the day of his coronation; she bore him two children, Epiphania and Heraclius Constantine, but died herself of epilepsy in August 612. Soon afterwards he celebrated a second marriage with his niece Martina, and this created a great scandal among his orthodox subjects, who considered such an alliance incestuous. Their superstitious objections seemed justified by the fact that of her two first children, Flavius and Theodosius, one had a wry neck and the other was deaf and dumb; and the physical sufferings of the Emperor himself, endured in the last years of his life, were looked upon as a retribution of this sin. Martina was a strong and ambitious woman, who seems to have always exercised a potent fascination on her husband; and if Heraclius had not felt that she was a necessity to him, he would hardly have run the risk of giving general offence and creating distrust when all his endeavours were directed to win the confidence of his subjects. It is remarkable that George of Pisidia, the friend of Heraclius, never mentions Martina's name, and some words seem to point to a sore spot. Martina was always looked on as "the accursed thing."

Of the operations of Chosroes at this period and the losses of the Romans' we know only the most important, and even these in the barest outline; for the historians seem to make a practice of omitting painful details, and George of Pisidia has formulated the principle that it is meet to commit to silence the greater part of our distresses.¹ Syria was invaded and Damascus taken, in 613 or 614, by the great general Shahr Barz or "Royal Boar." An embassy treating for peace was sent to Chosroes, but without result; and in 614 or 615 Palestine was invaded; Jerusalem was taken; "the wood," as the true cross was called, was carried to Persia; and the Patriarch Zacharias himself was led into captivity. Concerning the capture of Jerusalem we possess some significant details. At the first appearance of the Persians the inhabitants made little resistance, and were easily persuaded to receive a Persian garrison. But when the army had retired, the Christians suddenly rose and slaughtered most of the Persians and Jews in the city. Shahr Barz returned, and having taken the city after a stubborn resistance, which lasted about three weeks, he avenged his countrymen by a massacre of three days. We are told that 90,000 Christians were handed over to the untender mercies of the Jews; and the Jews had so many accounts to settle that, notwithstanding their careful habits, they ransomed prisoners for the pleasure of butchering them.

The loss of the country and the city with which the religious sentiments of the Byzantines were so closely associated was soon followed by the loss of the country which chiefly supplied the material needs of Constantinople. Egypt became a Persian province; for ten years a Copt, Mukaukas, administered it for the Persian king, and the centre of his government was not at Alexandria but at Misr (Babylon, near Cairo). Here, as in Palestine, as in Syria, as in the country about the Euphrates, the efforts of the Persians would never have been attended with such immediate and easy success but for the disaffection of large masses of the population. This disaffection rested chiefly on the religious differences, which were closely associated with differences in nationality. In Egypt there was bitter enmity between the Greek Melchites (Royalists) and the native Jacobites and monophysites¹; in Palestine the irreconcilable feud between Christians and Jews determined the fate of the Holy City; and in Syria Nestorians were not unkindly disposed to the Sassanid kingdom, which had generally afforded them a hospitable shelter.

In regard to the Jews, Heraclius was disposed to follow the policy of his predecessor. He seems to have considered that any attempt at conciliation or tolerance would be wasted, or perhaps he was influenced by the deadly power of superstition. This policy appears too in his relations with foreign states; he initiated an anti-Jewish movement throughout Europe. A treaty which he made with Sisibut, the Visigothic king of Spain, in 614, the year of the massacres of Jerusalem, probably contained the stipulation that Sisibut should compel the Jews of Spain to become Christians.¹ And six years later, in his negotiations with the Frank king Dagobert, he induced that monarch to adopt the policy of persecution. According to Fredegarius, Heraclius discovered by the aid of astrology that the Roman Empire was destined to be blotted out by circumcised peoples, and therefore sent to Dagobert an order or a request that he should baptize and convert all the Jews in his kingdom; and Dagobert did

this. Moreover, Heraclius made the same ordinance in all the provinces of the Empire, for he knew not whence the disaster was to come.

Although the Emperor's resources did not avail to save Syria and Egypt from the invaders, and from themselves, or even to secure Asia Minor, we cannot argue that he was inactive or that there were not Roman armies in the field. When Priscus had withdrawn to lead a holier life in 612, Philippicus, who had unwillingly abandoned the world at the instance of Phocas, came forth from his monastery, and was appointed general instead of Priscus. At the same time Theodorus, the Emperor's brother, received a military command. We may suppose that Philippicus until his death, which occurred not long after this, protected, like Priscus, the province of Cappadocia; and it is to be presumed that Theodorus was stationed in some other province of Asia Minor, perhaps in Cilicia. For from the situation of affairs it is natural to conclude that Heraclius, despairing of the southern countries, would devote all his resources to the defence of Asia Minor. But even Asia Minor was not to escape the horrors of invasion. After the conquest of Egypt, the general Shahan entered Asia Minor, meeting, as far as we know, no opposition, and advanced to Chalcedon, as another general had done in the last years of Phocas. The blockade of this town lasted a considerable time, and it is said that the Persian general and the Roman Emperor had an interview, in which the former professed himself desirous of bringing about a peace, and sanguine of the success of negotiations. He offered to go himself, along with the Roman ambassadors, to Chosroes, and use his influence with his master.

Heraclius readily agreed, and three envoys were nominated : Olympius, praetorian prefect (presumably of the East); Leontius, prefect of the city; and Anastasius, chancellor of St. Sophia. The most important feature of this embassy is that it was sent, not in the name of the Emperor himself, but of the members of the senate, who composed a long letter to Chosroes. The document justifies Heraclius and makes Phocas the scapegoat ; moreover, it reflects the general idea of the Romans that the losses of their provinces were ultimately due to their own sins, and not to the powers of the enemy. As soon as the ambassadors passed the frontiers, Shahan placed them in fetters; but worse things awaited Shahan himself. Chosroes, who from this time forth constantly displays a sort of irrational insolence, was so indignant that Shahan had conversed with Heraclius and yet had not brought him bound hand and foot to his feet, caused the general to be flayed alive ; the ambassadors he subjected to a rigorous confinement.

The loss of Egypt, and the loss of Jerusalem and the holy "wood" were disastrous in different ways. The cessation of the corn supply caused a famine at Constantinople, and the famine produced its natural offspring—a pestilence. Pestilence and famine are often called sisters, each is really both a cause and an effect of the other. Famine induces scanty clothing, dirt, overcrowding, huddling together for the sake of warmth; and thus are formed centres of weak organisms for the germs of the disease to breed in and spread. The plague, on the other hand, involves a cessation of work and production. This calamity must have seriously paralysed the action of the government, which was always to a certain extent unhealthily confined by the paramount importance of everything that affected the imperial city.

The capture of the Holy Wood was equally serious in a moral aspect; it seemed as if the Deity, by permitting the material instrument of redemption to fall into the hand of the adversary, had plainly turned away in anger from the sins of the Christians and withdrawn his favour. To the inhabitants of Constantinople especially it must have been a grievous distress, for, apart from its intrinsic value, the Holy Rood was closely associated with Helena, the sainted mother of Constantine the Great. When she went as a pilgrim to Jerusalem she was seized by a strong desire to find the actual wood on which Christ had been crucified. Inspiring Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem, with her ardour, she caused Mount Calvary to be excavated, and three crosses were discovered. Then the question was, which of the three was the Holy Cross ? It was soon solved. Held over the face of a lady who was sick unto death, the true cross healed her by the efficacy of its shadow. Helena caused it to be divided into two parts, of which one was sent to her son Constantine, while the other, placed in a silver case, of which the bishop of Jerusalem kept the key, was deposited in the church of the Resurrection. The loss of this, the most precious relic of Christendom, seemed a fatal omen and could not but dispirit still more deeply the desponding hearts of the Romans.

It was after the failure of the embassy to Chosroes that Heraclius conceived a remarkable idea, which, if it had been carried out, would have altered the history of the Roman Empire. He felt that amid the prevailing demoralisation and indifference it was utterly impracticable to make any effectual attempt to rescue the Empire from dismemberment. For he was not given free scope or allowed a fair chance. His actions were limited by the aristocracy, which seems to have assumed an independent position ; he was, in point of power, rather the first man of the senate than an Emperor raised above all alike. It seemed as if the imperial dignity were drifting back into its first stage of six centuries ago. The fact that the senate, and not the Emperor, sent the embassy to Chosroes is the clearest indication of the actual tendency of politics at this time. On the other hand, the atmosphere of Constantinople, the imperial city, had been corrupted by three centuries of degrading bounty. The inhabitants were spoiled children; they looked upon the Emperor as their own peculiar property; their mere residence in Constantinople entitled them to the privileges of idleness, of eating bread for nothing, of witnessing games and court pageants. In such an atmosphere, amid such a wicked and adulterous generation, Heraclius despaired of making a fresh start. While he remained there he must necessarily keep up the old palatial traditions, maintain a costly court expenditure with the money which should have supported a campaign. The iron fetters of "damned custom" lay heavy on his soul; and he concluded that the only chance of breaking with the past and starting afresh on rational principles, and thereby rescuing the Empire, was to go to a new place, and change the capital of the Roman world. Once he had resolved, the most natural place to select was Carthage, the scene where his youth had been spent. It was the only prosperous city of first-rate importance at this time, and it was the centre of flourishing provinces, which were devoted to the Heraclian family. There he might make a fresh start with hands untied, independent of the Byzantine nobility and unparalysed by Byzantine demoralisation. There he could be as economical as he pleased, his household could be as simple as was necessary, and he could organise a campaign against the Persians in a secure and distant retreat.

Heraclius made up his mind to carry out this revolutionary project, and before he published his intentions he secretly despatched to Africa the treasures of the palace. Fate itself declared against the design, for the larger part of the gold and silver and precious stones was wrecked in a storm. Then the Byzantines learned the resolve of the Emperor, and great was their consternation. They constrained the Emperor to abandon the plan and not desert Constantinople. The Patriarch Sergius bound him with solemn oaths in the church of St. Sophia that he would never leave the queen of cities.¹ This scene must have produced a deep impression on all who took part in or witnessed it.

If I am not mistaken, this was the turning-point of Heraclius' reign. For, although his design of making a new beginning in Africa was frustrated, this very design rendered it possible to make a new beginning in Constantinople, a consummation for which he could hardly have ventured to hope. We may say that the idea, which he wellnigh executed, caused a moral revolution. The possibility of losing the Emperor, of no longer being the privileged imperial city, brought suddenly home to Constantinople the realities of its situation, and awakened it from the false dream of a spoiled child. When the inhabitants saw that they were not indispensable to the Emperor, as the Emperor was to them, and imagined themselves left without protection, they took a different view of the relations of things. And to this awakening we may ascribe the salvation of the Empire.

At the same time a new element began to permeate the air and react against the morbid despondency which possessed men's minds. A religious enthusiasm spread, and the war against the Persians was regarded in a more religious light than it had been conceived before; it was regarded, namely, as a death-struggle between Christendom and heathendom. Perhaps the capture of the Holy Wood more than anything else rendered this aspect of the war visible; the contest became a crusade. This spiritual change is marked politically by the close alliance which was formed at this time between the Emperor and the Patriarch Sergius, who was henceforth not only a spiritual but a temporal adviser. Sergius was a strong energetic prelate who had the power of influencing men and stirring up enthusiasm; and he played as important a part in the last Persian war as the Pope played in the First Crusade. The religious feeling that prevailed was expressed in solemn services; and while the threats of Chosroes, that he would not spare the Christians until they denied the Crucified, stirred up religious fury against the Antichrist, the recovery of two relics,—the Lance which pierced the side and the Sponge which mocked the thirst of Christ,—shed a gleam of hope, as a sort of earnest that the Holy Cross would be ultimately recovered. It was about this time that Chosroes sent a characteristic letter to Heraclius, intended to be a leisurely reply to the embassy of Shahen. The letter ran thus:—

“The noblest of the gods, the king and master of the whole earth, the son of the great Oromazes, Chosroes, to Heraclius his vile and insensate slave.

“Refusing to submit to our rule, you call yourself a lord and sovereign. You detain and disperse our treasures, and deceive our servants. Having gathered together a troop of brigands, you ceaselessly annoy us; have I not then destroyed the Greeks? You say you have trust in God; why then has he not delivered out of my hand Caesarea, Jerusalem, Alexandria? Are you then ignorant that I have subdued land and sea to my laws? And could I not also destroy Constantinople? But not so. I will pardon all your faults if you will come hither with your wife and children. I will give you lands, vines, and olive groves, which will supply you with the necessaries of life; I will look upon you with a kindly glance. Do not deceive yourself with a vain hope in that Christ who was not able to save himself from the Jews, that killed him by nailing him to a cross. If you descend to the depths of the sea I will stretch out my hand and will seize you, and you shall then see me unwillingly”

Such a letter as this was advantageous to the cause of Heraclius.

As the loss of the cross, at first depressing, proved subsequently stimulating when the reaction came, so the loss of Egypt, at first disastrous, turned out beneficial in improving the moral tone of the capital. Once Heraclius had won his new position and a certain flame of unselfish enthusiasm had been kindled, he was able to refuse to continue the free distribution of “the political bread,” and demand a small payment; and a few months later he could venture to discontinue the practice altogether. This reform had many beneficial effects. In the first place, it was a direct relief to the public purse. In the second place, by rendering idleness less possible and by setting free funds to support labour, it increased labour. And in the third place, the idlers who could not or would not produce became recruits in the army. And, beside these results, the moral tone was raised.

But this relief was not enough to supply Heraclius with the funds necessary for effectual military operations. It was in fact merely a set-off against the loss of Egypt; it was no absolute gain to the exchequer. The financial perplexity was solved by the religious character of the war, which produced a close alliance between Church and State and made Sergius the ardent right-hand man of Heraclius. The Church granted a great loan to the State, which was to be paid back with interest at the end of the war. The immense treasures of the churches of Constantinople were melted and converted into coin; and the political insolvency was rescued by a peculiar form of national debt, which recalls the public loan made by the Romans in the second Punic war.

No event betrays more significantly than this loan that the character of the last Persian war was that of a holy crusade.

Perhaps for no lustrum in the seventh century are exact dates so desirable as for these years (617-622), during which the Roman Empire revived and a new spirit passed into its dry bones. And it is irritating to find that the notices of the chroniclers are vague and contradictory. But without attempting to establish definite dates for everything, I think the general nexus of events is plain, and this nexus is important. The design of Heraclius to migrate to Carthage (618) led to the reaction, and this reaction enabled him to incite the citizens to enthusiasm and carry out the needful reforms.

At this juncture another element in the political situation becomes prominent, the dangerous neighbourhood of the Avaric kingdom, of which we have heard nothing since the treaty with Phocas in 604. In

the meantime, however, the Avars had not been idle. One year in alliance and the next year at feud with their old allies the Lombards, they were alternately ravaging Istria in conjunction with that people and invading northern Italy. In 619 the chagan proposed to make a treaty with Heraclius, and won the hearts of two Roman ambassadors by his amiable behaviour. He proposed a conference at Heraclea, to which the Emperor eagerly consented, for it was now of the greatest consequence to him to secure for Constantinople immunity from attacks on the Thracian side, while he threw all his forces into the contest in the East. The preparations for the interview made by the Romans and those made by the Avars were of a very different nature. Heraclius made arrangements to entertain the barbarians by a scenic representation, and to dazzle them with all the sumptuousness of imperial splendour and court pageantry. The chagan, on the other hand, despatched a chosen body of troops to conceal themselves on the wooded heights that commanded the Long Wall. But fortunately Heraclius, who was waiting at Selymbria, received intelligence of this suspicious movement, and perceived that the chagan's intention was to seize his person by cutting off his retreat. He did not hesitate to throw off his royal dress and disguise himself in humble raiment; and, with his crown concealed under his arm, the Emperor fled to Constantinople. He arrived just in time to take some measures for the defence of the city. The Avars, baulked in their stratagem, pursued him hotly, and, penetrating into the suburbs of the city, wrecked several churches. Not only did the apparatus which had been provided for the scenic performances, and those who were engaged in the preparations, and the imperial robes, become the booty of the chagan, but men and women to the number of 270,000 were carried away to captivity.

We are not accurately informed what followed this alarming occurrence. It seems that the chagan tried to glaze over the treachery, and it is probable that Heraclius, unlike the unpopular Maurice, ransomed the captives and bought a peace. He had already directed the exarch of Ravenna to make a defensive treaty with the Lombards for operations against the Avars, and this was to a certain extent a check on the hostilities of the heathen.

But before Heraclius set out to conduct the Persian war he conceived the idea of throwing a sop to Cerberus and paying a compliment to the chagan of the Avars. He is said to have appointed that monarch guardian of his son, and he sent as hostages to the Avaric court two Roman nobles, along with a nephew and a son of his own; the latter, who "came saucily into the world before he was sent for," bore the Gothic name Athalaric. By this scheme Heraclius not only conciliated the Avars but possessed spies in the enemy's country, who could give early warning of harm intended to the Empire.

The new spirit of vigour and enthusiasm that prevailed had manifested itself in 618, and yet Heraclius was not ready to set out on his first campaign until 622. The year 619 is accounted for by the affair with the Avars which was so nearly fatal to the Emperor, but by what cares he was occupied during the two ensuing years we are not informed by our Greek authorities. We can hardly assume that all this time was required for the organisation of his army, especially as in 622 he spent several months in drilling his troops in Cilicia.

The solution of this difficulty is that he was engaged in hostilities with the Persians who were stationed at Chalcedon, and that these hostilities have been completely omitted by the Greek historians. That town, taken by the Persians in 617, had become the station of an army which was always watching for an opportunity to attack the great city across the straits. This solution would be only a probable conjecture but for a record preserved by an Armenian historian of an event which must be placed in one of these years. By the orders of Chosroes the Persians assaulted Constantinople, but the Greek fleet attacked them and utterly discomfited them, with a loss of 4000 men and their ships. This encouraging success indicates to us another preoccupation of Heraclius. It was not only necessary to organise an army; it devolved upon him to organise a navy also, in order to secure the capital during his absence.

By the end of 621 all the preliminaries were over. Friendly relations had been established with the Avars; the imperial city on the Bosphorus had a fleet to protect it against the Persians of Chalcedon; the military chest was well provided, owing to the co-operation of the Church; and an army had been formed, which was to be further increased on its arrival in Asia. There was a deliberation and want of haste about all these preparations which lent them a certain solemnity; and all minds must have been wrought up to form high expectations for the success of this enterprise, which was marked by two novelties. It was a distinctly religious war, in which the worshippers of Christ and the worshippers of fire were fighting to the death; and it was to be conducted by the Emperor in person,² an arrangement which to the inhabitants of Byzantium was a new and strange thing, for since Theodosius the Great no Emperor who reigned at New Rome had led an army to victory or defeat. Zeno the Isaurian had indeed proclaimed that he would conduct a campaign against Theodoric, and more recently Maurice had marched as far as Anchialus to take the field against the Avars; yet at the last moment both Maurice and Zeno had abandoned their valorous purposes. But Heraclius was not as Zeno or as Maurice, and the recent naval success in the Bosphorus was an inspiring omen of victory.

The winter before his departure (621-622) was spent by Heraclius in retirement. He was probably engaged in studying strategy and geography and planning his first campaign. Those who look upon him as an inspired enthusiast would like to see in this retirement the imperative need of communion with his own soul and with God; they suppose that he was like John the Baptist, or that, like Jesus, he retired to a mountain to pray. To support this idea they can appeal to George of Pisidia, who, speaking of this retreat, says that the Emperor "imitated Elias of old," and uses many other expressions which may be interpreted in a similar manner. It is probable that Heraclius was fain to possess his soul in silence for a few months; but it is hazardous to press the theological word-painting of a poetical ecclesiastic into the service of the theory that Heraclius was a semi-prophetic enthusiast with a naturally weak will. When George of Pisidia mentions in another place that the Emperor studied treatises on tactics and rehearsed plans of battle, we feel that we are on surer ground. The *Strategic* of Maurice, doubtless, was constantly in his hands.

Heraclius appointed his son Constantine, now ten years old, regent during his absence. The actual administration was vested in Sergius the Patriarch and Bonus a patrician, who were to act, of course, in concert with the senate. The political position of Sergius is highly significant of the time, and indicates the close bond

which was drawing together Church and State, a bond substantially welded by the material sacrifice which the Church had made. It was natural that when the Church had ventured the greater part of her possessions in the enterprise, she should have a representative in the government. Such a colossal shareholder had a claim to appoint a director. But, apart from this consideration, Sergius was the strongest and firmest supporter of the Emperor throughout his reign, quite an invaluable ally.

On the day after Easter 622 Heraclius sailed from Constantinople. His departure was celebrated with religious circumstance, emphasising the religious character of his enterprise, to prevent the infidels from insulting the heritage of Christ. George of Pisidia delivered an oration on the occasion, and foretold that Heraclius would redden his black leggings in Persian blood. The Emperor took with him that image of the Virgin not made propitious to him when, almost against Phocas.

CHAPTER III

THE PERSIAN WAR

The Persian campaigns of Heraclius are six in number: (1) the campaign of Cappadocia and Pontus, 622-623; (2) the first campaign of Azerbiyan, 623; (3) the campaign of Albania and Armenia, 624; (4) the campaign of Cilicia, 625; (5) the second campaign of Azerbiyan, 626; (6) the campaign of Assyria, 627-628. The year 626 was also signalled by the joint attack of the Persians and Avars on Constantinople.

I. Campaign of Cappadocia and Pontus, 622-623 a.d.

The plan of the first campaign of Heraclius was a distinct surprise. It was probably expected that he would sail up the Black Sea and enter Persia by Armenia. He took a completely different course. He sailed southward through the Hellespont, coasted along Asia Minor, then, bearing eastward, made for the bay of Issus, and landed at those remarkable Gates which form the entrance from Syria to Asia Minor, "the gates of Cilicia and Syria." These Gates are a narrow road between the range of Mount Amanus on the east and the sea on the west, about six days' march from Tarsus. The place played a part of strategic importance both in the expedition of Cyrus the younger and in the Persian expedition of Alexander. Its importance for Heraclius' purposes lay in its geographical advantages. It was a common centre to which Roman subjects in Syria on the one hand, and in Asia Minor on the other, who had escaped the sword or chains of Chosroes, could gather to the standard of the Emperor; and no place could offer a more secure retreat for organising and drilling his army at leisure and for assimilating the new recruits to the troops which he had brought with him. These preparations occupied the summer and autumn, and Heraclius showed that both in directing tactics and in inspiring confidence he possessed a rare talent for military command. He had already, on the voyage, won golden opinions by his personal energy in a storm which almost wrecked his ship; and he appears to have adopted a tone of genial comradeship which infused confidence into his followers and aided his Roman discipline in holding together the heterogeneous masses that composed his army. He did not forget to keep alive the religious enthusiasm which had inspired the expedition, and doubtless he sometimes delivered half-religious half-martial orations, such as became a crusader. The practical part of the preparations seems to have been thorough; and he exercised his own generalship and his soldiers' presence of mind in sham battles.

As winter approached, Heraclius passed from Cilicia into Cappadocia, and a trifling victory over some Saracen guerilla bands was hailed as an earnest of a prosperous issue.

In the meantime King Chosroes had sent a mandate to Shahr Barz,—who, regardless of Heraclius, was still watching his opportunity at Chalcedon,—to move eastward and oppose the advance of the Roman army. This was just what Heraclius desired. The Persians entered Pontus, expecting that the Romans would remain in the south of Cappadocia until winter was over; but, finding that Heraclius continued his northward march, they passed into that country. The armies met, and Heraclius found himself in an unfavourable position before he had time to choose his own ground; moreover, he was threatened with want of supplies. He extricated himself from this difficulty by a curious ambiguous movement, a sort of double-faced march. To the Persians he seemed to be moving in a southerly direction, whereas he really took a northerly route, and before they were aware what had taken place he had crossed the Antitaurus range and entered the region of Pontus where the Lycus and Halys approach each other. Shahr Barz now took it for granted that the Romans would winter in Pontus, but Heraclius soon gave him cause for uneasiness by feigning a movement in the direction of Armenia, as though he intended to invade Persia on that side. The Persian general then adopted the curiously infelicitous scheme of marching southwards to Cilicia, thinking apparently that Heraclius would follow him to secure the Gates at Issus. But the Gates had served the Emperor's purpose, and he was now indifferent in their regard; so the decoy did not succeed. Then, weary of this game of hide-and-seek, and uncertain of Heraclius' design in respect to Armenia, Shahr Barz retraced his steps and crossed the Antitaurus in the face of the Roman forces which occupied the passes.

Once more the armies were face to face, but on this occasion Heraclius had been able to choose his position. The versifier who celebrated this campaign has left an edifying description of the contrast between the two camps.

Cymbals and all kinds of music gratified the ears of Shahr Barz, and naked women danced before him; while the Christian Emperor sought delight in psalms sung to mystical instruments, which awoke a divine echo in his soul.

For several days the armies stood opposed in battle array without venturing on an engagement; and it is said that Heraclius employed stratagems to induce his opponent to fight; on one occasion, for example, causing a banquet to be prepared in the open air, to invite a Persian surprise. At last Shahr Barz conceived a plan which he thought would ensure success. One night he hid a body of men in a ravine on one side of the plain, and the next day, relying on this ambush, he prepared for action. But the Roman scouts had discovered the stratagem, and Heraclius availed himself of it to hoist the Persians with their own petard. He detached a regiment and sent it in the direction of the ambush, having given instructions to the soldiers that on approaching the spot they were to feign a panic and flee. The concealed Persians fell into the snare; they rushed out and pursued the simulating fugitives without caring to keep order. Heraclius came quickly up with the rest of his army to overwhelm the pursuers, and then the main body of the Persian host approached to assail Heraclius. We cannot clearly determine the course of the action or the causes which threw the Persian army into disorder, but it seems that when the calculation of Shahr Barz had been defeated by the promptitude of the Emperor, and the circumstances of the engagement had been decided for him, and not by him, he was not equal to the occasion, and could not prevent confusion from overwhelming his troops. The Persians were soon in headlong flight, stumbling among rocks and falling over precipices, where the pursuers easily cut them down. The pursuit was compared to the hunting of wild goats.

After the first great victory which established the reputation of Heraclius as a competent general and restored the lustre of Roman arms, the triumphant army established its quarters for the end of winter and the early spring in Pontus, while the Emperor, accompanied by George of Pisidia—his “poet-laureate”—returned to the imperial city to arrange a dispute which had arisen with the chagan of the Avars. Besides his arrival as a victorious hero, one evident fact brought home to the eyes of the Byzantines how much he had already accomplished, the fact, namely, that a Persian army was no longer menacing their city from the opposite shore of the Bosphorus.

II. First Campaign of Azerbaijan, 623 AD.

At the end of March¹ Heraclius returned to the army accompanied by the Empress Martina; he had become so popular that he might venture with impunity to take “the accursed thing” into his tent. Now that he had secured Asia Minor, his obvious policy was to carry the war into Persia and attack the lion in his lair. He therefore lost no time in passing through Lazica into Armenia, and, marching eastwards, he crossed first the river Araxes and then the chain of mountains which separates Armenia from Atropatene or Azerbiyan, “the land of fire,” the northern district of Media and chief seat of the Zoroastrian fire-worship. He had signified to Chosroes his intention to invade Persia unless that monarch made reasonable offers of peace; and Chosroes, who had already ordered Shahr Barz to return to his familiar quarters at Chalcedon, sent messengers to recall him, and hastened to collect another army under Saes. The king himself took up quarters at Ganzaca, the royal city of Azerbiyan, in which there was a magnificent palace.

Meanwhile the champion of Christendom advanced through this fertile country, laying it waste and destroying the towns, and the visible signs of heathen fire-worship whetted the swords of the Roman fanatics. He advanced directly on Ganzaca, where the great king awaited him with a garrison of forty thousand men. But a slight occurrence sufficed to make Nushirvan turn and flee. Some Saracens attached to the Roman army happened to surprise a company of the Persian royal guard, and Chosroes immediately left Ganzaca, and all that was therein, to his enemy, and fled westward in the direction of Nineveh. Perhaps not “all that was therein,” for the Christians had hoped to find the Holy Rood at Ganzaca, and were sorely disappointed to learn that it had been removed. On the other hand, they found a remarkable work of Persian “blasphemy,” which provoked their religious wrath, and was destroyed with exultant zeal. This was a statue of Chosroes standing in the temple of the Sun, round which winged images of the sun, the moon, and the stars hovered to receive his adorations. Thebarnes, the birthplace of Zoroaster—the Jerusalem of Persia—was reduced to ashes, and the Christians felt, when they had destroyed the temple of Fire, that they had retaliated on their enemies for the capture of the Holy City.

The enthusiasm of the troops might have led them on to the consummation of their successes by the capture of Dastagherd and Ctesiphon, but winter was approaching, Shahr Barz would soon arrive with his army from the west, and perhaps other deterrent circumstances, which we cannot guess, now influenced the resolution of Heraclius. Prudently proof against the lure of a speedy and brilliant termination of the war, he decided to winter in Albania, and by employing the test of a *sors evangelica*, he carried the spirit of his troops with him in a course really dictated by rational considerations. His mercy or policy liberated the 50,000 captives whom he had taken; their sustenance was a burden on the winter march, and at the same time this kindness alienated the loyalty of many Persians from the unpopular Chosroes.

III. Campaign of Albania and Armenia, 624 AD.

Of the three Caucasian countries which border on the north of Armenia—Colchis, Iberia, and Albania,—Albania is the most easterly. Bounded on the east by the Caspian, on the west by Iberia, it is separated from Armenia on the south by the Cyrus, which, mixing its waters with the great Armenian river Araxes at some distance from its mouth, flows along with it into the Hyrcanian Sea. In this country Heraclius recruited his army with Colchian, Iberian, and Abasgian allies, and entered into negotiation with the Khazars, a Hunnic people of the trans-Caucasian steppes.

The campaign of 624 consisted of a series of movements and counter-movements to and fro between Albania and Armenia, wherein both sides exhibited dexterity, but the Roman Emperor proved himself superior. At first he was opposed by two Persian armies, one commanded by a new general, Sarablagas,¹ the other by the

inevitable Shahr Barz. The object of Sarablagas was to prevent the Romans from entering Persia, and accordingly, having garrisoned the passes of Azerbiyan, he stationed himself on the lower Cyrus near its junction with the Araxes. Heraclius, however, marched in a north-westerly direction and crossed the river considerably higher up, but his advance was retarded by a mutiny of his Caucasian allies, and in the meantime Shahr Barz, who had entered Armenia from the south-west, had arrived on the scene of action and effected a junction with his colleague Sarablagas. When these tidings arrived, the obstructives in the Roman camp were pathetically penitent, and bade Heraclius lead them where he would. He then advanced towards the place where the Persians were stationed, defeated some of their outposts, and passing on marched to the Araxes.

But ere he reached the river he suddenly found himself face to face with the Persian army, which, as he thought, he had left behind him; the two generals had hastened to outstrip him by fast marches and cut off his progress towards Persia. Heraclius did not intend to give battle at such a disadvantage, and under the shelter of night he retraced his steps until he reached a plain where he could occupy a favourable position. The Persians imagined that he was fleeing for dread of them, and pursued him with a rash negligence of precautions; but they were calmly received by the Roman army, which was drawn up at the foot of a wooded hill. The victory of the Araxes was as complete as the first victory had been on the confines of Pontus and Cappadocia, and it proved fortunate for the Romans that the enemy were defeated just at that moment, for another army was close at hand under the command of Saes, and arrived almost immediately after the action. The victorious Romans fell upon the new army, which, tired by the march and dispirited by the misfortune, was soon scattered. Sarablagas was among those slain in the first engagement.

Notwithstanding this double victory, the judicious Emperor did not entertain the intention of invading Persia yet. It does not appear that his army was over strong, and the Iberian and Abasgian allies, weary of warfare, signified their determination to return to their habitations. He therefore fell back upon Albania again, and the Persians, observing that he had lost his allies, and thinking that they might even yet crush him, followed on his steps. On one occasion, when a battle seemed imminent, Heraclius is said to have made a brief speech, and if the words which a late chronicler has recorded were not actually uttered by him, they were almost certainly composed by a contemporary.

“Do not be afraid of the number of the enemy, for with God’s grace one Roman will turn to flight a thousand Persians. For the safety of our brethren let us sacrifice our own lives unto God, winning thereby the martyr’s crown and the praises of future generations.”

In this short exhortation, which, if not spoken by the Emperor, is at least a product of the atmosphere of his army, the religious character of the war is manifest; those who perish are *martyrs*.

The battle, however, did not take place; Heraclius again repeated his favourite movement of passing away at night from the presence of the foe and returned to Armenia. Shahr Barz remained, but Saes, following the Romans, found himself involved in difficult morasses; it was already winter, and his troops became disorganised and useless. Having thus disposed of one of the hostile armies, Heraclius retraced his steps once more and found that Shahr Barz had taken up quarters in the strong town of Salban. But even there he was not safe. The Roman Emperor surprised the fortress early in the morning, and massacred the people, who offered little resistance, while the Persian general, leaving even his arms behind him, fled for his life.

After this successful and intricate campaign, in which they had defeated three Persian armies, the Romans passed the rest of the winter at Salban, the modern Van.

IV. Campaign of Cilicia, AD.

In drawing up the plan of his next campaign Heraclius may have taken the following points into consideration. The Persians had had sufficient experience of warfare in the highlands of Armenia to prevent their essaying it again with such an antagonist as the Roman Emperor; so that there was no good reason for him to remain in those regions, especially as he could no longer rely on the useful help of the neighbouring tribes. It remained for him therefore either to invade Persia again—whether Assyria or Azerbaijan—or to return into Asia Minor, whither Shahr Barz would probably once more betake himself. The tidings of possible hostilities on the part of the Avars may have decided him to adopt the latter course, as it was desirable that he should in such a contingency be nearer at hand to provide for the protection of the capital of the Empire.

In 623 he had left Asia Minor by the northern route; in 625 he returned thither by a southern route, which involved the labour of crossing Mount Taurus twice. Marching in a south-westerly direction through Armenia, skirting Mount Ararat on the north, he followed for a while the course of the Murad Tschai, that branch of the river Euphrates which, rising near Ararat, flows between Taurus and Antitaurus. Before he approached the confluence he turned southwards and, crossing Mount Taurus for the first time, entered Arzanene, where he recovered the Roman cities of Martyropolis and Amida. When he reached the Euphrates he was opposed by Shahr Barz, who destroyed the bridge, but the army gained the right bank by a ford north of Samosata. He then crossed the Taurus for the second time, and, entering Cilicia at the town of Germanicia, arrived at the Sarus. Here the Persian general overtook him. The river separated the two armies, but an engagement soon took place which, owing to the enthusiastic precipitancy of the Romans, proved wellnigh a Persian victory. The presence of mind and personal prowess of Heraclius retrieved the fortunes of the day; he is said to have slain a gigantic warrior and to have performed prodigious deeds of valour, which excited the marvel of Shahr Barz, and which well became a hero who was destined to figure in mediæval legend. The defeated army abandoned the idea of contending further with their invincible adversary and retreated to Persia, while Heraclius, following the same route which he had taken in his first campaign, proceeded to Pontus and established his winter quarters on the Black Sea.

V. The Second Campaign of Azerbaijan; the Victory of Theodorus ; the Siege of Constantinople, 626 AD.

The Roman Empire was more seriously menaced in 626 than in any of the foregoing years; it was beset with dangers which put the ability of Heraclius in forming combinations to a severe proof, and he was obliged to leave the execution of his arrangements chiefly to others. Not only did Chosroes attempt, as the historian of the Sassanid dynasty tells us, "to bring the war to a close by an effort, the success of which would have changed the history of the world," but the chagan of the Avars prepared a gigantic expedition for the capture of Constantinople; and the two dangers were still more formidable from the fact that they were not independent. Movements in the East had often before influenced movements on another frontier of the Empire, the clash of arms in the Euphrates had roused an echo on the Danube; there had even been attempts at joint action between the enemies of the Empire in the East and its enemies in the West; but this was the first time that such an alliance took the form of anything resembling strict co-operation. And it was now carried out in a really alarming manner, as the two foes appeared almost simultaneously on either side of the Bosphorus, leagued for the destruction of the imperial city.

Chosroes levied a new army and appointed Shahr Barz to lead it against Byzantium. His more experienced troops, which had lived through the dangers and defeats of recent years, he placed under the command of Shahan or Saes, whom he ordered to hunt down Heraclius, under pain of an ignominious death.

Heraclius laid his plans with considerable skill. He made no attempt to prevent Shahr Barz from reaching Scutari, nor did he think, as many would have thought, of rushing with all his forces to the protection of the capital and abandoning the ground which he had already gained in the East. He divided his army into three portions. One portion he retained himself to protect Armenia, and, in case he found it advisable, to invade Persia. The second he entrusted to his brother Theodore, to operate against Saes. The third, a corps of veterans, was sent as a reinforcement to Constantinople, with the most minute directions as to the mode of defence which should be adopted.

Of the details of Heraclius' operations we are not informed. He entered into a close alliance with the Khazars, whom he met as they returned from a plundering expedition in Azerbiyan, and won the affections of Ziebil their king, or the brother of their king. Having entertained him sumptuously and bestowed upon him and his attendants rich raiment and pearl earrings, Heraclius confidentially exposed to his view the picture of a maiden in rich costume. "God," said the Emperor, "has united us; he has made thee my son. Behold, this is my daughter, and an Empress of the Romans. An thou assist me against mine enemies, I give her to thee to wife." Impressed by her beauty or her splendour, Ziebil was more ardent than ever in his friendship, and gave the father of his promised bride forty thousand Khazars; and Heraclius, when he had drilled them in the military discipline of a Roman army, proceeded to lay Azerbaijan waste once more.

Ziebil died before the end of the year, and Epiphania Eudocia, almost the victim of a political expediency, happily escaped banishment to the wilds of Scythia and an uncivilised people, to which her father and stepmother would not have hesitated to sacrifice her in the interests of Christendom. Ziebil's death was not so welcome to Heraclius, as it caused the return of his Khazar allies to their homes; and at the end of the year he found himself in Media with a weak army.

Of the collision of Theodore and Saes we know little more than the result. The battle was fought in Mesopotamia, and a great hailstorm, to which the Persians were exposed while the Romans were sheltered, decided the victory for the latter. Saes was the servant of a more than austere taskmaster, and this defeat cast him into such low spirits that his death anticipated the vengeance of Chosroes. But that monarch rivalled Xerxes of old by flogging the dead body in impotent spite, an act which shows that Chosroes was really possessed by a sort of lunacy, the madness of a weak man in an irresponsible position. It is remarkable that he never lost faith in Shahr Barz, numerous defeats and failures notwithstanding.

In the end of June (626) the last-named general resumed his old station at Chalcedon, and almost at the same moment (29th June) the vanguard of the Avar army began the blockade of Constantinople on the land side.¹ All the inhabitants of the suburbs fled into the city, and the Bosphorus was illuminated on both shores by the flames of burning churches. When the chagan himself drew near he sent an unexpected embassy, holding out the possibility of peace, which he had before declined to consider, if an adequate offer should be made him. But the citizens—having full confidence in the ability of Bonus the Patrician, relying, moreover, on the valour of the experienced veterans whom their Emperor had sent to them, and wrought up into a state of religious enthusiasm, which Sergius fanned to flame, against the heathen who threatened the very heart and brain of Christendom—unanimously disdained to make terms, with the ungodly.

The siege lasted throughout the month of July, and it is noteworthy that the Persians did not attack the city. They hovered, a black threatening mass, on the opposite shore, and laid waste the surrounding districts of Asia, but they left the whole work of the siege to their allies. At one moment, indeed, they seem to have entertained some intentions of joining the Avars in Europe, but these intentions were not realised.

The city was defended by more than 12,000 cavalry. The army of the Avars, on the other hand, numbered 80,000, and consisted of many nations and tongues, Bulgarians, and various tribes of Slaves, and perhaps Teutonic Gepids. From the Golden Gate on the Propontis to the suburb of Sycae on the Golden Horn they threatened the walls with all kinds of ingenious machines; while Slavonic sailors, female as well as male, had small boats ready in the Golden Horn to support the land operations by attacks on the water side. In the end of July the chagan himself arrived, and then the most formidable and concentrated assault by land took place, and was successfully repulsed, partly, it was said, by the potency of a miraculous image of the Virgin. After this failure the chagan received (2d August) ambassadors from the Romans and the Persians at the same hour in his tent, and insulted the former by constraining them to stand while the latter, who were dressed in silk, were allowed to sit. High words arose between the Persians and Romans, which edified and delighted the "abominable chagan," but the incident was not without its use. For the captains of the Roman ships carefully watched the straits that night and intercepted the three Persian envoys. One of these they slew in sight of the Persian camp, another was

mutilated and sent back to the chagan, the third was beheaded. This interception of intelligence disconcerted the plan that had been formed for common action; and two days later the Roman fleet succeeded in destroying a number of rough transport rafts, which had been launched in the waters of the Bosphorus to convey some Persian regiments across the straits (3d August). On the same night a double attack by land and sea was organised, the arrangement being that when the Slavonic and Bulgarian marines, who anchored in the north-western recess of the Golden Horn, saw a signal of fire rising from a fort in the adjoining quarter of Blachernae,¹ they should row down the inlet and proceed to Sycae. Fortunately Bonus received intelligence of this design, and thwarted it by giving the signal himself before the Avars were ready. The Slaves saw the fire and acted according to the arrangement; but they were enclosed and overwhelmed by the Roman ships, which waited for them like a trap. At this misfortune the bulk of the Avar army was seized with panic and began to retire in haste. The chagan himself is said to have felt superstitious terrors and seen visions of unearthly beings. It seemed as if the image of the Virgin had really infected his imagination; he said that he saw a woman richly dressed passing along the fortifications. And some of his soldiers professed to have followed a dame of queenly aspect, who issued from the gate of Blachernae and sped towards rocks on the sea-shore, amid which she vanished away. Such incidents as this are a feature of the stories of sieges of that age.

The chagan retreated to his own kingdom, not without menaces that he would return again ere long, and the Byzantines could rest and give thanks to the Virgin that they had successfully surmounted the first really imminent danger that had threatened their city since its new foundation; while the good tidings which had reached them of the victory of Theodore and of the alliance of the Emperor with the Khazars, — an alliance which was Heraclius' answer to the combination of Shahr Barz with the Avars, — gave them further cause for jubilation.

VI. Campaign of Assyria, 627-628 AD.

Abandoned by his Khazar allies in December, Heraclius spent the rest of the winter in Azerbaijan. We lose sight of him during the spring and summer of 627, and are unable to determine whether he spent those seasons in Media or in Assyria, where we meet him in autumn. A new Persian general named Eazates, to whom Chosroes significantly said, "If you cannot conquer, you can die," was sent out against him. The battle, which decided the war and the fate of Chosroes, was not long delayed, and took place in the auspicious neighbourhood of Nineveh and Gaugamela. Razates, with the words of his sovereign echoing in his ears, challenged Heraclius in the midst of the battle to a single combat; and the Emperor, riding on his steed Dorkon, like Alexander on Bucephalus, eagerly accepted the challenge. The Roman hero was victorious; Razates did not conquer, but he died. Heraclius is said to have slain other Persian warriors also, single-handed. Night terminated the battle, which had resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Romans, and they were fortunate enough to have secured a royal prisoner, the prince of the Iberians.

Heraclius then marched slowly southwards along the eastern bank of the Tigris, crossing the great Zab and the lesser Zab. Having spent Christmas in the "Paradise" of Yesdem, he advanced upon Dastagherd, the residence of Chosroes, built on the river Arba, about seventy miles north of Ctesiphon. In the meantime he had the good fortune to intercept a letter from Chosroes to Shahr Barz, recalling that commander from Chalcedon. Another letter of opposite import was substituted in its place, and the Persian general received a mandate to remain where he was, inasmuch as a brilliant victory had been gained over the Romans.

Chosroes fled to Ctesiphon on the approach of the hostile army, and when he had passed within its gates, remembered too late the vaticinations of the magi, that if he set foot again in that city³ his destruction was certain. He hastened to leave the fatal spot, and, in the highest compulsion of base fear, fled eastwards, with his favourite wife Schirin, to the district of Susiana. The Romans meanwhile did not spare the magnificent palaces of Dastagherd, and, though they treated the inhabitants with humanity, they were guilty of gross vandalism. The buildings and all the splendours of the place were committed to the flames (January 628).

From this moment the part played by Heraclius became that of a controlling spectator who allowed events to take their own course, though his consent or veto was decisive. He did not wish to abuse his victory; he sent a message to Chosroes offering peace on reasonable terms; and the Persian monarch wrote Iris own death sentence by refusing. For a long time the grandson of Nushirvan had been unpopular; his irrational cruelty and his political folly had alienated his subjects. The madness exhibited by this rejection of the clement offer of the victor was followed by an edict, ordering the old men, the women and the children to defend Ctesiphon. The insanity of a despot could scarce go further, and Heraclius, willing that the inevitable revolution should take its own course, retired north-eastward, and crossing Mount Zagros, just in time to escape a tremendous snow-tempest, established his quarters at Ganzaca.

The revolution against Chosroes was twofold. Shahr Barz and the army at Chalcedon threw off their allegiance, while at the same time Gundarnaspes, the general at Ctesiphon, combined with Siroes, the king's eldest son, to dethrone his father, who, under the influence of his seductive wife Schirin, had decided to leave the throne to a child of hers. Chosroes, who had lately had the audacity to complain to his courtiers that they were not all dead in fighting for his cause, was quickly seized and thrown into the "castle of Forgetfulness," loaded with chains. He was killed there by a process of slow starvation, which was varied by the spectacle of his own and Schirin's children executed before his eyes. His son is said to have taken an unfilial delight in the tortures of a worthless parent, of whom he spoke in the most bitter terms in a manifesto which he indited to Heraclius. Siroes professed a desire to compensate for all the miseries which his father had inflicted on the Persian kingdom by a reign of beneficence, and he began the reaction by opening the prisons and granting an exemption from taxes for three years. Heraclius, in his letter of congratulation to the new king, addressed him as "my dear son," and while he professed that if Chosroes had fallen into his hands he would have done him no hurt, he admitted that God had wisely punished the sins of the Persian king for the sake of the world's peace. He politically treated the parricide with the greatest friendliness, just as Pope Gregory had treated Phocas.

Shortly before his death Chosroes had taken a step which led to the alienation of Shahr Barz. Indignant at his general's delay in appearing, the true cause whereof, the interception of his own letter, he could not suspect, and full of distrust, he wrote to the kardarigan, who was second in command at Chalcedon, a letter containing instructions to put Shahr Barz to death and hasten back to Persia. The bearer of this letter fell into the hands of the Romans as he travelled through Galatia, and the epistle was forwarded to Constantinople. The authorities there knew how to make the best use of it. They laid it before Shahr Barz himself, and a dexterous artifice was adopted to create general disaffection in the Persian army. The names of four hundred important officers were annexed to the document, which was altered in such a way¹ as to convey an order for their deaths. They were then assembled together, the letter was laid before them, and with one consent they voted that Chosroes had forfeited the crown. Peace was made with the young Emperor Constantine, and the army hastened to Persia to depose an ungrateful tyrant.

The peace made between Heraclius and Siroes forms the conclusion of the Persian war. The restoration of all the Roman provinces, the surrender of all the Roman captives and of the Holy Wood were the main conditions, and the Emperor left his brother Theodore in Persia to make arrangements for their fulfilment. He sent to the imperial city, in announcement of his victory, a triumphant manifesto, which opened with the jubilate, "O, be joyful in the Lord,"—a song of exultation over the fall of Chosroes Iscariot, the blasphemer, who has gone to burn for ever in the flames of hell. The same spirit is echoed in the *Epinikion*, composed for the occasion by the "poet-laureate," George of Pisidia, entitled the *Heracliad*. A resolution, which was to become law with the Emperor's consent, was initiated by the Byzantines on this auspicious occasion, that Heraclius should be surnamed Scipio and his successors Scipiones. The great heroes of the Republic of Old Rome were not yet forgotten by the New Romans of the Bosphorus, and it was recognised that the Emperor who beat back the Asiatic power of the Sassanids was a historical successor of the emperor who overthrew the Asiatic commonwealth of Carthage.

Extremely noteworthy and characteristic is this combination of Roman reminiscences with an intensely Christian spirit. Before the end of the same century such combinations have become a thing of the past.

The letter of Heraclius came in May; he did not arrive himself at the palace of Hieria, close to Chalcedon, till some months later. All the inhabitants of Constantinople crossed the Bosphorus to meet him, and received him with taper processions and myrtle branches; but he did not enter the city in triumph until Theodore, his brother, arrived with the precious relic of the Holy Wood. Of the triumphal procession I need only remark that he made his entry by the Golden Gate and was received by Sergius in the church of St. Sophia, where the true cross, solemnly "uplifted," lent a peculiar solemnity to the service of thanksgiving. The ceremony in St. Sophia corresponded to the ceremony in the Capitol at triumphal processions in Old Rome.

The sun of Heraclius' house turned the winter of men's discontent to glorious summer for a moment, and perhaps many fondly imagined that by the battle of Nineveh and the ensuing peace with Persia the clouds which had so long loomed over the Roman Empire had been dissipated for ever. But another cloud, yet as small as a man's hand, was even then visible on the southern horizon, and unluckily its import was mistaken. The Persian war was over in 628; the Saracen conquests in Syria began in 633. In those five intervening years much might have been done to avert the coming storm if the danger could have only been realised, but, as it was, the policy of Heraclius was in every way calculated to ensure success to the new foes.

These five years might be considered the ultimate boundary between the Old and the Middle Ages¹; the appearance of the Saracen launches us into the medieval high seas, and few vestiges of antiquity remain. The Persian war had the double character of an age of transition. As a war of Romans against Persians it attached itself to the ancient order of things, and this element is not absent from its poet George of Pisidia, while as a religious war it was medieval, an anticipation of the holy wars of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. In short, it was a Roman crusade.

It was unfortunate, from a political and economical point of view, that the Church and State, as creditor and debtor, coincided in the arrangement that the national debt should be liquidated with all possible expedition. For the sources from which it was necessary to raise the payment were the provinces, which had for many years suffered the devastations of a cruel enemy and endured the tyranny of a foreign ruler; and it was desirable that time should be allowed them to recover their old prosperity before a severe tribute was imposed. This was the first mistake, and a serious one. Had the Church been more self-denying or more patient, had Syria and Mesopotamia been left for a few years exempt from the burden of taxes, a firmer resistance might have been offered to the Arabian invader.

The second mistake was the continuation of an unfortunate policy which had already proved disastrous, the persecution of the Jews. They were massacred in Palestine, they were massacred also at Edessa, and were forced to flee to Arabia. We are tempted to think that but for this fatal error events might have taken a different course, for we can hardly overrate the importance of the Hebrews in those countries. Their wealth is illustrated by the princely entertainment with which Benjamin, a Jew of Tiberias, honoured Heraclius and his' retinue on their journey to Jerusalem in 629. Benjamin had the reputation of being a persecutor of Christians, and yet he consented, at Heraclius' request, to be baptized a Christian himself. Other Jews would not have been so easily converted, but kindness might have made them loyal.

Heraclius remained no long time in the queen of cities after his triumph. Accompanied by Martina and her son Heraclius Constantine, who had been recently created Caesar, he hastened in spring 629 to restore the cross to its resting-place in Jerusalem and to set in order the affairs of his eastern provinces, where he found much to occupy him. He was obliged to keep a wakeful eye on Persia, which was in a state of political unrest; he was engaged in schemes of religious unity, which always seems so simple and is so impracticable; and he began to direct his attention to the movements in Arabia.

The burden of Persia may be told in a few words. Siroes reigned only eight months, and, after the short reigns of two intervening sovereigns, Shahr Barz ascended the throne with the approval of Heraclius, to whom he showed himself grateful. The protracted residences of that general in the neighbourhood of Byzantium seem to have rendered him a sort of Philhellene, or, as contemporaries might have said, Philoromaic. His son, whom he named Nicetas, received the title of Patrician from the Roman Emperor, who further patronised his Persian friend and former foe by accepting the hand of his daughter Nice for the deaf prince Theodosius. Perhaps we may combine the names of the son and daughter, "Niketas" and "Nike," with the fact that Shahr Barz gave the Holy Sponge and the Holy Spear back to Nicetas, Heraclius' famous cousin, and may draw the conclusion that there existed between the Greek patrician and the Persian general specially friendly relations which induced the latter to give his children those Greek names. But the simplest explanation may be that the children of Shahr Barz were baptized, and that Nicetas stood as sponsor for them. The cruel policy which Shahr Barz adopted when he became king led to his murder, and with some trouble Heraclius brought it about that his son Isdigerd received the crown. Isdigerd was the last of the Sassanids.

CHAPTER IV

MONOTHELETISM

We have often had occasion to notice the heresies that pervaded and divided Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia. The heretics were far more numerous than the orthodox, for religion and nationality in general coincided. In Egypt, for example, there were about 30,000 Greek Melchites over against five or six million Coptic monophysites. Syria and Mesopotamia were divided between Nestorianism and Jacobitism, a sort of Neoseverianism, which had spread into Egypt and Ethiopia. And the religion of Armenia was purely and simply monophysitic.

Heraclius dreamed that it might be possible to accomplish what many Emperors before him had essayed in vain, and unite all these heretics with the orthodox Byzantine Church by a new formula more inclusive or more elastic.

A new formula presented itself opportunely, the doctrine of a single energy. It must not, however, be thought that it was discovered for this ecclesiastico-political purpose.¹ On the contrary, it was a natural development of the old christological controversies of the fifth century. Sergius had considered and made up his mind on the question before there was any thought of drawing profit from it in an irenic direction. It was a question, of course, for adherents of the council of Chalcedon, not for monophysites. The latter, holding a single nature, necessarily held a single energy and a single will. But it was not clear whether dyophysites should hold a divine and human energy as well as a divine and human nature. It might be questioned whether it was legitimate to ascribe a human energy and a human will to Christ, and the Ecumenical Councils had uttered no opinion on the subject. A decision in favour of monotheletism (as the new doctrine was called) would provide a common ground for monophysites and Chalcedonians to join hands. This fact was perhaps the doctrine's strongest condemnation if we assume that the monophysitic controversy was more than a verbal one, and that the Chalcedonians were right, whereas it was the doctrine's strongest confirmation if we believe that the two parties divided the truth or falsehood between them.

But while the monotheletic controversy was a natural offspring of the ancient conflicts of the fifth century, it must be admitted that the new doctrine would never have led to a conflict in the seventh century but for the irenic advantages which, it was hoped, might be extracted from it.

That Sergius initiated Heraclius in his new doctrine—it could not yet be called a heresy, as no decision of the Church had been pronounced—long before it began to have any political importance, is proved by a conversation which took place in 622 between Heraclius and Paul of Armenia, wherein the former asserted that the energy of Christ was single. It was probably at this time, when his attention was specially directed to Armenia, that it first occurred to Heraclius to make a political weapon of monotheletism and reconcile the monophysitic Church of Armenia with the orthodox Greek religion; and a synod which was held in the same year at Theodosiopolis, called the synod of Garin, has been rightly brought into connection with this scheme. I have used the convenient word monotheletism, but it should be noticed that in the early stage of the controversy monenergetic would be a more appropriate adjective than monotheletic, for the singleness of the energy, not the simplicity of the will, was the point at issue.

His military occupations did not prevent Heraclius from prosecuting this design; and we find that he issued a decree (before 626) to Arcadius, bishop of Cyprus, in which island there was a colony of Armenians, enjoining on him to teach the doctrine of "one hegumenic energy"; and perhaps the success of this attempt at unity on a small scale within the limits of an island encouraged him to apply afterwards the same balm to the wounds of the entire Empire. In 626, while he was in Lazica, he sounded Cyrus the bishop of Phasis, and, through the influence of Sergius the Patriarch, secured his co-operation.

But after the successful issue of his campaigns Heraclius could devote more assiduous attention to the question; and the problems connected with the administration of the recovered provinces of Syria and Egypt suggested that the monotheletic talisman might be used with salutary effect. And hence Greek historians speak as though the doctrine had first emerged in 629 at an interview which took place in that year at Hierapolis between the Emperor and Athanasius the Jacobite. An agreement was made between them; the Jacobites were to return to the Church on the basis of the new theory, and Athanasius was to be raised to the patriarchal chair of Antioch. In the following year Cyrus of Phasis was made Patriarch of Alexandria, and his first act was to win over the important sect of the Theodosians or Phthartolatrai.

So far the policy of unification was successful. Sergius the Patriarch of Constantinople, Athanasius the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Cyrus the monophysite Patriarch of Alexandria were unanimous in teaching “one theandric energy.”

But many orthodox Christians felt qualms of distrust touching this new panacea which had been evolved by Sergius and Heraclius. They did not feel certain of their new bedfellows—Jacobites and Theodosians and dwellers in Mesopotamia; they suspected that there was something unsound in the doctrine of the single energy. They found an able spokesman in a monk of Palestine named Sophronius, who was possessed of considerable dialectical ability and became the champion of dyotheletism, the doctrine of two wills. He soon became convinced that there was a touch of insincerity in the new movement, that there was at least a readiness to sacrifice complete sincerity to political expediency. This was indicated in the opinion expressed by the Patriarch of Alexandria that for the sake of ecclesiastical unity doctrinal expressions should be “economised,” that is, adapted to expediency. The influence of Sergius, however, kept Sophronius dumb for a year or two, but when he was appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem in 634—this appointment was a false step on the part of Heraclius—he refused to keep silence any longer and prepared to forge a thunderbolt. Apprised of this, the Patriarch of Constantinople determined to anticipate him and crush his opposition by the authority of the bishop of Rome. Sergius wrote an account of the controversy to Pope Honorius; and in this letter his position, which he wished the Pope to endorse, was, that the unity of the Church now restored should not be again endangered by any use of the expressions in dispute; that no person should speak of either two energies or one energy. This evasion of the question by Sergius had already been enjoined on Sophronius and Cyrus. The reply of Pope Honorius (635) not only endorsed the “just mean” of Sergius, but agreed with the doctrine of monotheletism, and this consenting of the Pope has given rise to much discussion. The most reasonable conclusion¹ is that Honorius, with an occidental distaste for dialectics, did not really apprehend the point at issue. It seemed to him a question of grammar rather than of theology. He uses the expression “one will,” and yet we need not regard him as a monothelete, for he places “one energy” and “two energies” on exactly the same footing; and the second letter that he wrote was practically orthodox. Nor, on the other hand, need we reject as not genuine the acts of the sixth Ecumenical Council which condemned Honorius; it was for the “imprudent economy of silence” that he was condemned.

In the meantime the epistola synodica of Sophronius appeared, demonstrating that the new doctrine was inconsistent with orthodoxy; but the object of the monotheletes was rather to hush up the controversy, which had already produced a desirable result, than to argue for their opinion. The Ecthesis, which was composed by Sergius, was promulgated by the Emperor in 638 (639), and may be looked upon as the official answer to Sophronius’ letter; it forbids all mention to be made of one energy or two energies, while it proclaims the doctrine of one will. Before the Ecthesis was published Sophronius had died, but he left his controversial zeal as a heritage to a certain Stephen, from whom he exacted a solemn oath that he would proceed to Rome and make war against the monotheletes to the death. The four eastern Patriarchs accepted the Ecthesis, but John IV, who became Pope in 640, condemned it; and thus the attempt at union in the East, a union unstable as water, led to a schism with the West like Zeno’s Henotikon in the fifth century. What remains of the history of monotheletism belongs to a future chapter.

In the eleventh indiction, 638, the year of the publication of the Ecthesis, the Patriarch Sergius died, and was succeeded by Pyrrhus, also a monothelete, and a most intimate friend of the Emperor. ■

CHAPTER V

LITERATURE IN THE REIGN OF HERACLIUS

The works of two authors of this age, a prose-writer and a verse-writer, have come down to us. The Egyptian Theophylactus Simocatta composed a history of the reign of Maurice and a work on natural history; while George of Pisidia celebrated the exploits of Heraclius in verse. Both the verse-writer and the prose-writer are characterised by a painful attention to style and an affected use of far-fetched expressions; in fact they were both, as we say now, euphuists. The development of euphuism at this period is highly remarkable; we can see traces of it in Agathias and other historical writers, but in the works of Theophylactus bombast, in all its frigidity, was carried to an unprecedented extreme.

The *Ecumenical History*—such is the pretentious title— opens with a dialogue between the queen Philosophy and her daughter History, written in a style which the author fondly imagines to be poetical Attic.

Philosophy promises to listen to the siren songs of History, and, like the hero of Ithaca, not to stuff her ears. They both rejoice that the pollution (of Phocas) has been driven from the palace by the might of the "Heraclidae," and that literature is able to revive. History attributes the new movement especially to the Patriarch Sergius, "the great high priest and president of the world." "He is my oldest friend," replies Philosophy, "and my dearest treasure." "He," says History, "breathed in me the breath of life, lifting me from the tomb of my illiterate plight as though he raised an Alcestis with the strength of a delivering Heracles. And he generously adopted me and clothed me with bright apparel and adorned me with a golden chain." Here we catch a glimpse of Sergius as the centre and patron of a literary revival; and this is confirmed by all that we hear of him in the poems of his friend George the Pisidian.

The opening sentences of the funeral oration which Theophylactus pronounced over the Emperor Maurice eight years after his death (610 AD.) are preserved, and are a curious specimen of his extraordinary style -

"Let theatre and platform and freedom of speech mourn with me today; but let tragedy and tear keep holiday. Let dirge dance and leap in delight, being worshipped and honoured by a feast of such dejection. Let words shear themselves of sound, and the Muses shear themselves of fair speech, and Athens put off her white cloak. For the virtues are widowed, and seek for their charioteer, some violent envy having broken his wheel. Spectators, would that ye had not been -witnesses of these evils. The subject is an Iliad of evils; the Furies are the chorus of my discourse ; and the stage of my drama is a conspicuous tomb."

When the Persian war came to an end in 591, Maurice transported the military forces from Asia to Europe to act against the Avars. The historian describes this transaction as follows: "And so, now that day smiled upon the affairs in the East, and made not her progress mythically, in Homeric fashion, from a barbaric couch, but refused to be called 'rosy fingered', inasmuch as their sword is not crimsoned with blood, the Emperor transfers the forces to Europe." It is hardly credible that a sane man should use such language; and most pages of the History teem with similar passages. When a general changes his mind, he is said to "obelise" his first plan and "give the prize of victory to his second thoughts."

Four important works of George of Pisidia remain, and of these three celebrate directly the achievements of Heraclius. The *Persian Expedition*, in three acroamata or cantos, comes first, composed after the first campaign of Asia Minor, in 623. The Avaric War tells how the combined forces of Avars, Bulgarians, Slaves, and Huns, in league with the Persians, were driven back from the imperial city. The two cantos of the *Heracliad* celebrate the final triumph of Heraclius and the fall of Chosroes—the fall of one whereby all were saved. "Where now is the babble of the ever-erring magi?" George looked on the Persian war as a crusade, and on Heraclius as the champion of Christendom. This note dominates in his compositions; the *Heracliad* open with an invocation to the Trinity. His other work was the *Hexaemeron*, or poem of the six days of the Creation; it suggested too an allegorical application to the six campaigns of Heraclius. Written at the suggestion of the Patriarch Sergius and dedicated to him, it was intended to refute pagans and philosophers, not living philosophers, for there were none, but Aristotle and Plato, Porphyrius and Proclus. Euclid is confounded by the bee and Orpheus by the swan; Proclus are bidden to hold their peace and let the rustics speak—

Sigosi prokli ke kalosi agrote.

As in the prose of Theophylactus, we are often offended by bombast and affected expressions in the verses of the Pisidian, but the poet never goes so far as the historian. It seems probable that he was never indifferent to the strict laws of quantity observed by ancient writers of iambic verse; and though the rule of the Cretic ending, which Porson rediscovered, was not known to him, he adopted a harder canon and allowed only barytone words to end his lines.

CHAOTER VI

DISMEMBERMENT OF THE EMPIRE BY THE SARACENS

The Roman Empire was delivered for ever from the Persian foe, but, like a ship that "having 'scaped a tempest is straightway-calmed and boarded with a pirate," it was almost immediately-assailed by a new and more deadly adversary, who displayed the resistless energy and was animated with the uncompromising spirit of a religious enthusiasm.

When Mohammed appeared, Arabia was in a state of decline. The religion of its inhabitants, not very sublime originally—a sort of Sabaeism derived from Chaldea—had degenerated into superstition, which attached to every object in nature maleficent and beneficent deities or *ginns*; and superstition was naturally accompanied by religious indifference. "The Arab of Mohammed's time was what the Bedouin of today is, indifferent to religion itself," though observing a few rites and muttering a few phrases. Many Jews and Christians resided in Arabia; there was a Christian bishopric in Yemen; and thus the monotheistic ideas of those creeds were not unfamiliar to the Arabs, among whom arose a monotheistic sect called the Hanifs. But the Hanifs had no

inspiration; Judaism was too worn a thing to attract; while Greek Christianity, with its metaphysical subtlety, could not take hold of the Semitic mind. A new revelation was required; and there was a wide field for social and moral reform, which a new religion would naturally cover; there was the possibility of higher civilisation and of a more advanced form of political existence. For the ordinary occupations of the Arab were murder and highway robbery, and the only checks on the shedding of blood were the fear of certain revenge and the institution of the sacred months, which for a short period of the year secured the sanctity of human life. It was usual to bury alive superfluous female children, and one of the reforms of Mohammed was the abolition of this custom. These habits, which transgressed the first conditions of a stable society, rendered political union impossible; and the feeling of devotion to the tribe, which was strongly developed in the Arab—and necessarily developed, for without it life in Arabia would have been impossible—tended in the same direction. Their pride in birth, the freedom of their life, their passion for poetry, lend a sort of romantic nobility to the children of Hagar, as they were called by the Greeks; but enough has been said to show that there was another and dark side to the picture.

Mohammed the Prophet has been looked upon by some as a hero, by others as literally the emissary of the devil; and less extreme views fall again into the two classes of those who think, like Sprenger, that with the prophet's burning enthusiasm was combined an element of vulgar cunning, and those who, without admiring him, take a more lenient view of his character, as conditioned by a quasi-hysterical organism. His peculiar sensibility to physical pain, his tendency to fall into profound fits of melancholy indicate the frame, bodily and mental, of one who is always wandering on the borderland between illusion and reality; and "his first revelations," says Palmer, "were the almost natural outcome of his mode of life and habit of thought, and especially of his physical constitution." The significance of his attachment to *Hadiyah*, the widow whom he married, consisted in her ability to charm those demons of unrest and melancholy which afflict too sensitive natures.

Widely as Mohammed is separated from the prophets of the Old Testament, there is a common element which unites the Hebrew and the Arab and separates them from all Aryan thinkers. An incapacity for consecutive thinking, a directness which disdains process, a love of antitheses which never seeks contentment in a synthesis, a vagueness which delights to lose itself in metaphor, a freedom which will not be bound in the close but fruitful matrices of logic and which consequently becomes as monotonous as the reaches of the desert in which it was developed,—all these kindred features belong to both Mohammed and the Hebrew prophets; all of them were alien and would have been contemptible to the countrymen of Socrates and Plato. Nor were the Semites lovers of the beautiful, in the true sense, any more than they were philosophers. They were keenly susceptible to grandeur and sublimity and all that suggests the immense or the illimitable, but they were strangers to the beautiful; their love for beauty in women did not advance beyond the limits of the sensual. Their admiration for objects of art or beautiful girls is always linked somehow with luxury or sensuality.

The "Chapter of Unity" in the Koran resumes the central point of the new religion.

"In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
Say, 'He is God alone I
God the eternal!
He begets not and is not begotten!
Nor is there like unto him any one! "

The doctrine of pure monotheism was Mohammed's great inspiration. To profess belief in God and in Mohammed as his prophet was the first of the five practical duties of a Mussulman. It is not necessary to go here into further details concerning the Islamitic creed; but I must not omit to remind the reader that Mohammed brought it on several sides into historical connection with the past. He did not utterly break with the pre-existing cult of Arabia, for he made the black stone in the wall of the Kaabah at Mecca the most precious object of external veneration to his followers. This stone, which is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, was originally a white stone in paradise, but it was "blackened by the kisses of sinful but believing lips." Nor did Mohammed cease to believe in genii (*ginns*); he thought that he himself was sent as an apostle to genii as well as to men. He also connected his religion with both Judaism and Christianity, accepting their scriptures and their prophets. He used at first to look on Jerusalem as the holy city and pray with his face turned towards it; and it was not till the Jews had rejected him at Medina that he turned his face to Mecca. He regarded Christ as his own predecessor; and a prophecy of the coming of Mohammed, involving a slight change in reading and a hideous change in sense, was found in that verse of John which promises the coming of a comforter.

The Koran, we are told by a competent authority, derived much of its power, impressiveness, and popularity, less from the original sayings of Mohammed than from the mode in which it introduced "popular sayings, choice pieces of eloquence, and favourite legends current among the tribes for ages before his time." It is important to observe these links which bound Mohammed with the past. He had really no original doctrine; he only taught an old doctrine, of which his countrymen were losing sight, in a new and impressive manner, at the right moment and in the right way. His originality lay in the identification of himself with his doctrine, which went so far that it seemed often mere madness or mere imposture. He contrived to wrap his own personality and his revelation in an atmosphere of magnetic enthusiasm, which is called inspiration.

In 628 Mohammed took the first step in the direction of spreading his religion beyond the confines of Arabia. He wrote letters to the Emperor Heraclius, to the king of Persia, and to the king of Abyssinia (Nuggasi), exhorting them to embrace the faith of Islam.

The king of Abyssinia accepted the invitation in an enthusiastic and humble letter. Chosroes, transported with fury, characteristically ordered the governor of Yemen to send him the insolent Arab in chains. Heraclius

said neither no nor yes, but sent presents to Mohammed in acknowledgment of his communication. Arab writers boast that he was really converted to Islamism; Greek writers affirm that Mohammed came and did homage to him. After this Mohammed entered into correspondence with Mukaukas, the Coptic governor of Egypt, who, though he did not definitely profess belief in the new religion, treated the prophet with profound respect, and sent him among other suitable presents two Egyptian maidens. The first collision between the Romans and the Moslem was at Muta, near the Dead Sea, in 629. The result was a Cadmean victory for the latter, who were considerably inferior in point of numbers; and Khalid, "the Sword of God," won his first laurels in this battle. It was in the following year that Mohammed entered Mecca in triumph and made the Kaabah the central shrine of Islamism. Two years later he died (8th June 632), and for a moment the stability of his work seemed precarious. The Arab tribes fell away; Al Mundar, king of Bahrein, on the west coast of the Persian Gulf, revolted. Abu Bekr, who, along with Omar, had supplemented by practical wisdom the visionary nature of the prophet, was elected the first caliph (successor). He saw that the salvation of the cause must be wrought, not by conflicts in Arabia, but by foreign conquest; he apprehended that the prophet must look for honour, not in his own country or in peace, but abroad and by the sword. Accordingly preparations were made for war against both the Persians and the Bomans; and while Khalid, son of Welid, was sent against Irak, four generals were commissioned to attack Syria.

The programme of these enthusiasts, inspired with greed and faith, lusting equally after proselytes and riches, was characteristically concise and direct. Three alternatives were offered to the foe—the Koran, tribute, or the sword. Heraclius, who had established his headquarters at Edessa, had made no adequate preparations to oppose them. He foolishly trusted that the Saracens of the deserts which separate Syria from Arabia would prove a sufficient barrier against the people of the south, whose formidable character he seems to have insufficiently realised. But those Saracens soon showed that they were unwilling to resist the invaders of their own race, and even Roman governors proved recusants to their religion and country. A small army under the general Sergius was defeated, and the Arabs captured Bostrai and Gaza.

One who is not an orientalist and cannot consult the Arabic authorities at first hand will be inclined to conclude that it is hardly safe to venture on any but the shortest and barest account of the conquest of Syria. The interesting and romantic details which Ockley took from the dubious Al Wakidi, and which Gibbon took from Ockley, must probably for the most part be relegated to the same room as the story of Regulus. The difficulty of critically testing materials distorted by oriental fancy, Mohammedan orthodoxy, and political party spirit was fully felt by Weil, whom I have followed, while I would refer the reader who wishes for a mixture of legend and history to the pleasant pages of Ockley.

The four generals to whom Abu Bekr had entrusted the war against the Christians were Abu Ubeida, Schurahbil, Amru, and Yezid. It was intended that each should attack a separate part of the Syrian provinces, but the serious resistance which was encountered made a combination of forces necessary, and the caliph therefore recalled Khalid from southern Mesopotamia, where he had enjoyed a career of uninterrupted success. It appears that shortly before the arrival of Khalid a battle was fought at Adjnadein, in which the Saracens were victorious (30th July 634), but it is not clear whether this was the battle in which Theodore, the Emperor's brother, commanded the defeated side. The decisive battle was fought soon afterwards (end of August) on the banks of the Yermuk, or Hieromax, which flows into the Lake of Tiberias.⁶ The Roman generals were a Persian named Baanes, but called by Arabic authorities Vartan, and Theodore Trithyrius, the imperial treasurer, who is to be distinguished from the Emperor's brother of the same name. Khalid on this occasion was the life and soul of the Saracens; he allayed the discords of the commanders and won a complete victory.

Great preparations had been made by the Romans, and 60,000 light-armed troops of the Philhellene Arabs of Ghassan reinforced the army of Baanes. It is difficult to harmonise the accounts of this fiercely fought battle, and we cannot but see that the chaff of legend is mixed with the grain of history, as in the "Homeric" siege of Damascus. The storm of sand, for example, which blinded the Persians at Cadesia, has been transferred in one narrative to the banks of the Yermuk. Abu Ubeida yielded to his more martial captain Khalid the chief command in the action, and contented himself with the humble and useful post of standing in the rear and driving forward the fugitives. The Arabs were fortified for their toil by the concise and vivid words, "Paradise is before you, behind you the devil and the fire of hell." In the engagement we can detect that the Moslem were again and again compelled to retreat, and were exposed to terrible showers from the bows of Armenian archers. For a long time the result wavered, and the balance of Mars was equal. It was perhaps decided by a curious ambush devised by the Arabs, who placed around the tents of their camp camels with their feet bound together. The Romans did not hesitate to attack the camp, and a large company of concealed foes cut them to pieces or put them to flight. A general rout ensued, and many of the Romans were drowned.

The result of this battle decided the fate of Damascus, the stronghold of southern Syria. The small army that hastened to its relief was met and vanquished, and in 635 the city surrendered.

It is not a little surprising how completely this first expedition of the Saracens paralysed an Emperor who had deservedly won a high military reputation. It did not occur to him to lead his army in person, and when we combine this fact with the utter physical prostration and mental derangement from which he suffered in the following year, we cannot avoid the conclusion that his health was already rapidly failing. It is to be further observed that Martina, his constant companion, who possessed the same sort of influence over him that Schirin had possessed over Chosroes, aware of her husband's declining health, was in all probability taking measures to secure her own interests in the case of his possibly approaching decease. The offspring of the intrigues of an ambitious queen is suspicion, distrust, and division; and not only does the conduct of Martina after her husband's death compel us to entertain the idea that she was an intriguer while he lived, but direct indications of division and distrust in the imperial family are preserved. The relations of an Emperor are often obstacles to the designs of his consort; and Theodore and Martina, though uncle and niece, were antagonists. Accordingly we find that Theodore's defeat at Adjnadein or Gabatha was made a pretext against him; Heraclius sent him bound as a prisoner to Constantinople, and instructed Constantine to make his disgrace public and keep him in strict

confinement. We can hardly avoid suspecting that the disgrace of Theodore was due to the enmity of Martina, as we hear that he was one of those who condemned her marriage.

After the capture of Damascus the invaders appear to have remained quiet for almost the space of a year, but at the end of 635 or the beginning of 636 the high roofs of Emesa"— *Emesae, fastigia celsa*—or Hims, as it was called by the Arabians, and the city of Heliopolis or Baalbec were taken. Thereupon Heraclius, who was at Edessa or Antioch, forgetful of his ancient valour, despaired of saving the provinces of Syria, and determined to save his own person by flight to Constantinople, even as he had fled on another occasion many years before at Selymbria. He was able, notwithstanding the proximity of the Saracens, to hurry to Jerusalem and seize the cross, which he was resolved to prevent from falling again into the hands of unbelievers. He bade farewell to Syria, and when he arrived at Chalcedon he established his residence in Hieria, his favourite palace, and was seized there by a sort of hydrophobia. He was afraid to go on board a ship for even such a short voyage as the crossing of the Bosphorus, and used to send his sons to represent their father at public ceremonies in the capital. At length some one proposed to make a wide bridge of boats, and by covering it with earth, and hedging it with green branches, lend it the aspect of a hedged lane on dry land. Over such a bridge the Emperor consented to ride. The reception of the cross at St. Sophia was a rite of sad solemnity, contrasting doubtless in the minds of spectators with the glory of its reception six years before.

During these days there was a usurper in Syria, and there were conspiracies in Constantinople. Baanes the Persian, Heraclius' general, took advantage of the Emperor's withdrawal, which he might represent as a shameful desertion, to proclaim himself Augustus; but, under the circumstances, the matter was not of much importance. In the conspiracies the Emperor's love-child Athalaric and his nephew Theodore were the chief offenders; they were both banished to islands.

Abu Behr had died just before the battle of Yermuk was fought, and had been succeeded by the great and austere Omar, for whom the attractions of the future life did not consist in its licensed sensuality. He was sterner than Abu Bekr, and his drastic management soon restored the discipline of the army, which had degenerated after the capture of Damascus. The turbulent and ruthless Khalid was deposed from the chief command and made the lieutenant of Abu Ubeida.

The captures of Emesa and Heliopolis were soon followed by the fall of Tiberias, of Chalcis, of Beroea, of Epiphania, and of Larissa. Edessa agreed to pay tribute; Antioch fell, probably by treachery, for so much credit I am inclined to give to the story of Yukinna, the typical magariser. There can be no doubt that the rapid conquest of Syria was facilitated by the apostasy of Christians, as well as by the treachery of Jews; it was expected that the yoke of the Arab might prove lighter than the yoke of the Roman; and there was certainly no lack of magarisers. The very name magarise, "to embrace Islam," is a Syriac form which passed into Greek, and proves the frequency of apostasy to Mohammedanism in that country.

The chronological order of the capture of these towns is uncertain, but there is little doubt that after a siege of two years Jerusalem was compelled to surrender in 637. The inhabitants refused, however, to yield to any general save Omar himself.

Accordingly the Caliph Omar came from Arabia to take formal possession of the Holy City, and men wondered at his austere surroundings and his rough dress, which was simple even to ferocity, a much worn and much torn skin. The Patriarch Sophronius, the combatant against monotheletism, acted as a lugubrious guide through the holy sights of the city, and with difficulty persuaded the caliph to array himself in more decent costume to enter the precincts of the church of the Resurrection. The sight of Omar kneeling at the shrine drew from the bishop the exclamation, uttered in Greek, "The abomination of desolation which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, is in the holy place." A mosque was erected on the site of Solomon's temple, but the Christians were tolerated as subjects of the caliph, on condition that they made no attempt to proselytise the disciples of Mohammed, and paid a tribute.

Heraclius made a last desperate attempt to recover the lost provinces in 638. He sent his son Constantine to Syria, and an army was collected at Diarbekr or Amida, which proceeded to besiege Emesa. Khalid hastened from the north, Abu Ubeida from the south, to relieve it, and a battle was fought in the neighbourhood which decided that Syria was to remain in the hands of the Mohammedans until three centuries hence the valour of imperial successors of Heraclius should set up a Christian standard once more in Syrian provinces. In 638 Muavia was appointed emir of all the Saracen empire from Egypt to the Euphrates. Once Syria was conquered, the Roman possessions in Mesopotamia were an easy prey to the Saracens. Edessa, Constantina, and Daras were taken in 639, and the reduction of these strong places meant the conquest of Mesopotamia.

Meanwhile the Persian kingdom had been overthrown in the great battle of Cadesia (636). That field was the scene of struggles which lasted four days, but ultimately the elements intervened, and a storm of sand contributed to the victory of Saïd (Sa'ad). Some months later the conqueror entered Ctesiphon, and divided its riches and its marvels. Among the treasures found in the palace Takht-i-Khosru may be mentioned the golden horse, the silver camel with the golden foal, and the immense carpet of white brocade "with a border worked in precious stones of various hues to represent a garden of all kinds of beautiful flowers." Sixty thousand soldiers received about £312 apiece. The battle of Yalulah, fought early in 637, finished the work of Cadesia, and by the end of that year all the land west of Mount Zagrus from Nineveh to Susa was Arabian. The last king, Isdigerd, had sought a refuge in distant mountain fastnesses, and three years later he made a forlorn attempt to recover his kingdom. But the battle of Nehavend, "the victory of victories" (Fattah-hul-Futtuh), stamped out for ever the dynasty of the Sassanids, which had lasted somewhat more than four hundred years (226-641).

The Arab conquest of Persia was marked by the foundation of Kufa on the ruins of Ctesiphon, and the erection of the city of Bussora, or Bassra, on "the river of the Arabs," as was called the united stream of the Euphrates and Tigris. Bussora became soon a great mercantile centre.

The Conquest of Egypt by Amru.—The general Amru, who is said to have had previous acquaintance with Egypt, and was doubtless aware of the internal dissensions which prevailed in that land, obtained with difficulty the permission of the caliph to invade it in 639 or 640. If a foreign invader was welcome to some in Syria, still more was he welcome in Egypt. The native Copts, who were Jacobites, hated the Greeks, who were Melchites, and this element in the situation was made use of by Amru to effect his conquest.

The conquest of Egypt is somewhat clearer in detail than the conquest of Syria. Perenum or Farma was taken first, with the help of the Copts; the invader was next opposed at Bilbeis and at Umm Danin by Greek forces, and, having overcome in two battles, he laid siege to Babylon. Here he waited for reinforcements from Omar, who sent him 12,000 men, and after a siege of some months Babylon fell. The capture of this city was as decisive for the fate of Egypt as the capture of Damascus had been for the fate of Syria. It is probable that a great many Syrians were influenced by the latter event to desert the imperial cause; it is certain that the success of Amru at Babylon decided Mukaukas, the Coptic governor, to yield to the Arabs, and exchange the yoke of Constantinople for the yoke of Mecca. The simple life of the Arabs, their religious enthusiasm, and their contempt for death inspired him with reverence; he did not hesitate to make peace, and agree, on behalf of the Copts, to pay a moderate tribute.

The impression made upon him by the followers of Mohammed was thus described by Mukaukas when the Emperor Heraclius upbraided him for submitting to the invader: "It is true," he said, "that the enemy are not nearly so numerous as we, but one Mussulman is equivalent to a hundred of our men. Of the enjoyments of the earth they desire only simple clothing and simple food, and yearn for the death of martyrs because it leads them to paradise; while we cling to life and its joys, and fear death." This illustrates the spirit which enabled the Arabians to carry all before them in the first years of their new greatness; the joys of paradise were before their eyes as they fought. Al Wakidi gave poetical expression to this spirit in the words which he placed in the mouth of a youth fighting under the walls of Emesa: "Methinks I see the black-eyed girls looking upon me; one of whom, should she appear in this world, all mankind would die for love of her. And I see in the hand of one of them an handkerchief of green silk and a cap of precious stones, and she beckons me and calls out, Come hither quickly, for I love thee."

From Memphis and Babylon the Greeks retired to Alexandria, fighting as they went. Four places can be distinguished at each of which a stand was made, and at some of these stages more battles than one were fought, in which the Arabs were usually victorious. At length Alexandria was reached. The great Greek city which supplied New Rome with corn might perhaps have been saved and formed the basis for the recovery of Egypt if Heraclius had lived longer. But as he was making preparations to send an armament for its defence he died of a painful disease, which had been long afflicting him (10th February 641), and the intrigues and disturbances which ensued upon his death absorbed the attention of Constantinople. No help was sent to Alexandria; on the contrary, it even seems that troops were withdrawn from it, for selfish purposes, by one of the opposing parties in the capital. The inhabitants ultimately abandoned all thoughts of defence; those who possessed property left the city by sea, carrying off their possessions; and in December 641, after a siege of fourteen months, Amru made his entry.

Egypt was now a possession of the Saracens; and, with the exception of Cyprus, the Roman Empire no longer held any territory in the East south of the Taurus mountains. Omar would not permit Amru to make Alexandria the capital of the new province; it was too far from Medina, and the land about Misr (Babylon) was more fertile. Accordingly a new city was founded on the spot where Amru had encamped when he was besieging Babylon, and was hence called Fostat, "the Tent"; but the town afterwards assumed a more ambitious name and became Cairo, "the City of Victory," and the mosque of Amru commemorates to this day the Saracen conquest of Egypt. To the Egyptian population, whose squalor formed a vivid contrast to the splendour and luxury of Alexandria, the change of masters did not seriously matter. The cultivation of the soil was left in their hands; Egypt was now to be a granary for the Arabs, as it had been formerly a granary for the Romans. The old canal which connected the Nile with the Red Sea was opened up. "The channel followed the most eastern branch of the river as far north as Bilbeis, then turned to the right through the vale of Tumlat, and, striking the salt lakes near Timseh, so reached the Red Sea by what is now the lower portion of the Suez Canal".

I may quote part of a letter which the Caliph Omar wrote to the conqueror of Egypt, to illustrate the government of the first caliph and especially the character of Omar. One might imagine that he would have shown respect and honour to the general who had won such an important land for Islam, but his words express the sternness of an austere deity, who is not satisfied with works and reaps where he has not sown:—

"I have reflected on you and your condition; you are in a great and excellent land, whose inhabitants God blesses by number and might, by land and sea—a land which even the Pharaohs, in spite of their unbelief, brought by useful works into a flourishing condition. I am therefore extremely surprised, that it does not bring in half of what it brought in formerly, although this decrease cannot be excused by famine or a bad year. You wrote to me before of many imposts—which you laid on the land. I expected they would pour in; but instead I receive excuses, which do not please me. I shall not accept a whit less than the former revenue."

The preceding account of the Saracen conquests may appear a dry sketch, because it is barren in details. But this is unavoidable. For in the story of the conquest of Syria legend is so mingled with history, that if we once attempt to choose among the details, which come mainly from oriental sources, we can never be sure with which element we are dealing. No compromise is possible between Weil and Ockley. Again, it may seem to some that the conquest of Syria demands as a sort of due, even in a Roman History, a long disquisition on the Saracens, an elaborate biography of Mohammed, and a collection of anecdotes to illustrate the characters of the caliphs and their emirs. But here, as in the case of the Lombards and the Franks, where the temptation to write episodes is strong, I have diligently avoided Herodotean digressions.

Before we conclude this chapter we must bid a more solemn farewell to Heraclius, whose death has been already casually mentioned. On the 11th of February 641 the saviour of New Rome was laid beside Constantine, her founder, and Justinian, who had made her glorious, in the church of the Holy Apostles, which Constantine's

mother had built. For three days the body was exposed to view in an open coffin, watched over by eunuchs, in accordance with the wishes of the dead Emperor.

Heraclius is one of those unfortunate heroes who have outlived their glory, and have thereby won the sympathy as well as the admiration of posterity. Alexander the Great died in the fulness of his prosperity; Constantine the Great did not experience the mortification of seeing his work undone; Justinian passed away before his successes in Italy were half reversed by the Lombard invaders and before his system collapsed. But the Emperor who saved the inheritance of Rome at the time of sorest need, the warrior who, like Alexander, overthrew a Persian sovereign, the champion who maintained the cause of Hellenism as well as the cause of Christendom, was destined to live too long. He was to live to see the provinces which he had won back from the fire-worshipper fall a prey to the Semitic unbeliever; he was to live to behold the Holy City in the power of a more dreadful foe than the Persian; he was to live to hear a new word of more ominous sound than the old and familiar "Medism." And the woes of his latter years were aggravated by a hideous disease. But his name was not forgotten; like Alexander the Great, he passed into medieval legend.

CHAPTER VII

THE SLAVONIC SETTLEMENTS IN ILLYRICUM AND THRACE

In the first half of the seventh century important Slavonic migrations took place which affected the future of the Haemus peninsula. The details and the dates of these movements are obscure, but the general outline is sufficiently clear.

In the year 610 we hear of Bavarians in conflict with Slavs (Slovenes) on the upper Drave, and we find the latter taking up a permanent abode in the district of Carniola or Krain. At the same time, farther south, the settlements of the Slovenes in Illyricum, Macedonia, and Moesia were increasing, so that there was a considerable Slovene population extending from the frontiers of Bavaria almost to the Aegean. But this homogeneous population was not destined to become welded together and form one nationality; for a few years later—at what moment cannot exactly be determined, but certainly during the reign of Heraclius—two other peoples, Slavonic but not Slovenic,³ known as the Croates and the Serbs, pressed into the lands of Upper Moesia, Lower Pannonia, and Dalmatia, which they permanently occupied, thereby cutting off for ever the Slovenes of Carniola and Carinthia from the Slovenes of Macedonia and Lower Moesia. The lot of the north-western Slovenes was to be linked with that of the Franks and the Western Empire; while their south-eastern brethren were to be, closely connected with the Eastern Empire.

Dümmler supposes that the Croates and Serbs were tribes under Avaric suzerainty, and that with the consent of their lords they crossed the Danube to take possession of Dalmatia and Upper Moesia, which the Slovenes had laid waste. The fact that Pope John IV, a Dalmatian by birth, sent an abbot to Istria and Dalmatia, between 640 and 642 AD., to collect Christian relics and ransom Christian prisoners from the heathen, proves that the newcomers occupied those provinces in the reign of Heraclius. In later years, when the power of the Avars had passed away and the Serbs and Croatians had been converted to Christianity and entered into connection with Byzantium, the idea arose that they had been originally invited to settle in their homes by the Emperor Heraclius, and this idea, accepted and echoed by the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenetos, has been generally received.

I have been speaking of the Croatians as an unequivocally Slavonic people, and this is the generally received doctrine. I believe, however, that it is not a strictly correct view. Before the tenth century the legend had arisen that the Croatians came to their new abodes from the land of White Croatia under the leadership of five brothers, Klukas, Lobel, Cosentzes, Muchlo, Chrobotos, and two sisters, Buga and Tuga. This Croatian legend has a strong family resemblance to the Bulgarian legend of Krobot (or Kubrat) and his five sons, which will be related in another chapter; and I think we can hardly hesitate to suppose that Krobot and Chrobotos are the same prehistorical hero of the Hunnic nation to which the various closely related tribes of the Bulgarians, Cotrigurs, and Ono-gundurs belonged. If this be a true view, the name *Croatia*, is not Slavonic, and, as a matter of fact, no probable Slavonic explanation of it has ever been suggested. On the other hand, the Hunnic or Bulgaric name leads us to the interesting conclusion that the establishment of the Croatian Slaves as an independent state in Dalmatia was due to the same conditions that established the kingdom of the Bulgarian Slaves in Moesia. The Slaves of Croatia were clearly conquered by a Bulgarian people, just as the Slaves of Moesia were conquered by a Bulgarian people. But when and where the former conquest took place cannot be determined. It does not seem probable that Hunnic Croatians suddenly entered Dalmatia in the seventh century and conquered the Slaves who had been forming settlements there for the past hundred years. Some definite record of such an event would have been preserved, and there would have been most certainly a Croatian kingdom ruled by sovereigns of Hunnic names, instead of a number of practically independent Zupans. We must therefore suppose that Dalmatia was invaded in the reign of Heraclius, not by Croatian Huns, but by Croatian Slaves, that is to say, Slaves who had been conquered many years before in some country north of the Danube by Bulgarians, and had already absorbed

the individuality of their conquerors. Turanian Chrobat or Krobat was associated in the legend with Slavonic names, *Buga* and *Tuga*, Weal and Woe. I may add that this theory is supported by the non-Slavonic name of the Croatian governor, Boanos, which strongly reminds us of the Avar Baian, and of Baian or Batbaian, who in Bulgarian legend was one of the sons of Krobat.

The invasion of Croats and Serbs caused a general flight coastwards among the Roman inhabitants of Dalmatia, and new towns were founded on islands and promontories, just as Venice is said to have been founded by fugitives from the Huns and as Monembasia was probably founded in the Peloponnesus by fugitives from the Slaves. The inhabitants of the ancient Tragurium (Trail) withdrew to the opposite island of Bua; Rausium, or Ragusa, was founded by the citizens who fled from the old Greek colony of Epidaurus; and the town of Cattaro (Dekatera) had a similar origin. Salona, the home of Diocletian in his last years, did not escape destruction, and some of its inhabitants founded the town of Spalato, or Spalatro, around the palace of Diocletian, from which it derived its name. Is it fanciful to suppose that, when the people of Salona fled from their city at the approach of the invaders, they made for the Emperor's palace, and that some cried in Greek, 's palation (that is, "to the palace!"), and that hence the name Spalation, which became Spalato, was given to the new town? Further north, in the district of Liburnia, the city of Jadera (Zara) defied the Slave, and four islands opposite the mainland—Veglia, Arbe, Cherso, and Lussin, of which the two latter together are called by one name, Opsara—also remained under the supremacy of the Empire. The inhabitants of these cities and islands were called *Romanoi* by the Greeks, and retained the Latin language. A Byzantine strategos, in whose hands military and civil powers were combined, resided at Zara, and it may be conjectured that he was responsible to the exarch of Ravenna. The payment of a certain tribute and the contribution of ships and sailors for service in the Adriatic were practically the only link of connection that bound these dependencies with the Empire.

The kingdom of the Croats was probably much larger from the seventh to the ninth century than in later times; for at first it seems to have included Bosnia, which was afterwards lost to the Serbs. Croatia was divided into four zupes, governed by independent princes called Zupans. There was one great Zupan, but his was merely a titular greatness, which, however, afterwards developed into real monarchical power under the external influence of other monarchical constitutions.¹

South of the Croats, who had occupied northern Dalmatia as far as the river Cettina, were the four races of maritime Serbians. The Narentanes, who became renowned as pirates, dwelled between the Cettina and the Narenta, and for many generations, living amid inaccessible rocks, resisted the influences of Christianity, whence they were called by their Roman neighbours Pagans, a word which a Greek writer of the tenth century supposed to be Slavonic and translated "unbaptized." The district between the river Narenta and the town of Ragusa was occupied by the Zachlums, an important tribe; south of whom dwelled the less considerable Travouni between Ragusa and Cattaro; and the Dukljani between Cattaro and Antivari, in the district corresponding to modern Montenegro.

We seldom meet with the Romans of Dalmatia and their Slavonic neighbours in the general current of Roman history during the seventh and eighth centuries. We may conclude that as the power of the Avars decreased, the power of the Slaves increased; and that when Avaric influence had quite passed away, the Slaves entered into peaceful relations with the Emperor of Constantinople before the end of the seventh century, perhaps in the year 678, when all the powers of the West vied in establishing friendly relations with Constantine IV. Soon afterwards they were converted to Christianity.

We may now turn from the south-western Slaves, who were destined to remain free from Turanian influence, to the southeastern Slaves, who were soon to pass under a Turanian yoke. The statement of Constantine Porphyrogenetos that Heraclius settled the Slaves in Thrace and Macedonia cannot be accepted without reservation. We have seen how during the last thirty years of the sixth century Thrace and Illyricum were receiving a considerable Slavonic population; the invaders took up their abode in the land, and lived half as peasants half as freebooters. During this time the valiant and experienced Priscus was at the head of a Roman army in those provinces, and could to a certain extent keep the Slaves in check and prevent the land from being deluged with the strangers. But during the reigns of Phocas and Heraclius the political anarchy and the pressing difficulties of the Persian war rendered the government unable to extend its protection to the Illyrian and Thracian provinces; they were left to shift for themselves. The large fortified towns, Thessalonica, Hadrianople, or Marcianopolis, were able to defy the Avar and the Slave, or to purchase exemption from their hostilities; but there were no forces to hinder the occupation of the land. When the great Scythian destroyer marched against the city of Constantine in 626, to capture it in conjunction with the Persian, it must have been through an almost Slavonic land that his way lay. The connection then of Heraclius with these Slavonic settlers, which had been somehow handed down to the imperial antiquarian, probably consisted in arranging a "mode of living" with them. Heraclius doubtless made compacts with the chiefs of their tribes—even as Constantine and Aetius made compacts with Visigoths and Vandals, and Zeno with the Ostrogoths—that they should inhabit certain limited territories. It cannot be doubted that Heraclius, after his Persian victories, directed his attention to the condition of the Haemus countries, which sorely needed succour after a long neglect; but for us their history is buried in obscurity during this period. At the same time the decline of the Avar monarchy, which set in soon after the failure of the chagan at Constantinople, influenced the political situation, and a general revolt of the subject Slaves and Bulgarians, which drove the Avars westward, may have been attended with new migrations to the lands south of the Danube.

Regions of Lower Moesia and the lands of Macedonia about Thessalonica seem to have been the two chief Slavonic districts, or, as we may call them, the Sclavinias. The action of Heraclius doubtless consisted in recognising these settlements as dependencies on the Empire. Before we reach the end of the seventh century we shall hear of the "seven Slavonic tribes" in Moesia, which were subdued by the Bulgarians, but we know nothing more precise about the Moesian Sclavinia.

Of the Macedonian Sclavinia we know more; the Life of St. Demetrius has preserved some details touching the tribes which, settled in the neighbourhood of Thessalonica, harried its territory and threatened its walls.

Between Thessalonica and Beroea, in the valleys of the Axios and the Haliacmon, abode the tribes of the Drogubites and Sagudates. South of these, a district on the Gulf of Pagasae (Volo), in Thessaly, was occupied by the Belegeztes (whose name survives in the modern Velestino), the Berzetes, and the Bajunetes. All these tribes combined to besiege Thessalonica in the episcopate of archbishop John II (675-681), and the city of St. Demetrius was hardly saved by the miraculous protection of its patron. Other Slaves were settled on the Strymon, and the Bunchines were among the most formidable neighbours of the cities of Macedonia. Most of these barbarous tribes infested the sea as well as the land, and penetrated in their light piratical boats into the waters of the Propontis.

We saw reason to suppose that in the reign of Maurice Slaves had begun to settle in the lands south of Mount Olympus. It is almost certain that the Slavonic element in Greece increased during the reign of Heraclius, while the entire attention of the government was occupied by the struggle with Persia, for we can hardly refuse to allow so much credit to the strong statement of the contemporary Isidore of Seville that "the Slaves took Greece from the Romans". But while we infer so much from the words of the Spanish bishop, I think we can hardly infer more. It is certain at least that the large towns did not fall a prey to the Slaves. Athens, for example, was still Greek and to some extent still a seat of learning, for the great Theodore of Tarsus, to whom our own England owes so much, was educated there. Nor had the country yet become Slavised, as it is said to have become in the following century.

CHAPTER VIII

CONSTANS II

The history of the successors of Heraclius is veiled in the most profound obscurity. We have no contemporary historians; the writers on whom we are obliged to rely almost entirely, lived more than a hundred years later, and it is not even certain from what sources they obtained their materials. From the curt and scanty notices of these chronicles it is impossible to obtain a clear or definite idea of the state of the Empire, and our account of the reigns of Constans II, Constantine IV, and Justinian II must necessarily be defective.

Yielding doubtless to the persuasions of his beloved and ambitious wife and niece Martina, Heraclius had drawn up an impracticable will, in which he enjoined that the administration of the Empire after his death should be carried on jointly by his eldest son and colleague Constantine, by Heraclonas¹ his son by Martina, and by Martina herself. Accordingly, when her husband had closed his eyes, Martina called a conclave, consisting of the senate and the Patriarch Pyrrhus, and laid the testament of the dead Emperor before them. It seems that she then summoned the citizens of Byzantium to the hippodrome, and there, supported by the presence of Pyrrhus and the senate, made known publicly the last injunctions of the great Heraclius. The people demanded with impatient clamours that the two young Emperors should appear, and Martina unwillingly allowed them to come forward. She was determined from the beginning to take the first place, and keep both her august stepson and her own son, also august, in the background. But the public opinion of the Romaioi disapproved of the sovereignty of a woman, and they made her understand that her audacious project would meet with opposition. Someone is said to have cried out to the Augusta, "You are honoured as the mother of the Emperors, but they as our Emperors and lords." A cogent reason too was assigned for her remaining in an honoured obscurity; "When foreign ambassadors come to the court, you cannot receive them or reply to them"; and this decisive objection was thrust home by the rude exclamation, "God forbid that the Roman Empire should fall so low." The people dispersed cheering the Emperors, and the Empress retreated, discomfited but not hopeless, to the imperial palace.

This first scene, in which the schemes of Martina were baffled, was of evil augury for the future, and we shall not be surprised to hear that, failing to accomplish her ambitious purposes by fair means, the stepmother was prepared to resort to more doubtful practices. For not only had she been herself repulsed, but the public voice had unmistakably declared that Constantine, the eldest son, who had held the position of Augustus for many years, should enjoy a greater dignity and authority than his younger stepbrother.

There were two opposite parties now, the party of Martina in close league with the monotheletic Patriarch Pyrrhus, and the party of Constantine, who had faithful adherents in Philagrius the lord treasurer (*comes sacrarum largitionum*), and his squire Valentinus. As Constantine was orthodox and believed not, like his father, in One Will, the opposition of Pyrrhus to his government was all the bitterer. If Constantine had been a stronger man he must certainly have prevailed against his enemies, supported as he was by general public opinion. One is tempted to think that he might have safely banished his stepmother. He won at least one success with the help of Philagrius, who revealed to him that Heraclius had consigned to the care of Pyrrhus a sum of money which might serve as an ample reserve store for Martina if she should ever be driven from the court. Constantine forced the reluctant Patriarch to produce the money.

After this, Constantine fell sick, and for change of air crossed over to his palace at Chalcedon. But the salubrious atmosphere of Asia did not avail, and he died, after a reign of three months and a half. It was generally supposed that poison was administered to him by his stepmother, but as one of our authorities, who gives fuller details of these events than the others, does not even hint at such a suspicion, we are not entitled to assert it as a historical fact, though it may seem credible or even probable. When Philagrius, who waited on the Emperor, saw

that his master's end was approaching he felt fears for his own safety, and advised Constantine to engage the army to protect the rights of his children to the succession, in case he died. Constantine gladly accepted the advice, and sent Valentinus with a letter to the army, also entrusting to his care a large sum of money, with which he was to persuade the generals and soldiers to resist the machinations of Martina and her children.

Heraclius was proclaimed in the city successor of Constantine; and the proclamation of her son meant the ascendancy of Martina. One of his or her first acts was to banish Philagrius to Septae, a fort in Africa near the Straits of Gibraltar; and other persons attached to Constantine were punished, though not with death. Valentinus meanwhile was not inactive, and he appeared at Chalcedon, with the troops of Asia Minor, as the champion of the children of Constantine. The time of the vintage was approaching, and, as a large number of the inhabitants of Constantinople possessed vineyards on the Asiatic coast round about Chalcedon, the presence of Valentinus there in a hostile attitude threatened to be eminently vexatious. Heraclius, the eldest son of Constantine III, was in Constantinople, and his step-uncle Heraclonas, in order to anticipate, or perhaps repel, the suspicions and murmurs of the people, produced him in public as a proof that he was safe, and embraced him as if he were his own son. This display of affection seemed credible, as he had received Heraclius in his arms after immersion in the baptismal font. He confirmed this demonstration by swearing on the wood of the cross, in the presence of Pyrrhus, that neither from himself nor from others should the children of Constantine receive hurt. The asseverations of his own good faith were accompanied by imputations against the genuineness of the conduct of Valentinus, whom he accused of aiming at the imperial throne. To confirm this charge he crossed over to Chalcedon in the company of the young Heraclius and tried to persuade Valentinus that his intentions towards the princes were friendly and loyal. But the squire of Philagrius refused to accept his suspicious assurances; and when they of the city heard this, they believed the Emperor and reviled Valentinus.

Meanwhile the vintage was ripe, and the soldiers did not spare the grapes; nor were the vintagers from the city allowed to land in Asia. This state of things produced impatience and discontent, which were augmented for the orthodox by the fact that the monotheletic and unpopular Patriarch was closely associated with the Emperor and his mother. Pyrrhus was called upon, perhaps by a deputation, to crown Heraclius, and the importunity of the people was so urgent that the Patriarch communicated it to the Emperor, and the Emperor assented to the coronation. The crown of his father Constantine, which Heraclonas had put away in the sanctuary of the church, was placed on the head of Heraclius, whose name by the will and acclamation of the people was changed to Constans or Constantine.

A strong feeling of odium prevailed against Pyrrhus. The ignorant and superstitious portion of the community thought doubtless that his impious views on the matter of one will were mysteriously connected with the disagreeable state of things that had come about. It appears that on the day of the coronation the rabble proceeded to St. Sophia with intent to lay rude hands on Pyrrhus. When they failed to find him there they entered the thusiasterion, with a crowd of Jews and other "cacodox" persons; they tore up the sacred robes and defiled the holy place, and then paraded through the city with the keys of the church gates hung on a pole. That night Pyrrhus, seeing that his life was in jeopardy, stealthily entered the great church, and worshipped there for the last time. He laid his cloak on the altar and said, "I resign not my sacred office, but I take my leave of a disobedient people." He crept out unobserved and remained concealed in the house of a pious woman until he found an opportunity to sail to Carthage.

The coronation of Constans the Second rendered it practicable to make an arrangement with Valentinus and his soldiers at Chalcedon; and this was really the motive of the popular movement. The terms of the compact were that the Caesar David, the brother of Heraclonas, should be crowned Emperor, and named Tiberius,¹ that Valentinus should be created *comes excubitorum*, that no account of the money which the late Emperor had given him should be demanded, and that the soldiers should receive a largess. These events took place in the month of October (641), and at the same time Paulus, the chancellor of St. Sophia, was elected to the patriarchal chair instead of Pyrrhus, whose theological views he shared.

Thus at the end of the year 641 there were three Emperors, Heraclonas, Constans, and Tiberius; but the mode in which the coronation of Constans had been extorted and the well-known unscrupulousness of Martina precluded the hope of a permanent harmony. Concerning the course of events our authorities fail us; all we know is that before a twelvemonth had elapsed the senate resolved to adopt the violent measure of deposing Heraclonas and banishing him, along with his mother Martina. The sentence of banishment was accompanied by a barbarous act of justice or revenge; the tongue of the Empress was cut out and the nose of her son was slit. We cannot hesitate to suppose that some terrible provocation had been given. It is remarkable that Valentinus was banished at the same time, whence we must conclude that he had changed parties. What became of the Emperor Tiberius we are not informed.

Before September 642 Constans, then a boy of eleven years, was sole sovereign, and not long after that date he made a short statement to the senate¹ which has been preserved and deserves to be quoted:—

"My father Constantine, in the lifetime of Heraclius, his father and my grandfather, reigned in conjunction with him for a considerable time, but after his death for a very short space of time. For the envy of his stepmother Martina cut off his excellent hopes and deprived him of his life,—and this for the sake of Heraclonas, the son of her incestuous union with Heraclius. Your vote chiefly contributed to the just deposition of her and her son from the imperial dignity, that the Roman Empire should not behold a most illegal thing. Your noble lordships are well aware of this; and I therefore invite you to assist me by your advice and judgment in providing for the general safety of my subjects."

This short speech is noteworthy in two ways. It shows that a general belief prevailed that Martina had poisoned Constantine; and it indicates the importance of the senate at this time. By the decision of the senate Martina and Heraclonas had been deposed, and the tender age of Constans obliges us to assume that the administration of the Empire was entirely in the hands of the senate during the next few years.

Two revolts may have alarmed the inexperience of Constans in the early part of his reign. A patrician named Valentinian, who was apparently a general of troops in Asia Minor, rebelled, but Constans caused him to be executed, and recalled the army to the duty of loyalty (645). It is tempting to suppose that Valentinian is a mistake for Valentinus, and that the squire of Philagrius who undertook the cause of the children of Constantine had been made a Patrician; but the other statement that some one named Valentinus was banished along with Martina makes us hesitate to accept this identification.

Two years later Gregory, the exarch or governor of Africa, revolted “along with the Africans,” but was soon afterwards routed by the Saracens, who invaded those provinces and compelled the people to pay tribute (647-648).

While this tragic drama was being enacted among the children of Heraclius at the court of Byzantium, the Saracens were extending their power. In the year 646 the officer Manuel, who had unsuccessfully defended Alexandria, made an essay to recapture it, with a fleet of 300 ships, but the Greeks were utterly defeated in a battle which was fought close to the city. In consequence of this attack the Arabs razed to the ground the walls of the city of the Ptolemies, and made Fostat, afterwards to become Cairo, the capital of Egypt. To the Egyptian dominion of the caliph, Amru had added the western line of coast, including the town of Barca,¹ as far as Tripolis, and in these regions tribute was paid to the Arabs in the form of African slaves. In 647 Abu Sarh, who had succeeded Amru as governor of Egypt, advanced along the coast in the direction of Carthage, and, as has been already mentioned, defeated the Roman governor Gregory, who opposed him at the head of an army of 120,000 men. The Semites were beginning to reappear in a quarter from which a powerful branch of the same race had been exterminated eight hundred years before.

In the same year which witnessed the failure of the armament of Manuel at Alexandria, another expedition sent by land against Muaviah, the general in Syria, was also repulsed, and the Saracens overran parts of Asia Minor and Armenia, and advanced as far as Tiflis. In the meantime the death of the unbending Omar and the election of the more flexible Othman led to many consequences, good and bad, for the power of the new nation. The chief injurious consequence was that the dissensions and discords, which the strong personality of Omar had firmly suppressed, broke out under the weaker and less unselfish supremacy of Othman. The chief advantage was that Muaviah, the energetic ruler of Syria, was permitted to organise a fleet, which Omar, who had a superstitious distrust of the perfidious sea, had obstinately forbidden.

The first expedition of the new naval power was against Cyprus (649). The armament numbered 1700 ships; Constantia, the capital city, was taken, and the whole island was ravaged. But Muaviah did not attempt to occupy it permanently, and perhaps he was prevented from doing so by the news that the Roman chamberlain Kakorizos was sailing against him with a large force. The emir sailed back to the coast of Syria and turned his attention to the little island of Aradus, lying not far from the mainland between Gabala and Tripolis. But all his endeavours to take the fort were vain; and equally vain was his attempt to induce the inhabitants to surrender by the mediation of a bishop named Thomarichos. The Saracens returned to Damascus, but next year attacked Aradus again with greater success. The city was burnt, the island was left uninhabited, while the people were allowed to depart and settle elsewhere. Aradus had been a flourishing mercantile city for many centuries; it was the Venice of the Syrian coast, secured by its insular position. Strabo the geographer noticed that the Aradians resisted all temptations to follow the example of the Cilicians and adopt the trade of piracy. The destruction of the place by Muaviah is an example of the barbarous and shortsighted policy of Mohammedan conquerors.

In the following year (651) an Arab general marched into the southern provinces of Asia Minor and carried away 5000 captives. Constans, who was hampered by Italian and perhaps by other affairs at this time, sent an ambassador to Muaviah and arranged a peace of two years, for which he was probably obliged to pay a considerable sum. This peace was not actually violated, but in the following year the Romans lost Armenia by the revolt of the Patrician Pasagnathes (a Persian), who made a treaty with Muaviah, delivering up his own son as a pledge. The Emperor, who had proceeded to Caesarea in Cappadocia in order to see what measures could be taken, despaired, we are told, of Armenia, and returned to Byzantium. Nevertheless, two years later he sent forth an army under Maurianus to recover that important country; but Maurianus was driven before the Saracen general Abib to the foot of Mount Caucasus (654 A.D.), and Armenia remained tributary to the caliph.

In the same year (654) the Romans met with another reverse in the loss of the important commercial island of Rhodes. We are told that the celebrated statue of Helios, called the Colossus of Rhodes, was sold to a Jewish trader of Edessa, who carried off the metal on 900 camels; a notice which shows the wealth and enterprise of the Jewish merchants at this time.

Encouraged by his successes, achieved on an element strange to the children of the desert, against Cyprus, Rhodes, and the little fort of refuge at Aradus, Muaviah ventured to organise a grand expedition against New Rome herself (655 A.D.) Constans, informed of his intention, prepared a fleet, and, sailing to the coast of Lycia, anchored at Phoenix. The events that followed may be told in the words of the chronicler:—

“All the armament of Muaviah was collected at Tripolis in Phoenicia. And having seen this, two brothers, servants of Christ, who abode in Tripolis, the sons of Bucinator, pierced by the zeal of God, rushed to the prison of the city, where there was a multitude of Roman prisoners. Bursting open the gates and loosing the prisoners they rushed to the house of the amer (emir) of the city and slew him and his staff, and, having burned all the furniture, sailed to Romania. Muaviah, however, did not give up his design. He marched himself on Caesarea in Cappadocia, and made Abulathar captain of the naval armament. The latter sailed to a place in Lycia called Phoenix, where the Emperor Constans was stationed with the Roman fleet, and fought a naval battle with him. And as the Emperor was preparing to fight, on that night he dreamed that he was in Thessalonica, and awaking he related the dream to an interpreter of dreams, who said, ‘Emperor, would that you had not slept, nor seen that dream; for your presence in Thessalonica means, being interpreted, that the victory inclines to your foe.’ But the Emperor took no account of this, and drew up his fleet in line-of-battle and challenged an engagement. The ships

met, and the Romans were defeated, and the sea was stained with the blood-streams of the Romans. The Emperor changed garments with another; and the son of Bucinator (mentioned above), leaping into the imperial vessel, hurried off the Emperor into another vessel and unexpectedly saved him. But he himself, standing bravely in the imperial ship, slew many, this most noble man, and devoted himself to death for the Emperor ; for the enemy surrounded him and compassed him about, supposing him to be the Emperor, and, having slain many, he was himself slain by the foe, along with the man who wore the imperial clothes. But the Emperor was thus saved by flight, and having left all he sailed to Constantinople.”

After this great reverse an event happened which proved fortunate for the Romans, by preventing Muaviah from following up his success. This event was the murder of Caliph Othman (656 A.D.), which was succeeded by a struggle for the caliphate between Muaviah and Ali. The weak Othman had fallen the victim of a conspiracy, and Muaviah assumed the part of his righteous avenger. On a pulpit in the great mosque of Damascus he hung up the bloody shirt of the slain caliph and the mutilated fingers of Naila, who had tried to protect him. Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, had made the new city of Kufa the capital of his caliphate. Having subdued a revolt at Bussora by the celebrated victory “of the Camel,” he invaded northern Syria, and the battle of Siffn, where the forces of the rival caliphs met, was finally decided by an appeal to the infallible Koran. Having signed a document by which both agreed to accept the arbitration of the sacred book, Muaviah and Ali returned to their respective cities, Kufa and Damascus. The arbitrators appointed were Amru, as the representative of Muaviah, and Abu Musa, as the representative of Ali. Abu Musa was outwitted by the cunning of Amru, and Muaviah, according to the terms of the contract, was the rightful caliph. But, as Ali declared the arbitration unfair, and would not surrender his claim, the double caliphate lasted until his death in 661 AD., after which event his son Hassan2 abdicated in favour of Muaviah.

Occupied with these conflicts and rivalries, Muaviah was obliged to submit to a treaty favourable for the Romans in 659. The caliph agreed to pay to Constans 1000 nomismata, and for every day as long as the peace should last, a horse and a slave.

In the preceding year Constans had availed himself of the tranquillity of his neighbours on the south-eastern frontier to make an expedition against the Slaves who were settled in the provinces of the Balkan peninsula, and were manifesting an unruly spirit. The country which these Slaves occupied was called Sclavinia, but we are not informed where this country lay. Thus we cannot decide with certainty whether Constans marched westward to the Macedonian land beyond Mount Rhodope, where, as we know, there were Slavonian settlements, or northward to the Moesian lands beyond Mount Haemus, which were then almost entirely Slavonic ; but the former alternative, which is adopted by the German historian Hopf,¹ seems the more likely. Constans compelled them to pay the tribute which they had refused, and led away many captives.

Constans was a man of strong will and restless energy, and he displayed these qualities in the sphere of religion as well as in other departments. To his ecclesiastical policy we must attribute, in the first instance, his unpopularity with the people of Constantinople, whose detestation he cordially reciprocated; and this unpopularity, hampering and oppressing him at every step, drove him to make the remarkable resolution of transferring the seat of empire to the West. This then is the most fitting place to give a brief account of the ecclesiastical affairs of his reign, with which his expedition to Italy naturally connects itself.

After the death of Heraclius a monk named Maximus carried on a vigorous campaign in Africa against monotheletism; and in 646 AD the African councils, at his instigation, drew up a manifesto against the heresy, which they forwarded to Pope Theodore, a Greek by birth. In accordance with a suggestion made by the orthodox African bishops, the Pope wrote on the matter to Paul, the monotheletic Patriarch of Constantinople, and Paul replied in a letter professing in the strongest terms adherence to the doctrine of one will. The Pope decided to excommunicate the heretical Patriarch, and performed the ceremony with the utmost solemnity.

The reply made by New Rome to the deposition of Paul was an edict of the Emperor Constans known as the *Type*. This document is not a declaration of monotheletism, like the *Ecthesis* of Heraclius, but deals with the question of one will as the *Ecthesis* had dealt with the question of one energy. Under pain of serious penalties, it is commanded that no one shall speak of either one will or two wills, one energy or two energies ; that the whole controversy shall be buried in oblivion, and that “the scheme which existed before the strife arose shall be maintained, as it would have been if no such disputation had arisen.”

The spirit of the *Type* of Constans was similar to the spirit of the *Henotikon* of Zeno, but was marked by a more absolute and imperial tone. Paul, doubtless, urged Constans to issue an edict establishing the doctrine of one will, but if Constans was not wholly indifferent on the subject, he was certainly not a bigot, and such an edict would have been dangerous, or at least imprudent, in the face of the great body of orthodox opinion in Constantinople. He was only seventeen years old when the *Type* was promulgated, and we are not informed whether he acted by the advice or against the counsels of the senate. The document certainly displays the true spirit of imperial indifference which cares more for the State than for the Church; and its form, an edict and not a symbolum, distinguishes it essentially from the *Ecthesis* of Heraclius. The penalties to be incurred by those who disobeyed the decree were, in the case of a bishop or clerk, deposition ; in the case of a monk, excommunication ; in the case of a public officer in civil or military service, loss of his office; in the case of a private person of senatorial rank, loss of property; in the case of a private person of obscure position, corporal punishment and banishment for life.

The strict or bigoted orthodox adherents of the doctrine of two wills deemed the Laodicean injunction of neutrality no less to be reprobated than a heretical injunction of monotheletism. The *Type* implied that the one doctrine was at least as good as the other; and in Rome there existed a strong feeling on the matter, which led to the convocation of the Lateran Synod in the following year (649 AD) Pope Theodore had died in the meantime, and his successor, Pope Martin, presided at a council which condemned monotheletism and the *Type*. Martin was a man of learning and endowed with a fine physical frame, “marked out by providence,” says a Catholic

historian, “to be the martyr for the dyotheletic faith.” After the synod he wrote to the Emperor, informing his Majesty of its conclusions, and requiring him to condemn the heresy, “for the safety of the State is always wont to flourish along with the orthodox faith, and the Lord, rightly believed in by your clemency, will assist your power in making war justly against your enemies.”

While the Lateran Synod was sitting, Olympius arrived as the new exarch from Constantinople, with imperial instructions to secure the observance of the Type in Italy and not to respect the person of the Pope. It is said that Olympius ordered his squire to kill Martin at the communion office, but, though the man constantly watched and waited, by some miraculous accident he was never able to see the Pope. The superstition of Olympius was touched by this evidently supernatural frustration of his impious plans, and he revealed the whole design and the reason of his presence at Rome to the intended victim. “Having made peace with holy Church, he collected his army and proceeded to Sicily against the Saracens who were dwelling there. And on account of sin there was a great mortality in the Roman army, and after that the exarch fell ill and died.”

But a new exarch, Theodore Calliopas, who did not arrive in Italy until 653 AD (15th June), was not of such impressionable stuff. He was obliged to wait for some days in Rome until he could conveniently arrest the Pope, who happened to be ill; but he soon seized a favourable opportunity and conveyed the holy father to a ship which lay in readiness to bear him to Constantinople, that he might there reply to charges of treason which were alleged against him. Martin was said to have conspired with Olympius in revolting against the Emperor, and it was on this charge of conspiracy, and not on the ground of ecclesiastical opposition to an imperial edict, that it was resolved to condemn him. He was not taken directly to Constantinople, but was detained a prisoner at the island of Naxos for a whole year. He relates himself that he was allowed to enjoy such meagre comforts as an inn could afford, and to refresh himself occasionally with a bath. He arrived at New Home in September 654, and on the day of his arrival was left from morning until evening on the deck of the ship, exposed to the jeers and scoffs of Byzantine scurrility. At night the weary pontiff was carried from the ship to the prison of Prandearia, where he was obliged to remain for ninety-three days. It is said that during this time he was not permitted to bathe once. It is evident, although not expressly stated, that these long periods of imprisonment antecedent to the trial were adopted in order to break the Pope’s firm spirit and torture him into accepting the Type. This treatment was an imitation of the measures that Justinian had employed to tame Pope Vigilius.

At last the unhappy bishop of Rome was brought before the tribunal; a *sacellarius* or private treasurer of the Emperor conducted the proceedings. The illustrious prefect of the city was also present, but not apparently as presiding judge. We need not describe the details of the trial, which seems to have lasted but a short time. The Pope denied all the vain allegations of conspiracy and rebellion, and sometimes retorted on his ignorant or malignant accusers. It appears that the Emperor sat during the proceedings in an adjoining room, for it is related that the sacellarius came forth from the Emperor’s chamber and said to Martin: “Thou hast fought against the Emperor—what hast thou to hope? Thou hast abandoned God, and God has abandoned thee.” The same minister gave orders that the pontifical robe should be torn from the body of the Pope, and then turning to the prefect of the city, said, “Take him, and hew him in pieces.” He also called upon all those who were present to curse the primate of Christendom. The executioners roughly rent the tunic from neck to skirt and exposed the venerable person of the Pope to the gaze of his enemies or judges. Iron chains were cast upon his neck and he was dragged off to the praetorium, where he was detained for a short time, caged up with common criminals. Thence he was conveyed to the prison of Diomede and thrown with such violence into a cell that his legs were cut and the floor was stained with his blood. It was now midwinter and bitterly cold, so that the Pope, who was in a weak state of health and unable to use his limbs (he had been obliged to assume an erect position at the trial), must have suffered intensely. Two women connected with the prison pitied and were fain to assist him, but fear withheld them.

While the bishop of Old Rome was undergoing these hardships, his rival, Paul the Patriarch of New Rome, was lying sick, nigh unto death. Constans, after the trial of Martin, visited the bedside of Paul and related all that had happened, to cheer the sick man’s heart with triumph. But Paul felt no satisfaction. He said, “Woe unto me, that I have this too to answer for,” and conjured the Emperor to desist from further cruelty and not to put Martin to death. The Emperor did not indeed relent, but he decided to change the fate of Martin from death to banishment; and, after a space of eighty-five days spent in prison, the fallen Pope was permitted to say farewell to his friends. He was then confined for two days in the house of the secretary Sagoleba, and on the 26th of March 655 was sent to the remote shores of Cherson, where he died before the end of the year (16th September),¹ having endured great privations. In the meantime Paul the Patriarch had died and was succeeded by Pyrrhus, the same who had held the patriarchal chair in the days of Heraclius and Martina, and had relinquished without resigning the office. He had in the meantime visited Carthage and Italy, and at Old Rome had for a while, really or feignedly, acknowledged the error of his ways and confessed the doctrine of the two wills, but afterwards returned, in the choice language of an orthodox writer, “like a dog to his vomit.” His second patriarchate lasted for less than five months.

Although Constans was a friend of Paul, and naturally desired to support the Byzantine archbishops, his policy in persecuting Pope Martin was by no means the same as that of Justinian in persecuting Pope Vigilius. The Caesaropapism of Justinian, who composed ecclesiastical works himself, was different from the imperialism of Constans. Both sovereigns wished to make the Church dependent on the State, but to Justinian the ecclesiastical unity was an end in itself, while to Constans it was mainly a means to political unity. Justinian was interested in the nature of the doctrine for its own sake, Constans only desired that the doctrine should be uniform. The eyes of both Justinian and Constans were fixed on Italy; his Italian policy influenced perceptibly the ecclesiastical measures of Justinian; but it was solely with a view of drawing Italy closer into the frame of the Roman Empire that Constans was so earnestly concerned for the unity of religious belief.

A great object of Constans was to bring the outlying provinces of the Empire, the exarchate of Africa and the exarchate of Italy, into closer union with the centre, so that the Empire might present a compact resistance to Mohammedan progress. Syria and Egypt had been lost, and Constans could hardly look forward to recovering

them in the immediate future; in Rhodes, Cyprus, and Armenia, however, he might hope to re-establish Roman supremacy. But first of all it was imperative to prevent Saracen aggression in the West, where the fertile provinces of Africa and Sicily¹ were seriously threatened by the unbelievers. At this time the affairs of the Balkan peninsula, already thoroughly penetrated with the Slavonic element, seem to have occasioned little concern. When he had recalled the refractory Slaves to a sense of their obligations to the Empire by his expedition in 658, Constans might feel secure in regard to those provinces; and as for Asia Minor, it was well garrisoned with soldiers and regularly organised under a military administration. He was free then to fix his attention on the West, and he might dream of recovering the lost lands of Italy from the Lombards and rivalling the fame of Justinian.

Circumstances suggested to his mind a new idea, and carried him further in his occidental policy than he had meditated. He was personally unpopular at Constantinople, and we may suspect that conspiracies sometimes menaced his throne and his life. By the orthodox he was naturally detested. He had followed up the persecution of Pope Martin by the persecution of Maximus and his two disciples, who enjoyed a wide celebrity as champions of the true faith against the monotheletes, and this persecution seems to have created even greater odium than the affliction of the Pope. But an unwise act in the year 660 embittered still more the hatred with which the Emperor was regarded.

Of Theodosius, the brother of Constans, we hear for the first time on the occasion of his death, and we know not whether he held the rank of Caesar or not. He seems to have been orthodox in religion, but we are ignorant in what way he became an object of suspicion to his brother. Constans had compelled him to become a deacon, before the death of the Patriarch Paul, who consecrated him; and it is said that Theodosius often administered to his imperial brother the “undefiled mysteries in the holy cup.” In the year 660 the suspicions of the Emperor were again aroused, and he put Theodosius to death. It is said that he repented afterwards of this act. “After his death,” we are told, “he (Theodosius) frequently appeared to him (Constans) in his sleep, wearing a deacon’s dress and offering him a cup of blood, saying, ‘Drink, o brother’; for which reason, overcome by despair and dread of the apparition, he determined to go to Sicily.”

It is vain to suppose that we can guess all the motives that may have influenced Constans to bid farewell to the city of the Bosphorus in 662, but we may decidedly reject a sensational story like this, related by a writer of the eleventh century, and evidently emanating from the church party inimical to Constans. It is bound up with other suspicious details. “He left his wife and three sons,” proceeds the chronicler, “in the city, and embarked in a fast sailer (dromon); and he turned back and spat at the imperial city. But even in Sicily the dream did not leave him,” etc. This attribution of an act of childish and indecent spite to a man of strength and ability like Constans, throws suspicion on the whole narrative.

The scheme of Constans to transfer the seat of empire from New Rome back once more to Old Rome¹ was, we may presume, influenced by two chief motives, one negative and one positive, either of which would alone have hardly been sufficient to determine him to take such a course. The negative motive was a desire to leave Byzantium, where he did not feel at ease and was hampered by his unpopularity. The positive motive was a resolve to attempt to reconquer Italy, if not the whole peninsula at least southern Italy, from the Lombards. He would at the same time be able to protect Sicily and Africa from the advance of the Asiatic foe.

When we remember the scheme entertained by this Emperor’s grandfather Heraclius and thwarted by the influence of the Patriarch Sergius, to transfer the imperial residence from New Rome to Carthage, we are tempted to draw an analogy, and conclude that this westward tendency, manifested on two occasions in the seventh century, was due to the pressure from the East—a sort of unconscious retreat, in the case of Heraclius before the Persians, in the case of Constans before the Saracens, in order to win a breathing space for organising forces and means of resistance. This was a direct motive with Heraclius; it may have been an indirect cause with Constans. At least we may be sure that in resolving on the important step, he took the Saracen problem—the “eternal question”—seriously into consideration. But the negative motive, the feeling that their administration was cramped in the pampered city of Byzantium, was operative with both Emperors. The Byzantines would not allow Heraclius to leave them, but they made no effort to retain his grandson. Yet afterwards, when Constans sent for his wife and his three sons, they were not permitted to obey the summons.

On his way to Italy, Constans visited Athens. This mention of Athens as a station of the imperial journey indicates the flourishing condition of the Greek city in the seventh century. Thence he proceeded to Tarentum. An army accompanied him; we are not told of what numbers it consisted, but it was large.¹ A story is narrated that when Constans landed at Tarentum his first act was to consult a hermit whether his project to subdue the Lombards would be successful. The holy man prayed a whole night, and in the morning replied, “No, because a certain queen coming from another province built a basilica of St. John the Baptist in Lombard territory, and therefore they are protected by the saint. The time will come when the oracle will be despised, and then the race shall perish.”

Notwithstanding the hermit’s answer, Constans invaded the territory of the duke of Beneventum and captured almost all the towns that he passed. He razed Luceria to the ground, but failed to take Aventia. Finally, he laid siege to Beneventum. The duke at this time was Romuald, a stripling, the son of Grimuald. Grimuald had seized the Lombard crown when it was disputed by the two sons of Rotharis, and had left the duchy to his son. Romuald despatched his *nutricius*, Sesuald, to the lands beyond the Po, to obtain succour from his father. Constans meanwhile pressed the town hard, but the resistance was brave. At length Sesuald returned, bearing the news that Grimuald was coming to the rescue of his son, but the Romans—or Greeks, as the Latin historian calls them—captured the messenger before he reached the city. The Emperor was frightened at the news, and hastened to make a truce with Romuald, who gave him his sister Gisa as a hostage. Constans then led Sesuald in front of the walls, having instructed him, on pain of death, to announce to the men of the city that Grimuald could not come. Sesuald demanded to see Romuald himself, and, when the duke appeared, made him hold out a little longer with constancy, as the king was approaching, and prayed him in return for his own sacrifice of life to

protect his wife and children. By the order of Constans the head of the dauntless Sesuald was hurled by an immense catapult into the town.

Aware of the approach of the Lombard king, Constans abandoned the siege and proceeded in the direction of Naples, but on the way he was harassed by an attack of Mitola, the count of Capua, near the river Calor. Remaining himself at Naples, the Emperor committed 20,000 men to the command of a noble named Saburrus, who boldly promised to subdue to his sway the Lombards of the Beneventan duchy. But Saburrus was ignominiously defeated at Forino by Romuald, who advanced to meet him with part of his father's army.

It appears that, discouraged by this defeat and the unexpected resistance of the Lombards, Constans surrendered his idea of shifting the balance of the empire to the West; he certainly abandoned the project of fixing his capital at Rome. He proceeded thither from Naples, and was met at the sixth milestone from the city by a great procession, led by Pope Vitalian, who presented him with a cloak inwoven with gold. He stayed for twelve days within the walls, the first Emperor of New Rome that had visited Old Rome for wellnigh three centuries. But he showed scant respect for the eternal city, the venerable mother of the Empire. He dismantled her of her bronze ornaments, in order that he might enrich her daughter, the younger Rome. This incident seems to signify that he intended to return to his eastern residence at some future time.

Meanwhile he had resolved to live in the city of Syracuse, whither he proceeded from Rome by Naples and Reggio. A Latin historian complains that he governed with a rod of iron. "He imposed such afflictions on the people, on the inhabitants or proprietors of Calabria, Sicily, Africa, and Sardinia, as were never heard of before, so that even wives were separated from husbands and sons from their parents." Churches were robbed of their treasures. The south of Italy belonged, not to the exarchate of Ravenna, but to the government of Sicily and Sardinia; and perhaps the disorganised state of Africa, owing to the attacks of the Saracens, induced Constans to attach its administration also to that of Sicily. He thus formed a sort of special imperial prefecture or principality, with Syracuse for capital and residence. How far he directed the administration in the East we are not told, but his son Constantine is represented by the historians as acting irresponsibly at Constantinople, and carrying on negotiations with the court of Damascus.

In his sphere of government, where he presided for about five years, Constans had two enemies, one on either side, the Saracens in Africa and the Lombard duke of Beneventum in southern Italy. He recovered Carthage and other cities which had fallen into the hands of the Mohammedans, but these successes were obliterated by the great defeat which a Roman army of 30,000 men experienced at Tripolis. The Saracens, however, did not yet obtain a permanent footing in Africa, and if Constans had not imposed such severe taxation, and thus appeared less a deliverer than an oppressor, it is possible that Africa might have remained a Roman province longer than it did. In Italy, Romuald gained some successes, but made no considerable addition to Lombard territory. The presence of Constans in the West seems to have roused some apprehensions in the Frank kingdom; the mayors of the palace may have thought that he cherished the daring design of recovering the long-lost Gallic provinces for the Empire.

In the year 668 Constans was assassinated at Syracuse in the baths called Daphne. A certain Andreas, the son of Troilus, went into the bath with him to wait upon him. As the Emperor was preparing to smear himself with Gallic soap, Andreas, seizing the vessel in which the soap was contained, struck him on the head with it and fled. When the Emperor tarried long in the bath, his attendants, who were waiting outside, rushed in and found him dead. As soon as he was buried, unknown persons compelled an Armenian named Mizizios to assume the purple, "because he was very good-looking and handsome." The usurper's reign was short, for the young Constantine arrived promptly from Constantinople with a large armament and put both Mizizios and Andreas to death. It is possible that Andreas may have been the instrument of conspirators greater than himself; for a certain Justinian of high position was executed, and his son Germanus, who was destined in future days to be famous as a Patriarch of Constantinople and an opponent of iconoclasm, underwent the indignity of emasculation. The names Justinian and Germanus remind us of the great imperial house of the sixth century, and one is tempted to conjecture that Germanus the Patriarch may have been a descendant of kinsfolk of the Emperor Justinian.

Constans may be considered a typical example of a certain class of later Roman Emperors. There is, I apprehend, a general idea current that the Emperors who reigned at Constantinople were, almost without exception, either weak and cruel profligates or strong and cruel profligates, and that, if any were strong, their strength was generally misdirected. Such an idea is totally false. Brought up in an atmosphere of intrigue and danger, calculated to foster the faculty of self-help in a strong boy and at the same time to produce a spirit of cynicism, Constans grew up a stern and inflexible man, with decided opinions on policy and administration, resolved to act independently and not afraid of innovation, surprisingly free from religious bigotry in a bigoted age, an unusually strong and capable ruler. Although his ecclesiastical attitude drew upon him the disfavour of orthodox contemporaries and historians, we hear not a single hint that he was addicted to sensuality, and this is a testimony to his austere life—negative indeed, but extremely weighty when we consider what scandalous calumnies it has always been usual to circulate on the smallest pretext regarding persons of obnoxious religious opinions. He was never under the influence of ministers, as far as we know, and his independent self-reliant conduct may have sometimes seemed obstinacy; but it is hard, on our insufficient data, to judge of individual deeds. In regard to the act which has excited most odium, the execution of his brother, we are ignorant of his motives and the circumstances of the case. It was an unwise act for a prince who was unpopular with the orthodox; an orthodox prince, like Constantine the Great, might have done worse things with impunity.

We can, however, form an opinion of the general policy of Constans, and we must pronounce it to have been perverse, though not fruitless. In two different ways he opposed the tendencies of his age.

In the first place, the Roman Empire was becoming every year more deeply tinged with an ecclesiastical colour. In this respect a great change had silently taken place during the last hundred years, since the time of Justinian. The Christian element of the Christian Roman Empire has become dominant in men's minds, the

Roman element has fallen into the background. The importance of the Patriarch has increased, and a close union between him and the Emperor is more than ever necessary. I do not refer to any change in State mechanism or in the administration of law, though here too Roman traditions have undergone distinct alterations, but to a change in the public mind, and the views of people on politics, society, and life in general. Now when Constans, by the issue of his Type, asserted, as it were, the insignificance of the burning theological problem of the day, and, assuming an attitude of indifference to the doctrinal question, regarded the matter entirely from a political point of view, he clearly opposed the tendency of his age to look upon church matters as the vital interests of the world. In this respect Constans had more in common with the earlier than with the later Roman Emperors, and so far he was retrograde.

In the second place, ever since Constantine the Great had built his new capital on the Bosphorus, the gravitation of the Empire had tended to centre in New Rome; the Roman Empire had tended to contract itself to south-eastern Europe, while the provinces which it still retained in the West became, as it were, important outposts. The idea of Constans to take the sceptre from the daughter and restore it to the mother was retrograde and unpractical; and he could make no serious attempt to realise the scheme. It would have involved a struggle against the conditions of geography, a struggle wherein only in its best days the Roman Empire could succeed. Since the time of Theodosius the Great, nay since the time of Diocletian and still earlier, we can trace the tendency of southeastern and south-western Europe to throw off the unnatural unity superinduced by Roman sway. Notwithstanding, Constantinople retained a hold on parts of Italy and Sicily for many centuries, but the bond was always loose. At the same time the influence of Greek civilisation on western Europe through these Italian provinces was of high importance; and thus, although the scheme of Constans to abandon New Rome was perverse, he must have done useful work in consolidating the Roman power in southern Italy, and laying a foundation for its permanence there until the eleventh century.

But if Constans stands condemned in the light of ecumenical tendencies, Demosthenes, Cicero, Julian, and many others stand by his side. It may seem startling to place him among men devoted to an ideal or inspired by enthusiasm; but this severe Emperor of the seventh century, animated with some reflection of the old Roman spirit, and out of touch with his own age, was one of the men in history who have trodden the winepress alone. Of his domestic life we know nothing, not even the name of his wife. The only record on the matter, washed up from the waves of time, is that from Italy or Sicily he summoned his wife and sons, and that two powerful ministers (or, some writers said, the Byzantine people refused to permit them to obey the summons. The last years of his life at least were not enlivened or encumbered by domestic society.

As to the Saracens, little was added to their previous conquests during the reign of Constans, and therefore we must pronounce that his foreign policy was on the whole successful. They had indeed secured a footing in Armenia, in Cyprus, in Rhodes, even in Africa, but these were small reverses compared with the losses experienced by Heraclius. It may also be said that Muaviah would probably have extended his dominions farther but for the war of succession with Ali; nevertheless we are only entitled to consider actual results, and we must agree with Finlay when he says of Constans that "the Empire underwent no very sensible diminution of its territory during his reign, and he certainly left its military forces in a more efficient condition than he found them." Nor should I omit to mention that to Constans may have been due a partial reorganisation of the provinces.

The Saracens were not inactive while Constans was in the western regions of the Empire; they invaded Asia Minor almost every year. In 663 "Romania," as the Roman Empire was called in Asia, was invaded, many captives were led away, and many places rendered desolate. In 664 Abd Errahman repeated the expedition, and this time wintered in Roman territory, where in the following year he was joined by a body of Slaves, who had crossed the Hellespont and preferred to be the slaves of the caliph than the subjects of the Emperor. Five thousand of these Slaves were settled in Syria, at a place called Seleucobolus, in the district of Apamea. The years 666 and 667 were marked by expeditions of Busur against Romania. It does not appear that any permanent injury was inflicted by these incursions.

At this time the troops stationed on the Armenian frontier, and called *Armeniakoi*, were commanded by a general of Persian origin, named Saborios (Sapor). In 668 he revolted against the Emperor and sent his captain Sergius to Muaviah, promising that he would subject Romania to the Saracens if the caliph would help him against the Emperor. Constantine, the Emperor's son, who directed the administration at Constantinople, sought to checkmate this movement by sending another ambassador to the court of Damascus, but the diplomacy of Sergius was successful, and Muaviah's general Phadidas was sent to assist Saborios. Then Constantine appointed Nicephorus, a patrician, to lead a Roman force against Saborios, who was stationed at Hadrianopolis in Bithynia, prepared for war. An accident hastened the suppression of the revolt. Saborios was in the habit of taking exercise daily on horseback outside the walls of the town. One day, as he was approaching the gate, he applied the whip to his horse too severely, and the animal disdainful of the bridle rushed off at a furious gallop, the head of the rider was dashed against the gate, and death followed.

Meanwhile Phadidas had advanced to Hexapolis, and, seeing that the Romans were united, the Armeniac troops having returned to their allegiance after the death of Saborios, he sent for reinforcements to Muaviah. The caliph sent his son Yezid with an army, and the combined forces proceeded to Chalcedon and captured many prisoners. They also took the important town of Amorium in Phrygia, and, having secured it by a garrison of 5000 men, returned to Syria. Towards the end of the year Constantine commissioned Andreas, the same chamberlain whom he had sent as an ambassador to Muaviah, to recover Amorium. Andreas arrived by night, and the deep snow aided his enterprise by raising the ground and so lowering the height to be scaled. By means of a plank or ladder, he and all his company entered the city, and every Arab in Amorium was slain.

CHAPTER IX

CONSTANTINE IV

When Constantine IV set out from Constantinople at the time of his father's death to arrange the troubled affairs of Sicily, his face was smooth. When he returned, having successfully accomplished his mission, he wore a beard, and the Byzantines gave him the name of Pogonatos or "the Bearded." This circumstance is interesting, because since the fifth century, when Leo was called Makelies and Anastasius Dikoros, there is no record that any Emperor received a nickname, but from the end of the seventh century forward, few Emperors escape unhonoured by some popular appellation, so that the practice of nicknaming sovereigns is one of the minor features of the Byzantine world. Had the imperial residence been Alexandria, not an Emperor from Constantine to Heraclius would have escaped the stinging wit of the Alexandrines, who were notorious for their love of mockery, like the Florentines in later centuries. When Alexandria was lost to the Empire, her mantle, or at least some shreds of it, fell upon Byzantium.

Constantine had no intention of sharing the administration or the imperial title with his two young brothers Heraclius and Tiberius, who had perhaps received the rank of Caesar before their father's death. But the army of the Anatolic district, which embraced the regions of Isauria, Lycaonia, Pisidia, and western Phrygia, suddenly marched to Chrysopolis and sent over the straits to Constantinople a deputation demanding that the two brothers should be crowned Emperors. They based their demand on the ingenious and fanciful idea that, because they believed in the Trinity, it was meet that they should be governed by three Emperors. The assignment of such a reason indicates a religious and theological view of things becoming dominant in men's minds, so as to penetrate other and alien relations of life. Constantine entrusted to Theodore, captain of Coloneia, the delicate task of praising the soldiers for their excellent motives and persuading them to return to their stations, while their leaders visited the capital and consulted with the senate touching the execution of the wishes which they had expressed. When the army had obediently departed, Constantine caused the instigators of the movement, who came at his invitation to Constantinople, to be gibbeted at Sycae. We are also informed, in apparent connection with this affair, that the Emperor slit the noses of his two brothers, but the record is considered somewhat suspicious, as we learn on the same authority that in the year 680 Constantine deprived his brothers Heraclius and Tiberius of the imperial dignity and reigned alone with his son Justinian. If this seems unlikely, we may suppose, with Finlay, that the noses of the two princes were not slit until 680, and that the first notice of the chronicler anticipates the order of events; or we may suppose that the mutilation took place in 669, but that at some time between that year and 680 Constantine was compelled by political considerations or public opinion to associate his brothers in the Empire again.

The chief events of the reign of Constantine IV were the Saracen war, including the seven years' siege of Constantinople, the establishment of the Bulgarian power on the south side of the Danube, and the sixth Ecumenical Council. Bulgarian and Slavonic affairs will be dealt with in another chapter.

The usual invasions of Asia Minor by Saracen generals continued as before. The severe winter of 669 was spent by Phadadas on the shores of the Propontis at Cyzicus, and in 670 many Roman subjects were led into captivity by Busur. Africa had been attacked in 669, and, after the death of Constans, a formidable descent was made on Sicily by the Saracens of Alexandria, who carried off all the treasures that Constans had collected.

But in 672 Muaviah, who had conceived the ambitious project of conquering the whole Roman Empire, and thought perhaps that the young Constantine would prove a less firm adversary than his father, prepared a great naval expedition. The armament set sail under the command of Abd Errahman before the end of the year; and during the winter months some of the ships anchored at Smyrna, the rest off the coast of Cilicia. The troops of Abd Errahman were reinforced by yet another squadron before they proceeded to the Hellespont, into whose waters they sailed about April. From April to September (673) the fleet lay moored from the promontory of Hebdomon, on the Propontis, as far as the promontory of Kyklobios, near the Golden Gate, and engagements with the Roman fleet which defended the harbour continued from morning to evening. Constantine had made provision in good time to receive the enemy. He constructed a large number of fireships and fast-sailing boats provided with tubes or siphons for squirting fire, of which we do not know the exact nature. These engines were very formidable, and in September the Saracens, having accomplished nothing, sailed to Cyzicus, which they captured and made their winter quarters. The same operations were earned on dun same result, and were repeated at length the Saracens, "put to shame by the help of God and the Mother of God, and having lost many fighting men and received great injury, returned in great grief." This was not the end of their disasters. The unsuccessful fleet was caught in a storm at Syllaeum and dashed to pieces on rocks. All the ships that escaped were attacked by a Byzantine admiral, who commanded the Cibyraiot fleet,¹ and were destroyed. The naval armament in the Hellespont had been doubtless supported every year by a land army on the Asiatic shore; it is at least certain that, concurrently with the rout and destruction of the fleet of Chaleb, the Saracens met with a disaster on land. An army under Sofian was defeated by the Roman generals Floras, Petronas, and Cyprianus, and 30,000 Arabs were killed.

It is not clear from the words of our authorities whether "Romaic (Greek) fire" was actually used during the siege; but at all events the Greeks discovered it about this time. The discovery is attributed to Callinicus, an architect of Heliopolis in Syria, who fled to the Romans, "and having prepared marine fire, burned the ships of the Arabs and their crews alive." Marine fire is the name by which it was known. It is an obvious supposition that the siphon-boats, mentioned above, were connected with the new discovery, but our best authority mentions the marine fire subsequently, as if it had been introduced after the siege, so that it will be safer to conclude that the

siphon-boats and the *caccabopyrphori* were inventions of a simpler and less infernal kind, like the fireships of Gaiseric, or the sulphur-machines said to have been used by Proclus against Vitalian.

The utter failure of his ambitious enterprise inclined Muaviah to peace, and another circumstance confirmed his inclination. Bands of freebooters, or *armatoli*, who led an outlaw life in the wild heights of Mount Taurus, had penetrated to the recesses of Mount Lebanon, where they assisted the cause of Christendom by harassing and plundering the unbelievers and affording a safe shelter to Christian refugees. The Greeks called these outlaws *apel&tai?* but they are more generally known by the name *Mardaites* (“rebels”), which was applied to them by the Saracens. They increased in number and power, being constantly reinforced by Slaves and Syrian natives, and they soon dominated Palestine “from the Black mountain to Jerusalem.” The presence of this hostile mountain population of Christians was a serious danger to the Saracen power in Syria, and a notable advantage to the Roman Emperor. It is not surprising that Muaviah was glad to accept a disadvantageous peace. The Greek chronicler states that he and his counsellors were much afraid, “supposing that the Empire of the Romans is guarded by God.” He therefore sent ambassadors to Byzantium, offering to pay a yearly tribute. The Emperor sent back with them to Damascus a patrician named Johannes, and nicknamed *Pitzigaudes*, as an old and experienced statesman of sound judgment, to arrange the terms of the treaty, and Muaviah, we are told, showed him the most profound respect.

Two instruments were drawn up to the effect that the peace was to last for thirty years, on condition that the Saracens paid the Romans 3000 lbs. of gold, fifty captives, and fifty thoroughbred horses annually.

The repulse of the first great expedition organised by the Asiatic foe to pull down the bulwark of Europe was a noble triumph for Constantine. On him devolved the defence of European Christendom and European civilisation against the withering wind which blows from Arabian deserts, against Islam which blights thought and slays freedom; and he conducted the defence well. And the European nations recognised what he had done, and acknowledged him as the most powerful representative of the great cause of Europe. We are told that the advantageous peace which Constantine made with the Saracen caliph created a great sensation throughout the West, and redounded to the name and glory of the Roman Emperor. The chagan of the Avars, and the kings who ruled beyond him, the governors and *castaldi*, and the greatest chiefs of the western nations sent ambassadors laden with presents to Constantine, and entreated him to confirm peace with them. The Emperor received the embassies graciously, and there was a universal state of security both in the East and in the West. It is to be regretted that our historians have not mentioned precisely the names of the nations which desired the friendship of him whom they recognised as a champion against the Moslem. By the kings who ruled beyond the Avars we may understand the Franks, and perhaps even the Anglo-Saxons, while the governors and *castaldies* evidently refer to the Lombard duchies and *castaldies*. It is possible that the Visigoths may have also sent envoys to the great “Republic.”

It is a curious coincidence that it was under an Emperor bearing the name of its founder that the city of Constantine was first to undergo the assault of the Mohammedan destroyer, and that also under an Emperor Constantine it was finally to pass into Mohammedan hands. We may say that in this siege the keynote was struck of all that New Rome was to perform as the bulwark of Europe while she was still Home; and we may regard the embassies of the western nations on this occasion as an unconscious recognition of the fact.

Muaviah died in 680, and his son Yezid, who had succeeded in obtaining his recognition as heir-apparent four years before, reigned in his stead. Yezid’s short reign was disturbed by the opposition of Abd Allah Ibn Zubeir and saddened by the tragedy of Kerbela. A plague in Syria, the hostile inroads of the *Mardaites* of Lebanon, and serious agitations in Arabia disposed Abd Almalik to maintain the peace with the Empire, and the treaty was renewed (685) on the slightly altered conditions that the payments were to consist of one pound of gold, one slave, and one horse for every day in the year.

In the reign of Constantine, Crete was the only Roman country that the Arabs succeeded in making tributary, and this success was only temporary. The Christian inhabitants indeed may not have felt much repugnance to the Saracen yoke, for the policy of Muaviah was to make his burden light and to treat with clemency, humanity, and toleration his Christian subjects. It is even related that in the year 678, when an earthquake shook Mesopotamia, and the ambo and dome (Saton and trullus) of the church in Edessa fell in, Muaviah, at the request of the Christians of the place, rebuilt the edifice.

Having made a brilliant peace with the caliphate, and having also made a treaty more prudent than honourable with the Bulgarians, as will be related in another chapter, Constantine enjoyed peace until his death, and was at leisure to turn his attention to ecclesiastical affairs. He did not, like his father, struggle against the current; he did not think of pressing any measure like the Type of Constans; but, professing a strict impartiality, which was probably genuine, he was willing to let the monotheistic question be decided entirely by the Church.

After the death of Constans, Pope Vitalian, apprehending no danger from the young Constantine, whom he had assisted in quelling the usurper Mizizios, was emboldened to declare himself in favour of the two wills? In consequence of this, Theodore, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and Macarius, the Patriarch of Antioch, pressed the Emperor to allow Vitalian’s name to be struck off the diptychs of Constantinople (678 a.d.) Constantine refused to act hastily, but, as soon as the peace with the Saracens gave him time for other affairs, he conceived the idea of organising a “Catholic assembly” to decide finally on a controversy, concerning which he had not himself made up his mind. He therefore wrote a letter to Pope Donus, whom he addressed as “Ecumenical Pope”, and proposed a Catholic congress, to be held in Constantinople, at which the western dioceses should be fully represented. He suggested that the Pope should send three or more deputies connected specially with the Roman curia, twelve archbishops and bishops from other dioceses under his jurisdiction, and four monks from each of the four Greek cloisters at Rome. He also promised that the exarch of Italy should receive commands to assist and further the journey of the delegates by supplying money and ships, even armed vessels—castellated *carabi*—if necessary.

But when Constantine dated this letter (12th August 678), the Pope to whom it was addressed had been already four months dead (since 11th April)—an indication of the rate at which news travelled at this period. Pope Agatho had succeeded Donus, and on receipt of the imperial epistle he determined to hold a preliminary synod at Rome, in order to obtain a consensus of the opinions of western divines touching the matters in dispute. A considerable time intervened before the bishops could be collected, as many came from great distances, and the synod was not held until Easter 680. Bishops from all the “nations” were present—from the Lombards, from the Franks, from the Goths, from the Slaves, from the “Britons,” or, as we should say, the Anglo-Saxons. Felix of Arles represented the Gallic Church; Wilfrid of York was present, but by accident and not as a deputy. The synod condemned monotheletism, and a report of its acts was despatched to Constantine, accompanied by a letter from Pope Agatho, intended to be a sort of appendix to the *Epistola dogmatica* of Leo I. The Pope apologises for the delay in assembling the synod, owing to the great distance of the bishoprics, some of which were at or beyond the northern ocean. He states that he had hoped for the presence of the archbishop and philosopher of the great island Britannia, Thomas of Canterbury, but that prelate was unable to come. In compliance with the Emperor’s suggestion, he sends three bishops—Abundantius of Palermo, Johannes of Reggio, and Johannes of Porto, with two priests, a deacon and a subdeacon of Rome, along with Theodore, a priest, to represent the Church of Ravenna,—not, however, trusting much to their learning, for people who live among the “nations” and have to win their livelihood by bodily labour cannot acquire much erudition; they were, however, well-grounded and firm in the tenets of the five general councils. He then proceeds to expound a symbolum of the orthodox faith. The letter was addressed to Constantine, Heraclius, and Tiberius.

When the Italian delegates arrived at Constantinople they were received with honour and maintained at the Emperor’s expense, the palace of Placidia being placed at their disposal. It is related that on a certain Sunday they took part in a solemn procession to the church of St. Mary in the suburbs of Blachernae. The Emperor meanwhile issued a sacra “to the most blessed archbishop and ecumenical patriarch” Georgios, directing him to summon an assembly of metropolitans and archbishops.

The sixth Ecumenical Council met in a domed chamber (trullus) in the imperial palace on the 7th of November, and its sittings, eighteen in number, lasted for wellnigh a year, the last being held on the 16th of September 681. As the Bishop of Rome sent delegates, as the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Antioch were present in person, and as the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem were represented by priests, the council was ecumenical.

The holy Gospels were placed in the middle. The Emperor, surrounded by ministers and officers, presided, but directed only the formal side of the proceedings, as an impartial and disinterested chairman, and took no share in the theological discussions. He thus followed the example of Marcian, who presided at the council of Chalcedon. To the right of the Emperor sat George the Patriarch of Constantinople, Macarius the Patriarch of Antioch, the representative of the patriarchate of Alexandria, and others; to the left sat the delegates of the Pope, Theodore of Ravenna, Basil of Gortyn, and the representative of Jerusalem. It should be noticed that several of the Greek bishops were really representatives of the Roman Church, namely Johannes, the archbishop of Thessalonica, “vicar of the apostolic throne of Rome”; Stephanos of Corinth, “legate of the apostolic throne of Rome”; and Basil of Gortyn in Crete, “legate of the holy synod of the apostolic throne of elder Rome.” At the first eleven sittings and at the eighteenth the Emperor presided; his presence at the others was prevented by business.

The council unanimously, with the exception of two individuals, condemned the monotheletic doctrine, as savouring of Apollinarianism, in that it diminished the fulness of Christ’s humanity, and asserted as the true doctrine that “there are two natural wills and two natural energies, without division, alteration, separation, or confusion.” It also anathematised the chief representatives of the false doctrine, including Pope Honorius. The Patriarch George had declared his acceptance of the two wills at the eighth session (7th March), and on the same occasion it was voted that the name of Pope Vitalian should be restored to the diptychs, to which course the Emperor consented, and the members of the synod cried out:

“ Long live the preserver of the orthodox faith! Long live the new Constantine the Great, the new Theodosius the Great, the new Marcian, the new Justinian! We are slaves of the Emperor!

“ Long live the orthodox Pope Agatho of Rome!

“ Long live the orthodox Patriarch George !

“ Long live the holy senate ! ”

At the ninth sitting Macarius of Antioch, who had read a manifesto of his articles of belief, and Stephanos were deposed from their offices, and therefore could not attend the succeeding sessions. We may observe that Macarius, when he was pressed concerning his doctrine, had declined to use a numerical adjective—one or two—and professed to hold simply, with Dionysius, a theandric energy. This position was perhaps more philosophical than either of the debated alternatives, but it tended to coincide with monotheletism.

A curious incident diversified the course of discussion at the fourteenth sitting. A certain Polychronius, who was a monothelete, offered to prove the truth of his doctrine by the performance of a miracle, and the council consented to witness the experiment. In the open air outside the palace a corpse was laid, and Polychronius detained in suspense or amusement a large crowd, while he endeavoured to resuscitate the dead body by whispering formulae in its ears. Doubtless many who watched his operations were not sure of the event, but, when all his incantations proved vain, he was hooted as a new Simon Magus.

The proceedings of the council concluded as usual with an address to the Emperor, who affixed his signature to the acts, with the words we read and approved.”

I cannot leave this subject without a word on the delicate problem of the condemnation of Pope Honorius, which bears directly on the question of papal infallibility, and was brought up in that connection at the Vatican Council of 1869 and 1870. It is not of serious consequence whether Honorius, who was not a strong man, deserves the benefit of a doubt, though it is plain enough that his own words are not consistent with the accepted orthodox belief; but it is of great consequence, from an ecclesiastical point of view, whether the sixth Ecumenical Council anathematised a Pope as a heretic, as in that case one Pope at least was not infallible. Baronius could not admit such a monstrosity, and resorted to a theory, —generally rejected as baseless and elaborately refuted by Hefele,— that the acts of the sixth Council were tampered with by the Patriarch Theodore, who abandoned his heretical belief and was restored to the see of Constantinople after the death of George. As he had been anathematised by the council, it was his interest, says Baronius, to erase his name from the black list; and accordingly he substituted ONORION for THEODORON, and also made certain additions and alterations in the order of the acts. For further details on the subject I may refer the curious to Hefele.

Constantine died in the year 685, leaving the Empire, at peace with foreign nations, to his son Justinian. He was buried in the church of the Holy Apostles.

NOTE ON GREEK FIRE

The invention of Greek fire is attributed to a Syrian named Callinicus. It was preserved for a long time as a secret by the Roman government, but in the tenth century books were written on the subject.

The following receipt for the manufacture of Greek fire is contained in a treatise by a tenth-century writer, known as Marcus Graecus, on the composition of inflammatory powders and liquids for military purposes. "Take pure sulphur, tartar, sarcocolla (Persian gum), pitch, dissolved nitre, petroleum, and huile de gemme (?); boil these ingredients together; saturate tow with the concoction, and set fire to it. The conflagration will spread, and can only be extinguished by urine, vinegar, or sand." Another compound closely resembled gunpowder: a pound of sulphur was pounded in a mortar with two pounds of charcoal and six pounds of nitre; the mixture was poured into long, narrow, and tight envelopes, like cartridges, closed at the ends with iron wire. These shells were ignited and hurled through the air, probably by catapults.

CHAPTER X

JUSTINIAN II

Justinian II, like his father Constantine and his grandfather Constans, was placed in the position of an absolute ruler at a very early age. He was only sixteen when his father died. But, although the energy of the Heraclian family descended to him in sufficiently full measure, he was not endowed with the cool judgment and steady head of his father and grandfather, and he was seduced by a desire of personal glory, which had never misguided them into taking a false step. The consequence was that he committed many fatal blunders, and became extremely unpopular. This public odium, however, was indirectly incurred, for it attached primarily to the misconduct of favourite ministers, against whose influence the young monarch was not proof. It is in the days of adversity, after he has been ignominiously expelled from the throne, that the vigour and spirit of the man are most clearly revealed.

Abd Almalik renewed with Justinian the peace which he had made with Constantine on terms that superficially seemed more favourable.¹ The caliph undertook to pay 1000 nomismata and the daily tribute of one horse and one slave, while the Romans and Saracens were to divide between them the revenues of Armenia, Iberia, and Cyprus. Justinian, on the other hand, undertook to compass the removal of the Mardaites, who were a perpetual thorn in the side of the caliphs, from their homes in Lebanon. These mountaineers "rendered unsafe and uninhabited all the mountain towns of the Saracens from Mopsuestia to the Fourth Armenia." They were, however, monotheletes, and this fact made the Roman government look on them with disfavour, in spite of the services which they rendered in weakening the common enemy. And so Justinian did not demur to a measure, which really meant, in the chronicler's words, a maiming of the Roman power, by removing the brazen wall, that is the Mardaites. We are not informed how the measure was executed; but it must be remembered that these Christian outlaws considered themselves the subjects of the Emperor, and it was perhaps at the instance of Constantine IV that they had entered the highlands of Syria. Certain it is that the Mardaites, to the number of twelve thousand, were transferred to Romania. Of these some were settled in Thrace, others in Asia Minor, while others were enrolled in the army, and Justinian proceeded in person to the Armenian provinces in order to superintend the disposal of the immigrants. In the meantime Leontius, general of the Anatolic troops, had subjected Albania and Iberia to the Roman supremacy, and sent a large return of tribute money to the Emperor. This expedition involved direct hostility with the Saracens and was a breach of the peace, but Abd Almalik was then too much hampered by other affairs to retaliate.

During the year 689 or 690 Justinian was occupied by a war with the Bulgarians, provoked by himself, in which he was successful; and the Slavonic captives whom he earned off he established in Asia Minor, near the Hellespont, and formed of them "a supernumerary corps" 30,000 strong. It appears that Justinian by his policy in regard to the Mardaites had lost the support of the soldiers of Mount Taurus and the Anatolic district, and was obliged to have recourse to the Slavs. Trusting to the strength of these new military forces, he was not afraid to defy the power of the Saracens and dissolve the peace. In 6921 he refused to receive a new Saracen coinage, introduced by Abd Almalik, inscribed with verses of the Koran. The payments had been made before in the municipal coins of Syria, on which the effigy of the Roman Emperor was represented. Abd Almalik protested that he had fulfilled his part of the bargain, and that he desired peace. But as he had reduced to his sway Persia, Mesopotamia, and Arabia, his hands were free, and he did not shrink from war; and, as Justinian was obdurate, the Saracens marched to battle with the document on which the terms of the peace were inscribed stuck on the point of a lance, as a standard and a protest. The engagement took place in Cilicia, near Sebastopolis, and victory was ensured to the Saracens by the desertion of the "supernumerary corps" of Slavs, in which the Emperor had too lightly placed his confidence. Two-thirds of these troops joined the enemy and turned upon the Romans. Justinian fled to the Propontis with the remnant of the barbarians, and at Leucata, near Nicomedia, he put to death the Slaves who had been faithful to him in his fury against those who had been false.

The defeat at Sebastopolis led to the revolt of Symbatius (Simpad), a patrician of Armenia holding the same position that Saborios had held in the reign of Constans. He subjected southern Armenia to the Arabs. Soon afterwards the Roman dominions were invaded by the unbelievers, and on this occasion the Slavonic refugees proved serviceable, because they were versed in the topography of the country.

Other transplantations and immigrations, as well as those of the Mardaites, took place in the reign of Justinian. A famine in Syria (687) induced a number of the natives to migrate to Romania. I have already mentioned the transportation of the Slaves to Asia Minor, and although most of these were formed into a military body, some were doubtless settled as agriculturists in the north-western provinces on the Propontis. To the same regions the Emperor also designed to transplant part of the population of Cyprus. Cyprus, by the new arrangement which had been made with Abd Almalik, was half-Roman and half-Saracen territory; and Justinian wished to leave the whole island to the rival power without surrendering the Roman tributaries. As the Cypriotes sailed across to the mainland the ships were caught in a storm, many were drowned, and the rest returned to the island. But the design was carried out notwithstanding this mishap, and the Asiatic residence of the bishop and people of Cyprus was a new city, named Justinianopolis, in the neighbourhood of Cyzicus.

The fact that the north-western provinces, known at this time as the district of Opsikion, were chosen for the transplanted settlers can be explained by historical events. Throughout the entire century they had been continually exposed to the devastations of foes, first the Persians, then the Saracens, who used to establish themselves on the shores of the Propontis or the Bosphorus, to menace the capital of Romania. This circumstance necessarily brought about depopulation in those districts, and there was need of new colonists.

Justinian's foreign policy, including his idea of a supernumerary Slavonic corps, had been eminently unsuccessful; his domestic policy was also a failure. This was chiefly due to the proceedings of his two notoriously unpopular and unprincipled ministers of finance. The influence of ministers or subordinates had been almost quite inoperative in the reigns of Constans and Constantine, both strong and independent monarchs; but Justinian was a man of more impulse than steadiness, and was amenable to both good and bad influences. He unwisely allowed great latitude to his two favourites, Stephanus and Theodotus, whose cruelty and rapacity covered him with odium and obloquy.

Theodotus, who had been the abbot of a monastery, was general logothete, an officer corresponding to the former count of *sacred largesses*. A monk who forsook his retreat to become a civil minister would naturally be looked upon in those days with the utmost suspicion. The oppressions which he exercised and the extortions which he practised are reported to have been terrible. But his offences were aggravated by the fact that he went beyond his jurisdiction and succeeded in exacting money with no sufficient reason from men of senatorial rank, on whom the office of the private domains had no legal claim, and confiscating their property; he was able even to put them to death. He was cruel to his victims, we are told, and used to hang them up by ropes and scorch their bodies with a straw fire lit beneath them.

Stephanus, a Persian eunuch, was sacellarius, or keeper of the privy purse, and he too by his "bloodthirsty" oppression of the citizens made the Emperor hated. A story is told that once, when the Emperor was absent, "the savage beast" amused himself by administering a whipping to the Empress-mother Anastasia as if she were a little school-girl. Whether it was at the suggestion of one or other of these two men that the prefect of the city was empowered to imprison for years many persons of high rank and position, or whether the prefect was like unto the ministers of the treasuries, we cannot say. The general result was that Justinian's government was detested.

Like his distinguished namesake Justinian I, the Emperor was seized with a passion for building. He erected a new and splendid triklinos in the palace, and appointed Stephanus as a kind of taskmaster to superintend the progress of the building and accelerate its completion. It was a congenial work to the inhuman sacellarius, who did not content himself with beating the workmen, but used to stone both them and the overseers.

Close to the palace was a church sacred to the Mother of God, whose situation presented an obstacle to new plans of Justinian. He wished to utilise the place partly for a fountain and partly for tiers of benches to accommodate the members of the blue faction when they were receiving the Emperor on public occasions. He therefore begged the Patriarch Callinicus to deconsecrate the church that he might pull it down, but the Patriarch replied, "We have received a form of prayer for the establishment of a church, but for the abolition of a church we have not received such." But when the Emperor pressed him hard, he said evasively, "Glory be to God, who is long-suffering now, always, and for ever and ever, Amen!" This convenient formula was accepted as an adequate

prayer of deconsecration; the church was pulled down and the fountain was made; and at Petriou a new church to the Virgin was built to compensate her for the demolition of her house in the Augusteum.

Justinian professed to concern himself for the morals of his subjects. At least he assembled a synod (in trullo) in 692, of which the object was to consider important matters which had been neglected at previous councils. Amid the excitement of theological discussion, moral life had declined and church discipline had become relaxed; the Emperor desired to reform morals, to bring Christian life into order, and to uproot the remains of Jewish and heathen perversity. The acts of this synod are peculiarly interesting to the general historian, as illustrating manners and morals, and we shall return to it in another place. It was called *Quinisextum*, because it was a sort of supplement to the fifth and sixth general Councils and it purposed to be ecumenical, but the Pope, Sergius, refused to sign the acts on account of certain clauses, such as the prohibition of fasting on Saturdays and the permission to priests to marry.¹ Justinian attempted to force the Pope to his will by violence, such as Constans had used to Martin, but the feeling in Italy was strong for the bishop of Rome, and the soldiers of the exarchate supported him against the spatharius whom Justinian had sent to seize him.

At length in 695 the inevitable retribution came, and Justinian suffered the penalty of his unpopular policy and injudicious oppression of the higher classes. His fall came about on this wise.

Leontius, an Isaurian, the general of the Anatolic theme, whom we saw fighting in Armenia and Iberia and gaining repute in war, had incurred the Emperor's suspicions or the enmity of his favourites, and had pined for three years in prison. Perhaps it was in connection with the defeat at Sebastopolis that Justinian placed him in confinement. But at length (in 695) he was suddenly released, and at the same time informed that he had been appointed "General of Hellas" and must without delay set out for his district with three fast sailers. He had two friends who used to visit him in prison, Paulus, a monk and astronomer, and Gregory of Cappadocia, who had once commanded a mountain fort, presumably in Asia Minor, with the title of *kleisuriarch*, and, having since become a monk, was then abbot of the monastery of Floras. These two monks had often averred to Leontius, while he was in prison, that he was destined to become Emperor of the Romans. On the night of his departure for Greece he met them, to say farewell; he reminded them of their prediction, and observed bitterly, "Now my life is ending in misery, for I shall be expecting every moment death to follow me". "Fear not," they replied, "the prophecy will be soon fulfilled. Only listen to us and follow us."

In accordance with the directions of these ecclesiastics, Leontius took his men and his arms and proceeded silently to the praetorium, or residence of the prefect of the city. He knocked at the gate and announced to the porter that the Emperor was waiting without, having come for the purpose of arranging the treatment of some of the prisoners who were incarcerated in the buildings. The prefect, informed of the imperial presence, came hastily down to open the gate; and was immediately overpowered by Leontius, beaten and bound. Then the prisoners, who were numerous and of exalted rank, were set free. Most of them were soldiers, and some had languished in the dungeons for seven or eight years. Leontius, sure of their fidelity, provided them with arms, and then proceeded with his party to the Augusteum, crying aloud, "Ho, all Christians to St. Sophia!" and he sent others to cry the same summons in other regions of the city. A multitude of citizens thronged to the church, and in the meantime the revolutionist, along with the two monks and the most important of the released prisoners, went to the Patriarcheion, where they found the Patriarch filled with alarm.

It is stated as the cause of his fear that the Emperor had given orders to a patrician and general named Stephanus, and surnamed Rusius (not to be confounded with Stephanus the sacellarius), to massacre the people of Constantinople by night, beginning with the Patriarch. This mandate would be quite credible if attributed to Justinian after his return from exile, but I feel considerable hesitation in believing that he had at this time reached such a pitch of insanity.

The Patriarch Callinicus not unwillingly accompanied Leontius to the cathedral. There he said to the people, "This is the day which the Lord has made," and all the people cried, "Let the bones of Justinian be dug up," that is: may Justinian be accursed. After this preliminary quasi-religious sanctification of their future acts, all proceeded to the hippodrome. Thither the unfortunate Justinian was led at daybreak; and in the southern crescent, where such scenes usually took place, his nose and his tongue were slit, after which spiteful usage he was shipped off to the Tauric peninsula, whither his grandfather had banished Pope Martin.

The mutilation which Justinian suffered cannot have been so severe as the terms naturally suggest. The operation performed on his tongue did not deprive him of the power of speaking, and we may assume that the cutting of the nose did not mean its total removal. In fact, it seems probable that the words are more cruel than the acts really were; and that the *rinokopia*, and *glossotomia*, which were ordinary occurrences in Byzantium, and are cited as instances of Byzantine cruelty, were little more than a very severe and indelible brand, which, however, did not materially affect the victim's general wellbeing.

The expulsion of Justinian was accompanied by the execution of the two detested ministers of finance Stephanus and Theodotus, who with their feet tied together were dragged through the thoroughfare and burned at the place called Bous.

Thus the prediction of the astronomer Paulus came to pass, and Leontius the Patrician, instead of being "General of Hellas," became Emperor of the Romans. And thus too the dynasty of Heraclius, having lasted for eighty-five years, came to an end; for we need hardly reckon to its credit or discredit the few years during which Justinian, having returned from exile, enjoyed the supreme power again and committed acts that were worthy only of a madman.

I may conclude this chapter by putting forward the conjecture that Justinian II made Justinian I a model for his own acts. I do not mean that he attempted to adopt the spirit of the great monarch's administration; I mean that he had a fancy for aping his namesake in certain minor matters. In the first place, unlike his immediate

predecessors and forefathers, he caused expensive architectural works to be executed; like Justinian I, he desired to be remembered as a builder. In the second place, he intended to force Pope Sergius to comply with his will by violence, as Justinian I had forced Pope Vigilius. Here of course he had the more recent example of his grandfather Constans. In the third place, when he was in exile he married, as we shall see, the sister of the chagan of the Khazars. As Justinian's wife she was called Theodora, and! conjecture that the banished monarch, when he chose this name for her, thought of Theodora the wife of his great namesake. In the fourth place, he formed designs against Abasgia, as we shall learn in a future chapter, and here too I think he was recurring to the days of Justinian I. Certain it is that from Justinian I to Justinian II we hear of few dealings between the Empire and the Abasgians. Again, the foundation of Justinianopolis recalls the eponymous cities of Justinian I. Once more, Stephanus and Theodotus, the instruments of cruelty and extortion, remind us of John the Cappadocian; and since John's prefecture no Emperor is recorded to have employed such notorious oppressors until the monk became logothete and the eunuch *sacellarius* under the second Justinian.

CHAPTER XI

FOUNDATION OF THE BULGARIAN KINGDOM

By the middle of the seventh century the Balkan lands were, as we have seen, covered with Slavonic settlements, so that in Moesia, Illyricum, Macedonia the Slavs constituted the hulk of the population. The towns on the sea-coast were still Greek, and the remains of the old Albanese and Thracian nations lingered still among the mountains; but it was evident that destiny had marked out the peninsula north of Mount Olympus for a Slavonic country.

The Slavs, however, were themselves incapable of union; they had no political instinct in that direction; and if a principle of unity had not been induced from without, they might have never become dominant, they might have even been gradually crushed by the Emperors of Constantinople.

The people who supplied the unity, which the Slovenes were by themselves incapable of realising, were the Bulgarians, a non-Aryan race allied with the Khazars, Magyars, etc., and belonging to what is called the Ugro-Finnic branch. We have already met them as early as the end of the fifth century fighting with Theodoric, and defeated by him; we have then seen them invading the Roman Empire in the reigns of Anastasius and Justinian, and afterwards, at the end of the sixth century, reduced to a condition of semi-dependence on the Avar monarchy. These Bulgarians, who dwelled on the Euxine coast north of the Danube in Budiak and Bessarabia, had separated from the great Bulgarian nation, whose home was in the lands between the Don, the Volga, and the Kuban, east of the Sea of Azov.

The Greek historians Theophanes and Nicephorus, living at the end of the eighth century, record a story about the Bulgarians, which they must have drawn from a common source, as not only their facts but their verbal expressions coincide. This story is legendary, but it has a historical foundation. Kokrat, or Kourat, was king of the kindred nations of the Bulgarians and Kotragoi in the reign of Heraclius. He died in the reign of Constans, leaving five sons, whom he exhorted to cling together and not break up the Bulgarian power. As might have been predicted, they did not follow his admonition. The first son, Baian or Batbaian (a name that reminds us of the chagan of the Avars in the reign of Maurice), remained in the territory of his father; the second, whose name was Kotragos, established himself on the right bank of the Don; the third, Asperuch, crossed the Dniepr and Dniestr, and settled near the north bank of the Danube; the fourth migrated to Pannonia, and was subject unto the Avars; the fifth travelled still farther west, and settled in the "pentapolis of Ravenna."

This notice crowds into the reign of Constans the Second events that took place nearly two centuries before. The migration of the third brother, Asperuch (or Ispereich, as he is called in the Slavonic record of Bulgarian monarchs), represents a migration that took place before the year 480 AD. We may further conjecture that the migrations of the fourth and fifth brothers do not represent separations from the mother nation on the bank of the Kuban, but rather offshoots from the daughter nation between the Danube and Dniester. Both these later settlements of the Bulgarians in Pannonia and in Italy must have taken place in the seventh century; and we must evidently connect the fifth with the notice of Paul, the historian of the Lombards, that King Grimuald settled some Bulgarians, who entered Italy peacefully under the leadership of one Alzeco, in the neighbourhood of Beneventum.

The Bulgarian king¹ who revolted against the Avars and allied himself with Heraclius, Kokrat or Kroat, is called Kurt in the Slavonic list of Bulgarian monarchs to which we have already referred. Nicephorus records that Kubrat, the nephew of Organ and chief of the Onogundurs, revolted against the chagan of the Avars and made a treaty with Heraclius, who conferred on him the title of Patrician; moreover, Kubrat expelled the Avars from his own land. This event was decisive for the history of the Bulgarians, just as the battle of Netad was decisive for the history of the Ostrogoths.

In the reign of Constantine IV the independent Bulgarians began to distress the neighbouring Roman territory by their incursions. The Emperor determined to take vigorous measures immediately, and, instead of

merely strengthening the frontier defences, to attack the enemy in their own country and teach them a salutary lesson. He prepared a naval armament as well as a land army, and transported the Asiatic troops to Europe. The territory of the Bulgarians was called Oglos or Onglos (an angle or comer), and corresponds to the district marked Budiak on modern maps. Here they possessed strong and inaccessible fortresses, secured by precipitous rocks which rose behind and perfidious morasses which stretched in front, so that it was a difficult country for an invader. When they saw the great expeditions by land and sea that had come against them, the Bulgarians, greatly terrified, retreated into their fastnesses, and for four days endured a siege. But unluckily the Emperor, who had accompanied the naval armament in person, fell sick of a pain in his foot, and, commanding his forces to continue the siege, departed with a few ships to Mesembria. Some regiments of cavalry misconstrued the departure of the sovereign as flight, and, seized with a groundless panic, fled themselves. The panic was communicated to the rest of the army, the flight became general, and the Bulgarians, issuing from their retreats, pursued and completely routed the Romans. All whom they captured they put to death. Still pursuing, they crossed the Danube and advanced to Varna, near Odessus. Struck by the natural features of Moesia, which seemed to lend it a peculiar security,—the Haemus on the south, the Danube on the north, the Euxine on the east,— they determined to change their habitation and establish themselves south of the Danube.

Accordingly, the Bulgarians reduced to subjection the seven Slavonic tribes that dwelled in Moesia, experiencing probably little resistance, and disposed them along the frontiers of the new Bulgarian kingdom, to defend it on the west against the Avars and on the south against the Romans. The tribe of the Severs was placed to guard the pass of Beregaba in the eastern Balkans. The Roman towns and forts were gradually reduced, and Constantine, after the failure of his great expedition, was constrained to make a treaty with the new kingdom that was being founded within Roman territory, and to agree to the payment of a certain sum of money every year to the Bulgarian king, Isperrich. The motive of Constantine in paying this tribute seems to have been to save Thrace from immediate invasion, so that he might have time to take measures for its permanent security against “the new and abominable” neighbours.

The chief towns of the new kingdom founded by Isperrich were Preslav (Peristhlaba), on the Kamcija (about a degree due west of Varna), and Drster (Durostorum, the modern Silistria), on the Danube; and in these regions the kingdom continued for more than two centuries with little change in its boundaries, nearly corresponding to the modern principality of Bulgaria. It was not till the tenth century that Bulgarian supremacy extended to the south-west, and included the Slavs of Macedonia and Dacia. In the meantime the conquered Slavs were by a gradual process conquering their Tartaric conquerors. The Bulgarian customs had little influence on the Slavonic character; and the Bulgarian language had less influence on the Slavonic language. On the contrary, the Bulgarians were Slavised, and ultimately absorbed among the Slaes, so that the Bulgarian people of the present day is purely Slavonic, with nothing non-Aryan about it except its name and a slight infusion of Tartar blood.

In these events we see two features of Slavonic history prominently marked. We observe on the one hand the inability of the wayward Slavonic tribes to form a political unity, without an alien power to give the initiative by subjecting them to a monarchy. On the other hand we see the assimilative absorbing power of the Slavonic race—herein somewhat resembling the Hellenic—which was able in a short time to obliterate the identity of the conquerors, while it profited by the principles of unity and monarchy which they had introduced. I call these two phenomena features of Slavonic history, because they recurred some centuries later in the more celebrated ease of the Russians, and, if my conjecture touching the Croatian Slaves is right, they had occurred in a less pronounced form before. The unity, to which the Slavs of Russia would never have attained of themselves, was superinduced by the Northmen of Scandinavia, who founded a Russian kingdom; but the language, the manners, and the identity of the conquerors were soon absorbed in Slavism.

Thus for the Slavs the way to unity and empire has lain through acceptance of a foreign yoke; they have lost their life in order to save it.

The khan of the Bulgarians ruled with a council of six *bolyars* (whence the Russian *boyar*), and the constitution rested on an aristocratic basis. The customs of the Bulgarians had an oriental complexion, and differed totally from those of the Slaves. They were polygamists. The women veiled their faces, and the men wore turbans, and both sexes wore loose trousers. The king partook of his meals alone, without the company even of a wife. The Bulgarians cared only for war, and their barbarous manners present no trace of industrial development. In their old homes they did not use coins; cattle were the medium of exchange. They were a superstitious people, and considered magical rites a necessary preliminary to battle.

About ten years after the settlement of Isperrich and his Bulgarians in Moesia, the young Emperor Justinian dissolved the peace which his father had made by refusing to pay the stipulated tribute (689 AD.) He ordered the cavalry regiments stationed in Asia Minor to cross over to Thrace, “desiring to lead captive the Bulgarians and the Sclavinias,” that is the Sclavinia which was now included in the Bulgarian kingdom and the Sclavinia to the west of Mount Rhodope, which was nominally part of the Roman Empire, but was constantly rebelling. In the following year (690) Justinian first marched northwards against the Bulgarians, whom he repulsed, and then turned westwards against the Slavonic settlements in the neighbourhood of Thessalonica. He succeeded in collecting a vast number of Slavs, some of whom voluntarily joined him, while others he forcibly constrained; and, having transported them to Asia Minor, settled them in the district of Opsikion. We have already seen how he formed thirty thousand of these captives into a “upernumerary corps” under the command of Nebulus, and how twenty thousand of them deserted to the Saracens.

The Bulgarians enjoyed a slight revenge for their defeat. They waylaid Justinian, “as he was returning,” in a mountain pass, and he escaped with difficulty. But it is not clear whether this took place as he was returning from Thessalonica with his captives or after he had settled them in Opsikion. The Bulgarians, however, seem not to have harassed the Empire again during the reign of Isperrich, who died in 700 and was succeeded by Terbel.

I may add a word as to the history of the old Bulgarians who dwelt on the Kuban and Kama. Their kingdom was called Great Bulgaria, and was on friendly terms with the Saracens, who converted it to Mohammedanism in the tenth century. It suffered from the enmity of the Khazars and the Russians, and was finally, in the thirteenth century, exterminated by the Tartars. And thus the only relic of the Bulgarians is their name, which in western Europe has come to be a word of opprobrium, connoting a nameless vice.

I may conclude this chapter by noticing the series of attacks which were made upon Thessalonica by the Macedonian Slavs in the latter part of the seventh century. In 675 or 676 the fierce tribes who dwelled on the coasts of the Thermaic and Pagasaic gulfs blockaded the capital of Illyricum by land and sea. But the ships of the besiegers were scattered by a storm; and, as far as we can determine from the account transmitted by a biographer who writes for edification, a sally of the besiegers put the land army to flight, and Chatzon, the chief of the expedition, was captured, and stoned to death by women. The inhabitants attributed this deliverance to the special intervention of St. Demetrius, whose church still attests the honour in which he was held; just as, nearly a hundred years before, the repulse of the Avars was gratefully set down to his protection.

But the Slavs had not abandoned the idea of obtaining possession of the great capital of Illyricum. In 677 the aid of the holy Demetrius was again needed, when the barbarians returned to the assault, reinforced by Avars and Bulgarians and provided with poliorcetic machines. The blockade lasted for a month, and then the foe retired, the saint having again wrought deliverance for his city. At this time John II was archbishop of Thessalonica, and his activity in providing for the defence of the town is closely connected with the supernatural colouring given to the events by the ecclesiastical biographer, in whose pages the praetorian prefect plays a subordinate part. The city suffered from an earthquake soon after this siege, and had the distress of beholding the church of its patron in flames. A greater misfortune befell it in the death of the archbishop. Then we have a glimpse of Perbund (Pervund), "chief" of the Runchines, walking in the streets of the town; but the praetorian prefect suspects him, commits him to irons, and sends him to Constantinople. He attempts to escape from prison and is slain.

In consequence of this dealing with Perbund, his tribe, the Runchines, combine with the Sagudates and march against Thessalonica (678). For two whole years the city is closely blockaded, and endures all the miseries incident to a siege. The Emperor is unable to send more than ten small ships to its relief; and the raising of the siege is finally due to dissensions among the beleaguers. The Belegezetes desert to the Romans, and the enemy's camp is broken up (680); but the credit of the deliverance falls to the share of the saint. Once more, in the following year, the city is besieged; and once more the besiegers are repulsed by its protector. In the meantime the waters of the northern Aegean are infested by the Slavonic pirates.

XII

ORIGIN OF THE SYSTEM OF THEMES

One of the most obscure and also most interesting problems of seventh-century history is the origin of the "Byzantine themes." In the tenth century the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogennetus wrote a treatise on the themes or districts into which the Empire was at that time divided, and he distinctly assigns their origin to the seventh century. The assertion of the imperial writer would by itself weigh little, because he was lamentably ignorant of history and quite destitute of critical ability, but it is confirmed by the undesigned testimony of the historians Nicephorus and Theophanes, whose narrative of the latter years of the seventh century presupposes at least the beginning of a thematic division, if I may be permitted to use the expression. Nicephorus and Theophanes lived indeed a century later, but they made use of earlier sources. Constantine further fixes the latter part of the reign of Heraclius as the date of the introduction of the theme system. This statement is not contradicted by the scanty records of the history of that time; but it is not necessitated. The passages in Theophanes and Nicephorus which bear on the question prove only that the new division was partially made before the death of Constans (668 AD) There are, however, reasons for supposing that Constantine was in a certain sense right.

Many of the themes which existed in the middle of the tenth century had been created recently, within the preceding fifty or sixty years. Such were either smaller districts of subordinate importance, which had previously been subdivisions of large themes, or else new acquisitions won from hostile territory, such as Longobardia and Lycandos. With the origin of these Constantine was of course familiar. But he did not think of applying the facts, which he had heard with his ears and his father had told him, to the course of past history, and concluding by analogy that many other themes were also of later institution; and that the whole Empire had originally been divided into a few large districts, from which the elaborate system of seventeen Asiatic and twelve European themes gradually developed.

For this is the conclusion to which we are led by a careful collection of all the passages bearing on the subject in our two chief sources for Roman history from Constans II to Nicephorus I.

The word *theme* meant properly a military division or regiment, and this fact indicates that the geographical themes had a military origin, and that the new division was due at least primarily and partly to needs of warfare. The language of the historians makes this fact plain, and we can trace in their pages the transition from theme in the sense of troops quartered in a particular district to theme in the sense of the district over which

the *stratégos* or military governor presided. But we can also see their origin clearly stamped on the names of the themes themselves; and here we find an important distinction which helps to elucidate the whole subject. A certain number of the thematic names are of military origin, while the rest are purely geographical. Of military origin, for example, was the Opsikian theme, so called because the Opsikion (*obsequium*) or imperial guard was quartered in that district; the Armeniac theme received its appellation from the Armeniakoi, or troops placed to guard the Armenian frontier; whereas Cappadocia, Paphlagonia, Lycandos are geographical names.

Now a study of our historical authorities shows us that the former class of themes are the most ancient, and that themes with names like Cappadocia and Sebasteia were formed long afterwards. Hence we may draw the general conclusion that the thematic system grew gradually and un-designedly out of military necessities, and was not created suddenly (like the French departments) by the fiat of one Emperor.

But the military necessities which existed in the reigns of Heraclius and his successors are by no means a complete explanation. It seems to me that we shall miss the import of the new provincial system which developed in the seventh and eighth centuries if we fail to recognise that it was really initiated in the sixth century, and that the administrative changes of Justinian were the link between the system of Diocletian and the medieval system. I showed in a former chapter how Justinian's reforms departed from the principles of Diocletian, and anticipated an arrangement which was elaborated in later times. Thus it would be false to consider that the tendency to supersede the hierarchy of officials and abandon the principle of division of labour—in fact, to recur to the system of the imperial provinces under the early Emperors—appeared first in the seventh century; the new departure was really made by the great Justinian. What was the *strategia* (or *praetura*) of Sicily but a theme founded in the sixth century? But the circumstances of the seventh century, the wars with the Persians and the Saracens, favoured the development of this Justinianean novelty and gave it a particular direction. The absence of definite statements in our meagre sources renders it impossible to trace out in detail the course of this development; nevertheless a careful examination of incidental notices may lead us to some important conclusions. We may first see what intimations our authorities, Theophanes and Nicephorus, give us of the existence of themes (or rather *stratégiai*) in the seventh century; we may then pass on to consider their origin; and finally we may glance, in anticipation, at the development of the system in the eighth century.

I. The earliest definite notice that concerns us is that of the revolt of Saborius or Sapor, the *general* of the *Armeniakoi*, in the last year of Constans. This entitles us to conclude that at that time the provinces of the Empire bordering on Armenia were under the separate government of a general, and the regiments under his command were called Armeniakoi. Two years later we learn that the soldiers “of the theme of the Anatolikoi” went to Chrysopolis and preferred a curiously expressed request to Constantine IV, and twenty years later Leontius was general of the Anatolikoi (690 or 691). These passages prove the existence of an Armeniac and of an Anatolic district, under separate strategoi, in the reign of Constans, I.

Two other districts, afterwards called themes, seem to have been under the authority of independent military governors in the latter half of the seventh century; they are first mentioned in the reign of Justinian II. That Emperor settled the Slaves “in the parts of Opsikion” in 687-688, an expression which shows that the troops quartered there had already associated their name with the territory. The commander of the Opsikians was not entitled general, but *count*, and the “county” of Opsikion stretched along the Propontis and reached to a considerable distance inland; it included Dorylaeum, near which city the district of the Anatolies began. Moreover, “Hellas” was under the command of a general, for we hear that Leontius was released from prison and appointed strategos of Hellas.

There is no direct evidence that the southern coast of Asia Minor, from near Miletus on the west to near Seleucia on the east, constituted in the seventh century a *Cibyraiote theme*. We hear of no strategos of the Cibyraiots until the year 731; but, although we hear of no strategos, we hear of a *drungarius*. In 697 Apsimar, who became the Emperor Tiberius III, was drungarius of the Cibyraiots. The words of the chroniclers imply that he was especially connected with the people or soldiers of Corycus (Attalia); but it is not clear whether he was subordinate to someone who bore the title strategos of the Cibyraiots, or whether he was himself the sole admiral of the Cibyraiots. It is evident, however, that the little maritime town of Cibyra, between Side and Ptolemais, had already given her name to the naval troops of those regions, a distinction such as her greater namesake, the inland Cibyra of Caria, never achieved; and perhaps this distinction was due to some energetic enterprise against a Saracen fleet. The term drungarius was specially applied to admirals and to commanders of the watch.

In the seventh century then it appears that there were at least three administrative divisions in Asia Minor, the Opsikian, the Anatolic, and the Armeniac, subject respectively to a count and two strategoi; and probably a fourth, the Cibyraiote drungariate. The question now arises whether there were not also other independent districts, which do not happen to be mentioned because they played no prominent part in the seventh century. Now in 711 we are told that Justinian II collected the Opsikians and *Thracians*, and of these Thracians one Christopher was the *turmarch*. The Thracians were evidently regiments transferred from Thrace to Asia Minor for military service against Persians or Saracens. They were originally one *turma* or division of the troops commanded by the strategos of Thrace, but when they were permanently established in Asia Minor they could no longer obey that general and were under the supreme command of their turmarch. This turmarchy some years later was raised to the dignity of a *strategia*, or theme proper. As for the Bucellarian theme, which included the old provinces of Honorias and First Galatia, we hear nothing of the Bukellarioi until the year 765, and I think we shall be safe in attributing the origin of the theme to Leo III, who, as we shall see hereafter, probably organised a symmetrical system of thematic divisions. Optimaton, “the poorest of the themes,” did not perhaps become a theme until a still later period. Paphlagonia, in the eighth century, though perhaps not in the seventh, was a part of the Armeniac district, and Cappadocia was included in the Anatolic. The parts of Cilicia close to the Saracen frontier were presumably governed by one or more cleisurarchs, perhaps responsible to the Anatolic general. .

It is possible that there may have existed in the seventh century an anticipation, in some sort, of a theme which did not exist in the days of Constantine Porphyrogenetus, but existed a little later in the days of Basil II. We read that when Heraclius, sailing from Carthage against Phocas, anchored in the Dardanelles, he received some information from a certain functionary called the count of Abydos. It is tempting to think that he may have had control as a governor over the surrounding districts, and that thus the theme of Abydos, which was formed by splitting up the theme of the Aegean Sea, was anticipated. But perhaps it is safer to attribute only financial offices to this Abydene count, and connect him exclusively with the dues⁴ which were exacted from merchants entering the Propontis.

To sum up, our chronicles prove that there existed in Asia Minor in the seventh century two themes or districts under strategoi, or governors in whose hands military and civil authority were combined. These were the Armeniac and the Anatolic themes, and both were much larger than we afterwards find them in the tenth century. Besides these, there was the Opsikian theme governed by a count, who in dignity and power was on a level with the strategoi. There were also the drungariate of the Cibyraiots (at least this seems the most probable theory) and the turmarchy of the Thracians; and these administrations were probably independent, though not equal in dignity to the strategiai. Thus practically the Cibyraiote theme and the Thracian theme existed in the seventh century. In Europe we find two strategiai, Thrace and Sicily, dating from the reign of Justinian, and two strategiai of later date, Africa and Hellas. The exarchate of Ravenna was similar in nature though different in title; and the praetorian prefect of Illyricum, who still kept state at Thessalonica, was in some sense a military governor, as the defence of the city devolved upon him. We may tabulate then the following list of military districts for the seventh century:—

Asia.

1. County of Opsikion.
2. Strategia of the Anatolikoi.
3. Strategia of the Armeniakoi.
4. Turmarchy of the Thracians.
5. Drungariate of the Cibyraiots.
- 6 (?). Strategia of Coloneia.

Europe

1. Strategia of Thrace.
2. Strategia of Hellas.
3. Strategia of Sicily.
4. Strategia of Africa.
5. Exarchate of Ravenna.
- 6 (?). Prefecture of Illyricum.

But besides these there were possibly other independent governments in Asia Minor which chance has not recorded. Perhaps we may take it for granted that some of the strategiai instituted by Justinian had not yet been superseded. The strategos of Lycaonia had probably given way before the jurisdiction of the Anatolic general, and it is possible that the same fate may have befallen the Justinianean praetor of Pisidia. But the moderator of Helenopontus was perhaps still in existence, and the region of Paphlagonia may not have yet been incorporated in the Armeniac theme, but may have enjoyed the rule of an independent strategos, as in the sixth century. The proconsulate of Cappadocia had certainly ceased, and perhaps the proconsulate of Asia; but Asia is still spoken of as a separate province, though a governor is not mentioned. It may also be noticed that there was a strategos of the Roman cities on the coast of Dalmatia, but it is uncertain whether he was responsible to the exarch of Ravenna or directly to the Emperor.

II. Though the mist of ages has obscured the actual circumstances which attended the innovations noticed in the foregoing pages, we can make some attempt at explaining how they came about. First of all, I would once more insist that the beginning of the changes was prior to the seventh century—that the change really began with the administrative reforms of Justinian. In fact, as I said before, Justinian founded the theme of Sicily and the theme of Thrace, though they were not then called themes but *stratēgiai*. The strategos or praetor who governed in Sicily in the sixth century was the forerunner of the strategos who governed there in the eighth century; and the son of Artavasdos, who was strategos of Thrace in 740, was the official descendant of the first strategos who was appointed by Justinian, when the vicariate was abolished.

I shall begin with the Armeniac theme, because its origin admits of a simple explanation. It will be remembered that Justinian in the early years of his reign instituted a new military commander, entitled *magister militum per Armenian*. The Greek word *stratēlates* was almost entirely confined to express the Latin *magister*

militum, while the word *stratégos*, which in stricter use corresponded to praetor, was also employed as an equivalent for *magister*. And thus we find John Mystacon (in the reign of Maurice) at one time described as the *stratégos* and at another time as the *stratélates* in Armenia. Some years later, when Asia Minor was overrun by the Persians, and the civil authority of the praetorian prefect of the East or of the governors of the Armenian provinces could not be maintained in the constant presence of the foe, it was natural that the general of the Armeniac armies should extend his control to civil matters and act as a provincial governor. The ambiguity of the word “strategos” rendered this change easy and natural. Men were accustomed to the *stratégoi* of Paphlagonia, Lycaonia, Sicily, Thrace; and it was not hard to think of the general of Armenia as a *strategos* in the same sense—a military and civil governor. It is impossible to determine when this change was officially recognised. In the last Persian campaign of Heraclius we meet one George, a *turmarch* of the *Armeniakoi*; and I think we may assume that at that time the name *Armeniakoi* was the ordinary term for the troops under the *stratégos* (or *magister*) of Armenia.

This theory is illustrated by the parallel case of Africa. A *magister militum* and a praetorian prefect at first coexist; the prefect soon disappears; and the *magister* becomes a *stratégos*, in the sense which the word bears in the Novels of Justinian.

The origin of the Anatolic theme is susceptible of a similar explanation. When the Syrian provinces were lost to the Saracens, the troops of the East, who obeyed the *magister militum per orientem*, retired to Asia Minor, and henceforward the energies of that officer were limited to a narrower scope. For security against the new lords of Syria it was necessary to place the provinces north of the Taurus under military control; the old office of praetorian prefect of the East fell then, if it had not fallen before, into disuse; and the supreme military commanders became also the supreme civil governors. This seemed no great innovation, for the *stratégoi* instituted by Justinian had accustomed the government to the idea of combining civil and military functions. And thus the *stratélates* of the East, or, as he was perhaps usually called, *stratégos*, became *stratégos* in a new sense, and the ambiguity of the term facilitated the transition. The adjective *anatolic* (eastern) was the word commonly applied to the army of the general of the Anatoli (East), and so, when certain districts in Asia Minor were consigned to the care of that general, they were known as the districts of the Anatolies. This I believe was the origin of the Anatolic theme.

Thus the governors (*stratégoi*) of the two most important provinces or themes of Asia in the seventh century, the Anatolic and the Armeniac, were the descendants of *magistri militum*, who had been instituted respectively by Diocletian and Justinian.

Neither the chroniclers nor George of Pisidia give us information as to the divisions of the armies which followed Heraclius to battle. But we hear of the *Armeniakoi*, and there were of course the *Anatolikoi*. Distinct from these were the troops from Thrace and the troops from Greece. May we not assume that Heraclius, reviving the classical name of Hellas, called the latter *Helladikoi*, on the analogy of *Anatolikoi* and *Armeniakoi*? The soldiers from Thrace, we may argue from the name of the later theme, were known as *Thracians*. Besides these, there were the regiments especially attached to the person of the Emperor; they were named in Latin *obsequentes* or *obsequium*, in Greek the *opsikion* or *opsikians*.

We may assume with tolerable certainty that when Syria was lost, these regiments, with the exception of the *Helladikoi*, were disposed in various parts of Asia Minor. The *Helladikoi* returned to Greece to defend it against the inroads of the Slavs; the *Opsikian* regiments were disposed in the regions adjoining the Propontis; the *Thracians*, or at least some of them, occupied parts of Lydia and Phrygia; while the central districts of Cappadocia, Galatia, and Phrygia were assigned to the Anatolies. This accords with the statement of Constantine Porphyrogenetus that the themes were formed in the days of Heraclius on account of the Saracen invasions.

The soldiers of *Opsikion* were often designated as the *peratic themes* (“the themes over the water”); and some of the Asiatic regiments were specially distinguished as the *cavallarie* or cavalry themes.

The question arises whether the new provincial governors were invested with financial as well as with civil and judicial powers in the seventh century. In later times they did not exercise financial functions, which were assigned to special imperial officers, called *prótonotarioi* or *dioikétai*, but it is possible that this arrangement was due to Leo III, who paid special attention to the financial administration, and that at first the *stratégoi* superintended the collection of tribute. Justinian certainly had in some instances assigned such functions to his praetors, but it is hardly probable that the Emperors, especially the Emperor Constantine, would have long left such extensive powers in the hands of their governors without control. I think we may assume that the tribute was levied by officials not formally dependent on the governors, though dependent on their help in case difficulties arose.

III. Administrative Organisation under Leo III.

As we are discussing the subject of the themes, it will be convenient to anticipate a little and speak of some further changes which were probably made by Leo, the first Isaurian Emperor. Finlay said that the division into themes, which he supposed to have been made by Heraclius, was reorganised by Leo III, but he has not given any proof of his statement. I have shown in what sense the assertion is true that they were established by Heraclius.

Now there are, I believe, sufficiently clear indications that Leo the Isaurian made certain changes in the administrative divisions of the Empire, which entitle him to be considered the first organiser of a regular system of themes. In the year 731 we find the *Cibyraiots* under the government, not of a *drungarius*, but of a *stratégos*. In 740 we find the *Thracians* ruled by a *stratégos*, no longer by a *turmarch*. A *Bucellarian* theme under a *stratégos* is mentioned first in the reign of Constantine V, Leo's son and successor (765-766). But when we put

these data together, we can hardly avoid drawing the conclusion that Leo III introduced a symmetrical system of *stratégiai* or themes, (1) by raising the Thracesian subdivision to be a chief division, independent of the Anatolic general; (2) perhaps by giving the name of *stratégos* to the Cibyraiote governor, who was independent before, but was hereby raised to equality with the Anatolic and Armeniac *stratégoi*; (3) by constituting the Bucellarian theme out of what was before, perhaps, a minor division of the Opsikian. The result was that the Anatolic theme was curtailed, and though it continued to be highly important, it no longer overshadowed Asia Minor. These new arrangements were doubtless accompanied by a strict definition of subdivisions,—turms and *cleisurae*.

In Leo's time then, and throughout the eighth century, the Asiatic themes seem to have been:

1. Opsikian.
2. Anatolic.
3. Thracesian.
4. Armeniac.
5. Cibyraiote.
6. Bucellarian.
7. Coloneia (?).

In regard to the European provinces, Thrace, like Sicily, had been a *stratégia* since the days of Justinian. We find Hellas governed by a *stratégos* at the end of the seventh century, and although we meet a *turmarchy* of Hellas in 727, there is no reason to suppose that a *stratégia* had been changed into a *turmarchy*. The general of "Hellas," a name which came to be specially used of northern Greece, doubtless administered the affairs of the Peloponnesus; and thus there would naturally be two *turmarchies* in his district, a *turmarchy* of Hellas and a *turmarchy* of the Peloponnesus; if his sway extended to the Adriatic, there was a third *turmarchy*—called perhaps Epirus or Nicopolis. It is impossible to say whether these *turmarchies* existed at the end of the seventh century, when Justinian II appointed Leontius *stratégos*, or were established by Leo III. In any case there is no reason to suppose that those regions had ceased to constitute a *stratégia* in 727. Agallianus, the *turmarch* of Hellas in that year, governed the *Helladikoi*—the soldiers and people of northern Greece.

It is not clear whether Macedonia constituted a theme at this time. The land was inhabited by Slavonic tribes, and it seems probable that the sway of the praetorian prefect of Illyricum was practically limited to Thessalonica. We may perhaps assume doubtfully a theme of Macedonia.

On the whole then I would set down the European themes in the eighth century as—

1. Thrace.
2. Macedonia (?).
3. Hellas (including Peloponnesus).
4. Sicily (including Calabria and Bruttii).

To these divisions must be added (5) the government of the islands, which in later times was called a theme; (6) the exarchate of Italy; and (7) the free state of Cherson.

CHAPTER XIII

TWENTY YEARS OF ANARCHY

The twenty years which intervened between the banishment of Justinian in 695 and the accession of Leo the Isaurian in 717 witnessed a rapid succession of monarchs, all of whom were violently deposed. Isaurian Leontius was succeeded by Apsimar, who adopted the name Tiberius, and these two reigns occupied the first ten years. Then Justinian returned from exile, recovered the throne, and "furiously raged" for six years (705-711). He was overthrown by Bardanes, who called himself Philippicus; then came Artemius, whose imperial name was Anastasius; and finally the years 716 and 717 saw the fall of Anastasius, the reign and fall of Theodosius, and the accession of Isaurian Leo, whose strong arm guided the Empire from ways of anarchy into a new path. This period

may be most conveniently treated by dividing it into three parts. The more orderly reigns of Leontius and Tiberius III we may associate together; the adventures of Justinian and his acts after his restoration stand by themselves; the reigns of the three subsequent Emperors form the third group.

I. The Leontius whom Verina crowned at Tarsus and Isaurian rebels acknowledged in the fifth century has never been enrolled on the lists of Roman Emperors, and thus the Isaurian Leontius who overthrew the dynasty of Heraclius is the first and only sovereign of his name. He enjoyed power for three years. His reign began auspiciously with a year of peace, but in 697 troubles threatened him from three quarters. Lazica and "Varnucion" revolted under the Patrician Sergius, who magyarised or went over to the Arabs; Asia Minor was overrun by a Saracen army; and the same enemy occupied Africa and placed garrisons in the chief towns. The affairs of Africa led in an unforeseen way to the deposition of the Emperor.

Almost due south of Carthage, the city of Kairowan was founded in the reign of Constantine IV by Okba (670) six years later it was taken by the Christians, then retaken by the Saracens, and taken yet again by the Christians (683), in whose power it remained until it was recovered by Hassan, whom Abd Almalik sent against Africa at the head of a large army (697). Hassan also conquered Carthage and compelled it to receive a garrison. But before the year was over, Leontius sent an efficient general, John the Patrician, in command of the entire Roman fleet, to rescue Africa from the invader. When John reached Carthage he found that the Saracens had secured the entrance to the port by a strong chain. But, bursting through this obstacle, he expelled the garrison from the city; and then freed all the other fortified towns from their Saracen occupants. Thus in a short space of time the Roman dominion was re-established, and the successful general wintered at Carthage, waiting for imperial behests from Constantinople. In the meantime Abd Almalik prepared a larger fleet than he had sent to the western seas before, and early in 698 his armament arrived at Carthage and drove the Roman vessels from the harbour. Seeing that with his present forces he had no reasonable prospect of holding out against a Saracen siege, John returned to the East in order to obtain reinforcements. His fleet put in at the island of Crete, which lay directly in his homeward course; and events took place there which proved important to the whole Empire.

The subordinate generals of the various regiments and themes conspired to throw off their allegiance to Leontius, and incited the army to join in the revolt. It is said that they did not wish to return to the Emperor "for fear and shame"; whence we may perhaps conclude that they had in some way thwarted the commander-in-chief and feared the consequences that might ensue if he should complain to the Emperor. The rebels fixed their hopes and favour on Apsimar, the *drungarius* or admiral of the Cibyriaiots, as the inhabitants of the coast countries Pisidia and Pamphylia were officially called, and they gave him a new and august name, Tiberius.

Apsimar and his party sailed directly to Constantinople, and anchored at Sycae. For a time Leontius held out, but his enemies succeeded in bribing certain officers who possessed keys of the gates to admit them near the palace of Blachernae. When the soldiers obtained admission they stripped the inhabitants of their goods and plundered their houses. It was an unfortunate year for the citizens of Constantinople. They had hardly recovered from a deadly plague which had ravaged the city for four months, when they were forced to submit to violence and pillage at the hands of the troops who were paid to defend them. We shall see this occurrence repeated before many years have elapsed.

Tiberius III dealt with Leontius even as Leontius had dealt with Justinian. He mutilated his nose, but, instead of banishing him to Cherson, confined him as a monk in the cloister of Dalmatus. The chief supporters of the deposed monarch were flogged and banished. Having established himself securely on the throne, Tiberius took measures for the safety of the provinces of Asia Minor by entrusting his brother Heraclius with the sole command of all the cavalry regiments (*cavallarie* themes), and charging him to provide by careful personal inspection for the efficient defence of the important passes of Cappadocia. For a short time a revolt in Persia and the outbreak of a plague in Syria staved off an invasion; and in 700 the usual course of events was reversed, and, instead of finding the Saracens invading Romania, we find the Romans overrunning northern Syria. According to the exaggerated accounts of the Greek historians, they killed two hundred thousand Arabs, besides carrying away immense spoil and many captives. In the following year the caliph retaliated, and Mopsuestia was taken and received a garrison of Mohammedans.

This success was followed up by the acquisition of the Fourth Armenia, the province which had been formed by Justinian I and included the city of Martyropolis and the fort of Kitharizon. The inhabitants revolted from the Romans under a Persian, Baanes, who was nicknamed "Seven Devils." At this time the Romans seem to have frequently employed Persians as governors of frontier provinces.

Armenia was now vacillating between allegiance to the Romans and allegiance to the Saracens, as it had formerly wavered between the Romans and the Persians. In 703 the Armenian rulers rebelled against the Commander of the Faithful and slew the Mohammedans who were residing or sojourning in Armenia. They then sent a request to Tiberius III that he would occupy the country afresh with Roman troops. But the wrath of the caliph was prompter than the succour of the Emperor, and a Saracen general speedily arrived and quelled the insurrection. The Armenian grandees who had been the leaders of the rebellion were assembled by the stratagem of the relentless captain into one place and burned alive.

The loss of the Fourth Armenia and the subjugation of the Romanising party within Armenia itself were perhaps partially compensated for by a great victory which the Emperor's brother Heraclius gained over Saracen invaders in Cilicia, 703 AD., and by a second great victory which the same general achieved in the following year over another army in the same district.

Amid the details which historians record of the elevations and falls of the Emperors of this period, who appear and vanish so rapidly in scenes of treason and violence, we are apt to lose sight of the steadfast and

successful resistance which the Empire never failed to offer to the Saracens. Outlying provinces indeed, like Africa and Sicily, might be doomed to Mohammedan servitude; but ever since the days of Heraclius the main strength of the curtailed Empire was preserved. Had it not been for the able sovereigns and generals of New Rome, the Saracens might have almost, if I may use the word, Islamised Europe.

To Tiberius III we must doubtless attribute the repopulation of Cyprus, whose inhabitants had been transferred to the shores of the Propontis by the policy of Justinian II. Tiberius sent three noble Cyprians, named Phangumes, to the court of Damascus, bearing to the caliph a request that he would allow the Cyprian captives, whom he retained in bondage, to return to their country. The caliph consented, and thus the island was repopulated. Moreover, at the request of the Cyprians, who were much troubled by Saracen pirates, the same Emperor provided for the defence of the island by placing in it garrisons of the *Apelatai* or *Mardaites* of Mount Taurus, who were known as *Stratiotai* (*Stradioti*). The attention of Tiberius, who was perhaps born and reared in Pamphylia, seems to have been specially directed towards the southern coast lands of Asia Minor, and he placed the rest of the *Mardaites* in the city of Attaleia under a chief of their own, who was called a *catepan*. It is also possible that he organised the Cibraiot district and placed it under the command of an independent strategos.

The reign of Tiberius III was by no means discreditable as far as foreign politics were concerned, and the silence of historians leads us to conclude that his subjects were not oppressed by heavy burdens. The only act recorded of him which discloses the apprehensiveness of an illegitimate sovereign is the banishment of Philippicus, the son of a patrician, to the island of Cephallenia. Philippicus had dreamed that his head was overshadowed by an eagle,¹ a dream which, according to the convention of necromancy, betokened future empire, and was likely to awaken the fears even of a legitimate Emperor. The fall of Tiberius was brought about by the banished descendant of Heraclius, the Emperor Justinian, and to him we must now return.

II. Cherson, called in earlier times Chersonesus and built not far from the site of the modern Sebastopol, was a flourishing commercial city which maintained down to this late period and still later its old Hellenic traditions and municipal organisation, little affected by the Roman administration, for though it belonged to the Empire it held a unique, almost independent position. This position was secured by the privileges which were granted to the community by Diocletian and Constantine in return for the assistance which the Chersonite soldiers had rendered to the former against the king of Bosphorus, to the latter against the Sarmatians and Goths. A golden statue of the great Constantine, his own gift, was placed in the council hall of the city. The prosperous history of this municipality, a strange survival of old Greek life, was occasionally varied by hostilities with the town of Bosphorus, situated on the straits which connect the Euxine Sea with Lake Maeotis, and corresponding to the ancient Panticapaeum, while over against it, embayed on the opposite shore, was the city Phanagoria, dependent on the Khazars. We see in the warfare of these cities the relations of old Greek history repeated; we see the rivalry between a city like Athens, wedded to freedom, and a city prone to submit to the thralldom imposed by despots. Cherson would have fain made Bosphorus a free state like unto herself; Bosphorus essayed to inoculate Cherson with the disease of tyranny. But the cause of republicanism prevailed, and while Bosphorus was made free for a season, though she afterwards returned to her old ways, Cherson successfully escaped the plots that were laid against her constitution by Bosphorite intriguers.

Justinian, who had been condemned to live in this remote corner of the Empire, was not overcome by his misfortunes, and did not despair of recovering his throne. Desire of vengeance was a powerful motive for weaving schemes and cherishing hopes. The magistrates of Cherson, aware of his uneasy spirit and his unconcealed designs, deemed it dangerous to have in their state a plotter against the existing government, and determined either themselves to slay him or to send him to Tiberius. Justinian, learning their intentions, fled to a place called Daras (or Doros), close to the territory of the Tetraxite Goths, a people which we met before in the days of the first Justinian. The banished Emperor then communicated with the chagan of the Khazars, and asked him to accord a refuge to a fallen monarch. The chagan was proud to show him every honour, and to give him his sister in marriage; and Justinian and his wife established their abode in Phanagoria. We are told that this princess was called Theodora, but we cannot suppose that this was her original name. It is clear that she adopted the Greek name at the time of her marriage; and I suspect that Justinian selected "Theodora" because the illustrious wife of his renowned namesake Justinian I. bore that name. In other matters also he seems to have copied the example of the same sovereign,² and it was perhaps in memory of the great Emperor that he had been baptized Justinian.

The Emperor Tiberius III was soon informed of these events in the Tauric peninsula, and was seized with alarm. He sent an embassy to Khazaria, and promised money to the chagan if he would send him Justinian alive or dead. These offers tempted the cupidity of the barbarian, and he did not scruple to betray his august brother-in-law. He sent a guard to Justinian on the pretext of protecting him against violence on the part of the Khazars themselves, and gave secret orders to Papatzys, one of his ministers in Phanagoria, and to Balgitzis, governor of Bosphorus, to kill Justinian. Bosphorus stood in a sort of dependent relation to the Khazars, resembling the relation of Cherson to the Romans. Justinian was apprised of the danger that menaced him by his wife Theodora, to whom it was revealed by a servant of her brother. Justinian sent for Papatzys, with whom he had been on terms of personal friendship, and when he was alone with him strangled him with a cord. He then requested a private interview with Balgitzis, and dealt with the governor of Bosphorus as he had dealt with the governor of Phanagoria. These two feats show not only the personal strength, but the energy, resources, and boldness which seem never to have failed this clever and eccentric prince. Having sent Theodora back to her brother, he secretly embarked in a fishing boat which he found on the shore, and sailed to a place called Symbolum, near Cherson. He sent one of his few attendants into the city to fetch some friends or adherents who had remained there.

The vessel bearing back the exiled Augustus sailed along the northern coast of the Euxine, and somewhere between the mouths of the Dniester and the Dnieper it was caught in a storm. The crew despaired. One of his attendants said to the Emperor, "Lo now, my lord, we perish. Make a compact with God for your safety, that, if

he restore your sovereignty, you will take vengeance on none of your enemies.” But Justinian answered angrily, “If I spare a single one of them, may God drown me here.” And they came safely forth from the storm and reached the Danube. This incident illustrates the temper of Justinian’s metal. If he was not great enough to grant a general political pardon, oblivious of personal wrongs, he was not weak enough to sink, in a moment of superstitious fear, to the tameness of repentance or forgiveness. His courage and indomitable spirit did not desert him in the imminent peril of a shipwreck.

The rescued mariners sailed up the Danube, and Justinian sent Stephanus, one of his companions, to Terbel, king of Bulgaria, who, as the city of Peristhlaba had hardly yet been built, was probably residing in Varna. Stephanus invited Terbel to assist in the restoration of his master to the imperial throne, and promised in return that Justinian would give his daughter¹ in marriage to the Bulgarian monarch, as well as many gifts. Terbel gladly consented to the proposals, and welcomed Justinian with great honour.

These events took place in 704, and Justinian spent the winter with the Bulgarians. In the following year he marched to Constantinople, accompanied by his host Terbel and a large Bulgarian and Slavonic army. For three days they remained outside the walls, attempting to persuade the citizens to declare for the legitimate monarch, but the citizens only insulted them. At the end of three days, however, Justinian with a few soldiers succeeded in gaining an entrance by a conduit somewhere near the palace of Blachernae, in which he took up his abode for a time. The city was won without a struggle, and Terbel returned to his kingdom laden with gifts, among which royal plate is especially mentioned, and honoured with the dignity of Caesar.

The vengeance of Justinian on his enemies was summary and unsparing. Apsimar, or Tiberius, who fled to Apollonias, was captured; and Leontius, who for seven years past had lived the religious or innocuous life of a recluse, was dragged from his monastery by the sovereign whom he had mutilated and banished. Both the illegitimate but well-meaning monarchs who had ruled the Roman world during the ten years of Justinian’s exile were haled in chains through the streets, and exhibited in the hippodrome. Sitting aloft in the cathisma, the restored Emperor presided at the games with his feet resting on his prostrate fettered rivals; and the facetious populace shouted a verse from the psalms, “Thou hast trodden on the asp and the basilisk; the lion and the dragon thou hast trampled underfoot.” When the spectacle was over they were taken to the Kynegion and decapitated. Heraclius, the able brother of Apsimar, was brought in chains from Thrace and hanged, with all his captains. The Emperor extended his vengeance even to Apsimar’s soldiers, but whether we are to interpret literally the statement that they were all put to death is doubtful. The Patriarch Callinicus was deprived of his eyesight and sent to Old Rome, and Cyrus, a monk of Amastre, was appointed to succeed him. The restoration of the Heraclian house was in fact succeeded by a reign of terror. Men of civil and military distinction were slain in multitudes, and the manners of their destruction were various. Some were invited by the Emperor to a repast,¹ and as they rose at its conclusion were taken to be gibbeted or decapitated; to others he made death bitter by enclosing them in a sack and casting them into the sea.

The second Justinian did not forget the second Theodora. He sent a large fleet to Khazaria to fetch her, but the ships were wrecked on the way, and the loss of life was considerable. The chagan is said to have thereupon sent a message to Justinian: “Fool, should you not have fetched your wife in two or three vessels and not caused the death of so many? Do you expect that you will have to seize her by force? Learn that a son has been born to you. Send and take both her and him.” Accordingly the Emperor sent Theophylactus the chamberlain; and Theodora and her son, having arrived safely at Constantinople, were crowned Augusta and Augustus.

The six years of Justinian’s second supremacy were inglorious, yet were not marked by any overwhelming loss. He quarrelled with the royal “Caesar,” and made an unsuccessful expedition by land and sea against Bulgaria. Anchialus was blockaded and taken, but the cavalry, who formed the most important part of the army at the time, were not sufficiently wary, and as they straggled about in disorder the enemy attacked and routed them. For three days Justinian remained shut up in Anchialus with a remnant of horse-soldiers who had escaped, and then, having ordered all the horses to be houghed and so rendered useless to the enemy, he returned by sea to Byzantium.

The town of Tyana, situated on the road that crossed Asia Minor and connected the Propontis with Syria, was lost to the Saracens after a long siege. Justinian sent two generals at the head of an army, consisting of both untrained husbandmen and regular soldiers, to relieve the place. Here again, as in the Bulgarian expedition, want of discipline proved disastrous, and the Romans were routed. Pressed by hunger, Tyana yielded, and the place was left deserted. The inhabitants had stipulated that they should be allowed to settle elsewhere, but the Saracens perfidiously enslaved some and banished the rest to the desert.

The caliphs were beginning to abandon the clement and enlightened policy of Muavia, in whose reign the Christians had been treated almost as well as if they had lived under a Christian government. Abd Almalik imposed a tax called the Haratch, which fell exclusively on Christians and was a heavy burden. This innovation probably induced many Christians to flee to the refuge of the Empire. Valid took the great church of Damascus, which was famous for its splendour, from the Christians, and converted it into a mosque. He also ordained that the State accounts should no longer be kept in Greek. It appears, however, that the Arabians were not good arithmeticians, and they continued to employ Greek notaries.

The fact that the army of relief which Justinian sent to Tyana was largely composed of peasants seems to confirm the statement that he more than decimated the Roman armies in a spirit of improvident revenge. It is plain at least that after the death of Apsimar there was a decline in the military power of the Empire. The years 710 and 711 were marked by Saracen invasions.

Against Cherson, which had cast him out in his adversity, the Emperor was filled with an animosity which assumed the nature of a monomania. He resolved upon the destruction of its inhabitants. In 710 he prepared for this purpose a large fleet, consisting of all kinds of ships,—fast sailers, triremes, immense convoy vessels, fishing

smacks, and even small boats (*chelandia*). These were collected and fitted out at the expense of all the inhabitants of Constantinople, including the guilds of artisans¹ as well as the senators. Maurus and Stephanus Asmictus, who were entrusted with the command of this expedition, apparently received orders to slay or send to Constantinople the members of the chief Chersonite families, and to make Helias, a spatharius, governor of the city. The commands were nearly but not entirely obeyed, for the striplings were reserved for slavery. Tudunus the governor and other men of note were sent to Justinian, who tormented some of them by tying them to spits and roasting them before a fire; while he killed others by binding them to small boats, which were filled with stones and sunk in the sea.

But Justinian was by no means satisfied that the youths had been spared, and he issued commands that they should be conveyed to Constantinople. For this purpose an armament set sail from Cherson in October 710, but one of the fatal storms which so often trouble the treacherous Euxine befell it, and seventy-three thousand persons are said to have been drowned. This misfortune delighted the Emperor, who seems to have become really insane. He despatched another fleet to lay the city of Cherson level with the soil and destroy every human being in the place. Helias, the new governor of Cherson, along with the Armenian Bardanes, also called Philippicus, who, having been exiled to Cephalonia by Apsimar and recalled by Justinian, had accompanied the expedition to Cherson, determined to resist the inhuman project, and they sent for aid to the Khazars. The affair assumed the complexion of a revolt, and the army that had been sent to wreak vengeance on the Chersonites declared against Justinian. When that monarch learned the course that things had taken, he attempted to repair his fatal blunder, and despatched to Cherson George Syrus² the general logothete, John the prefect of the city, and Christopher a captain of the Thracasian troops, to retract the imperial orders and restore things to their former position, to send apologies to the chagan of the Khazars, and to bring to Constantinople the leaders of the revolt, Helias and Bardanes. He sent with them Tudunus, the former governor, and Zoilus, the “first citizen” of Cherson, who had survived the process of roasting at a slow fire; he expected that their fellow-citizens, on receiving them back, might be ready to surrender Bardanes and Helias.

The rebels received this company into the city. They put the prefect and the logothete immediately to death, and sent their followers to the land of the Khazars, a bourn from which they never returned. The name of Justinian was then publicly cursed in Cherson and the other towns of the peninsula, and Bardanes, under the more classical name Philippicus, was proclaimed Emperor. When the news of this revolution reached Constantinople, Justinian slew the children of Helias in the arms of their mother, and compelled the unfortunate lady to submit to the embraces of a hideous “Indian” (Ethiopian) who enjoyed the privilege of being the imperial cook.

Then for the third time Justinian prepared an armament for the purpose of abolishing Cherson. He placed it under the command of Maurus the Patrician; he did not forget to provide a battering-ram, a *helepolis*, and other engines for the destruction of fortresses, and he strictly enjoined the captain to spare not a soul in the doomed city, and to keep him (Justinian) constantly informed by letters touching all that happened. Maurus laid siege to the town, and by means of his engines made some impression on the walls and battlements, but the arrival of the Khazars, to whom Philippicus had fled for refuge and succour, put an end to the siege. The army of Maurus, thus foiled and afraid to return unsuccessful, could hardly choose but embrace the cause of Philippicus, who, still uncertain of his prospects, had remained at the chagan’s court. The chagan would not surrender the suppliant until he had exacted a promise from the Roman soldiers that they would not injure him, and received a security in money.

As Justinian gained no tidings of prosperity or adversity from Maurus, he suspected treachery, and took measures for the defence of his throne. He had recourse once more to Terbel, the Bulgarian king, and obtained from him about three thousand soldiers. With these auxiliaries he crossed over to Asia, and along with the Opsikian and some of the Thracasian troops proceeded along the coast to the plain of Damatrys, where he left the main body of the army, and proceeded himself with a small company as far as Sinope, impatient to receive news from the Tauric peninsula. As he anxiously watched the sea, he saw at length the fleet of the rebels making full sail for Constantinople. “Soaring like a lion,” as the chronicler says, Justinian hastened back to Damatrys. But meanwhile Philippicus was received in the capital without striking a blow, and took prompt measures to secure his authority. Helias was sent forth against Justinian, and by promising immunity from punishment to the men at Damatrys, he induced the whole army to desert the Emperor, whom he immediately decapitated with his sword. Philippicus sent the spatharius Helias to Old Rome, to display in its streets the head of the fallen Emperor.

Tiberius, the little son of Justinian, who can have been little more than six years old, took refuge under the guidance of his grandmother in the church of the Virgin, near the palace of Blachernae. Maurus the Patrician and Johannes Struthus, a spatharius, were sent to put him to death, that the lineage of Heraclius might be exterminated. They found him clinging with one hand to the leg of the altar; a fragment of the wood of the cross was clasped in the other, and his neck was hung with holy relics. Hard by, outside the precincts of the altar, sat his grandmother Anastasia,—it seems that his mother Theodora was already dead,—and when the officers entered the old lady fell at their feet and begged them to spare the life of the little boy. She clung to her grandson, but Struthus approached and dragged him away, replacing the holy wood on the table and hanging the sacred charms around his own neck. They took the child to the postern gate of Callinice, stripped him naked, and, laying him on the lintel of the gate, “cut his throat like a sheep’s.” He was buried in the church of SS. Cosmas and Damian,—the last representative of the house of Heraclius.

Before Justinian was banished in 695 he had made an unsuccessful attempt to compel Pope Sergius to accept the acts of the Trullan Synod. After his restoration he returned to this question again, and sent a copy of the acts to Pope John VII, requesting him to assemble a council for the purpose of considering them. As John knew that some of the clauses would be inevitably rejected, he refused to undertake the matter from prudence or timidity (706 AD) Justinian summoned John’s successor, Constantine, to the East, and received him at Nicomedia with an honour and respect very different from the usual reception accorded to Popes at New Pome. It seems probable that Constantine may have partly yielded to Justinian’s wishes about the synod of 692; certain

it is that he returned to Old Rome, having received from the Emperor a confirmation of the privileges of the Roman see.¹

The city of Ravenna was unfortunate enough to incur the displeasure of the tyrant who so furiously raged against Cherson. The men of Ravenna had not deemed it necessary to disguise their delight at the dethronement of a prince whose restoration they could not foresee; and they had also ventured to protect Pope Sergius against the violence with which Justinian threatened him. The Emperor, we are told, bethought himself how he might best take vengeance on the disobedient city of the exarchs. He despatched a fleet under a certain Theodore, who faithfully executed the imperial mandates. The nobles and chief men of Ravenna were invited to a banquet near Classe, where tents were pitched on a meadow of green grass within sight of the Greek ships. The unsuspecting guests were seized, gagged, and thrown into the holds of the vessels, and then the ministers of vengeance set fire to the city. Among those who were taken to New Rome was the archbishop Felix, and, while the other prisoners were cruelly put to death, Justinian in consequence of a dream allowed him to escape with the loss of his eyes.¹ One of the most notable victims was Johannicis, once a secretary at Byzantium, who was crushed to death between two stones.

The most serious single event in the six years' reign of Justinian Rhinotmetos was the destruction of Tyana, but, as we noticed before, this disaster was only a result of the degeneration in discipline and the decrease in numbers of the military forces. The problem which devolved upon a subsequent Emperor to solve was the reorganisation of the army. As to Justinian himself, our narrative has brought out the salient features of his character, in both prosperity and adversity. It is well worthy of notice that no writers allege any charge of sensuality against him, or even hint that his erratic nature transgressed the bounds of conventional morality in the direction of unchastity. The quality of continence seems to have been hereditary in the race of Heraclius.

III. Philippicus, Anastasius II, and Theodosius III.

Armenian Philippicus was not the sort of man to heal the diseases of the Empire or to guide it out of the waves of anarchy into secure roads. He was essentially a man of pleasure, who had no sense of the responsibility of his position, and looked on the imperial throne as a personal prize which the occupant for the time was only called upon to enjoy. The unsettled condition of things and the swift succession of Emperors were well calculated to nourish such agreeable and unprincipled notions. It is said, however, that the sentiments which he judiciously expressed in conversation were sound and laudable, and diametrically opposed to his actual behaviour. He spent large sums of money on luxurious indulgences and frivolous amusements; he was unduly addicted to the pleasures of bed and board; and besides all this he was a monothelete.

The first condition of regenerating the Empire was the reorganisation of the army, and this obvious duty was utterly neglected by Philippicus, whose reign of two years was marked by military disasters on the northern as well as on the southeastern frontier.

Terbel, on the pretext perhaps of avenging his friend Justinian, as Chosroes II in the days of Phocas professed to avenge his friend Maurice, penetrated with his Bulgarians and Slaves through the pass of Phileas into Thrace and marched to the Bosphorus, plundering and slaying as he went. At the straits they found merry parties of rich people preparing to cross over to the Asiatic suburbs, where they were to celebrate a marriage feast and enjoy sumptuous entertainments. These holidaymakers were provided with the various materials required for the festive celebration, including valuable silver plate. The Bulgarians came upon them as they were on the point of crossing, and spoiled and massacred them. The suburbs of the capital up to the Golden Gate were plundered, and no opposition was offered to the enemy, who retreated at their leisure, laden with booty and driving droves of cattle.

At the same time Asia Minor was exposed to the usual Mohammedan invasions. Amasea in Pontus and other strong cities in that district were taken in 712, and in the following year Antioch of Pisidia fell into the hands of the foe. The only act attributed to the inactive Emperor is the removal of the Armenians from their own land to the Fourth Armenia and districts in the neighbourhood of Melitene. This shows that the Saracen occupation of that province was only temporary, and that it had been left by them in a depopulated condition, which Philippicus was induced to remedy by new Armenian settlers.

The fact that Philippicus was a heretic was perhaps more fatal to him than his want of energy and his spendthrift ways. He banished the orthodox Patriarch Cyrus to a monastery and appointed John, a monothelete, in his stead. A monotheletic party was organised at Constantinople, consisting of numerous ecclesiastics and senators, and led by the new Patriarch; Germanus, bishop of Cyzicus, who afterwards became Patriarch; Andrew, bishop of Crete, who was under the jurisdiction of the Pope; Elpidius, a deacon of St. Sophia; Antiochus, keeper of the records; and the quaestor, Nicolaus, who had at one time been a cupbearer, a man profoundly versed in medicine. The acts of the sixth Council were publicly burnt, and the names of the anathematised monotheletes were again inserted in the diptychs. Old Rome declared herself opposed to this heretical policy by hanging a picture of the sixth Council in one of her churches instead of the Emperor's portrait; and there was a popular insurrection, which Pope Constantine could with difficulty quell, against an officer sent thither by Philippicus. It was said that the cause of Philippicus' repudiation of the sixth Council was the fact that a monk had at one time predicted that Bardanes would possess the throne on the condition that he subverted the acts of that synod.

At Whitsuntide in 713 the reign of this sovereign came to a violent end, owing to the hostility which was felt towards him by the military commanders. After the calamitous inroad of the Bulgarians, the Opsikian troops had been stationed in Thrace to defend the passes of Mount Haemus. Their commander, the Patrician George Buraphos, entitled "the Count of Opsikion," and another patrician, Theodore Myacius, conspired to overthrow

the government of Philippicus, and they sent Rufus, the prætorator or colonel of Opsikion, along with some soldiers, to accomplish the deed of violence which was necessary for their purpose.

Philippicus had just celebrated the commemoration of the birthday of the city by the usual spectacles in the hippodrome. We are told that on this occasion the Greens were victorious in the contests. He had made his arrangements for Whitsunday; he was to enter the hippodrome to the sound of music, he was to bathe in the public baths of Zeuxippus, and then to breakfast in the palace with "the citizens of ancient family." As he was enjoying a midday siesta on the eve of Pentecost, after a morning banquet with his friends, Rufus and the soldiers who had been chosen for the act of treason traversed the rooms of the palace, entered the sacred bedchamber, and, rousing the Emperor from his sleep, hurried him off to the tiring-room of the green faction in the hippodrome. No one recognised the Emperor, and the conspirators deprived him of eyesight.

The next day was Whitsunday, and when the people were assembled in the church of St. Sophia, Artemius, the chief secretary of the deposed sovereign, was brought in and crowned by the Patriarch under the name of Anastasius. It is unfortunate that we are not accurately informed of all that happened in the hours that intervened between the seizure of Philippicus and the coronation of Anastasius, but it is evident that the senate and the people united to determine, the election of the new Emperor independently of the Opsikian party, who certainly would not have chosen him; for immediately after his accession he blinded, and banished to Thessalonica, George the count of Opsikion and Theodore Myacius.

The second Anastasius proved himself, on the whole, equal to the emergencies of the time. He recognised that the pressing necessity was to regenerate the military power of the Empire, and he set himself with diligence to perform the task. He promoted the most efficient men to the chief command, paying especial attention to the cavalry regiments, which at this period were of greater importance than the infantry. His practical knowledge of the details of official work, and his general experience as an important minister, fitted the former chief secretary to direct the general administration of the Empire with ability and skill. If his reign had not been cut short he might have enabled the State to tide over its perilous season and founded a new dynasty, especially as he was an orthodox adherent of the doctrines of the sixth Council. But unfortunately there was a fatal circumstance connected with his elevation, which caused his fall; he had ascended the throne, not as the candidate, but as the opponent of the influential Opsikian theme, whose count he had sent into exile.

Anastasius II reversed the ecclesiastical policy of his predecessor. He deposed the Patriarch John, and translated Germanus, the bishop of Cyzicus, to the see of Constantinople. Germanus is the same man who had been emasculated by Constantine the Fourth and who had supported the monotheletic tendencies of Philippicus; but he suddenly and opportunely returned to the orthodox faith. It is related that John too professed that he had been really orthodox always, and that he had only consented to the heretical measures of Philippicus in order that a real heretic might not be appointed. This laudable "economy," however, did not enable him to retain the chair.

A report reached Byzantium in 714 AD that the Saracens were mustering their forces, and preparing for a grand expedition against the Roman Empire both by land and by sea. In consequence of these tidings, Anastasius sent a deputation of senators to Damascus for the nominal purpose of proposing a peace to Valid, but really in order to spy the extent of the Saracen power and to discover what truth was contained in the alarming rumour. The most prominent member of this embassy was Daniel of Sinope, the prefect of the city, who was entrusted with the secret behests of the Emperor. They went and saw and returned with the news that the report was entirely true. Then the Emperor, with a promptitude similar to that which Constantine IV had exhibited on a like occasion, made preparations to withstand a siege. He issued a proclamation that each inhabitant was to provide himself with means to procure sustenance, sufficient to last for three years, and that all who were too poor to compass this were to leave the city instantly. He filled the royal storehouses and granaries with copious supplies of corn, and carefully provided for their security. He renewed the sea walls, which were showing signs of decay, and built new ships to defend the city against attacks on the sea side; while for the protection of the inland fortifications he erected engines of all kinds for hurling darts and stones.

Anastasius, however, was not destined to win the glory of successfully withstanding a Saracen siege. The death of Valid, who was succeeded by Suleiman, interrupted the course of the preparations; but Suleiman by no means intended to abandon the project, and in 715 news arrived that a fleet of the Saracens of Alexandria had repaired to Phoenicia, in order to hew cypress wood for ships, and increase the power of their navy. The Emperor, who knew the value of promptitude, conceived the idea of attacking the enemy while they were engaged in this occupation. He appointed Rhodes¹ as the place of meeting for the troops whom he destined for the expedition; and he caused the forces of the Opsikian theme to embark in swift vessels and sail thither, whence, united with the other themes under the general command of John, the general logothete, who was an ordained clergyman, they were to proceed to Phoenicia. At Rhodes, John found the commanders of the various regiments filled with zeal for the expedition, and ready to obey his commands; the Opsikians alone were recalcitrant. They renounced allegiance to the Emperor, whom they had never loved, and, disdainingly, to obey a general logothete, beat John to death with clubs. The collected forces were immediately dispersed, and returned to their various stations, while the rebellious theme proceeded to Constantinople in order to carry their revolt to its natural conclusion. They desired to subvert Anastasius, and gave no thought to the question of a successor; even as they had overthrown Philippicus without a plan or a thought for the future. It is in the conduct of the Opsikian theme that we see the anarchical complexion of the times most clearly reflected. On the way to Constantinople, however, they actually deigned to reflect that it would be well to choose a head for their enterprise, and to put forward a candidate to replace the sovereign whom they had determined to dethrone. Characteristically they chose at haphazard one who could be nothing more than a figure-head. At Adramyttium, on the sea-coast of Mysia, they picked up a stray tax-gatherer named Theodosius, who, if he had no vestige of those qualities which are generally demanded in an Emperor, bore at least an imperial name. His obscure respectability rendered him inoffensive, and if unwillingness to become an Emperor is a token of fitness for occupying a throne, Theodosius was certainly worthy, for he fled from the threatened honour and concealed himself in the mountains. He was found, however, and constrained by force to assume the dignities and incur the dangers of a tyrant.

Thus it came about that the ships and engines and fortifications, which Anastasius had prepared to repel assaults of the unbelievers, were applied to the use of defending his government against a refractory division of the army. The Emperor left his most trusted ministers in charge of the city, and, crossing over to Asia, shut himself up in Nicaea. Meanwhile the Opsikian troops which had rebelled at Rhodes had been reinforced by other regiments which belonged to the Opsikian district, and also by the soldiers called Gotho-Graeci. They marched to Chrysopolis (Scutari), and with an armament of merchantmen which they had collected they carried on an ineffectual warfare for six months with the fleet which defended the city. Then Theodosius crossed over and occupied the Thracian districts to the west and north of the city walls. Treachery, like that which delivered Constantinople into the hands of Apsimar and caused the fall of Leontius, now delivered it into the hands of Theodosius, and caused the dethronement of Anastasius. The officers in whose custody were the keys of the gate of Blachernae proved untrue to their trust, like their predecessors, and Theodosius was admitted. At night the Opsikian soldiers and the Gotho-Graeci entered the city and pillaged it, sparing none. Here again was a repetition of the things which had happened when Leontius was deposed by Apsimar.

Theodosius sent the ministers of Anastasius and the Patriarch Germanus to Nicaea to assure the Emperor that further resistance was vain. Anastasius submitted quietly to the will of fate or providence, and was allowed to live as a monk at Thessalonica without undergoing any ill treatment.

The reign of Anastasius was too brief, notwithstanding his honest endeavours, to restore order to the disordered State, or to wipe away the effects of so many years of "tyranny." "The affairs of the Empire and the city," says Nicephorus, "were neglected and decaying, civil education was disappearing, and military discipline dissolved." It was a time for the enemies of the Romans to reap a harvest of prisoners and captured cities. Theodosius had good intentions, but was utterly ignorant of politics, and completely incapable of administration; and during the short period to which he gave the name of Theodosius III he is a lay figure, almost forgotten, in the background. We may occupy the space which should have been devoted to the acts or policy of an Emperor with a digression on the adventures of the man who stood in the foreground and was destined to be Theodosius' successor, Leo the Isaurian, general of the Anatolic troops.

According to some, Leo was a native of Germanicia in Commagene, but the more approved account places his origin in the Isaurian mountains. In the first reign of Justinian II his parents emigrated to Mesembria in Thrace by the orders of that monarch, who, it will be remembered, had a passion for transplanting his subjects. When Justinian returned with the Bulgarians to recover his throne, Leo met him on the way with a gift of five hundred sheep, and this mark of attention pleased the Emperor so much that he made Leo a *spatharius* (aide-de-camp). A malevolent or premature accusation that the *spatharius* was plotting to ascend the throne himself, while it was triumphantly repelled, and only brought shame upon the accusers, who could not prove their charge, left a rankling suspicion in the heart of the sovereign, who took an early opportunity to despatch Leo on a commission to Alania—a bourn from which he expected that his ambassador would never return. The purpose of his mission was to provoke the Alans to invade and reduce the Abasgi, a people who, once infamous for their trade in emasculated boys, had been reformed, christianised, and reduced to a sort of dependence by Justinian I. The Roman Emperors used to appoint the governors of Abasgia, but this relation can hardly have lasted long, as the Empire in the seventh century was beset by too great dangers and difficulties to retain its grasp on this remote country. We may assume that the Abasgi had been practically independent for more than a century when Justinian II conceived the idea of reducing them to subjection; and here, again, I am inclined to suppose that he was consciously imitating his more glorious namesake. The Alans occupied a wild and spacious territory north of the Caucasian range, but they had no access to the Euxine, from which they were shut off by the Abasgi, who lined its eastern shores.

We are fortunate to possess an account of Leo's adventures, risks, and escapes in these barbarous regions, and the record is apparently genuine, and certainly credible, sounding almost like an excerpt from a diary kept by Leo himself.

From Constantinople the ambassador may have proceeded to Trapezus either by land or by sea, and thence he sailed to Phasis, the important seaport of Lazica. In Phasis he stored the sums of money which the Emperor had given him for the execution of his diplomatic mission, and then proceeded to Apsilia with a few natives who knew the topography of the country. He crossed the Caucasus and entered Alania, where he was received with high honour by Itaxes, lord of the Alans, and his proposals were favourably entertained. But in the meantime Justinian, who desired the final disappearance of Leo, had perfidiously caused the money stored in Phasis to be removed, and had permitted the fact to be so generally known that the news thereof reached the adjacent land of Abasgia. Then, as the Alans were preparing to invade and subject Abasgia, the potentate of the Abasgi addressed the potentates of the Alans thus: "Justinian had at his disposal no other such consummate liar, save only this man, to let loose upon us and to excite us against one another. For as to the money which he promised you, he deceived you, for Justinian sent and took it away. But do ye hand him over to us and we will give you 3000 nomismata; and let our love not be dissolved." But to this remonstrance the Alans replied, "We followed his advice, not for the sake of money, but for the love of the Emperor." The lord of the Abasgi sent once more, doubling his offer; and this time the Alans, conceiving a subtle purpose, consented. They had no intention of betraying their friend Leo, but they deemed it an excellent opportunity to spy out the enemy's country. So they said to Leo, "You see, the road to Romania is shut up, and you cannot pass. Wherefore let us deal subtly and pretend to agree to surrender you, and so discover their passes, and plunder and destroy their country, acting thereby to our own advantage."

Accordingly, ambassadors of the Alans went into Abasgia to arrange the compact, and, having received the usual gifts, returned along with a company of Abasgi, who were to pay the stipulated money and to receive Leo in return. The bargain was faithfully carried out, but the Abasgi captors had hardly departed with their prisoner when they were attacked by a band of Alan soldiers, who, as had been preconcerted, rescued Leo and bound his guards. Then the Alans invaded Abasgia with great effect, owing to the knowledge of its topography which they had acquired through the embassy.

When these events came to the ears of Justinian, and he saw that Leo was inviolable among the Alans, he wrote to the Abasgi monarch: "If you allow Leo to pass safely through your country, I shall condone all your errors." The Abasgi, who entertained a salutary fear of the Roman Empire, were delighted, and offered their children as hostages to the Alans that their guest would receive no harm. But the suspicious Leo refused to avail himself of the opportunity, saying, "The Lord can open me a door to go out."

Some time after this (probably in 712) a joint army of Romans and Armenians invaded Lazica and laid siege to Archaeopolis. Hearing that an army of Saracens was approaching, they retired to Phasis, but a division of about two hundred men was left behind in the Caucasian region of Apsilia, whither they had diverged to plunder. Separated from their companions and cut off from the Empire by the Saracens, who had occupied Lazica, they were obliged to remain in the defiles of the Caucasus, living as desperate brigands. The rumour of their presence reached Alania at the other side of the mountains, and it was suggested to Leo that he should embrace the chance and join them. In the month of May, under the guidance of fifty Alans, he crossed the snows of Caucasus with the help of cyclopedes or snow-shoes, and was glad after his long expatriation to come among Romans again. But his return was as yet only half accomplished. It was still a difficult problem how he and the two hundred soldiers were to reach Phasis.

In the Caucasian highlands, not far from the place where Leo joined his countrymen, was a fort called Sideron, which was then held for the Saracens by a governor named Pharasmanios. As Pharasmanios was at peace with the Armenians, Leo ventured to send a messenger to him with this message: "Make peace with me and become a subject of the Romans. Supply us with the means of reaching the sea and crossing to Trapezus." But Pharasmanios rejected the request.

Then Leo placed some of his men in an ambush at night, directing them, when those in the fort issued forth in the morning to work in the fields, to seize as many as possible, or at least prevent their returning to the gates, until he and the rest of his comrades arrived. The plan was carried out successfully, and Pharasmanios was left with a small number in the fort. Leo approached the gates and repeated his proposals, but the governor again refused. The place, however, was too strong to take.

A circumstance now occurred which converted the obstinacy of the governor into a reluctant compliance. When Marinus, the potentate of the Apsilians, an adjacent and subordinate tribe, heard that Leo was besieging Sideron, he concluded that the Romans must be numerous, and fearing their hostility, he came with a band of three hundred and offered to conduct Leo to the coast. Then Pharasmanios, perceiving the attitude of Marinus, relented and said, "Take my child as a hostage; I agree to serve the Empire." Leo received the child, but insisted that the father should surrender the fort, and gave him a safe-conduct, promising to enter the gates with not more than thirty men. The recent adventures of the spatharius had trained him in the arts of prudence or perfidy, and he issued secret commands to his troops to burst into the fortress as soon as the gates were opened. He burned the place to the ground, and then paid a visit to Apsilia, where he was honourably received. Thence he was escorted to the coast and returned to Constantinople, where great changes had taken place during his absence. Justinian had been deposed, Philippicus had reigned, and Anastasius was on the throne (713 A.D.)

This Emperor, who sought out men of merit and ability for military commands, made Leo general of the Anatolic theme. The Armeniac regiments, which protected the eastern provinces, were entrusted to Artavasdos. These two generals, although they stood aloof when the Opsikians deposed Anastasius, looked with unveiled hostility and cold derision on the government of Theodosius. The eyes of Asia were fixed on Leo as the man who, both by his position as the most powerful general in the Empire and by his natural talents, was the best qualified candidate for the imperial diadem.

In the meantime the Caliph Suleiman was preparing to carry out the projected expedition against the Empire. He sent two armies into Romania, one under his brother Moslemah and another under a general named Suleiman. The latter, advancing through the Anatolic districts, approached Amorium, —the city which in the days of Constans II had been seized for a short time by the Saracens and soon recaptured. Suleiman saw that it was insufficiently defended, and perceived at the same time that Leo, the Anatolic general, was in opposition to the government of Theodosius. He also discovered that Leo was regarded as destined to be the next Emperor, and he argued that it would be a great blow to the Empire to seize the person of such an able man. For this purpose he resorted to stratagems, of which details have been preserved.

He wrote a letter to Leo to this effect: "We are aware that the Empire of the Romans devolves upon you. Come then to us that we may discuss the conditions of peace." Meanwhile he blockaded Amorium, awaiting the arrival of Moslemah, who was to join him; and as the Saracens approached the walls of the city, they cried out, according to the directions of their general, "Long live the Emperor Leo!" and exhorted the Amorians to take up the cry. Leo, in reply to the letter which he had received, demanded why Amorium was blockaded if the Saracens desired peace. To which Suleiman said, "Come, and I shall retreat."

Thus assured, but still distrustful, Leo approached Amorium with three hundred cavalry. A company of Saracens clad in complete armour advanced to meet him, and encamped about half a mile from their own army. For three days they met daily and discussed the possibility of arranging a peace. Leo was well aware that his enemies were secretly plotting to capture him, while he was himself scheming to save Amorium, which he knew would surrender when Moslemah arrived. In order either to test their intentions or by some means to communicate with the Amorians while the Saracen officers were engaged, he invited the chief men of the Mohammedan army to a banquet, and while they were enjoying themselves a messenger succeeded in conveying to the besieged a secret message: "Fear God and do not betray yourselves, for lo, Moslemah approaches." Meanwhile Suleiman had also determined to take advantage of the banquet for his own purpose, and had commanded three thousand cavalry to encircle the place. As the company sat at table a sentinel entered and informed Leo that the camp was surrounded by horsemen; but a Saracen cavalier named Zuber immediately stepped forward and explained to the astonished general that a slave had run away from their camp with a large

sum of money, and that they had mounted horse to catch him. "Do not put yourselves out, gentlemen," said Leo, who understood the art of dissimulation; "in whatever part of our camp he takes refuge, we shall find him."

Before the banquet was ended, Leo contrived to have an interview with the bishop of Amorium, who stole out of the city to his camp and was introduced to a room in his tent. But the Saracen guests discovered that the bishop had paid the general a visit, and indignantly demanded that Leo should give him up to them. Leo gained time by parleying, while attendants disguised the bishop as a woodman or a watercarrier, and sent him from the dangers of the camp to flee to the security of the mountains. Then Leo asseverated that the bishop was not in the camp, and urged the Saracens to search it. This altercation probably led on to a general discussion of differences and grievances, which Leo at last terminated by offering to go to Moslemah and leave the decision to him. The Saracens agreed to the proposal, and he was allowed to leave the camp with a body of two hundred men, on the pretext of hunting. But he soon abandoned the beaten tracks and diverged to the north. When some Saracens, who had accompanied him for the sport, asked him whither he went, he replied that he intended to change the position of his camp "to the meadows." "Your plea is not good," they said, "and we will not go with you." When they had departed Leo remarked to his men, "*They* have pledged their faith to us, but nevertheless they wished to seize us and thereby to destroy the Christians of Amorium; yet of our men and beasts which we left behind us they have taken none." He then advanced ten miles farther and encamped. Next day he sent the domestics of his strators or harness-corps to Suleiman, bearing a message of reproach for his treacherous intentions.

These details I have thought it worthwhile to reproduce fully, often almost in the words of the chronicle in which they are preserved, because, while they are to be found in few modern books on the subject, they seem to have been drawn originally from memoirs of some eye-witness, perhaps of Leo himself, or at least to have been related by an eye-witness to some contemporary writer. Though they are sometimes affected with the incoherence of a chronicle, they exhibit the circumstantiality of memoirs.

The Saracen army soon became weary of their leaguer before the walls of Amorium, and showed signs of mutiny. The soldiers wished to plunder the country, and the generals were obliged to yield and raise the siege. When they had retreated, Leo appeared at Amorium, and having removed the women and children and all valuable property, and placed in the city a garrison of eight hundred men under the command of a turmarch, he proceeded southward to Pisidia.

In the meantime Moslemah had crossed the passes and entered Cappadocia, which was then destitute of defenders. Cappadocia was included in the Anatolic district, and Leo apparently had not a sufficient number of troops at his disposal to defend all points. The chief towns were doubtless garrisoned, and some of his troops may have perhaps been in Cilicia or Pisidia acting against the Saracen general Omar, who had invaded those parts. The Cappadocians went forth from their abodes to meet Moslemah, offering him abject submission. But Moslemah, aware (perhaps from letters of Suleiman) of the relations subsisting between the Emperor Theodosius and Leo, and wishing to catch the latter by a bait and "through him subjugate Romania," asked the Cappadocians whether they were subjects of the general Leo, to which question they replied in the affirmative. "Do ye whatever he does?" "Yes." "Depart then to your fortresses and fear no one," said the generous or wily Saracen, and he commanded his army to abstain from plundering all the regions which were subject to the administration of Leo.

When Leo heard this, and knew that Suleiman had communicated to Moslemah the events of the camp at Amorium, he wrote to Moslemah that he wished to visit him, but that the treacherous attempts of Suleiman had filled him with apprehension and deterred him from going. The following conversation is recorded to have passed between the Saracen general when he received the letter and the messenger who brought it.

Moslemah. "I see your general mocks me, because I wholly abstained from ravaging his provinces."

Messenger. "Not so, but he really means what he says."

Moslemah. "How is Amorium affected towards him?"

Messenger. "Well, and is loyally subject unto him."

Moslemah (angrily). "Why do you lie?"

Messenger. "It is as I say. And he has thrown a garrison into it with a turmarch, and driven out the superfluous families."

Moslemah, whose intentions had been to take Amorium in summer, to wait for the fleet and proceed to the coast of Asia Minor for the winter, was much vexed at the news. He sent back a message to Leo, inviting him to come and make peace. Leo calculated that in the course of five days Moslemah would have passed beyond the limits of the Anatolic district, and he shaped his plans accordingly. He sent two consulars to Moslemah with this message: I received your letter, and accept your offer and shall come to you. But, as you know, I am a general, and must travel with my appurtenances and silver plate and my retinue. Send me then an assurance for the safety of each of them, so that, if things turn out satisfactorily—well, but if not, I may return without injury or despite." The envoys overtook Moslemah at Theodosiana, and obtained from him the required safe-conduct. But his large army, which soon exhausted the supplies of a district, would not permit him to halt anywhere for long; he was obliged to be constantly moving to new pastures; and when the envoys had returned to Leo, Moslemah had already reached Acroinon and was beyond the boundaries of the Anatolic provinces (autumn 716).

While Leo was thus baffling the Saracens in Asia, Theodosius was sitting in the palace on the Byzantine acropolis, shrinking under the undesired grandeur that had come upon him but could not make him great. He posted his son, whom he had presumably invested with the imperial title, on the Asiatic side of the Propontis, perhaps in command of the Opsikian troops. Having assured himself that Moslemah had evacuated Romania,

Leo advanced to Nicomedia and routed the young prince; but this victory did not immediately secure him the crown. He probably spent the winter at Nicaea or at Nicomedia (716-717), and early in the ensuing year was proclaimed Emperor. The immediate cause of the general consent both of the military commanders and of the civil ministers to the elevation of Leo is represented to have been a well-grounded fear, occasioned by the certainty that a vast Saracen armament would in a few months besiege Constantinople, and the consciousness that Theodosius was devoid of the skill required for its defence, and utterly unfit for the duties of a commander. Otherwise they might perhaps have preferred the inoffensive Theodosius, who could never have attempted to strain the imperial authority against the aristocracy. There was a formal meeting of the Patriarch, the senators, and chief officials to choose an Emperor, and they chose Leo, with the knowledge and consent of Theodosius himself, who, we are told expressly, consulted the senate and the Patriarch touching his own resignation. He received an assurance of personal safety, and was permitted to withdraw to a monastic retreat at Ephesus, where he died and was buried. The word *vyieia*, "health," was the inscription which the third Theodosius wrote for his tomb.

The twenty-one years of anarchy, which happily came to an end by the accession of Leo the Third, were the direct result of the long struggle between the Imperium and the aristocracy, which had been going on ever since the death of the great autocrat Justinian, and was itself an offspring of the original dyarchical nature of the Roman Empire. The senatorial classes, who were now chiefly natives of Asia Minor, did not wish to make any fundamental change in the constitution; they only wished to limit the absolutism of the Emperor and to fetter his hands. Their opposition hampered Constans II and Constantine IV (as it had hampered Justin II and Tiberius II), but did not oppress them; they guided the helm with tact and firmness. But Justinian II, like the Emperor Maurice, had little or no tact, and firmness in him was misapplied and impolitic; he strained the bow too tight and it gave way. The executions and long imprisonments of numerous nobles were an apparently drastic but really inept way of crushing the opposition.

Closely combined with this opposition was a spirit of nationality which had been growing up in Asia Minor, and which could not escape the attention of the Emperors. It was perhaps with a view to keeping this spirit in subjection, as well as with a view to defending the Empire against the Saracens, that the country was organised anew into large districts with separate and independent generals. Justinian's system of transplanting human beings was a line of policy partly directed to the same purpose. The importation of Mardaites, Cypriotes, and Slaves might be expected to assist in denationalising Asia Minor, while a stray notice makes us suspect that he also exported inhabitants of those provinces to Europe. The parents of Leo III were transferred from the regions of Mount Taurus to Thrace, and it is highly improbable that this was an individual case. The Isaurians were peculiarly obstinate in clinging to their nationality.

The year 695 was thus a year of triumph for the anti-imperial aristocratic party. The legitimate and autocratic Justinian was deposed, and one of themselves, an Isaurian and former general of the Anatolic theme, was elevated in his stead.

But it is not long before the inherent elements of the situation display themselves. The illusions of the aristocracy are exposed, its pretensions are shown to imply anarchy by the logic of facts; and the necessity of a real imperial power is demonstrated. At the same time the far-sightedness of the policy of the Heraclian dynasty in their administrative organisation of Asia Minor is clearly shown.

In the first place, the candidate of the party of opposition finds on his elevation that he must desert his old aristocratical principles and become an autocrat, if his administration is to be really efficient and if he is not to be a mere puppet. This was the first proof of the necessity of imperial autocracy under the given conditions. In the second place, the political differences in the Empire, which had not even in Asia Minor the unity produced by a common nationality, exposed an illegitimate Emperor like Leontius to the jealousy and rivalry of sections other than that to which he belonged. Leontius was the representative of the Anatolic districts; the soldiers of other Asiatic districts combined to overthrow him. This want of national unity made the strong hand of a single individual indispensable to maintain the integrity of the Empire. In the third place, unity, integrity, and common action were of vital importance at this time, when the Moslem were threatening Christendom, and it was a lively consciousness of this fact that caused the senators and military commanders to reject the weak and meek Theodosius, whose character ought to have rendered him the ideal Emperor of the refractory aristocracy, and elect the able Isaurian who made the Empire feel the power of a firm will and obey the constraint of a strong hand.

I may notice here the curious resemblance between the state of affairs that lasted for a considerable time in the Frank kingdom and a political phase which appeared for a moment in the Roman Empire. It is well known how the Merovingian monarchs became finally unburdened of all the duties and attributes of royalty except the name, while the real power centred in the mayors of the palace (*maiores domus*).¹ And so, just for a moment, at New Rome it appeared possible that Theodosius might have continued to reign in name, and might have been succeeded by a series of inoperative Emperors, while the actual power might have been invested in some minister, perhaps the *curopalates*, who was the Byzantine analogue of the mayor of the palace. Yet, though this might have appeared possible, it was really impossible. The feeling for the dignity of the imperial throne was too strong to permit of its ever becoming permanently a political nonentity.

While we followed the events which led to the fall of Leontius we had hardly time to realise the fact that Africa had finally passed away from the hands of her Roman rulers and was once more, after a period of nearly eight hundred and fifty years, subject to a Semitic people. It was decreed that Heraclius and his race should see Roman provinces subdued one after another by the enemies of Christendom; but it might seem a slight concession on the part of inexorable fate that the country which had sent a saviour to New Rome in her great need should not be lost by one of his dynasty, but should remain, at least formally, Roman until the last "Scipiad" had fallen.

The retreat of the Romans from Africa was the knell of the greatness of Carthage; her history was now over. The consistent policy of the caliphs dethroned the venerable Phoenician city from her position as the capital of Africa, and the circumstance that she had been originally a Semitic, not a Greek or Roman, foundation did not save her from the lot of Alexandria. It was mortifying enough for Antioch and Toledo to behold the exaltation of Damascus and Cordova; but Cordova and Damascus were ancient and famous cities. The mighty capitals of Persia, Egypt, and Africa had to bear the greater indignity of yielding precedence to upstart rivals with strange names—Kufa, Bagdad, Cairo, and Kairowan.

CHAPTER XIV

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DECAY IN THE SEVENTH CENTURY

The prevalence of superstition and the decay of culture render the seventh century perhaps the darkest age of Europe within historical times; and the contemporary glory of the Arabs makes Christendom seem all the darker. We may first glance at the superstition which prevailed in the Roman Empire, and then consider the decline of culture and the decay of education; after this we may pass to the moral condition of the clergy, and finally notice the rise of the Paulicians.

When I speak of the deplorable extent of superstition, I do not refer primarily to the lower classes of society, among whom it prevails at all ages. The degrading feature of the end of the seventh century, which the Emperors of the eighth century tried so manfully to reform, was the ignorant credulity of the richer classes; and this credulity was generally accompanied by moral obliquity. Men who professed to be educated believed in the most ridiculous miracles; and the law of natural cause and effect, which however inadequately recognised has generally maintained some sort of ascendancy in human reason, became at this period practically obsolete. A Patriarch and a Pope believed in the power of painted virgins to heal the sick and maimed, or to exude unearthly balsams; and no hesitation was felt in accepting the legends, that certain pictures regarded with peculiar veneration were, like manna, manufactured in the workshops of heaven. To this subject I shall have occasion to recur when I come to the war that was waged by the Isaurian sovereigns against the adoration of pictures; and there is no clearer and surer proof of the malignancy of this moral pestilence than the fact that Leo III made an attack upon superstition the basis of his policy of reform. The clergy could not guide mankind to a spiritual apprehension of the great doctrines of Christianity, because they had lost that spiritual apprehension themselves; they taught the worship of dead symbols and the efficacy of the letter; they encouraged the growth of superstition and themselves led lives which Christianity would regard as immoral.

At the appearance of an "iris" in heaven (March 673), we are told that all flesh shuddered and declared that the end of the world was come. Every one believed in the prediction of future events, and the Empire was overrun with impostors, unconscious or deliberate, who gratified the desire of men to believe in supernatural revelations. A monk who dabbled in astrology and a Cappadocian abbot foretold to Leontius the Isaurian his future elevation. Another Cappadocian prophesied to Justinian II his restoration. Philippicus dreamed that he would be Emperor,—his dream, that his head was overshadowed by an eagle, reminds us of the legend of the Emperor Marcian,—and on that account Apsimar banished him. The story of the ass-driver Conon (said to be the original name of Leo III), who resting in the noonday heat under the shade of oaks, hard by a fountain and a chapel of St. Theodore, was accosted by two Jews endowed with magic powers and acquainted with the secrets of futurity, and was apprised by them that he was one day to be the lord of the Roman world, illustrates not only the general credulity, but the superstitious horror with which Jews were regarded at this time by Christians. They were thought to be direct emissaries of the devil.² One of the minor aims of the Quinisext Council was to uproot the remains of Jewish perversity, and one of its acts ordains that no Christian is to have any dealings with the Jews, to take unleavened bread, to receive medicine from them, or to bathe with them. One of the measures of Leo III, scarcely in harmony with the legend, was the compulsory conversion of all Hebrews in the Empire.

An incident that took place during the siege of Pergamus by the Arabs in 717 AD shows the depths of depravity to which superstition was impelling humanity. The inhabitants of that city, in order to fight with more effect against the besiegers, took a pregnant girl who was approaching the time of her first delivery, and having cut in pieces both her and her unborn infant, boiled the fragments in a pot of water. The soldiers then dipped the gauntlets of their right hands in this concoction, believing that the blows of their weapons would be surer and stronger after the horrible anointment. In spite of these enlightened precautions, Pergamus was taken, but it is characteristic of the age that those who condemned the act ascribed the success of the Saracens to it, and affirmed that the hands of the soldiers were unable to hold a sword on account of the defilement. This incident is worthy to be placed beside the sacrifice of the maid-servant at the tomb of the Empress Eudocia, just one hundred years before.

The tragedy of Pergamus was of course suggested and instigated by one of the numerous soothsayers or hekatontarchs, who infested the Empire and were denounced by the Quini-sext Council. *Hekatontarch* was the name in use for old people who had obtained a reputation for occult lore; perhaps it was so applied in jocular

reference to the extreme age of these wizards, just as the word centurion might be used as an intentional “mistake” for centenarian.

The increase of ecclesiastical influence in the Empire is one of the most striking features of the seventh century; and as the dignitaries of the Church readily acquiesced in the growth of superstition, to which they were themselves inclined, the prospect of reform seemed almost hopeless, as it would be necessary to carry it out in spite of the institution with which the spiritual life of the age was interwoven. The Isaurian Emperors in the eighth century undertook the task, but the obloquy which has ever been attached to their names among the orthodox shows how much the undertaking cost them.

We have already met indications of the way in which ecclesiastical influences had penetrated secular and political life, and as an illustration of the same circumstance it may be appropriate to quote the coronation oath, which, we may certainly conclude, was used in the seventh century, if not before? The new Emperor used to recite the oath in the great church of St. Sophia.

The declaration began with the creed, “I believe in one God the Father Almighty, etc.,” and then proceeded thus: “Moreover I accept and confess and confirm the apostolic and divine traditions, and the ordinances and formulae of the six ecumenical synods and the occasional local synods; also the privileges and usages of the most Holy Great Church of God. Moreover I confirm and accept all the dogmas that were laid down and sanctified by our most Holy Fathers in various places, rightly and canonically and blamelessly. In the same manner I promise to abide and continually to prove myself a faithful and true servant and son of the Holy Church; moreover to be her defender and champion, and to be kind and humane to my subjects, as is meet and right, and to abstain from bloodshed and mutilations³ and such like, as far as may be, and to countenance all truth and justice. And whatsoever things the Holy Fathers rejected and anathematised, I do myself also reject and anathematise, and I believe with all my mind and soul and heart in the aforesaid holy symbolum of faith. And all these things I promise to keep before the face of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of God. Dated . . . month, . . . o’clock, . . . indiction, . . . year.”

The Emperor handed this document to the Patriarch with the following formula :—

“I, . . . the Roman Emperor and Sovereign faithful in Christ, the God, having signed this with my own hand, do hand it over to my supremely holy lord and ecumenical Patriarch, Sir ..., and, along with him, to the divine and sacred Synod.”

We shall have occasion in another place to notice that the Emperor and the Patriarch were regarded as the two pillars of the Roman constitution, and that harmony between them was the essential condition of the prosperity of the Empire.

Sunk though Constantinople was at this period as regards learning and education, it was still the centre of European culture; thither young men still, though not so frequently as in preceding centuries, repaired from western lands to learn Greek and theology. The Empire was generally regarded as the greatest power and the centre of light in Europe; and Pope Agatho, in a letter to Constantine IV (680 A.D.), writes that it was the expressed wish of a synod assembled at Rome that the Empire, wherein is the chair of St. Peter which the other barbarians revere, should for Peter’s sake have the primacy over the other peoples. But the diffusion of culture and the interchange of ideas were hindered and rendered difficult by the slowness of communication between East and West.¹ This infrequency of intercourse not only withheld advantages from the West, but reacted unfavourably on the Empire itself. Similar effects were produced by the decrease of communication between the various parts of the Roman dominions in the East. Provinces became isolated, and the better classes of their inhabitants became more and more provincial. At the sixth Council Theodore of Melitene called himself apologetically a provincial; and in fact there was no part of Europe, except perhaps Constantinople, to which the name might not be applied from a wider point of view. Pope Agatho complained that theological study had completely decayed, and indeed become quite impossible in Italy owing to the vicinity of the Lombards. A certain knowledge of Greek, however, was still prevalent; there were Greek monasteries at Rome; and it is probable that while the monotheletic controversy agitated the East many orthodox inhabitants of Thrace and Asia may have betaken themselves to Borne. But there is one point on which it may be well to insist; there must have been constant if not considerable intercourse between Italy and Greece, including Macedonia and Thessalonica, during the seventh century and up to the year 733 AD., inasmuch as the Balkan peninsula, except Thrace, was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the bishops of Rome.

It is a strain on our credulity to accept the remark that in western Europe during the seventh century Greek was studied more in the remote island of Ireland than elsewhere. At Trim, indeed, there was a church called “the church of the Greeks,” but we can only smile when we are told by a recent writer that “the Celtic monastery of Bangor became a potent focus of Hellenism.” In other countries certainly we meet Greek scholars, such as they were, of more distinction than any Irish monk. Into England a knowledge of Greek was introduced by the great Theodoras of Tarsus, archbishop of Canterbury, and Hadrian, an African abbot. They landed on Saxon shores in the year 669, four years before the birth of Bede. Theodore had studied at Athens; he was profoundly learned in Greek and Latin literature, secular as well as sacred, and with his companion he formed a school in which the chief subjects were mathematics, astronomy, metrical laws, and church doctrines. Writing sixty years later, Bede, himself a Greek scholar, says, “There live even today pupils of these men who know Latin and Greek as their own native tongue. Never were times more happy since the arrival of the Angles in Britain.” Letters flourished under the prosperous reign of Ina, king of Wessex, who invited two learned men to come from Athens in order to instruct St. Aldhelm in the Greek tongue. In Spain, Isidorus of Seville is the only prominent scholar acquainted with Greek. As for Gaul, a bishop of Rouen mentions certain Greek authors, including Plato, Homer, Menander, and Herodotus, who, he considers, are studied with too much diligence.

To return to the Empire after our digression to western Europe, it is observable that just as the influence of the Church was waxing in the State, so the influence of the monks was waxing in the Church. The monks painted pictures and maintained art, but they also maintained bigotry and superstition, and were the archenemies of spiritual reform. Along with intellectual weakness, dissolute manners also prevailed, and the misdemeanour of ecclesiastics as well as of laymen had become such a public scandal that the express object of the Quinisext Council was to regenerate morality and restore the strictness of the old regulations, which had fallen into abeyance. The acts of this council possess considerable interest, as almost the only extant document bearing on the manners and customs of the age.

It was generally agreed that the church discipline at Constantinople was far milder than the discipline enforced in the Churches which looked up to the bishop of Rome, especially in regard to the restrictions imposed on marriage. The aim of the Quinisext Council was to blend the strictness of Old Rome with the mildness of New Rome. It was enacted that no man could be admitted to an ordination who, after his baptism, had committed the enormity of marrying twice, or of keeping a concubine, or of marrying a woman who suffered from the disadvantage of being a widow, a divorced wife, an adulteress, a slave, or an actress. Of clerical persons, only readers and cantors (members of the choir) are by the new rules allowed to marry; no clergyman is allowed to harbour a woman in his house, and clergymen as well as laymen are forbidden, on pain of deposition from office and excommunication, to have intercourse with consecrated women. The special enactments in regard to all these matters naturally lead us to conclude that the forbidden acts were frequent occurrences in the see of Constantinople.

On the same principle we might suppose that the Byzantine Church often blushed for such scandals as clergymen bathing along with women, or even keeping brothels; and doubtless the smuggling of females into male monasteries was no uncommon event. A married man who became a clergyman was not compelled to put away his wife unless he became a bishop; but it appears that at this time bishops were suspected of maintaining conjugal relations with their former wives, for it is ordained that the wife of a newly consecrated bishop must be removed to a tolerably distant cloister. Many improprieties of other kinds had also crept in. Some clergymen seem to have been small capitalists and to have lent out money on usury. It was a common event for clerks to sanctify by their presence theatrical spectacles and horse-races; nor did they disdain to witness the licentious amusements and coarse festivities—survivals of paganism—with which marriages were still celebrated, for a significant clause directs clergymen and monks to leave a wedding party when the games begin. Some were indecent enough to lay aside their clerical garb in the privacy of their houses or on a journey. Anchorets or hermits, whom it became to wear their hair short, used with long hair and unsuitable dress to seek the distractions of cities and converse with the “people of the world.” It is found necessary by the Trullan Council to lay down strict injunctions that nuns shall not leave their cloisters save with the special permission and benediction of the abbess, and in the company of old sisters; moreover, that they shall in no case spend a night beyond the walls; a similar rule is to apply to monks. It was usual for ladies who were taking the veil to appear at the altar decked out in gold and jewels, and in the presence of a congregation which might divide its admiration between their splendour and their piety, exchange the glittering apparel for a black garment. The prudence of the council directed that this practice, as suggesting that the novices had left the world unwillingly, should be discontinued.

Many ancient customs, relics from the pagan world, still lingered on and offended the stricter members of the Church. Some old feasts were not yet extinct, such as the feast of the kalends, the feasts of Bota in honour of Pan, and Brumalia in honour of Bacchus. Women danced in public; and when men arrayed themselves as women, and women appeared in masculine apparel, it might be thought that sex was indecently confused. The old comic, satyric, and tragic masks were still worn at dramatic representations; mimic performances, accompanied by ballet-dances, were enacted in the old style. At the gathering in of the vintage the god Dionysius was still invoked. Another heathen custom, which had withstood the assaults of time and religion, was that of illuminating fires in front of houses and shops at the time of the new moon and leaping over the flames; the more pious Christians compared such acts to that of the godless Manasses. All these survivals of pagan times were strictly prohibited by the council of 692; in fact, one of the express objects of that assembly was to wipe away any vestiges of paganism that still remained. The use of a pagan oath was forbidden on pain of excommunication. Some superficial forms of superstition are also branded as worthy of punishment. Soothsayers, men who lead round bears and other beasts for show, “to the hurt of simpletons,” and sell tufts of their hair as amulets, men who profess to set nativities or work enchantments, are threatened with penalties of considerable severity. Yet notwithstanding this authoritative disapprobation of such occult arts, Emperors and probably Patriarchs believed in the prognostics of soothsayers and astrologers. Another ordinance of the council was that false tales of martyrs should be burned.

From general prohibitions, which do not especially concern the clergy, we cannot draw many conclusions in regard to the morality of the age. In all ages men gamble with dice; in all ages women use medicaments to procure abortion; in all ages women plait and adorn their hair to seduce; in all ages obscene pictures delight the vulgar or the prurient. It is noteworthy that the Quinisext Synod found it necessary to enjoin that copies of the Old or the New Testament, or of the writings of the Fathers, should not be destroyed or cut up, or sold to others—for example, to perfumers—for such purposes, except the book were so eaten by moths as to be utterly useless. Other clauses ordained that no tavern, confectioner’s shop, or booth should be erected in the immediate vicinity of a place of worship; and that the garrulity of women should cease during the celebration of divine service. Law students were expressly forbidden to adopt any pagan custom, to appear at the theatre, or to wear foreign clothes; it would seem that they affected some outlandish garb—oriental or Slavonic?—just as turbulent youths in the fifth and sixth centuries used to dress themselves like Goths or Huns. I have already mentioned the hostile attitude of the Council to Jews.

Whatever may have been the prevailing morality, it must be acknowledged that the Emperors themselves set a good example. The sovereigns of the Heraclian dynasty seem to have led exceptionally irreproachable, almost severe lives, for even against the unpopular and heterodox Constans and the tyrannical Justinian no charges of sensual extravagance have ever been brought. A heterodox Christian in exalted position, like Constans, must be indeed of stainless character if his orthodox countrymen cast no stones of calumny.

PAULICIANISM

The rise of the Paulician sect in the seventh century is worthy of observation. Its founder was a certain Constantine of Mananalis in Commagene (near Samosata), and his doctrine may be described as a *Christian dualism*. Trained up in a dualistic faith, which was probably Manichaeism, he became acquainted with the New Testament, and conceived the idea of blending the theory of two independent principles with the doctrines of Christianity. His admiration for the apostle Paul led him to adopt the spiritual name of Silvanus, and in 660 A.D. he founded his new community at Cibossa in Armenia. His tenets were not distinguished by the public or the government from those of the Manichaeans, and the laws against Manichaeism were put in force against Paulicianism. Silvanus was executed in 687 by imperial order, but Simeon, who had been sent to carry out the execution, was converted himself, and succeeded Silvanus as the leader of the sect under the name of Titus. The doctrine spread in Asia Minor, and its chief centre was Phanaroea in Helenopontus. Although the doctrine of the Paulicians was a dualism like the doctrine of Manes, there were many differences between the two systems. For example, the creation of the world was attributed by Manes to God, whereas the Paulicians ascribed it to the evil principle, or Demiurge, and drew the corollary that the body was the work of the devil. Their doctrines were expressed in mystical language which would have been appreciated by William Blake.

Like the monophysites, the Paulicians were strongly opposed to the worship of the Mother of Christ, and entertained but small veneration for the cross. For them Mary was merely a human agent and the wood merely a material instrument, and their wisdom or audacity refused to see in either the one or the other any religious value or import. In this spirit they approach the Hussites of Bohemia, the Vaudois of the Alps, and other free religious sects who in later days rebelled against the yoke of the Church. And in fact it may be considered almost certain that the Paulicians of Asia Minor were the forefathers of these heretics who prepared the way for the Reformation. For colonies of Paulicians were settled in Thrace in the eighth century by Constantine V, and in the tenth century by John Tzimiskes. The heresy penetrated into Bulgaria and thence into central Europe. Of the Paulician sects may be mentioned the Bogomiles, the Sclavoni, the Athingani.

The derivation of the doctrines of the Albigenses and the Vaudois from the tenets of the Paulicians is a subject on which much has been written, and the reader will find some interesting pages on the subject in Hallam's Middle Ages as well as in Gibbon. But what interests us here is not the later propagation of the doctrines, but the circumstance that the new faith made its appearance not long before the birth of the great iconoclast Leo the Isaurian, whose religious movement was animated in some respects by the same spirit. Notably the opposition to Mariolatry and to undue respect for relics and symbols was common to the Paulicians and the iconoclasts. The significance of this resemblance appears when we remember that the founder of the Paulician sect was born in Commagene, and that the inaugurator of iconoclasm was, if not born at Germanicia, closely connected with it. Aversion to symbolism and concomitant superstitions seems to have been in the spirit of the sturdy highlanders of the Taurus mountains.

BOOK VI

THE

HOUSE OF LEO THE ISAURIAN

CHAPTER I

THE REPULSE OF THE SARACENS

On the 25th of March 717 Leo the Isaurian entered Constantinople by the Golden Gate, and rode along the great street which led thence to the acropolis in triumphal procession.

Five months were granted to Leo for organising the Empire and preparing Byzantium to undergo a siege before the arrival of the Saracens on the shores of the Propontis. How far the arrangements which the prudence of Anastasius II had made for meeting an apprehended attack of the unbelievers were still available we are not informed.

With an army of 80,000 men, Moslemah marched across Asia Minor and took the city of Pergamus on his way; he crossed the Hellespont at Abydos, reduced some Thracian forts on the Propontis, and on the 15th of August encamped before the city, which he surrounded with a ditch and a breastwork of huge uncemented stones. Sixteen days later, on the 1st of September, Suleiman arrived with a fleet, consisting of eighteen hundred great warships and fast sailers.

The first object of the admiral was to cut off the city from communication either with the Euxine or with the Propontis and Aegean. Accordingly, having remained quiet for a space of two days between Magnaura and Kyklobios, he took advantage of an opportune south wind, and while one division of his squadron sailed to places on the Asiatic shore, named after Eutropius and Anthemius, which commanded the southern entry to the Bosphorus, other ships steered northward to occupy the entrance to the Euxine from the castle of Galata to the extremity of the straits. The weighty ships of burden, defended each by 100 soldiers, sailed in the rear of the line; unwieldy by the freight which they carried, and obliged to steer against the current, they progressed slowly. The watchful eyes of Leo, who perhaps stood on the Pharos in the palace observing the operations of the enemy, perceived the situation. He caused ships which were in readiness to be launched, and, going on board himself, burned twenty of the transport vessels with the redoubtable marine or "Roman" fire. This success encouraged the citizens, and filled the enemy with terror of "the very drastic operation of the moist fire." On that same night the Emperor caused the chain which closed the Golden Horn to be removed with pretended secrecy, and the Saracens, supposing that some cunning snare was being prepared, avoided the place and moored in the haven of Sosthenion, or at the islands called "Sharp" and "Flat."

A long and unusually severe winter was passed by the army and navy of the Arabs in a dreary blockade. The fall of snow was so great and the frost lasted so long that the solid earth was not seen for a hundred days, and many men and other animals perished. It was the besiegers and not the besieged who suffered from these inclemencies; the Byzantines were more accustomed than natives of Syria, Egypt, or Arabia to cold and frost, and were better provided with means to defy them. The death of the admiral Suleiman was another misfortune for the Saracens. But with the spring new hope and new reinforcements came. Sophiam, with a great armament and supplies of food and arms, was sent from Egypt; and his arrival was soon followed by that of Yezid with a large number of transports from Africa. These transports, afraid to approach the Bosphorus on account of the deadly "Roman fire," moored at Satyrus, Bryas, and Kartalimen, harbours on the Bithynian coast.

Both the fleet of Sophiam, which drew up at Kalos Agros, "Fair Farm," in the Bosphorus, and the fleet of Yezid contained many Egyptian Christians. By a previously concerted agreement these men, who liked not their Mohammedan lords, detached on a certain night little boats from the ships and rowed to the city, shouting "Long live the Emperor". The information which these deserters supplied to Leo was doubtless useful. He straightway sent vessels, fitted with the various appliances for hurling Roman fire, to consume the transport ships, and the fire-vessels triumphantly returned laden with booty. It must be assumed that they only burned a few ships, and that the crews of the rest fled or surrendered. This important success, so discouraging to the Saracens, could not have been obtained so easily and so soon but for the desertion of the Egyptian Greeks, whose natural instinct led them to take the right side on one of the most critical occasions for the decision of the greatest question of history.

The besiegers were not only assisted by the reinforcements of men and provisions sent overseas; they were also supported by an army under Merdasan, who, entering Asia Minor by the Cilician gates, traversed Cappadocia and Phrygia by the well-known routes and arrived in the neighbourhood of Nicomedia and Nicaea. Hovering on the coast of the Bosphorus and the Propontis,—the peratic coast, as it was called by the Byzantines,—he was able to prevent Roman boats, sent across the straits, from obtaining supplies. But the army of Merdasan was as luckless as the armament of Sophiam. It was surprised by foot-soldiers under the command of some Roman officers, who concealed themselves "like Mardaites" in an ambush, and, falling suddenly upon the Saracens, cut many to pieces and utterly routed the rest. Thus the peratic coast was made free for the Byzantine boats; and the fishes which they caught, along with those taken by nets or rods suspended from the walls or on the adjacent islets, kept the city adequately provisioned. In the meantime famine prevailed among the Arab hosts, and became so terrible that, according to the probably exaggerated account of a Greek historian, they were obliged to feed on a pulp, which they cooked in ovens, consisting of the flesh of dead men mingled with their own excrement. This deadly substitute for nutrition produced a plague, which increased the misery and the death rate.

The final blow to this unfortunate expedition was struck by the Bulgarians, who came from the north and slew, it is said, twenty-two thousand Saracens. It is interesting to see the not yet slavised and not yet christianised Bulgarians, who led however many Slavs to war, fighting for Christendom at this great crisis against the Mohammedan Arabs. They knew not then that the nation which they were organising would in future days have to struggle long for freedom against the yet more barbarous Mohammedan Turks.

On the 15th of August 718 AD, after a siege of just twelve months, the remnant of the Saracen expedition, despairing of a cause which the skill and fortune of their enemies had baffled, and which nature herself seemed to have condemned, departed on their homeward journey. But even then they had not been sufficiently discomfited. The land forces reached Syria in safety, but the fleet met with calamities similar to those which befell the squadron that had besieged New Borne in the reign of Constantine IV. Before the ships had passed through the Dardanelles a tempest scattered them; but this was little compared with the storm of thunder and lightning ("burning hail") which caught them in the Aegean and destroyed all save ten vessels. Of these ten, five were captured by the Romans and five returned to tell the story in Syria.

Regarding this terrible discomfiture of the archenemies of Christendom, and essentially, if not superficially, of civilisation, we cannot doubt that Theophanes the chronicler, in his pious reflections on the supernatural protection of the Christian Empire, merely repeated the feelings, not only of Roman, but of European Christians. At this time New Rome, not Old Rome, was the great bulwark of Christian Europe, and if New Rome had fallen it might have gone hard with the civilised world. The year 718 AD is really an ecumenical date, of far greater importance than such a date as 338 BC when Greece succumbed to Macedon on the field of Chaeronea, and of equal importance with such dates as 332 BC when an oriental empire fell, or 451 AD which marked the repulse of the Huns. The expedition which Muavia had sent against Constantinople nearly fifty years before was not so tremendous or so formidable, for neither was it conceived on such a great scale, nor was the Saracen empire in the days of the fourth Constantine so extensive and powerful as in the days of the third Leo. The expedition led by Moslemah was, we may say, the great culmination of Omeyyad ambition; from this time forward the Omeyyad dynasty declined in the East, and the caliphs little thought that a recent conquest in the extreme West was destined to be the sole possession of their posterity at a period not far distant.

Asia Minor, however, during the eighth century was as much exposed as ever to the inroads of the Moslem, who entered by the Cilician gates and plundered in one year Cappadocia, in another year "Asia" or Opsikion. For six or seven years indeed after the calamity of the great expedition of 718, Romania had rest. The Caliph Hischam, who succeeded to the throne in 724, devoted his attention to erecting palaces, constructing roads, aqueducts, and gardens, and improving the internal condition of his empire. But in 726 the invasions began again, and were repeated almost every year during Leo's reign under the generals Suleiman and Muavia.¹ Caesarea in Cappadocia was taken, Nicaea was hard pressed. A general decline in agriculture was the inevitable result of such conditions.

In the last year of Leo (739)¹ the Saracens undertook an expedition on a larger scale than usual. An army was collected numbering 90,000 men, and placed under the command of four generals. One of these proceeded with 10,000 to the western part of the Taurus peninsula and plundered in "Asia"; Suleiman, with 60,000, confined himself to the districts of Cappadocia; while the other two generals, Malik and Sid Albattal, at the head of 20,000 cavalry, advanced in a northwesterly direction through the Anatolic theme. At Acroinon, a place south of Dorylaeum and near the frontiers of the Opsikian and Anatolic districts, the Emperor Leo and his son Constantine joined battle and completely defeated the Saracens. The battle of Acroinon is especially famous, because Abd Allah Albattal, said to be the prototype of the hero of the Spanish legends of the Cid, perished on the field, and his grave is still shown. The other division of the Mohammedan army, which plundered the Aegean coast and Cappadocia, returned to Syria in safety with numerous captives.

We need not pursue all the details of the hostilities between the Empire and the caliphate in the reign of Constantine V, Leo's son and successor. On the whole, the Empire was successful. The Cibyraiot fleet baffled an attempt of the Saracens in 746 to take possession of the island of Cyprus, which had been reconquered, we know not at what time, by the Romans since the days of Justinian II. The Saracen fleet was utterly destroyed. Constantine had invaded Commagene and northern Syria in the preceding year, taking advantage of the civil wars which convulsed the caliphate, and had captured the reputed birthplace of his father, Germanicia, whose inhabitants, chiefly Syrian monophysites, he transferred to Byzantium and other places in Thrace, where they could be recognised sixty years later by their heretical religious opinions. In 751 he took Melitene and Theodosiopolis, and carried away prisoners from Armenia. The domestic struggles of the Saracens and their wars with the Turks prevented them from attacking Romania with serious effect, but Germanicia and Melitene were recovered some years afterwards, and on two occasions defeats were inflicted on Byzantine armies. It may be noticed that the practice of interchanging captives began to become usual at this time, and thus, as Finlay remarks, the commercial view of prisoners as saleable articles introduced humanity into the usages of war.

In the year 750 Damascus was taken by the Abbasids; the last Omeyyad caliph, Mervan II, fled to Egypt and was there slain in a church; and Abd Allah, called Al Saffah ("the Bloodshedder"), became the Commander of the Faithful. This change of dynasty led to the formation of two rival Saracen powers; for after a struggle in Spain the power there remained with the Omeyyad faction, and the Omeyyad emirs of Cordova, though they did not at first assume the title of caliph, asserted and maintained complete independence of the caliphs of the East.

CHAPTER II

THE ADMINISTRATION OF LEO III

The mere elevation of Leo did not immediately quench the embers of anarchy, although it allayed the flames, and, as soon as the danger from the Mohammedans had passed by, uneasy spirits formed a conspiracy against the man who had delivered them from jeopardy. Anastasius, or, to give him once more his private name, Artemius, who was living at Thessalonica, still nourished hopes of regaining, as Justinian had regained, the throne from which he had fallen, and for this purpose he entered into communications with several important ministers who were not loyally disposed to the new aristocratic government. Sisinnius Rendaces, a patrician who had been sent to Bulgaria by Leo to negotiate an alliance against the Saracens, promised the ex-Emperor to induce the Bulgarian monarch Terbel to undertake his cause. Isoes the count of Opsikion, Theoctistus the chief secretary of state, Nicetas Xylinites the *magister officiorum*, and Nicetas Anthrax, the commissioner of the fortifications, secretly favoured the pretensions of Artemius, who had also the support of the archbishop of Thessalonica. The treason was disclosed to Leo in good time, and he promptly seized those conspirators who were at Byzantium. Theoctistus and Xylinites were decapitated; others were mutilated and banished.

Meanwhile the persuasions of Sisinnius had been effective with the Bulgarians, and Artemius, accompanied by the archbishop and Sisinnius with a Bulgarian army, was advancing to Heraclea, while rough Slavonic sea crafts coasted along beside them. But the inhabitants of Byzantium had not forgotten who had saved them from the jaws of the infidel, and when the Bulgarians discovered that the popular feeling for Leo was pronounced and unmistakable, they hearkened to that monarch's proposals and surrendered the pretender whom they had come to support. Leo executed Artemius and the archbishop of Thessalonica in the Kynegion; as for Sisinnius, the Bulgarians had sent his head to the Emperor, presumably because he was too brave to allow himself to be taken alive.

Horse-races were celebrated in the hippodrome in honour of the suppression of the conspiracy, and the heads of the rebels were exposed on poles.

While Leo punished his adversaries he rewarded his supporters. To Artavasdos, the general of the Armeniac district, who had supported him against Theodosius, he gave his daughter Anna in marriage and made him general of the Opsikian theme. The fruit of this marriage was two sons, who also obtained distinguished posts while they were still young. Nicephorus, the elder, received a high command on the Thracian frontier, and Nicetas was made general of the Armeniacs.

The joy of Leo at the discomfiture of the Saracens was increased by the birth of a son. The boy was baptized by the Patriarch Germanus under the name of Constantine; his mother Maria was crowned Augusta at the same time in the chamber of Augusteus, and the new Empress did not forget to distribute the "consular donation" (25th December 718). Almost a year and a half later (25th March 720), just after the suppression of Artemius' conspiracy, the young Constantine was crowned Emperor by the Patriarch Germanus in the tribunal of the Nineteen Accubiti. At the age of fourteen or fifteen (732) Constantine was betrothed to Irene, the daughter of the khan of the Khazars, who were generally on friendly terms with the Roman Empire and on hostile terms with the Saracen caliphate. This was the second time that a Khazar princess became a Roman Empress.

Besides the conspiracy of Artemius, a revolt in Sicily troubled the peace of Leo. Sergius, the general of that province, threw off his allegiance and caused one of his staff, Basil, son of Gregory Onomagulus, to be saluted Emperor under the title of Tiberius. This happened while the Saracens were besieging Constantinople; the western provinces deemed it a good opportunity to rebel against the government. Leo appointed Paul the Patrician, on whose loyalty and military skill he could rely, stratégos of Sicily, and sent him to quell the revolt, supplying him with letters to the governors of the western parts and a sacra or imperial manifesto to the army. The soldiers returned to their allegiance immediately, Sergius fled to the duchy of Beneventum, and the heads of Basil and the other chief conspirators were sent, swathed in cloth or linen, to Leo.

Thus, about four years after his accession, having won immortal fame by repelling the great expedition of the enemies of Europe, having quelled conspiracies in the East and in the West, having begotten a son to succeed him, Leo might feel himself secure on his throne, and begin to address himself to the great work of his life.

This work was no less than the regeneration of the Roman Empire. While the twenty years of anarchy, from a political point of view, represent the culmination of the struggle between the autocratic and aristocratic elements in the State; from spiritual, social, and moral points of view they represent a low stage in a long decline. These years were the darkest point of the dark ages in southern Europe. As we already observed, society was sunk in ignorance, and the surest sign of this ignorance was the gross superstition that prevailed. There was a dearth of writers; no books were written, except perhaps tracts on the monotheletic controversy. Education, affected with the deadly disease of superstition, must have been in a sorry condition. The law schools had degenerated, and with them the knowledge of jurisprudence. This circumstance directly affected the administration of justice and undermined the very foundations of society.

What gave the reforming spirit of Leo its peculiar complexion was the fact that he did not content himself with renovating each branch of the administration separately, but attempted to cut away the root of the evil. He improved the discipline and efficiency of the army, he restored the majesty of law and justice, he reformed the police control, and he attended assiduously to the financial and commercial interests of the Empire; but he did much more than this. He essayed to eradicate the prevailing superstition by the iconoclastic policy, which has

made him so famous or notorious; and, even if he failed and the Empire could not endure to have such a vital sore removed, the results show that a new spirit of order and improvement was breathed into Roman society. An account of his iconoclastic measures will be given in another chapter, and we shall now proceed to consider his secular reforms, of which we have but scanty records. Such departments of history as this are neglected by monastic chroniclers; and unfortunately the Isaurian Emperors were regarded with such hatred by their successors on account of their religious policy that none of their laws were incorporated in the great ninth-century Code of Basil I and Leo VI.

Roman law, like the Latin language, was no longer understood in the Empire, which was tending more and more to become entirely Greek, now that it had lost Syria in the south, Africa in the west, and the northern provinces of the Haemus peninsula. Thus the nominal law of the Empire was practically in abeyance in the provinces, and while on the one hand old local customs superseded the forgotten law, on the other hand a wide room was left for the good pleasure or arbitrary opinion of judges, uncontrolled by a written, accessible, and intelligible code. If the judges had been a class of lawyers independent of the civil administration, their ignorance might not have been so fatal to justice and equity, although there was still the certain danger that fear or bribery would often corrupt them. But, as the provincial governors were often the judges, and cases were constantly occurring in which the interests of the governor or his friends were at stake, there was no guarantee for the distribution of justice when the written laws were inaccessible and therefore practically obsolete.

Leo met the imperative need of his subjects by preparing a handbook in Greek for popular use, containing a short compendium of the most important laws on the chief relations of life. It was entitled an *Ecloga*, and was not published until the last year of Leo's reign (740), but doubtless several years were spent on its preparation, which involved long preliminary studies. The preface shows the spirit in which it was undertaken; and I may quote parts of this poem as an original document illustrating the intellectual atmosphere of the eighth century.

“The Lord and Maker of the universe, our God, who created man and granted him the privilege of free will, and gave unto him a law (in the words of prophecy) to help him, made known thereby all things which ought to be done by him and all things which ought not to be done: to the intent that he should aim at the former as things that provide salvation, and avoid the latter as things that cause punishment. And not one of those who keep His commandments or who—save the mark!—disregard His statutes, shall fail to receive the appropriate recompense for his deeds. For it was God who declared both these things aforetime; and the power of His words, charged with immutability and meting to the work of each man its deserts, shall not (in the words of the Gospel) pass away. . .

“Whence, busied with such cares, and watching with sleepless mind the discovery of those things which please God and are conducive to the public interests, preferring Justice to all things terrestrial, as the provider of things celestial and as being, by the power of Him who is worshipped in her, sharper than any sword against foes; knowing, moreover, that the laws enacted by previous Emperors have been written in many books, and being aware that the sense thereof is to some difficult to understand, to others absolutely unintelligible, and especially to those who do not reside in this our imperial city, protected of God; we have called Nicetas, the most illustrious Patrician, our quaestor, and the most illustrious Patricians Nicetas and Marinus, and our most illustrious consulars and comptrollers, and others who have the fear of God, and we have ordered that all their books should be collected in our palace. And having examined all with careful attention, going through both the contents of those books and our own new enactments, we considered it right that the decisions in many cases and the laws of contract and the respective penalties of crimes should be repeated more lucidly and minutely, in order to a eusynoptic knowledge of the force of such pious laws and to facility in deciding matters clearly, and to a just prosecution of the guilty, and to the restraint and correction of those who have a natural propensity to evildoing.

“But those who have been appointed to administer the law, we do exhort and command to abstain from all human passions; and from a sound understanding to bring forth the sentences of true justice, and neither to despise the poor nor to permit a powerful transgressor to go unconvicted.

“Let those, and those only, who participate in sense and reason and know clearly what true justice is, exercise straight vision in their judgments and without passion assign to each his deserts. For so also our Lord Jesus Christ, the power and wisdom of God, giveth unto them far more abundantly the knowledge of justice and revealeth those things that are hard to discover, who also made Solomon truly wise, when he sought out justice, and granted him the privilege of successfully hitting the mark in the sentence pronounced to the two women in the matter of the child. . . .

“It is just to abstain from all taking of presents. For it has been written, ‘Woe unto them who justify the unrighteous for the sake of gifts and declining the paths of the humble take away from him the right of the just man. Their root will be as ash and their flower will come up as dust, because they did not wish to fulfil the law of the Lord.’ Presents and gifts blind the eyes of the wise. Therefore, being solicitous to put an end to such wicked gain, we have determined to provide from our Patrimony salaries for the most illustrious quaestor, for the comptrollers, and for all the officials employed in administering justice, to the intent that they may receive nothing whatever from any person whatever who is tried before them; in order that what is said by the prophet may not be fulfilled in us, ‘he sold justice for money,’ and that we may not incur the indignation of God, as transgressors of his commandments.”

This preface shows clearly the decline that had taken place both in legal knowledge and in the administration of justice, and also the earnest purpose of reform that animated Leo. But what especially strikes one who is accustomed to the language of Gaius or Tribonian is the ecclesiastical note which characterises both the preface and other parts of the *Ecloga*. The point of view of the old Roman jurists had been almost completely lost, and the spirit of Roman law had been transformed in the religious atmosphere of Christendom. Men tried now to base jurisprudence on revelation, and to justify laws by verses of scripture. The judgment of Solomon became a sort of commonplace which pious lawyers quoted for edification; while in the proceedings of law courts the venerable and mystic Romans, Titus and Seius, were deposed in favour of the scriptural worthies Peter and

Paul. As a further illustration of this change we may note that, in the first title of the treatise which is before us, law is defined to be "the discovery of God" as well as a political or social compact. In the second title, where the duties and functions of the Emperor are set forth, it is explained that it devolves upon him to maintain (1) all things laid down in scripture, (2) all the enactments of the seven holy synods, (3) the Roman laws. It is stated moreover to be highly important that he should hold correct theological opinions, and the orthodox doctrine is defined.

All this harmonises with the general theory of the constitution of the Empire, which is enunciated in terms that expressly affirm the preponderance of the ecclesiastical element. The constitution of the State is compared to the organism of a man (in the third title), and the Emperor and the Patriarch are declared to be the two chief parts. Consequently, as the wellbeing of a body depends on the unison of the chief organs, the peace and happiness, both bodily and ghostly, of the subjects depend on the union and harmony of the Patriarch and the Emperor. In point of fact, though not in name, the Roman Empire of Leo III, or the Eastern Roman Empire of Basil I., was as much a Holy Roman Empire as the Western Empire of the Othos.

The Ecloga gives a short account of the duties of the Emperor himself, of the Patriarch, of the prefect of the city, of the quaestor, and of the provincial governors, and supplies us here with some interesting information. The true aim of the Emperor is stated to be the conferring of benefits, while his special objects are (1) to preserve the strength which his Empire has, (2) to recover lost dominions by sleepless care, (3) to make fresh acquisitions by wisdom and just triumphs. In interpreting the laws he must regard the custom of the State as a clue, and if he errs, should err on the side of clemency.

From the functions of the various members of the imperial government the treatise passes first to personal law, then to obligations and actions, and finally to public law (criminal and military). Thus real law is almost entirely omitted, and even the important subject of servitudes is not mentioned; whence it is evident that in this department it was considered expedient to allow local customs to continue.

The great interest of the Ecloga is the clear view which it gives us of the tendencies of Roman law as they developed under the Christian influences of the Middle Ages without reference to past legislation. This medieval development was cut short in the ninth century by the return to Justinian law, which was inaugurated by the first Basil and carried out by the sixth Leo.¹ It is especially instructive to compare the Ecloga with the Code of Justinian on the subject of marriage and divorce. The influence of Christianity on the legal conception of the conjugal relation was, as Zacharia remarks, small up to the time of Justinian; and it was the Isaurian Emperors who really introduced a Christian legislation on the subject.² The following points are worthy of note: (1) Justinian permitted concubinage, while Leo and Constantine ordained that every concubine was to be considered a wife. (2) The Ecloga sternly institutes punishments for fornication, which the laxer law of earlier days had regarded as a venial immorality, to be dealt with by the Church. (3) The Ecloga required the consent of both parents to the marriage of their child, while the older law recognised only the father. In this point Basil returned to the rule of Justinian. (4) The marriage of Christians with Jews had been forbidden by Justinian, but not the marriage of Christians with heretics. The Ecloga assumes the latter relation, which had been condemned by the Quinisext Council, to be illegal. (5) The Ecloga forbade the marriage of cousins to the sixth or even seventh degree.¹ In regard to divorce, the contrast of the earlier and the later legislation is striking.² The general principle of Justinian and his lawyers was that all contracts and agreements made by men are dissoluble by the consent of both parties; and an arrangement *ne, liceat divertere* was invalid. Hence divorces could take place by private agreement without the intervention of a court. But instead of the secular and rational principle underlying the legislation of Justinian, the Ecloga adopts the religious principle that man and wife are one flesh, and refuses to permit divorce except in four cases, namely: (1) if the wife commit adultery, (2) if the husband be proved to be impotent, (3) if either spouse circulate calumnies which endanger the life of the other, (4) if either spouse be afflicted with leprosy. It appears that adultery on the part of the husband was not a valid cause for divorce. Many avoided this stringent law by acting as sponsors to their own children and thus incapacitating themselves from further intercourse with their spouses, but in the year 780 Leo IV strictly forbade this artifice for annulling the marriage bond. In the Basilica, however, the older and laxer law is restored. In regard to a third marriage, the Ecloga affects to regard such an act as inconceivable, and it was definitely forbidden by Irene in 800.

The *patria potestas* is another matter in which the Justinian and Isaurian attitudes notably differ. Long before Justinian, the power of the father over the person and property of his children had been growing weaker; it had become easy to obtain emancipation; and practically, though not theoretically, the maternal had become equal to the paternal influence in guiding the life of the son. But here Justinian preserved the letter of the old law and did not bring the theory into accord with practice; the father still retains his old rights over his son's person and property; and the son is only permitted to have the independent disposal of his *castrense peculium*. The Ecloga here adapts the law to the fact and sets aside the old Roman conception of the *patria potestas*. Equal duties or rights are assigned to both the mother and the father, and thus as long as either parent is alive no guardian is requisite. The personal consequences of *patria potestas* disappear, and though the management of the son's property is still in the hands of the parents, this is considered not so much a legal right as a parental care for the interests of the children.

The publication of the Ecloga was accompanied by three special codes embodying and sanctioning the customs which regulated military, agricultural, and maritime affairs. The Maritime Code, known as the Rhodian laws, Rhodes having been in old days a centre of ocean traffic, shows us that in the eighth century mercantile trade by sea was carried on by companies. The Mediterranean was infested by Slavonic and Saracen pirates, and sea commerce was so dangerous that merchants and skippers could not undertake it except on condition that the risk should be common. Thus the Isaurian Emperors lay down the law that in case of ship or cargo being injured by an accident for which no one can be blamed, the loss is to be borne jointly by the skipper, the owner of the freight, and the travellers.

The Agricultural Code leads us to consider the important question as to the changes which had taken place in the agricultural population and in the institution of serfdom since the fifth century. A great but silent revolution had been accomplished in the intervening ages, so gradual that it has been left unnoticed by the writers whose works have come down to us, but deducible with absolute certainty from a comparison of the legislation of the eighth with the legislation of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries. The institution of the colonate has been slowly undermined, and by the age of the iconoclasts has completely disappeared; in the Agricultural Code there is no mention of the *adscriptionii*; and we find no cultivators fastened to the soil by the chains of law. Peasants of two kinds are mentioned, and both classes are in every sense free. There are (1) peasants who are allowed by a proprietor to settle on his land and cultivate it, but they can leave it when they like, though they are obliged to compensate the proprietor for any loss accruing to him from their untimely departure. As rent for the land these tenants paid the landlord a tithe of the produce and hence they were called *portiri*. There are (2) free communes of peasants, who possess land in common, which they divide among the members. Each member farms the land either himself or with the help of slaves; or even rents it or part of it to some other person on condition of receiving a percentage of the profits.

When we proceed to inquire how this change in the economical condition of the provinces came about, and how serfdom disappeared, we are reduced to speculation. It is clear that the explanation of these facts must lie partly in changes in the national character and partly in the external history of the Empire. Now a great change had taken place in the population, both in the European and in the Asiatic provinces, since the middle of the sixth century. The north-western regions of Asia Minor as well as the Balkan peninsula had been filled with Slavonic settlers; while the other provinces of Asia—Syria had been lost—were colonised by the free Mardaites and in the east by Armenians. The new settlers were not accustomed to the colonate and the system which enchained the son to the

profession of the father; and the Roman Emperors, who were straining every nerve to beat back Persians or Avars or Saracens, were not injudicious enough to force the colonate upon them. Moreover, during the Persian and Saracen invasions the colons were doubtless called upon, if not for offensive, at least for defensive military service, and the continuance of this abnormal state of things must have led to practical changes in their position. When new cultivators were settled in a district, the condition of the old cultivators who had lived under the colon system must have been gradually assimilated to that of the new settlers. But, in addition to this, the invasions of the Avars, Slaves, and Bulgarians in Europe, and of the Persians and Saracens in Asia, had depopulated wholly or partially many districts. The peasants were either slain, or led captive, or compelled to flee to other provinces. In the last case, the general confusion occasioned by constant invasions secured the fugitives from being recalled to their old state of serfdom; and we may conjecture that when captives were redeemed from an enemy those who had been serfs were allowed to settle, on new conditions, in the provinces.

Thus the continuous invasions from the middle of the sixth century to the end of the seventh operated both directly and indirectly in the abolition of the colonate—directly by removing the serfs, indirectly by changing the character of the population. Now the latter change has a peculiarity which throws further light on the problem before us.

The most important new element in the population was the Slavonic. One point of difference between the Slaves and the Germans was that the Slaves had no institution corresponding to the German *laeti*. The Slaves had slaves, but they had no free cultivators attached to the soil. Now the development of the Roman colonate in its later stages was closely connected with the settlement of Germans in the Empire; and the success of the system was certainly due partly to the fact that the Germans, familiar with the notion of *laeti*, readily adapted themselves to the institution of the *coloni*. “But the institution which was signified in the Byzantine Empire by the word *enapografī*, was strange to the spirit of the Slavonic race; the Slaves did not understand it and could not reconcile themselves to it. A direct result of the intrusion and settlement of the Slaves was the abolition of this institution; the tie connecting the peasants and the soil was broken, the peasants ceased to be serfs and received the right of free movement from place to place.”¹ The new Slavonic settlements reacted on the condition of the colons and *adscriptionii*.

The hypothesis that the Slaves were mainly influential in bringing about this change is confirmed by the existence of peasant communities, attested by the Agricultural Code of the Isaurian sovereigns. Besides the new class of free tenants “there appeared peasant communities which were organised by Slaves in the provinces occupied by them, according to Slavonic custom, and which, it may be, were borrowed from the Slaves by peasants of other nationalities subject to the Byzantine Empire.”

It thus appears that while the Roman institution of the colonate worked out a natural development among the Teutonic nations of the West, it ceased to exist in the Roman Empire itself, where new conditions were to lead to a great struggle, in the ninth and following centuries, between, the rich and the poor proprietors. The colonate did not arise again in the East, and references to this system in the Basilica are anachronisms, having no application to contemporary society, but merely repeated from the Code of Justinian.

As the iconodulic chroniclers did not know, or did not care to tell of Leo’s beneficial reforms, we are left in the dark as to the details. The successes gained during his own reign against the Saracens, the successes gained by his son Constantine against the Bulgarians, indicate that he restored the relaxed discipline and improved the efficiency of the military forces.³ If he did not extend the frontiers of the diminished Empire, he made it firm and compact from Haemus to Taurus. He also improved the police control both in the city and in the provinces; but on this subject we may speak more conveniently in another place. During the years of anarchy brigandage had flourished in the highlands of Thrace and doubtless also in the highlands of Asia Minor. To Constantine V is due the credit of suppressing the bands of scammers which infested Thrace and were recruited by peasants whose lands had been wasted by Bulgarians or drained by heavy taxation.¹ A notorious chief of one of these robber bands was made an example by an inhuman punishment; his extremities were amputated and he was dissected alive by surgeons.

It is certain that the financial condition of the Empire was not satisfactory when Leo ascended the throne. At the time of Philippicus' succession, after the death of Justinian Rhinotmetos, the treasury was full, but the voluptuous upstart spent in a short season the greater part of the treasures. The expenses incurred by Anastasius in preparing for, and by Leo in undergoing, a long siege were probably considerable, and the revenue proceeding from direct taxation must have been appreciably affected by the circumstance that Asia Minor had been so long exposed to annual invasions, which injured the agricultural prosperity of the country. It may be concluded that Leo was anxious to improve the revenues, and that his fiscal measures were not likely to be lenient. For six or seven years Asia Minor suffered little from the Saracens and had time to recover its productiveness (719-726); then the Emperor saw good to increase the burden suddenly.

The manner in which he carried out this measure was peculiar, if I am right in interpreting a curious aberration in the chronology of the time. I believe that Leo caused the taxes which would regularly have been paid in two years to be paid in one year, and that for this purpose he adopted the original idea of altering the calendar. The official mode of reckoning was by indictions; thus the year current from 1st September 726 to 1st September 727 was the tenth indiction. Leo threw two indictions into one, or, in other words, omitted one indiction, either the eleventh or the twelfth (probably the eleventh), and then exacted the double tribute. Thus the year current from the end of 728 to the end of 729 was called in the official records the thirteenth indiction, whereas according to the natural reckoning it should have been the twelfth. The consequence of this has been that the chroniclers, who took their dates from the public records and were not aware that an indiction had been suppressed, have misled modern historians, who, when they perceived that the indictions and the years of the world did not correspond, assumed that the indictions were right and the years of the world wrong. Nearly fifty years later, shortly before the death of Constantine V, the alteration was cancelled and the right reckoning restored by counting two years as one indiction. But for fifty years of the eighth century all the received dates are wrong by a year. Leo III, for example, reigned a year less than is generally supposed, and his son Constantine V a year longer.

In 732 Leo ordained that a register should be kept of the male children born in the Empire, a measure which his religious enemies held up to odium.¹ In the same year he increased the capitation tax in Sicily and Calabria, and ordained that a sum of three and a half talents of gold, which was annually paid to the patrimony of the Apostles at Old Rome, should be paid to the treasury.

A great earthquake which occurred in October 739 may be recorded here, because it gave rise to a new tax. Some of the oldest monuments in the city were thrown down by the shock, the statue of Constantine the Great, at the gate of Attalus; the statue and sculptured column of Arcadius; the statue of Theodosius I, over the Golden Gate, and the church of Irene, close to St. Sophia. The land walls of the city were also subverted; and in order to repair the fortifications Leo increased the taxes by one-twelfth, or a *miliarision* in a *nomisma*.

From Leo's time forward it was the habit of the Emperor to pay more direct personal attention to the finances than before, so that the officer called *logothetes* was rather the imperial secretary in fiscal matters than a responsible minister, while the Emperor was himself chancellor of the exchequer. This, however, was a matter of practice and not of statute, and the relation between the logothete and the sovereign varied according to the judgment or character of the latter. Active princes like Leo and his son might take the direction of the fisc altogether into their own hands, and leave to their logothetes little more than routine work; while indolent monarchs like Michael III, or delicate monarchs like Leo IV, might surrender a large proportion of the financial administration into the grand accountant's hand. I am not confident, however, that this change was first introduced by Leo; I am rather inclined to believe that it dated from the reign of Constans, one of whose characteristics was the habit of doing things himself. His grandfather Heraclius was called upon to solve serious financial difficulties at the beginning of his reign, and must have exercised a careful personal supervision over the fisc and the "count of sacred largesses." Now before the end of the seventh century we find that this name has become obsolete, and that our historians, whose language generally echoes that of their sources, use the term logothete. It seems not improbable that the change of name was concurrent with the change in the functions of the office, and that the autocratic and independent Constans managed the affairs of the exchequer himself, and transformed the count of sacred largesses into a secretary, who received the name *Logothetis tu genikú*. As the new office was almost equivalent to a private secretariate, it becomes intelligible that Theodotus, a monk, held it under Justinian II, just as freedmen held such posts in the early Empire.

CHAPTER III

THE ICONOCLASTIC MOVEMENT

The historical import of the iconoclastic controversy, as I conceive it, did not consist in the mere definite point at issue concerning the worship or reverence paid to sacred pictures, but rather in the fact that the movement represented a great reaction against the gross superstition which hung as a cloud over Christendom. The adoration of pictures tends to become a most degraded form of superstition, as uneducated minds fail to distinguish between the sign and the thing signified; and it naturally leads to other forms of credulity. There were many pictures which, in the belief of men, had descended from heaven, and were not made with hands; and not only the populace but even a Pope believed in the power of icons to work miracles. Thus picture-worship was

selected by Leo the Isaurian as the main point of attack. But what especially interests us and concerns history is, not the details of the controversy itself, but the fact that Leo III, Constantine V, and their party were animated by a spirit of rationalism, in the same sense that Luther was animated by a spirit of rationalism. They were opponents, not only of iconolatry, but also of Mariolatry; they did not believe in the intercession of saints, they abhorred reliques which were supposed to possess magic potency. They were, moreover, especially Constantine V, the sworn foes of monks, whom they justly regarded as the mainstays of superstition and mental degradation; for although the monks of south-eastern Europe were on the whole more pious and chaste than their brethren in the West, and although some of them were learned men, the large majority were ignorant, narrow-minded, and obstinate.

At first sight it might be thought that these purists, who preferred that the walls of their churches should be unadorned by rich pictures and mosaics, and who, in their zeal, destroyed valuable works of art and persecuted their opponents, were fanatical zealots and somewhat rude pietists, like the Puritans of the seventeenth century in England. This comparison, however, would be a wholly misleading one. The Isaurian Emperors and their Amorian successors were not opposed by any means to the pomps and vanities of the world. On the contrary, one of their rational principles was that many things which the monks called pomps and vanities were really only innocent and not unbecoming amusements. The Emperor Theophilus, who persecuted image-worship in the ninth century, was one of the gayest and most brilliant monarchs that ever reigned at Byzantium; in fact, we may say that he introduced a new period of oriental splendour. In the reign of Constantine V the palace was constantly a scene of frivolity and festivity. The iconoclasts were not the apostles of puritanism; they were the apostles of rationalism, and the opponents of extreme austerity.

While, from a historical point of view, iconoclasm was a great reaction, from a dogmatic point of view it was not new; it was connected with old controversies. The objection of the iconoclasts to represent Christ in art was simply a corollary to the doctrine of the monophysites; and the opposition of the Isaurians to Mariolatry was a thoroughly monophysitic feature. The monotheism of the seventh century was a connecting link between monophysitism and iconoclasm; but there were two new influences which affected the eighth-century movement and gave it a peculiar character, namely the Paulician doctrines and the Mohammedan religion.

It is a great misfortune that no historical or other works composed by iconoclasts (with the exception of the *Ecloga*, which does not deal with iconoclasm) are extant, and that we derive all our knowledge of the movement from the accounts of their antagonists, the iconodules, who, with malevolent bigotry, misrepresented their motives, exaggerated their faults, and calumniated their moral character. The hatred against the iconoclasts was so great in subsequent ages that all their works have perished except the *Ecloga*, which was preserved by accident, probably because it was wrongly attributed to Leo VI and Constantine VII.

It was in the year 725 that Leo first began to put forward his objections to the worship of images. Several stories were current as to the influences which caused Leo to assume this position. At the seventh general Council, which condemned iconoclasm in 787, a monk named Johannes stated that Leo had communicated with the Saracen caliph Yezid, through the mediation of Constantine, bishop of Nacolia, and had at his suggestion waged war against pictures. Yezid had in his dominions issued a decree against pictures some years before, by the persuasions of a Jew of Laodicea.

Whatever truth or falsehood may lie in these stories, there is no doubt that the Mohammedan religion, which was freer from superstition and materialism than a degraded Christianity, exercised considerable influence on the religious doctrine of the iconoclasts; and that it could do this all the more readily on account of the kinship of the worship of Allah to the worship of Jehovah, and the connection of Judaism with Christianity. Neither of the great Semitic religions permitted the use of images and pictures in its service, and this austerity maintained a less sensual conception of God. Hence it was a common reproach, levelled against Leo and Constantine, that they were imbued with Arabic ideas. Here too lies the meaning of the nickname *Kopronymos*, which was fastened to Constantine. We need not necessarily reject the tale, which our historian professes to have had on unimpeachable testimony, that perfidious nature played the child an indecent trick at the moment of his immersion in the font; but the point of the name is illustrated by the word "magarise," which soon acquired an unsavoury sense. And it was not only in the condemnation of picture-worship that the religion of these Emperors had a flavour of Islamism and Judaism; they were fain to degrade the Virgin and the saints from an almost divine eminence, and their doctrine tended towards an Arianism which verged on monotheism. Yet they were by no means favourers of the Jews. Four years after his accession, Leo attempted to compel all the Jews in the Empire to be baptized; possibly he thought that they might leaven the Church with a new spirit. At the same time he tried to force the Montanists to embrace the orthodox creed; but they were so devoted to their faith that, sooner than yield, they assembled in a building, and, having set it on fire, perished in the flames.

But the resemblances of iconoclasm to Paulicianism appear to me more important than its points of contact with Mohammedanism. When we remember that the home of the Paulician doctrine was in Commasene, and that Leo III, if not born at Germanicia, was closely connected with those regions, it seems natural to suppose that he or his parents inhaled among the Paulicians a spirit of antagonism to Mariolatry and superstition. Moreover, Leo afterwards stamped with his approval the heresy which his predecessors had persecuted. He summoned a certain Paulician named Gegnaesius to New Rome, and caused him to be tried before the Patriarch Germanus. Gegnaesius was honourably acquitted of the charges which "slanderers" had brought against him, and Leo sent him back to his home with a written safe-conduct to protect him against future persecution.

Leo issued his first decree against the worship of images in 726. The purport of this decree was not, as is often stated, that pictures should be hung higher in the churches, in order that people should not adore them and kiss them; it commanded that they should be totally abolished. One of the first acts in the execution of this edict, the destruction of a specially revered image of the Saviour above the palace gate of Chalke, caused a riot. An old legend was connected with this image, and it was called *Antiphonetes*. The officers who were breaking or taking down the image were attacked and killed by enraged women; and Leo was obliged to proceed to strong measures

in order to enforce his decree. It must not be supposed, however, that he had recourse to harsh extremes with the lower classes of the people; his enemies tell us expressly that his anger fell on those who were conspicuous by their birth and education. When those whom he expected, on account of their position, to join him in his enlightened campaign against superstition, refused to do so, he attempted to coerce them. But Leo, although he was determined to carry through his reforms, was not as intolerant or violent as his son Constantine, and did not go beyond petty persecutions. At that age of the world it was impossible for any religious movement, rationalistic or other, to avoid the tendency to intolerance ; and no one seemed to imagine that intolerance was inconsistent with enlightenment.

We must touch here on the subject of education, for the policy of Leo in this respect has been made a ground of serious accusations against him. Theophanes, the monk, states that he exterminated the educational establishments and put an end to the pious system of instruction which had prevailed since the time of Constantine the Great. In other later sources, George the Sinner and Zonaras, we find a curious statement. There was an imperial institution between St. Sophia and the palace walls, near the place called the Bronze Bazaar (Chalkoprateia). This academy contained a large library of both sacred and profane rolls, and was the residence of a personage entitled the Ecumenical Doctor (*Didaskalos*), who was assisted by twelve learned men. It was, in fact, a college with a provost or master and twelve fellows. They were fed at the public expense, and gave instruction in arts and theology. The Emperor used to consult them on political matters, and they enjoyed a high reputation at Constantinople. Leo thought that if he could gain over to his side the representatives of learning and education, the victory would be easily won; but he failed. The conservative spirit that generally exists in universities and bodies of learned men is sufficient to explain their opposition to the Emperor's radical reforms; but the dark atmosphere of superstition that had prevailed so long and the mists of theological prejudice had probably obscured their reason. I do not suggest this because they upheld the cause of pictures; really learned and relatively enlightened men, like John of Damascus, were earnest antagonists of iconoclasm. But if it be true (and there seems no reason to doubt) that Leo disendowed the college, ejected the Ecumenical Doctor and the twelve fellows, and perhaps removed the library to the precincts of the palace, it is clear that he considered the institution a nursery of superstition. So much truth, I believe, underlies the outrageous and absurd slander which was circulated in later times to shed obloquy on the reformer's name. It is narrated by Zonaras and George Hamartolus that, having failed in many discussions to win over the learned men, he surrounded the imperial house, as their college was called, at night with heaps of inflammable wood, and burned the building down with professors, library, and all. If there were no direct evidence against this story, it would be incredible in Leo, who never proceeded to extreme persecution with any individual; it would be incredible even in Constantine, though he did not hesitate at executions. But the silence of the orthodox historians Theophanes and Nicephorus, who bitterly hated the memory of the iconoclast, is absolutely conclusive. Yet the existence of such a gross calumny is instructive, and shows us with what circumspection and distrust we must accept all statements of the friends of pictures regarding their opponents.

When we combine the brief statement of Theophanes, quoted above, that Leo put an end to "pious education" and shut up educational institutions, with this later notice touching the Ecumenical Doctor and the imperial house, it is plain that the Emperor's reforms extended to education. But nothing could be less critical and less equitable than to repeat, as some modern historians have done,¹ the adverse statements of his enemies, that in a spirit of bigotry he quenched education and threw the Greek world into a slough of ignorance and darkness, from which it did not begin to rise until the reign of Constantine Porphyrogenetos, and did not finally recover until the days of Michael Psellus in the eleventh century. Such an assertion is absurd. The fact is that education in the Roman Empire had been enveloped in darkness since the middle of the seventh century, and that, but for the new spirit which the iconoclastic reaction introduced, south-eastern Europe and Asia Minor would have walked in the same path of ignorance and corruption as western Europe during the succeeding centuries. That Leo, the knight-errant against superstition, should have taken measures to exterminate liberal education, is a charge too ludicrous to entertain. But it is sufficiently refuted by facts recorded in Ignatius' *Life of Nicephorus*, or in *the Life of Theodore of Studion*, where we are told that these learned divines received an excellent secular education in grammar, language, science, and philosophy. There was, in fact, a large number of educated and learned men at the end of the eighth century, and there was not a single educated man of eminence at the beginning of the eighth century. The iconoclast movement intervened, and by the inductive method of difference we are justified in attributing the improvement to its salutary influence. And yet we are told that iconoclastic bigotry quenched liberal education.

What Leo really did in the matter of education is indicated by the words of Theophanes. He suppressed the schools of theology, which were doubtless hotbeds of superstition and bigotry, and that is what Theophanes means by the extinction of "pious education." The imperial house, from being originally an institution for the maintenance of both secular and sacred knowledge, had probably degenerated into a theological seminary, where all subjects were touched with the deadly breath of superstition and every branch of learning was obscured by religious irrelevancies. By disestablishing such an institution Leo was cutting at the very root of the evils against which he was contesting; and we may feel sure that the abolition of the Ecumenical Doctor and his twelve coadjutors was no loss to the cause of education, but rather a gain.

It was easy to deal with the Ecumenical Doctor, but it was not quite so easy to deal with the Ecumenical Patriarch. Germanus refused to support Leo's policy, and Leo determined to depose him, as the importance of the Patriarch in the Empire made his co-operation highly desirable and his opposition extremely formidable. A suspicious story is told, that one day, as the Emperor and Germanus were discussing the controverted subject, the latter remarked that pictures would be destroyed, but not in Leo's reign. "In whose reign, then?" demanded Leo. "In the reign of Conon," was the reply. "My name is really Conon," said the Emperor. "God forbid," ejaculated Germanus, "that the evil should be accomplished now in your reign! For he who fulfils it is the precursor of Antichrist and the subverter of the mystery of the incarnation." At this Leo was angry, and Germanus reminded him of the covenant which he had made before his coronation, not to shake or change the apostolic and divinely transmitted canons of the Church.

On the 7th of January 729 Leo summoned a conclave or *silentium*, in the tribunal of the Nineteen Accubiti for the purpose of condemning idolatry, and invited Germanus to attend it. Germanus replied by resigning his office, and as he laid down his episcopal surplice or *omophorion*, he said, "If I am Jonah, cast me into the sea." The principle on which he based his opposition to Leo was that he could not introduce innovations without the authority of an Ecumenical Council. Germanus was deposed, and Anastasius, the Patriarch's *syncellus*, who had taken Leo's side in the controversy, was elected in his stead (22d January), and immediately issued a manifesto, which was important in that it gave ecclesiastical authority to Leo's policy. Pope Gregory II refused to recognise the elevation of the new Patriarch; but we must postpone to another chapter an account of the important results which the iconoclastic edict produced in Italy.

I may mention in this place the revolt that broke out in Greece in the year 727, although we cannot believe that it was entirely caused by the religious policy of Leo. We may rather suppose that oppressive taxation was the deepest cause, and that orthodox ardour against the iconoclast only hurried the catastrophe. At the same time it must be admitted that we can assign rough geographical limits to the distribution of idolatry and iconoclasm, and that Greece was devotedly attached to pictures, central and southern Asia Minor being the home of the heretics.

Theophanes says that the Helladikoi and the inhabitants of the Cyclades rebelled against Leo and proclaimed one Cosmas Emperor. This passage is the *locus classicus* for the word Helladikoi, which is usually explained as a contemptuous expression for the inhabitants of Greece proper—that is, for the Greeks who dwelled between Mount Olympus and Cape Taenarum. There is, however, not the least ground for the supposition that the word is charged with a contemptuous or scornful implication; nor, on the other hand, is it probable that it includes the Peloponnesus; perhaps it does not even include the inhabitants of north-western Greece. When Leontius was appointed strategos of Hellas by Justinian, Hellas was a definite geographical district not coincident with Hellas in the modern sense any more than it was coincident with Hellas in the ancient sense. The medieval district or theme of Hellas did not include the Peloponnesus; it included Attica, Boeotia, Phocis, and Thessaly; it may possibly at first have also included the western regions of Epirus, Acarnania, and Aetolia, which in the tenth century formed the theme of Nicopolis, but it is just as likely that the theme of Nicopolis was independent from the beginning. The word Helladikoi was the natural name to use, primarily of the soldiers, and then generally of the inhabitants of the military district of Hellas, on the analogy of the names Armeniakoi and Anatolikoi.

Thus the district of Hellas combined with the Cyclades, which belonged to a separate jurisdiction, and the armament of the rebels arrived at Constantinople under the command of Agallianus, the turmarch of Hellas, on the 18th of April 727. With the help of marine fire, the imperial fleet found no difficulty in routing the insurgents; Agallianus leaped into the sea in full armour when he saw that the cause was desperate; Cosmas and one other leader were beheaded. It is probable that Leo did not push his iconoclastic policy to extremes in Greece, especially after this rebellion; in the same way we shall see that he did not press matters too far in southern Italy. Nevertheless, it is not improbable that many of the monks who sought refuge in Italy in consequence of the iconoclastic movement were natives of Hellas and the Peloponnesus.

CHAPTER IV

IMPERIAL ITALY IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

The iconoclastic movement was destined to lead to important political results in Italy. It was destined to assist in the accomplishment of two tendencies that had been always operative, the tendency of the Roman possessions of central and northern Italy, in which there was a strong Latin element, to separate themselves from the Empire, which was becoming gradually Greek, and the tendency of southern Italy, which still retained some traces and memories of the days when it was Magna Graecia, to go a different way from the rest of the peninsula and throw in its lot with Sicily and the eastern Mediterranean. During the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, while the main bulk of Italy was Latin, southern Italy was Greek. Apulia and the land of Hydrus or Otranto, which owing to a temporary Lombard occupation had lost its old appellation Calabria, and the false Calabria, which once was called Bruttii and by an accident of Roman administration obtained a fairer name,—all these were part of the Greek or "Roman" world under the name of Longobardia; just as before the Roman conquest Apulia and the true Calabria and Bruttii were nationally grouped with the peoples of the Aegean and not with those of the Tyrrhenian Sea. The repetition of history becomes still more striking when we observe that the inhabitants of Rhegium, Croton, and Taras in the days of Hiero and Gelon, or in the days of Agathocles, saw a struggle of the same import in Sicily as took place in the days of Basil the Great or in the days of George Maniakes. In ancient times it was the struggle between the Aryan Greek and the Semitic Phoenician, in which the Romans finally intervened; in medieval times it was the struggle between the Aryan Greek or Byzantine and the Semitic Arab, in which the Normans finally intervened; but in both cases a people who spoke Greek and a people who spoke a Semitic tongue were contesting the lordship of Sicily, and in both cases "Great Greece" was vitally interested.

But of the history of medieval Magna Graecia, as we might call it, or Longobardia, as it was actually called from the end of the ninth century, only the first act falls within the limits of this work. The present chapter will narrate how the iconoclastic movement contributed in two ways to a new departure in Italy, consciously in one

way, unconsciously in another; and how this prepared for that series of events—the fall of the exarchate, the appeal to Pipin, the overthrow of the Lombard kingdom, the new policy of the Popes—which led up to the constitution of the Western Roman Empire. The intentional innovation was the transference of the Churches of Calabria and Sicily along with that of Illyricum from the see of Old Rome to the see of New Rome; the unintentional innovation was the colonisation of southern Italy by Greek refugees from the iconoclastic persecution. These two events had a common cause, and were followed by a common effect, but they may be treated separately; and we naturally begin by considering the somewhat entangled history of the affairs that took place in Italy between the year 726, when the edict against images was issued, and the year 732 (according to received chronology 733), when the ecclesiastical innovation mentioned above was carried out.

It must not be supposed that the revolt of the exarchate was first or solely caused by the iconoclastic edict of Leo. Before the news of that measure had reached Ravenna or Rome, Pope Gregory II had lent his countenance to a general opposition of the imperial Italian subjects to an extraordinary taxation.¹ He supported the inhabitants of Rome in their refusal to obey the imperial governor; and duke Basil was driven from the city and compelled to become a monk. About the same time Liutprand, king of the Lombards, invaded the exarchate and took Classe, but failed to take Ravenna, while Narnia was lost to the Lombards of Spoleto.

Then the news of the destruction of the mystic image of Christ, called the Antiphonetes, horrified the pious or superstitious souls of the Latins. The rumour was a vaunt-courier of the edict itself, which soon arrived, along with instructions to the civil officers and a letter to the Pope (727). The feeling of dissatisfaction with the government which had before prevailed became now undisguised animosity, and all the cities of the exarchate rebelled. The imperial officials were killed or expelled, and each district elected a duke for itself. The idea was even conceived of electing an Emperor in Italy and escorting him in triumph to New Rome. Exhilaratus, duke of Naples, who tried to enforce obedience to the edict, was lynched, and in Rome the feeling was so high, owing perhaps to the idea that the Pope's life was in danger, that an army was despatched from Ravenna to quell the recalcitrant spirit in its central seat. But King Liutprand, who from his palace in Pavia was watching for an opportunity to extend his dominion, which he perhaps hoped to make conterminous with Italy, assumed the position of a supporter of the Pope and Latin orthodoxy against the imperial heretic, and entered into communication with the rebels. At his instance the Lombards of Spoleto and Tuscany surprised the army which was marching from Ravenna to Rome at Ponte Salaro—the bridge which Totila destroyed and Narses restored—and prevented its further progress.

Ravenna meanwhile was rent with discord, some supporting the Emperor and others declaring for the cause of rebellion, or, as they loved to say, for the Pope. The latter faction, whose zeal was doubtless stimulated by private agents of Liutprand, prevailed, killed Paul the exarch, expelled his successor Eutychius,¹ and enabled the Lombard king to gain possession of the strong city² of the marshes, which Lombard kings had so long coveted in vain, and he himself had failed to take a year before. The cities of the Pentapolis, Rimini, Eano, Pesaro, Ancona, and Umana, the Roman cities of Aemilia, and the city of Auximum invited Liutprand to occupy them with garrisons, and some time later Sutri was taken by the Lombards of Tuscany.

Eutychius, the successor of Paul, had fled to Venice when he found the insurgent faction too strong for him. The duchy of Venice was theoretically, like Rome and Naples, under the government of the exarch, but practically independent, since the citizens had begun to elect their own dukes in the year 69*7. It was, however, still attached to the Empire, and a letter of Pope Gregory to his friend duke Ursus brought to Ravenna a Venetian army, with whose help Eutychius expelled the Lombards from the city of the exarchs. This assistance rendered by Venice to Ravenna was an anticipation of the succour that she was to lend her against the Spaniards in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

As to the dates of these events we are left by our authorities in uncertainty; the very order of their occurrence is confused. But they clearly occupied a considerable time, and meanwhile Pope Gregory had taken up a decided position and exerted himself actively against iconoclasm, while he took care not to encourage the rejection of Leo's civil authority and disapproved of the idea of creating a rival Emperor in Italy. I say a rival Emperor in Italy; but I must explain clearly that there was no idea afloat of disconnecting Italy from the government of New Rome' or creating a second Roman Empire; the contemporary biographer of Gregory II states expressly that Italy thought of electing an Emperor and leading him, to Constantinople. The idea of the Roman Emperor and New Rome were still indissolubly connected in men's minds. Three extant letters of Gregory, one to the Patriarch Germanus and two to the Emperor Leo, are important documents for the iconoclastic controversy, and show us the position of Gregory. Like John of Damascus, who wrote in Syria against the enemies of image-worship, Gregory asserted that the Emperor had no right to interfere in the question of ecclesiastical doctrines. Leo had laid claim to priestly functions in virtue of his imperial station, and had written "I am an Emperor and a priest." In answer to this, Gregory admitted that Constantine the Great, Valentinian I, Theodosius the Great, and Constantine IV were really both priests and Emperors,—because they were orthodox; but he denied it in the case of Leo, and insisted on the essential difference between ecclesiastical and temporal jurisdiction. In defending picture-worship he chiefly appealed to the authority of the Fathers, but also pointed out that it had a certain educational use for the masses; and he accused Leo of having diverted the people from a wholesome interest in pictures and "occupied them with idle talk, harpplaying, cymbals, flutes, and such trivialities."

Having held a council in Rome (727), which condemned iconoclasm, Gregory anathematised the enemies of pictures—expressly mentioning Paul the exarch of Ravenna, but not extending the ban to the Emperor. Leo threatened to treat him as Constans had treated Martin; but the Pope felt secure, with the Lombards and western Christendom to support him, and plainly told the Emperor of New Rome that the Church of Old Rome was the great bulwark of the Empire in Italy against the Lombards. At the same time, it was not the policy of the Popes to favour the extension of Lombard domination in Italy; although the presence of such domination to a certain degree was useful to them as a check on the imperial power. The history of Italy has shown that a double, treble, or multiple political rule has tended to exalt the papal power, and ' a single rule has tended to depress it; effects which might have been predicted. Accordingly, whether the Popes of the period were on friendly or hostile terms

with the Emperors, they regarded with disfavour Lombard aggressions on imperial territory. Yet Lombard aggressions at this time began to turn out to the advantage of the Roman see; for the moral influence of the Popes induced the Lombard kings to present as a donation to the successors of St. Peter what they had taken away from the successors of Constantine. Thus the letters of Gregory II persuaded Liutprand to hand over to him the strong town of Sutrium (south of Viterbo), shortly after it had been captured by the Tuscan Lombards.

Eutychius had not been long restored to his residence at Ravenna when a new and curious political combination, reversing the usual relations of Italian politics, surprised the peninsula for a moment. The exarch Eutychius and King Liutprand formed a league against the Pope and the dukes of Beneventum and Spolegium, who had allied themselves to win back from Liutprand the cities of the exarchate.

I must remind the reader of the position of the dukes of Beneventum and Spolegium. They enjoyed an almost complete immunity from the interference of the Lombard kings, who dwelled far away in the north at Pavia, and were separated from them by the hostile territory of the exarchate. These duchies were in fact, throughout the seventh century and until the reign of Liutprand, independent principalities. The dukes appointed their own civil officers, and there was no royal domain, at least in Beneventum, to give the king a pretext to interfere. Thus it was to their interest that the exarchate should continue to exist, and that a strip of Roman territory should separate their dominions from the dominion of the king. This was especially desirable when the throne was filled by a vigorous ruler like Liutprand, who aimed at reducing all Italy under his sway, and first of all at bringing into a state of dependence the duchies of his own nationality.

The action of the dukes, Transmund of Spolegium and Romuald II of Beneventum, in allying themselves with the Pope against himself, decided Liutprand to exact their homage and allegiance. At the same time he felt a grudge against the Pope for his share in compassing the recovery of Ravenna, notwithstanding the donation of Sutrium. The exarch, in spite of the Pope's recent assistance, was bound to assert the imperial authority which the Pope had allowed to be defied in Rome. And thus this remarkable league came into existence.

Liutprand did not find it necessary to advance farther than Spolegium, nor was he obliged to make use of force to constrain the dukes to his allegiance. They both met him at Spolegium and acknowledged his suzerainty. He then proceeded to Rome and joined the exarch, who was besieging the city; but his arrival was the means of deliverance for the Pope. Furnished with the pomp and solemnities of his office, Gregory went forth into the camp of the Lombards, and by the influence of his personality moulded the will of the susceptible king, who, laying his arms at the feet of the pontiff, yielded to his wishes and induced the exarch to acquiesce in a peace favourable to Rome.

Soon after this Gregory II died and was succeeded by Gregory III, whose election is remarkable for the circumstance that he was the last bishop of Old Rome for whose consecration the consent of the Emperor who resided at New Rome was asked. The third Gregory opposed iconoclasm, like his predecessor,¹ and in his pontificate the struggle came to an end as far as Italy was concerned. A council of ninety-three bishops assembled at Rome and excommunicated the iconoclasts; and in reply Leo sent a naval armament of Cibyriote seamen under the command of Manes to arrest the Pope on the charge of treason and bring him to Constantinople, as Martin had been treated eighty years before by Constans. The expedition never reached Rome, but the details of its failure are not clear. It appears that the armament was scattered by a storm in the Adriatic, and that the Greek troops were not over eager to carry out the Emperor's wishes.

At this juncture Leo came to the important conclusion that he would no longer oppose the Pope's ecclesiastical power in the dominions of the exarchate, but would translate the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Sicily and Calabria, as well as of the dioceses of Illyricum, from the bishop of Rome to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The jurisdiction of Calabria meant the jurisdiction of the metropolitan Churches of Rhegium and Severiana and Hydrus (Otranto). All the bishoprics of the Bruttian peninsula were included in the two metropolitan provinces of Rhegium and Severiana, a town probably as old as the age of Pliny, now called by a name which it obtained in the tenth century, Santa Severina, and famous as the natal place of Pope Zacharias.

The effect of this act of Leo, which went far to decide the medieval history of southern Italy, was to bring the boundary between the ecclesiastical dominions of New Rome and Old Rome into coincidence with the boundary between the Greek and the Latin nationalities. In other words, it laid the basis of the distinction between the Greek and the Latin Churches. The only part of the Empire in which the Pope now possessed authority was the exarchate, including Rome, Ravenna, and ' Venice. The geographical position of Naples, intermediate between Rome and the extremities of Italy, determined that its sympathies should be drawn in two directions; in religious matters it inclined towards Old Rome, in political matters it was tenacious of its loyalty to New Rome.

The fact that the execution of such a thorough innovation as the detachment of south Italy from Rome was attended with no difficulty or opposition, may at first seem surprising. To explain it we are led to consider the other important, though indirect, result of iconoclasm, which was mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, namely the second Greek colonisation of southern Italy in the eighth century AD, whereby it became a Greek land for four centuries, just as it had been a Greek land before the Roman conquest.

In the crypt of the cathedral of San Sabino at Bari an old discoloured Greek madonna is shown to visitors, which the inhabitants of Bari believe to be the celebrated Hodegetria, a picture supposed to have been executed by the hands of St. Luke himself. It was said to have come from Constantinople in one of the ships of the fleet of Manes (autumn 731), a fugitive from the sacrilegious hands of Leo. It had been originally presented to the princess Pulcheria and had been kept in the church of Hodegos at Constantinople as a possession of priceless and talismanic value, and had sometimes been carried into battle to ensure victory. Regarded with a superstitious reverence above other pictures, it was a special stumbling-block to reason in the eyes of Leo the Isaurian, who decided that it should be burnt, in spite of its antiquity and historical associations; but two monks were

sufficiently bold and cunning to convey it to one of the ships about to set sail for Italy, and store it away secretly and safely. When the tempest arose in the Adriatic “above the vessel in which this miraculous image was hidden, an angel descended from heaven under the form of a young man of the greatest beauty, who restored confidence to the terror-stricken crew, and seizing the helm guided the vessel safe and sound into the port of Bari, on the first Tuesday in March.” The inhabitants of Bari claim that they still possess this holy picture, now nearly two thousand years old. But the Greek inhabitants of Constantinople contend that they have the work of St. Luke, also miraculously preserved from the wrath of the iconoclasts, in a church of Blachernae.

This legend, as M. Lenormant elegantly remarks, may be taken “as a poetical symbol of the transplanting of Hellenism to Italy by orthodox refugees.” In the eighth century it was decided that central and northern Italy were to be Latinised and pass out of the sphere of direct Greek influences, while southern Italy was to be Hellenised and detach itself in religion, nationality, and language from the Latin and German world. This change, which knitted the south portion of the peninsula more closely to the eastern Mediterranean, was rendered possible by the indirect and unintentional consequence of iconoclasm, the emigration of an immense number of monks and laymen, who hoped in the recesses of Calabria and Bruttii, beyond the reach of Leo’s arm, to be able to adore pictures and relics without fear. The number of orthodox Greeks—priests, monks, and laymen—who escaped from the East to southern Italy in the reigns of Leo and Constantine has been set at 50,000. It was really, as has been pointed out, a new Greek colonisation, which may be compared to the old Greek colonisation fourteen or fifteen hundred years before, and which explains such facts as that Squillace was a purely Latin town in the sixth century in the days of Cassiodorus, and a purely Greek town in the tenth century. Besides Bari, many other towns, such as Barletta in Apulia, Otranto, Amalfi, and Salerno, pretend to possess old Greek pictures brought from the East by iconodulic refugees.

The firm opposition which his religious reforms excited in the West prevented Leo, who was politically farsighted, from pressing matters to extremes. He saw the danger of alienating the inhabitants in provinces, which without their co-operation might at any moment become the prey of the king of the Lombards or of the duke of Beneventum. He also apprehended clearly that northern Italy and Rome were more alien to the rest of the Empire than were southern Italy and Sicily. Under these circumstances, his policy was to draw in the less alien districts still closer, and allow the rest to remain as they were. But it necessarily resulted that the closer connection of the one with the Empire caused the other to drift more and more away. The special mode, I conceive, in which this tendency operated, was the exclusion of the Pope from all jurisdiction in the eastern part of the Empire; his authority was confined to Latin-speaking districts. He was thus driven as it were into the arms of the German powers, in whose dominions his authority was still accepted as supreme; whereas in the Empire, with whose traditions his office was so closely associated, his influence was practically inoperative, except in a few provinces held by a precarious tenure, and the domains of the see of St. Peter had been confiscated by the temporal power.

Thus the great influx of Greeks, especially monks and priests, who were firmly attached to the Greek liturgy and forms of worship, explains the ease with which southern Italy was alienated from Old Rome. Leo, as I said, was judicious enough not to attempt to enforce his iconoclastic edicts in these regions, which seem to have enjoyed in the eighth century an almost unique period of material prosperity combined with spiritual peace, for which, however, a severe Nemesis in the shape of the “unnameable” Saracens was destined to overtake them in the ninth.

CHAPTER V

CONSTANTINE V

Soon after the death of Leo, which occurred on the 18th June 740, the elements of opposition to his government, which had smouldered during his lifetime, began to flame forth against his son Constantine, who was imbued with his father’s ideas and inclined to carry them to further extremes. There were two distinct interests involved, which became blended in a common feeling of hostility to the Isaurian dynasty, the interest of the aristocratic class who maintained the old quarrel with imperial autocracy, and the interest of the orthodox friends of images. It was a favourable opportunity for an ambitious man to utilise the general discontent of large and influential circles before the new sovereign had securely established himself on the throne. Nor was the opportunity lost. Artavasdos, who had supported Leo at the time of his accession and married his daughter Anna, was not deterred by the ties of relationship from determining to oust his brother-in-law. He was count of Opsikion, and had two sons to support him, Nicephorus and Nicetas, of whom one held a command in Thrace, while the other was general of the Armeniac theme. The Armeniac troops were devoted to him; but the Anatolic and Thracian themes were faithful in their allegiance to the son of Leo.

It was in June 741 that Constantine crossed over to Asia Minor in order to conduct a campaign against the Saracens, and pitched his camp at a place called Krasos in Phrygia. He sent an order to Artavasdos, who with the Opsikian troops occupied the plain of Dorylaeum (near the borders of the Anatolic theme), to join him. Artavasdos, however, was already coming; he had assumed imperial rank, and he put to death the Emperor’s messenger Biser, a patrician. Constantine had barely time to escape to Amorium in the Anatolic theme, where he

was sure of personal safety and a loyal reception. The Anatolic troops swore to fight to the death for him, and were joined by the Thracians under the command of Sisinnius.

Meanwhile Theophanes Mondtios ("One Ear"), who had been left by Constantine as a sort of viceroy at Byzantium, declared for Artavasdos, and at his suggestion proclaimed publicly that Constantine was dead. Artavasdos was accepted as the new Emperor, his son Nicephorus with the Thracian army occupied the city, and the officials who remained loyal to the Isaurian family were displaced. The basis on which the usurper proposed to establish his power and secure popularity was the revival of picture-worship, and no time was lost in restoring pictures in the churches. The Patriarch Anastasius is said to have deserted his iconoclastic colours and to have publicly asserted that Constantine did not believe in the divinity of Christ. Anastasius probably found it necessary to temporise, but we must remember that his conduct is reported by writers who sympathised with his ecclesiastical opponents.

Constantine advanced with his army to Chrysopolis (Scutari), but no action took place, and he returned to Amorium, where he wintered. In the spring of 742 two battles were fought, in both of which Constantine was victorious and displayed his military skill. He first defeated Artavasdos, who was devastating the Thracian provinces, at Sardis; and then marching in a north-easterly direction, met Nicetas, who was advancing with the Armeniac troops and Armenian auxiliaries, and routed him utterly at Modrine in the Bucellarian theme. He next proceeded, supported by the Cibyraiote fleet, to besiege Constantinople, where Artavasdos, having fled from the field of Sardis, had shut himself up. The city, unprepared to stand a siege and blockaded by land and sea, was soon reduced to straits of distress, and it was necessary to relieve the pressure by tacitly allowing a large number of the non-fighting inhabitants to escape. All these were received kindly in the camp of Constantine, and many persons of high position, to whom Artavasdos would not have deemed it safe to grant permission to leave the city, stole out secretly in the disguise of women or monks.

Nicetas meanwhile had collected new forces since his defeat at Modrine, and now advanced to the relief of his father. Constantine met him at Nicomedia and defeated him a second time, taking him prisoner, as well as Marcellinus, the archbishop of Gangra, whom he beheaded. After this discomfiture Artavasdos, who had doubtless been holding out in expectation of succour from his son, fled to Nicaea, and having there collected a few soldiers, took refuge in the fortress of Puzane, where he was captured by a battalion of Constantine's army. At the spectacle in the hippodrome which celebrated Constantine's restoration to Byzantium, Artavasdos and his two sons were exposed to the view of the populace and then thrown into prison. Some time afterwards the general of the Thracians, Sisinnius, who had stood by the Emperor in his difficulties, was convicted or suspected of treasonable plotting, and was deprived of his eyesight. It is possible that this plot was a scheme for the elevation of Artavasdos, as the eyes of Artavasdos and his sons were also put out immediately afterwards.

The troubles that beset Constantine on his accession were a true augury of a stormy and uneasy reign; but the ability which he had displayed in overcoming the difficulties, also boded that his energy and skill would hold the joints of the time together. Although it was a time of uneasiness, it was not a time of rottenness, like the reign of Phocas or the reign of Apsimar; the policy of Leo had reformed the State. But the very tendency to reform had created an uneasy surging movement in the Empire. This tendency did not consist merely in the conscious endeavours and definite activity of the Emperor and those who sympathised with his spirit of rational enlightenment. All these conscious endeavours and activities were themselves the result of a general tendency to change, which was latently at work among the inhabitants of the eastern Mediterranean in the eighth century. I already touched on this subject in speaking of the pestilence which raged in the reign of Justinian, and put forward the conjecture that plagues on a great scale spread at periods when the organisms of a people are involved in a precarious condition of transformation or decay, and may be peculiarly susceptible to noxious external influences. The plague itself contributes to the formation of a new world by clearing away an effete population and making room for new settlers, while only the fittest of the old inhabitants survive its ravages.

A great plague of this kind broke out in the reign of Constantine and desolated large portions of the Roman dominions. It originated in Syria (744) and spread thence to Constantinople, not, however, by way of Asia Minor, but in a circular direction, travelling through Egypt, Africa, Sicily, and Calabria, and passing thence to Greece and the Archipelago. It is interesting to note this course, for it shows that the plague followed lines of commercial traffic. Had Syria still belonged to the Roman Empire the pestilence would doubtless have traversed Asia Minor and so reached the Bosphorus, as in the days of Justinian; but there was now little intercourse by land between Asia Minor and Syria, as a chronic state of hostility prevailed between the caliphate and the Empire and the trade of the two states was carried on by sea.

The following account of this pestilence is given by Theophanes, who was born about the time of its prevalence :—

"A pestilential death, beginning in Sicily and Calabria, advancing like fire to Monobasia (t.e. Monembasia) and Hellas and the adjacent islands, spread throughout the whole of the fourteenth indiction (744-745), chastising the impious Constantine and restraining the mad violence against holy churches and sacred pictures; yet he remained incorrigible, like Pharaoh of old. And this plague of bubo (swelling in the groin) reached the imperial city in the fifteenth indiction (745-746); and then, suddenly and without visible cause, many crosses of olive oil began to appear on the garments of men and on the sacred cloths of the church (St. Sophia). Hence men were seized with sorrow and great despondency, in perplexity at such a sign; and the divine wrath, destroying and not sparing, overtook not only the inhabitants of the city but those who dwelled round about it. Moreover, many saw apparitions, and, having fallen into ecstasy, they fancied that they were communing with certain strange, as it seemed, and hideous faces, and that they addressed them as friends and discoursed with them, and noting what they said, declared it unto others. And they saw the same forms entering their houses and slaying some of the household, and wounding others with swords. But most of the things which the forms told them fell out, as they afterwards beheld.

“And in the spring of the first indiction (747) the pestilence spread to a greater extent, and in summer its flame culminated to such a height that whole houses were entirely shut up, and those on whom the office devolved could not bury their dead. In the embarrassment of the circumstances, the plan was conceived of carrying out the dead on saddled animals, on whose backs were placed frameworks of planks. In the same way they placed the corpses above one another in waggons. And when all the burying-grounds in the city and suburbs had been filled, and also the dry cisterns and tanks, and very many vineyards had been dug up, the gardens too within the old walls were used for the purpose of burying human bodies, and even thus the need was hardly met.”

Towards the end of 747 the violence of the disease abated. Constantinople was depopulated after the black year, and while his orthodox enemies were making the most of the misfortune as a direct visitation on the iconoclasts, whom they regarded as no better than Jews, Constantine began to take measures for repopulating the capital. For this purpose he transplanted families on a large scale from Greece and the islands to Constantinople. The effect of this act was to leave room in the Greek peninsula, already depopulated by the plague, for the Slaves, who began to press southward in greater numbers than ever, and complete the process of Slavising large districts of Hellas and the Peloponnesus, in which there was a considerable Slavonic element already. Two tribes, called Ezerites and Melings, established themselves on Mount Taygetus, and long remained independent.

The question suggests itself, how far the Slaves who had been settling in Greece as early as the second half of the sixth century were interfused with the native Greek population. On this subject we have little or nothing in speculating that the infusion took place rapidly, and that the Slaves who settled in Greece between the dates 570 and 640 were gradually and easily converted to Christianity. It is at least remarkable that we hear of no intestine conflicts in Greece, nor yet of a mission for the conversion of the Slavonic settlers there. It is inviting to compare the infusion of the Slaves with the Greeks to the speedy amalgamation of the Danes, who invaded England in the ninth century, with the Angles. “The Danish Odo, Oskytel, and Oswald were archbishops in less than a century after Halfdane had divided Northumbria”; and just in the same way the Slavonian Nicetas became Patriarch of New Rome in the reign of Constantine V. We may pursue the parallel further, and compare the later Danish migrations of the eleventh century to the later Slavonic migration of the eighth century, of which we have just spoken. It was against these new immigrants, not yet amalgamated with the inhabitants, that the expedition of Stauracius was directed in 783.

Thus the plague was fruitful in far-reaching changes. On the one hand, an immense number of the inhabitants of Greece, who kept up many old Hellenic traditions, were either exterminated or transferred to a new place, where they came under new influences. On the other hand, a vast portion of the inhabitants of Byzantium, who maintained a certain Roman character and many Roman traditions amid all their half-Hellenic half-oriental ways, had been carried off by the plague, and were replaced by pure Greeks who had not inherited the effects of Roman influence, but, on the other hand, had been affected by intercourse with the Slaves. A double process went on in Byzantium; the new Greek settlers were Byzantinised, and at the same time Byzantium was Hellenised more completely than before. This was an important step in the direction of becoming a Greek nationality, to which goal the Roman Empire was steadily tending.

But we must especially emphasise the fact that these changes mark the final separation of the Empire from the ancient world and its assumption of a completely medieval . The removal of the Greeks from Greece cut off the dim survivals of the ancient Hellenic spirit; the depopulation of partly-Roman New Rome cut off the dim survivals of the ancient Roman spirit. All the elements that define the Middle Ages operated henceforward unstified and unmodified. In the middle of the sixth century, the time of the plague in Justinian’s reign, we left the ancient world and entered the outer gate of the medieval city; in the reign of Heraclius, after the conquest of Persia, we passed an inner gate; hut the innermost gate is not reached till the eighth century; and the plague in the reign of Constantine marks the new departure. The ninth century and the twelfth are far more homogeneous than the sixth and the eighth.

Neither Constantine nor his father Leo took pains to commemorate their reigns by costly buildings, as did other less patriotic Emperors when the public purse could but ill afford the expense. Constantine, however, executed one solid and useful public work. The aqueduct of Valens had been destroyed by the Avars when they besieged Constantinople in the reign of Heraclius, and had never been restored since. The consequence was that the city was not well supplied with water, and when there was a drought in 766, the want of a duct to bring water from the hills was painfully felt. The Emperor immediately set about the restoration of the old aqueduct, which involved a large outlay. He collected skilled workmen from various parts of the Empire: a thousand masons and two thousand plasterers or cement-workers from Pontus and from Asia (that is, the western coast lands of Asia Minor); five thousand labourers and two hundred potters from Thrace; five hundred *ostrakarioi* or pottery-workers from Greece and the Aegean islands.

Constantine was said to be avaricious, and one writer calls him a “Christ-hating new Midas.” This accusation seems to be chiefly founded on a curious and unjustifiable economic measure, which, whether designedly or not, had the effect of benefiting the non-productive portion of the community at the expense of the productive. He withheld the imperial revenue from circulation, and this at once cheapened all articles of food. The farmers and corn-growers were forced to sell their products at absurdly small prices; so that the money received was hardly sufficient to pay the taxes, which were not diminished and were exacted in coin. Meanwhile the non-agricultural classes, the buyers, were jubilant, attributing the low prices to plenteous crops, instead of to the true cause, scarcity of the medium of exchange. This affair is an interesting paragraph in the history of political economy.

Constantine married three times. By his first wife, Irene, the daughter of the khan of the Khazars, he had one son Leo (nicknamed “the Khazar”), who succeeded him. His second wife, Maria, died childless in 751. He

then married Eudocia, who bore him five sons, Christophorus, Nicephorus, Nicetas, Anthimus, and Eudocimus. The eldest son, Leo, married an accomplished and ambitious Athenian lady named Irene in 768. The second and third sons were raised to the rank of Caesar and the fourth and fifth to the rank of *nobilissimus* in 768; the youngest, Eudocimus, was not made a *nobilissimus* until the reign of his half-brother Leo.

CHAPTER VI

ICONOCLASTIC POLICY OF CONSTANTINE

Constantine was an apt pupil of his father Leo in the lessons of autocratic government and the assertion of imperial supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs. But in the matter of iconoclasm his little finger was thicker than his father's loins, and he detested so intensely the superstition and stupidity which were fostered by the monks that he ended by persecuting them with a sort of passionate bitterness. As monasticism was one of the most radical elements of medieval Christendom, Constantine's opposition may appear vain and untimely; nevertheless, he was not altogether beating the air. For, although persecution is always impolitic, the attitude of the iconoclasts was the expression of a new and healthy spirit, and we should not blame them much if they fell into the error of intolerance, whose entire eradication can be looked for only after a long education of the human race. And when we read the accounts of the persecutions we must remember that they emanate from Constantine's opponents, and that no sources written in the iconoclastic interest are extant. It will not be necessary to enter here into the details of the "martyrdoms," which find a fitter place in works on ecclesiastical history; our attention is directed rather to the general spirit of the rationalistic movement.

Constantine not only condemned picture-worship and hated monachism, but his orthodoxy in theological doctrine was extremely doubtful, and in some respects his moral principles were decidedly far from austere. Thereby he laid himself open to the attacks of his opponents, who made him out to be almost a pagan in creed and a Minotaur or a Cyclops in manners.

The stories that are told to illustrate his tendency to Nestorianism, or even to Arianism, have probably a basis of fact, and both Leo and Constantine may have been secretly inclined to a Unitarian system as a purer form of religion. In any case, Constantine won the reputation of being addicted to free theological speculation. He forbade the prefixion of the epithet saint to the names of men; he would not permit any one to speak of St. Peter, but only of the apostle Peter. He bantered his courtiers unsparingly when they displayed traits of superstition or an inclination to practise austerities, which he deemed unjustified by reason. If one of his nobles slipped and fell in his presence and happened to employ such an expression as "Virgin, help me," he was exposed to the Emperor's smiles or sneers. If a minister was in the habit of attending church services with a pious and punctilious regularity, or complied with such a custom as the keeping of a sacred vigil, the Emperor laughed him to scorn. Even an over-scrupulous care in avoiding profane language was held up to ridicule by this enemy of all that savoured of superstition.

Constantine recoiled in horror from the austerity as well as from the superstition of monasticism, and he held a merry, perhaps ribald court, which gave his enemies welcome material for charges against him. His palace was the scene of banqueting, music, and dancing; he was not prudish in conversation; he was fond of the companionship of handsome young men. His ecclesiastical opponents circulated mysterious stories of secret orgies; and a tale was told, which may be true or false, that a youth named Strategius, whose intimacy Constantine courted with peculiar ardour, communicated the dangerous secret to a third person, and was on that account put to death by the Emperor.

Both Leo and Constantine, while they deprived the people of sacred pictures, desired to substitute other things, not for their edification, but rather for their amusement. Pope Gregory accused Leo of endeavouring to replace images by harps, cymbals, and flutes, as means of popular enjoyment; perhaps Leo organised public concerts. Constantine was fond of music; the attention which he paid to harp-playing is one of the charges brought against him; and it was he who sent to Pipin the first "organ" that ever reached western Europe. Theatrical entertainments, to which the Quinisext Synod had assumed an uncompromisingly hostile attitude, were in favour with the iconoclasts; nor did their reprobation of sacred and seductive pictures by any means imply hostility to the art of painting as an art. For example, when the walls of St. Maria in Blachernae were stripped (after the synod of 753 AD) of pictures which illustrated the history of Christ, they were covered instead with paintings of landscapes,—trees and birds and fruits. How beautiful such ornamentation may have been we can fancy from the exquisite mosaics preserved in the church of St. George at Salonica; but the author of the Life of Stephanus describes St. Maria as transformed into an aviary and a fruit market. The Patriarch's palace was adorned with "Satanic" representations of hunting scenes, horse-races, and similar subjects. Hence we cannot take literally the condemnations of painting in itself which are recorded to have been uttered by the synod of 753.

This synod, which condemned image-worship as contrary to Christianity, was held at Constantinople, and consisted of 338 members, but was not attended by representatives from Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem, so that it had no just claim to be styled ecumenical. The Patriarch Anastasius had died of a foul disease in the preceding year, and as no one had been elected in his place, Theodosius, bishop of Ephesus and son of the

Emperor Apsimar, presided at the council. Soon afterwards the patriarchal chair was filled by Constantinos, bishop of Sylaeum, who was presented to the people in the church at Blachernae by the Emperor himself, with the words, "Long live the ecumenical Patriarch." A few days afterwards, accompanied by the new Patriarch and the bishop of Ephesus, Constantine declared aloud his heretical doctrine in the Augusteum (Forum of Constantine).

After the synod, coercive measures were taken to carry out its resolutions. It would seem that for almost ten years after Constantine's victory over Artavasdos he had abstained from active proceedings against the adoration of pictures, waiting until he should feel himself securely established on the throne, and that consequently the churches which Leo had purified were once more adorned with sacred paintings and images. The monks, moreover, had taken advantage of the lull to propagate the orthodox doctrine and encourage the forbidden practices; nor did they cease after the synod to agitate against the Emperor and the Patriarch. But for several years wars and other affairs prevented Constantine from pushing coercion to extremes and suppressing by violent measures the refractory monks who, from the aspect of Caesaropapism, were no better than rebels.

But in 761 the persecution began, and among the many monks who were put to death or maltreated six stand out conspicuously, as the Greek Church commemorates the anniversaries of their martyrdoms. Peter Kalybites, who had called Constantine a new Valens and a new Julian,—he' probably detested an Arian even more than a pagan,—was flogged to death in the circus of St. Mamas in Blachernae on the 16th of May. John of Monagria suffered two months later. The year 766 was signalised by the executions of Paul of Crete and Andreas of Crete. Another Paul underwent martyrdom in 771 (8th July). But of all the victims the most celebrated and influential was the abbot Stephanus, whose death is commemorated on the 28th day of November; the year in which he suffered cannot be fixed with positive certainty, as the statements of our authorities are contradictory. Stephanus lived the austere life of an anchorite in a cell on Mount Auxentius in Bithynia, and when Constantine began (about the year 760 or 761) to suppress monks and monasteries, not only the monks of Bithynia, but those of Constantinople and the country round about, betook themselves to the secluded mountain and lived under the guidance of the abbot. It was said that false witnesses were suborned by the Emperor to bring charges against this powerful opponent, and that a noble widow, Anna, the spiritual daughter of Stephanus, was accused by her slave of having indulged in carnal conversation with the abbot, and was whipped in the vain hope of extorting a confession (about September 762). When this charge failed, Stephanus was accused of having transgressed the Emperor's edict that no monk should take in a novice, and of having tried to seduce a young court page into embracing monastic life under his guidance. Of course the biographer of the martyr represents this charge as false, but we cannot accept his colouring of the story without reservation, and must regard it as at least quite possible that the complaints of the page had some foundation. At all events, the Emperor's representations of the matter in Constantinople created a current of popular excitement against the monks, and Constantine no longer hesitated to send soldiers to Mount Auxentius with orders to pull down the monastery and the church, which were built at a lower point on the mountain than the cell of the abbot,¹ to disperse all the monks, and to conduct Stephanus to the island of Proconnesus. He was allowed to remain there in exile for a space of two years, but as crowds of monks congregated to him and he continued to preach the doctrine of image-worship with unflagging energy, he was at length removed in fetters to Constantinople (764) and flung into the praetorian prison (praetorium) with 342 monks, who were condemned to suffer various penalties and indignities—some losing their eyes, some having their ears or noses slit, while the beards of others were tarred and burnt. Stephanus was condemned to death, and stoned or hewed to pieces in the street.

Soon after he had removed from his way the zealous and noxious Stephanus, the Emperor adopted the measure of exacting an oath from all his subjects that they would not worship pictures. About the same time he induced the Patriarch Constantinos to relax the severity of manners affected by ecclesiastics, to abandon the habit of eschewing meat, to join in good fellowship at the imperial table, and to assist at musical entertainments. The Patriarch thus became, in the eyes of the monks, no better than a worldly reveller.

When he had returned from his unfortunate expedition against Bulgaria (765), Constantine entertained the populace and held the monks up to ridicule by a curious exhibition. He caused a large number of monks to walk up and down the hippodrome, each holding a harlot, or, according to some accounts, a nun, by the hand, spat upon and jeered by all the people. As for the monasteries, which were numerous, he had either caused them to be pulled down, as those of Callistratus and Dion, or converted them into barracks for soldiers like that of Dalmatus.

Hitherto the campaign against monachism had been chiefly confined to Byzantium and regions in the vicinity on either side of the Propontis; but in 766 Constantine appointed staunch and unflinching iconoclasts, men after his own heart, to governorships in the Asiatic provinces, and commanded them to abolish pictures and coerce monks. Michael Lachanodrakon was made governor of the Thracian theme, Michael of Melissene of the Anatolic, and Manes of the Bucellarian theme. Who can describe, cries the chronicler, the evils which these men did in the provinces? But we hear no details until the end of the year 769 or the beginning of 770, when Lachanodrakon assembled all the monks and nuns of the Thracian theme in a plain called Tzukanisterion ("Pologround"), and bade them immediately marry under pain of being transported to Cyprus. Many, most probably, yielded, but some chose the penalty. Subsequently the same governor attacked the monasteries, committed all the patristic books, monastic manuals, and sacred relics to the flames, and sent to the Emperor a welcome sum of money obtained by selling the costly consecrated vessels. The Emperor wrote him a letter-of warm thanks, and said, "I have found a man after my own heart." Not a monk was left in the Thracian theme, and it is said that Lachanodrakon anointed the beards of some with a mixture of oil and wax and set fire to them; but these are the stories of opponents.

I may here draw attention to another aspect of Constantine's war against the monks, and point out that economical considerations as well as the desire of uprooting superstition evidently influenced his policy. In a society where the danger was depopulation, not over-population, the monastic system was distinctly an evil. A few monasteries scattered here and there might have been not only innocuous but highly beneficial; but in the

Roman Empire cloisters multiplied every year, and a sort of mania seems to have seized the wealthier classes in the eighth century to found monasteries and retire to their seclusion. The consequence was that an unduly large proportion of the population, men who should have been productive and reproductive citizens, led a life of sterility and inactivity, saving as they thought their own souls, utterly regardless of the State. The progress of this individualism was fraught with peril for the Empire, which was always surrounded by enemies and needed the active co-operation of every subject for its preservation ; and I believe that this was one of the deepest causes which led to the decline of the Eastern Empire. For after the iconoclastic movement had died out, the monastic spirit increased more and more, and almost every man who was in receipt of a respectable income saved money in order to endow a monastery before he died; while it was a common occurrence that ministers or governors embraced the spiritual life ere they had passed their prime.

Constantine V could not be blind to this aspect of the monastic system, nor could he fail to see that it stood in direct antagonism to the interests of the State. It is recorded that he always became angry if he heard that any of his courtiers or officers entertained the intention of retiring to a cloister; and the statement not only indicates the Emperor's attitude but also illustrates the fact that persons of rank frequently sought the seclusion of cells. The measure of compelling monks to marry proves, I think, that a desire to redress the evil of depopulation, as well as the motive of eradicating superstition, determined Constantine's policy. It may be added that the enormous ravages which the great pestilence made among the inhabitants of the Empire rendered the population question more important and pressing than ever. If we once realise that not merely ecclesiastical differences of opinion, but social and political problems of the greatest magnitude, were involved in Constantine's conflict with monasticism, we shall be more able to comprehend and ready to make allowances for the unrelenting severity with which he suppressed men like Stephanus, who, though personally amiable and well-meaning, exerted all their power and influence to maintain a system which, as he plainly saw, was undermining and ruining the Empire. One might almost say that the spirit of Constantine's policy anticipated the famous paradox of Gibbon that the virtues of the clergy are more dangerous to society than their vices.

Before concluding this chapter I must mention the fate of the Patriarch Constantinos, of which the causes are somewhat obscure. A conspiracy was formed against Constantine in August 765, shortly after his disastrous expedition to Bulgaria, by a number of men of high rank, including Antiochus, who had filled the posts of governor of Sicily and logothete of the course; Constantine Podopagurus, who was in office as logothete of the course, and his brother Strategius, the *domesticus* of the imperial guards; David, count of Opsikion; Theophylactus, governor of Thrace. Constantine and Strategius were beheaded, others were blinded. But the most remarkable circumstance was that the iconoclastic Patriarch Constantinos was suspected of being an accomplice; or else the Emperor was angry with him for some other reason, and framed against him a false charge of participation in the conspiracy. The historians say that some of his own servants were suborned to declare that their master had conferred treasonably with Podopagurus. Accordingly Constantinos was banished to Hieria, and Nicetas, a Slavonian and of course an iconoclast, was elected in his stead. A year later (6th October 766) Constantinos, who had in the meantime been transferred from Hieria to Prince's island, was brought to Constantinople. He was first beaten so severely that he could not walk, and then carried in a litter to St. Sophia, where an imperial secretary read out a list of the accusations which had been preferred against him, accompanying the recitation of each item with a blow in the face, to the delectation of the new Patriarch Nicetas, who looked on. He was then beaten backwards out of the church; and on the following day, sitting on an ass, with his face turned to its tail, was exposed in the hippodrome to the spits and mocks of the people. He was beheaded in the Kynegion, his head was exposed in the Milion, and his body was dragged by ropes along the streets to "the place of Pelagius," the barathrum of Byzantium.

Unfortunately we know nothing of the crimes or misdemeanours which the imperial secretary read in the solea of St. Sophia, and it is not a little surprising to find the Emperor treating thus an iconoclastic Patriarch, whom he had at first regarded with marked favour. If I may hazard a conjecture, perhaps Constantinos, while he agreed with the Emperor in his hatred of image-worship, did not agree with him in his hatred of monks, and did not approve of his thoroughgoing policy, which aimed at the extirpation of the monastic system. I am inclined to think that in this respect the iconoclastic clergy were not at one with the supporters of Constantine's policy against monachism, and that this difference may have occasioned a breach between the Patriarch and the Emperor.

CHAPTER VII

BULGARIA

The Bulgarian monarch Terbel, who had restored Justinian II to the throne, and in return for that service obtained the rank of a Roman Caesar, who had afterwards attacked the Saracens as they besieged Constantinople, and in the following year espoused for a moment the cause of the ex-Emperor Anastasius, died in 720, after a reign of twenty years, during which the Bulgarian kingdom had been on terms of almost unbroken peace with the Roman Empire. Forty-three years passed, during which two princes, both fameless and one nameless, ruled the Bulgarians; then in 753 Kormisos usurped the royal power, and a period of disturbances set in.

As the Bulgarians were in the habit of making inroads on Thrace, Constantine took measures to secure the frontier by establishing strong fortresses, and planting, as settlers in the northern parts of Thrace, the Syrian and Armenian inhabitants of towns in Asia, which he conquered from the Saracens. At this juncture (755) Kormisos sent a message to Constantine demanding the payment of tribute, that the Emperor's refusal might be an excuse for invading the Empire. According to one historian, the Bulgarians devastated Thrace up to the Long Wall, but were then attacked and routed by the Emperor; according to another, they returned to their country unharmed.

In 758 Constantine proceeded to Macedonia to reduce the Slavs, whose numbers in those regions had considerably increased of late. In consequence of the ravages of the plague, there had been a very large migration of families from northern Greece and the Peloponnesus to Constantinople; and this evacuation had left room for the Slaves to press southwards, where they were fast gaining ground. The Sclavinias, as the settlements in Macedonia and Thessaly were called, were nominally tributary to the Emperor, but they were ever ready to throw off the yoke, and it was not always easy for the Emperors, occupied by Saracen or Bulgarian wars, to reduce them to submission. Constantine subjugated "the Sclavinias," and made prisoners of the refractory.

In the following year he headed an expedition against Bulgaria, but when he arrived at the pass of Beregaba, somewhere between Anchialus and Varna, he was met by the enemy, and experienced a defeat, which was fatal to two important ministers, the general of the Thracian theme and the master-general of the post (logothete of the course). Three years later we find that Kormisos is no longer king, that the Bulgarians have revolted and set up Teletz (Teletzes), a man of a bold, and some said bad, disposition. The domestic discord that prevailed at this time induced an immense number of Slaves, two hundred and eight thousand, to leave Bulgaria. They fled in their boats on the Euxine to the shelter of the Roman Empire, and Constantine settled them near the river Artana in Bithynia.

Teletz soon attacked Roman towns and plundered Roman territory in the neighbourhood of Mount Haemus, and Constantine prepared an expedition to chastise his insolence. On the 17th of June 762 he left the city, having previously sent by the Euxine a fleet of eight hundred transport vessels, each carrying twelve horses each, to meet him at Anchialus. When Teletz heard of these preparations, he collected about two thousand auxiliary troops from the neighbouring Slavonic tribes of Illyricum, and secured his fortresses. The Emperor encamped in the plain of Anchialus, and on the 30th of June, when Teletz arrived with a large army, a battle was fought, lasting from eleven o'clock in the forenoon until late in the evening. The Bulgarians and Slaves were beaten back and routed by the Roman cavalry. Many were killed and many captured; the latter were carried through the streets of Constantinople on wooden planks, adorning the triumph of the Emperor, who then delivered them to the populace to deal with as it willed.

The defeat of Teletz was fatal to his supremacy. The people rebelled, slew him and his ministers, and set up Sabin, the son-in-law of Kormisos, in his stead. The new king sent to the Emperor a proposal of peace, but this policy displeased his disorderly subjects, who delighted in war. They met together in a sort of diet, called by the Greek historian *Komventon* (conventus), and having deposed Sabin, asking him, "Is Bulgaria to be enslaved to the Romans by thee?" they elected Baian (Paganos). Sabin fled to Constantine, who espoused his cause; and the Emperor found some means to seize the wives and relations of the Bulgarian nobles who had led the opposition against Sabin. The possession of these hostages rendered the Bulgarians desirous of peace, but Constantine apparently declined at first, and made an ineffectual expedition against their country, which they were able to protect by occupying in good time the passes of Mount Haemus. After this (762) the Emperor consented to grant an audience to Baian and his boyars, whom he received in the presence of Sabin, and, having reproached them for their rebellious behaviour, made a treaty with them.

Thrace suffered not only from the inroads of the northern kingdom, but also from the pillaging expeditions of independent Slavs and the brigandage of mountain outlaws. About this time Constantine captured a chief of the Slovene tribe of the Severs, nominally dependent on Bulgaria, who had inflicted many evils on Thrace. He also captured Christianus, an apostate Christian, who had "magarised" or turned Mohammedan and commanded a band of scammers. I have already mentioned the horrible punishment which this man suffered.

We hear not what became of Baian, but he was succeeded by Omar, who represented the interests of Sabin, and was opposed by Toktu, Baian's brother. Constantine invaded Bulgaria to suppress Toktu, who, supported by the majority of the Bulgarians, had driven Omar from the land; and, finding the passes undefended, he advanced as far as the river Tundra, plundering the villages. In the woods on the banks of the Danube, Toktu was captured and slain. The Roman invasion wrought terrible mischief to Bulgaria, which, as is specially stated, offered a spectacle of devastated fields and burnt hamlets.

Constantine followed up this success by organising another expedition on a larger scale in the following year. Two thousand six hundred transport ships were prepared; troops were assembled from their various stations for a simultaneous attack on Bulgaria by land and by sea. But a north wind blew hard and wrecked the ships as they were sailing to Anchialus. The crews were drowned, and by the Emperor's orders the bodies were fished up with hooks and received Christian burial (765).

Before Constantine's next Bulgarian expedition King Telerig had ascended the throne, and his measures for the defence of his kingdom were so efficient that in the year 773 Constantine, who had arrived with a land army and a naval armament, abandoned the idea of hostilities and concluded a written treaty, each party undertaking not to attack the other. This was in May or June. In October of the same year Constantine, who had friends and emissaries in Telerig's dominions, was informed by them that the king was sending an army of twelve thousand men to enslave the Slavonic land of Berzetia and remove the inhabitants to Bulgaria. Promptness and secrecy were necessary to anticipate this invasion; and, as Bulgarian ambassadors were then present at Constantinople, the Emperor pretended that the preparations which he set on foot were for war against the Saracens. To keep up this pretence he caused some troops to cross over to Asia; but as soon as the ambassadors had departed he assembled in Thrace an army of eighty thousand, consisting of garrison soldiers collected from

all the themes, of the Thracian regiments, and of the Optimati who were settled in Pontus. At Lithosoria he completely surprised the unsuspecting army of the enemy, gained a great victory, and returned with abundant booty. In 774 he again embarked a large squadron of cavalry, but at Mesembria the ships were wellnigh wrecked by a storm and the expedition returned without having effected its object.

The success that generally attended Constantine in his Bulgarian campaigns was greatly promoted by the presence of his agents in Bulgaria, who, keeping him well informed concerning the state of the country and the intentions of the monarch, enabled him to seize favourable opportunities. Telerig knew this, and, in order to identify the traitors, had recourse to a stratagem. He wrote to Constantine announcing his intention of fleeing from his realm and taking refuge in the Roman Empire, and asked him to advise him touching persons to whom he might most wisely confide his scheme. Constantine was taken in by the guile and sent to Telerig the names of his friends, whom Telerig immediately put to death.

In August 775 the Emperor, indefatigable in his hostilities against Bulgaria, headed an army and marched northward once more, but, seized with an inflammation in his legs, he was obliged to return to Arcadiopolis, whence he was brought to Selymbria, and a few days later died in the vessel that was conveying him to Constantinople.

In the reign of his successor Leo IV, Telerig carried out in earnest the intention which he had falsely professed to Constantine and fled from his kingdom to the Roman Emperor, at whose court he was baptized, created a Patrician, and married to a Roman princess. Cardam succeeded Telerig, and in his reign the Romans were on the whole unsuccessful. The general of Thrace was surprised and his army routed in the neighbourhood of the Strymon (788). Two or three years later Constantine VI led a fruitless expedition against Bulgaria; the Romans and the Bulgarians fled from each other in mutual terror (April 791).

The second expedition of Constantine VI, in July 792, was attended with a calamitous defeat. Cardam with all his forces advanced to meet him, and the fair presages of false prophets induced the Emperor to give battle at a disadvantage. The Romans were utterly routed and left some of their most able officers on the field, among whom was the veteran Michael Lachanodrakon, the beloved of Constantine V. The Emperor made good his escape, but the disaster almost cost him his throne, as it led to a revolt in the army.

The next campaign took place in 796. Cardam sent a message to the Emperor demanding a donation of money, and threatening, in case the demand were refused, to lay waste Thrace up to the Golden Gate. The Emperor sent him back horse-dung rolled up in a napkin, with this message: "I send you the tribute that is meet for you. You are an old man, and as I don't wish you to tire yourself by coming so far, I shall go to the fort of Marcelion. God will decide the result." The peratic themes were collected for this expedition, but Cardam fled without hazarding an engagement. Here we take leave of the Bulgarian kingdom, on the eve of the accession of one of its most warlike and savage monarchs, the famous Crumn, and of the catastrophe of the Roman Emperor Nicephorus I, who was slain in battle and whose skull was used as a goblet in the palace of Peristhlaba or of Varna.

By the end of the eighth century, as we have seen, the Bulgarian kingdom had not advanced beyond its original frontiers; but, on the other hand, the Slovenes had pressed southwards in great numbers, had Slavised the country districts in northern Greece and the Peloponnesus, and had probably increased in strength in the regions of Illyricum and Macedonia, which they had occupied before. This Slavonic movement really prepared the way for the extension of the Bulgarian power in a south-western direction, and before the end of the ninth century the southern boundary of the kingdom was the same as the northern boundary of modern Greece. The first step in this direction was the capture of Sofia, which took place in 809; but this lies beyond the limits of the present work.

I should not omit to mention that in the eighth century the northern parts of the Aegean Sea were rendered unsafe by the bands of Slavonian pirates who infested it. These pirates belonged to "the Sclavinias," that is, Macedonia and Thessaly. In the year 768 they carried off into bondage no less than two thousand five hundred inhabitants of Tenedos, Imbros, and Samothrace, and Constantine ransomed the captives by silken robes. "No act of his reign," says Finlay, "shows so much real greatness of mind as this," because to make terms with pirates was for an Emperor to lower his dignity.

CHAPTER VIII

LEO IV

The short reign of Leo IV is by no means remarkable. He was an iconoclast at heart like his father; but just as his father had refrained from giving full effect to his theories for some years after his accession, so Leo at first veiled his real opinions and not only favoured the monastic order, electing monks to metropolitan sees—a practice which seems to have become prevalent by the end of the seventh century—but even pretended to be "a friend of the Mother of God," whom iconoclasts generally treated with scant respect. His generosity with the stores of

money which his father had laid up gained him popularity. But before he died he laid aside the veil and imitated his father's policy against image-worship, not, however, proceeding to such violent extremes. In 780 a number of distinguished men, among them Theophanes the chamberlain, were arrested for iconodulic practices; they were flogged, tonsured, led in procession through the streets, and shut up in the praetorian prison, where Theophanes died. It is noteworthy that the Slavonic Patriarch Nicetas died (6th February 780) and was succeeded by the Cyprian Paul just before the persecution began; and it might be conjectured that the influence of Nicetas was exerted in the direction of tolerance, and that the newly elected Paul instigated the Emperor to renew the persecutions.

Soon after Leo's accession measures were taken, at the express desire of the imperial governors and the people, to secure the succession to his son Constantine. Leo was probably consumptive and felt that he could not expect to live very long. On Good Friday (776 AD) all the governors of the themes, ministers, and persons of senatorial rank, all the soldiers present in Byzantium, the representatives of all classes of citizens, and especially of the guilds of artisans, took an oath of allegiance to the child Constantine. As Finlay observes, a more than usually popular character was given to the ceremony. On the following day the Emperor created his brother Eudocimus (a boy who can have been little older than his own son) a nobilissimus in the chamber of the Nineteen Accubiti. Thence he proceeded, accompanied by his son and the two Caesars and the three nobilissimi, to the church of St. Sophia, probably by way of the covered passage which connected the church with the palace. Having changed his dress in a side room, he entered the ambo with his son and the Patriarch Nicetas; and the people who had assembled in the church came forward in order and deposited their written oaths on the altar. "Behold, brethren," said Leo, "I fulfil your request and give you my son for Emperor. Behold, receive him from the Church and the hand of Christ." The people cried in reply, "O Son of God, be our surety, that we receive from thy hand the lord Constantine as Emperor, even to protect him and die for him." The next day was Easter Day, and at dawn the Emperor proceeded with the Patriarch to the hippodrome. There the *antimission*, a carpet which was used on ceremonial occasions, was spread out beside the Emperor's throne; the Patriarch stood upon it and prayed; then Leo crowned his son; and the two Augusti proceeded to St. Sophia accompanied by the Caesars and nobilissimi.

Shortly after this ceremony a conspiracy was discovered, in which the Caesars Nicephorus and Christophorus were involved. Though the popular feeling was strongly in favour of punishing the princes, they were pardoned, but their confederates were banished to Cherson, and on them doubtless the real blame rested, as all Leo's half-brothers were weak men.

A considerable success was gained over the Saracens in 778. Leo organised a large expedition, 100,000 strong, for the invasion of Syria. All the Asiatic themes except the Cibyraiots took part in it; the iconoclast Lachanodrakon commanded the Thracesians, Artavasdos (an Armenian) the Anatolies, Gregory the Opsikians, Karisterotzes the Armeniacs, and Tatzates the Bucellarians. Germanicia was blockaded, but Lachanodrakon was bribed to raise the siege, and the army turned to plunder the country. The Saracen forces then arrived and experienced a severe defeat; in honour of which the generals were received on their return to Constantinople with a triumphal welcome. A number of Syrian Jacobites were led captive and settled in Thrace. In the following year a Mohammedan army invaded Asia Minor and ineffectually besieged Dorylaeum. Harassed by the Roman troops, who did not risk a general engagement, but cut off the provisions and obstructed foraging parties, they were compelled to return home. In 780 the successful siege of Semaluos¹ rewarded Harun's invasion of the Armeniac theme, but another army under Othman was defeated by the general of the Thracesians.

Leo IV died on the 8th of September 780, and was succeeded by his wife Irene and his son Constantine, then ten years old.

CHAPTER IX

CONSTANTINE VI AND IRENE

The record of the twenty-two years which elapsed from the death of Leo IV to the deposition of Irene (in 802) is chiefly occupied, apart from military and ecclesiastical events, with conspiracies and intrigues, the unnatural struggle of Irene with her son, and the schemes of rival eunuchs. We will first note the conspiracies in which the brothers-in-law of the Empress were involved; we will pass on to the details of the tragedy which was determined by the unscrupulous ambition of Irene, and then to the intrigues which troubled the five years of her sole power after the fall of Constantine. The chapter may be concluded with a short notice of the monotonous wars with the Saracens.

All the sons of Constantine V, six in number, were men of inferior ability; Leo, who actually reigned, was probably the best of them all, notwithstanding his physical weakness. The other five were always glad to share in a treasonable conspiracy whose object was to place one of themselves on the throne; but none of them had the energy to organise a plot himself or the capacity to carry it out with a fair prospect of success. The way in which the three Caesars, Nicephorus, Christophorus, and Nicetas, and the two nobilissimi, Anthimus and Eudocimus, are always grouped together, like a company of puppets ever ready to be employed by any designing conspirator,

without any initiation on their own part, is really amusing. We have already seen, in the reign of Leo, a conspiracy to elevate Nicephorus, which resulted in the exile of all the guilty persons except the Caesar himself. About six weeks after the accession of Constantine VI and Irene a similar plot was formed, of which the prime movers were probably nobles and courtiers who had supported the iconoclastic policy of Leo and his father and disliked the iconodulic proclivities of the Greek Empress-mother. Bardas an ex-governor of the Armeniac theme, Gregory' the logothete of the course, Constantine the commander (domesticus) of the imperial guards, Theophylact Rangabd the admiral (drungarius) of the Dodecanese, and other distinguished men were flogged, tonsured, and banished. The three Caesars and the two nobilissimi were ordained and caused to administer the sacrament on Christmas Day, in order to impress on the people the fact that they had become ministers of the Church. As there was no such institution as an official gazette, these measures of informing the public were adopted.

Irene appointed Elpidius governor of Sicily in February 781. Whether he had been secretly connected with the recent conspiracy we are not told; Irene plainly had no suspicion of his disloyalty. In April news reached Constantinople that he had revolted and professed to support the claims of the late Emperor's brothers. Theophilus, a spathar or aide-de-camp, was sent to bring him back; but the Sicilians would not allow him to be arrested; so that Irene was obliged to content herself for the time with flogging and imprisoning his wife and children. The support which Elpidius found in Sicily seems to show that he was not an iconoclast, or that, if he was, he carefully disguised the fact. We may in any case be sure that he used the names of the Caesars merely as a cloak. In the following year an armament was sent against Sicily under the command of the patrician and eunuch Theodore, an energetic officer. Accompanied by the duke Nicephorus—the duke, one may conjecture, of Calabria—Elpidius immediately fled to Africa, where he was well received by the Saracens. This revolt reminds us of the Sicilian revolt at the beginning of the reign of Leo III, when Sergius fled to the Lombards, just as Elpidius fled to Africa.

For the next ten years the three Caesars and the two nobilissimi were permitted to live in an obscurity from which they were not worthy to emerge. But at length, in the year 792, when general dissatisfaction was felt with Constantine in military circles after the grievous defeat which he had suffered at the hands of the Bulgarians, through his own credulity and ineptitude, the soldiers formed the design of deposing him and elevating his uncle Nicephorus, notwithstanding the clerical status of that Caesar. Constantine, seeing that the priestly garb was not a sufficient disqualification for elevation to the throne, blinded the eyes of Nicephorus and slit the tongues of the other two Caesars and of the two nobilissimi (15th August). He probably considered himself, and was generally considered, clement in not putting them to death.

For five years after this the five puppets of fortune were left in peace and confinement; but in November 797, after Constantine VI had been blinded—a retribution, his uncles probably thought, for his cruelty to themselves—and Irene had become sole sovereign, some restless persons organised a plot to set one of her brothers-in-law on the throne, and they were enabled to escape from their prison and seek refuge in St. Sophia. Aetius, the eunuch and chief favourite of the Empress, immediately repaired to the church, and the five princes, assured that no harm would befall them, followed him as readily and meekly as they had concurred in the schemes of the conspirators, and were banished to Athens. As Athens was the native city of Irene, she thought that she could rely on its loyalty. In March 799, however, a plot was formed in the Helladic theme, and an appeal was made to Akamer, the lord of the Slovenes of Belzetia, to make one of the unfortunate brothers Emperor. Irene promptly suppressed the revolt, and the eyes of the conspirators were put out. It might have been expected that the Greeks, among whom the iconoclastic movement was unpopular, would have been loyal to the restorer of imageworship, all the more as she was Greek herself. We can hardly avoid suspecting that many, perhaps most, of the Helladikoi were Slavs. In Greece there were multitudes of Slavs who were theoretically Romans and possessed lands entailing the duty of military service, as well as of Slaves who were only tributary and constantly hostile.

The struggle for sovereignty between Irene and her son broke out in the year 790, when the latter was twenty years old. As long as he was a boy and submitted implicitly to her authority, Irene was content that her own name should come second in official documents; but when he began to show signs of impatience at his own nonentity, his mother determined to affirm her authority by reversing the order of the imperial names, and afterwards even to depose her son altogether. When he was about twelve years old (782) a marriage had been arranged between him and Botrud, whom the Greeks called Erythro, the daughter of Charles the Great, and a certain Elissaeus had gone to the court of Aachen to teach the future Empress Greek. The imagination of the boy seems to have been attracted by the idea of marrying the Frank princess, whom he never saw, and he was inconsolable when his mother broke off the match and compelled him to marry, at the age of eighteen, a lady of Paphlagonia, named Maria, for whom he never cared.

Soon after his marriage Constantine became bitterly aware of the fact that the favourites of his mother, especially the logothete Stauracius, conducted all the affairs of government quite independently of him, and that she was resolved to exclude him from all share in sovereignty as long as she lived. The circumstance that no one ever thought of presenting a petition to him, all repairing with their grievances or requests to Stauracius, was humiliating. It was the interest of the courtiers to foster the jealousy and widen the breach between the mother and son. The eunuchs and creatures of Irene, knowing how to play on her unscrupulous ambition, flattered her into the hope of being sole sovereign. Stauracius, a patrician and a eunuch, was at this time the most powerful minister. He held the office of logothete of the course, or post, and had won laurels by reducing the rebellious Slaves of Macedonia, northern Greece, and the Peloponnesus, and compelling them to pay tribute (783 AD). At another time he had been employed in negotiating with the Saracen caliph, and it was he who superintended the disbanding of the refractory guards, who had rioted in the cause of iconoclasm and prevented the meeting of a synod (786).

The intimate friends of the Emperor were few. Three are especially mentioned—Theodore Camulianus, Peter the *magister officiorum*, and Damanus. Wishing to assert himself, Constantine took counsel with these and others, and a plan was formed (January or February 790) to overthrow Stauracius and banish Irene to Sicily.

But the watchful Stauracius discovered the plot in time and revealed it to his mistress, who banished some of Constantine's party to the Peloponnesus and Sicily, and punished others by confining them to their houses, a mode of punishment which became frequent at Byzantium. Her son she actually struck, and prevented him from leaving his apartments for several days. An oath was then formulated, which all the soldiers in the Empire were required to take, to this effect: "As long as you live, we will not receive your son to reign over us." All the troops in the city took the oath, and the regiments of Asia also acquiesced, except the Armeniacs, who refused to place the name of Irene before that of Constantine. Then the Empress sent to them Alexius Mouseld, the *drugarius* of the watch, but he did not much avail her cause, as the soldiers placed their *stratégos* Nicephorus in custody and replaced him by Alexius, proclaiming Constantine sole Emperor. Then the other themes, in spite of their recent oath, followed the example of the Armeniacs, and elected new generals. These events took place in September, and in October all the themes, except the prime movers, the Armeniacs, who were too far away, assembled at Atroa and demanded the presence of the Emperor. Irene, unable to resist this pressure, allowed her son to go, and the soldiers straightway proclaimed their allegiance to him and deposed her. Then Constantine sent two officers to the Armeniacs to receive a formal oath of loyalty from them. In December he returned to Constantinople and removed Irene's favourites. Stauracius was whipped, tonsured, and banished to the Armeniac theme; Aetius, also a eunuch, and many other of her confidants were likewise exiled. She was herself confined in the palace of Eleutherius, which she had built, and in which she was supposed to have concealed much money—a part of those stores of treasure which had been laid up by Constantine, her father-in-law.

A circumstance may be noticed here which seems to indicate that soon after her husband's death Irene deposed the governors of themes who had been appointed by Constantine or Leo. For we observe that the iconoclast Michael Lachanodrakon, who before the accession of Irene had been governor of the Thracian theme, was an adherent of Constantine VI, and was one of the two officers who were sent by him to secure the allegiance of the Armeniacs. Now we are told that all the themes deposed their generals, who were evidently supporters of Irene; hence Michael Lachanodrakon can no longer have been general of the Thracians, for, as he was a staunch supporter of Constantine, there would have been no reason for deposing him. Nor can this conclusion be escaped by saying that, while in most cases the generals were displaced by the soldiers, the Thracian theme may have been an exception; for, had Lachanodrakon been governor of the Thracians, he would hardly have been sent to the Armeniac theme on a mission which was suitable for a *spathar*, or for an officer whose functions were unconfined to a district, but not for the governor of a province. Moreover, in 792 Lachanodrakon is spoken of as the *magister (officiorum)*.

During the following year (791) Constantine, who had inherited his grandfather's love of war, was occupied with expeditions against the Bulgarians and Arabs, but in January 792 he was weak enough to consent to allow his mother to be proclaimed Empress again. Nor did he confine himself to a mere passive consent, but when the Armeniac theme resisted the measure he determined to enforce actively their recognition of his mother's title. He had summoned to Constantinople, a short time before, Alexius, the governor of that theme, who was suspected of aiming at usurpation; and as soon as the Armeniacs declared their refractory spirit and demanded that their governor should be restored to them, the Emperor imprisoned Alexius in the praetorium, having first flogged and tonsured him, according to the custom of the time. After the Bulgarian expedition, which ended disastrously and led to a plot which was wellnigh fatal to Constantine, Alexius was subjected to the severe penalty of losing his eyesight. When the Armeniacs heard of this, they were greatly enraged, and retaliated by blinding Theodore Camulianus, who had succeeded Alexius as their general. Then Constantine sent against them an army commanded by Constantine Artaseras and Chrysocheres, the general of the Bucellarian theme; but the Armeniacs were victorious in a battle, and blinded the two generals. Nothing was left for Constantine but to go forth and punish those wicked servants himself. The treachery of the Armenian auxiliaries secured him an easy victory. Three of the instigators of the rebellion were put to death, one of whom was the bishop of Sinope; the rest were mulcted by fines or total confiscation. One thousand were led in chains to Constantinople and conducted through the Blachern gate, as an example to men, each of them bearing on his face an inscription tattooed in black ink, "Armeniac conspirator." They were then banished to Sicily and other islands.

The ensuing year was uneventful, but on the 3d of January 795 a new act of the imperial drama was opened by the divorce of Maria, Constantine's unwished-for consort, who then retired to a nunnery. The Emperor's affections had been for some time bestowed on Theodote, a maid of honour, and he crowned her Augusta and married her before the end of the year. This marriage, as his first wife was still alive, created a great scandal among strict orthodox Christians, and some said that his mother Irene had instigated him to divorce Maria and marry Theodote in order that he might incur public odium and that she might win a chance of resuming the reins of government. The Patriarch Tarasius refused to perform the ceremony, but he countenanced the imperial sin, inasmuch as he did not excommunicate either the Emperor or the abbot Joseph, who officiated at the nuptials. Chief among those who openly expressed their indignation at what seemed to them an unblushing act of adultery, were the abbot Plato and his monks. He had founded a monastic retreat in his estate at Saccudion in Bithynia, and lived there a quiet but influential life. He repudiated the conduct of Tarasius and refused communion with him. Bardanes, the commander (domesticus) of the *scholarii*, and Johannes, count of Opsikion, were immediately despatched to Saccudion; Plato was taken to Constantinople and imprisoned in a room in the palace (adjoining the chapel of St. Michael), and his flock of monks, conspicuous among whom was his nephew Theodore, were banished to Thessalonica.¹ It was a welcome opportunity for Irene to embrace the cause of the monks, and place Constantine's conduct in the worst light.

Constantine and his mother visited Prusa in autumn 796 for the sake of the hot baths, which made it a place of resort. While they were there, the welcome news arrived that a son was born to Constantine, who immediately galloped off to the city with his staff and attendants. Irene took advantage of his absence to beguile the military officers with gifts and promises, and persuade them to undertake to place the imperial power in her sole hands. She was almost as successful as she could have wished; she drew all men unto her by flatteries. The intrigues of Irene's supporters rendered ineffectual an expedition against the Saracens which the Emperor headed himself in the following spring; it was important to prevent him from acquiring popularity by winning military glory. At length in June (797) it was decided to strike the final blow. As Constantine was proceeding from a

spectacle in the hippodrome to the church of St. Mamas in Blachernae, he was attacked by troops bribed to kill him, but he escaped to the imperial boat (*chelandion*), which conveyed him to the Asiatic coast. He intended to flee to the Anatolic theme, where the Isaurian Emperors were always befriended, but unfortunately he was accompanied by false friends who were really attached to his mother. A letter from Irene, who threatened to disclose their treason to her son unless they acted promptly, decided their wavering resolution; they seized Constantine and hurried him back to Constantinople. Arriving early in the morning, they shut him up in the palace in the Purple Chamber, in which he had been born, and at the ninth hour (15th August) put out his eyes in a brutal manner, intentionally calculated to cause his death. The superstitious observed the coincidence that on the same day five years before Constantine's uncles had been blinded by his orders, and saw therein a supernatural retribution. It was also said that a miraculous darkness prevailed for more than two weeks.

Irene had now attained her wish and was sole sovereign of the Empire. Her court became the scene of quarrels between her eunuchs Stauracius and Aetius, each of whom desired, not to be an Emperor—for a eunuch on the throne would not have been tolerated—but to be an emperor-maker and to secure the succession for a friend of his own. These favourites had probably been allowed to return from their banishment in 92, when Irene resumed her position as Augusta. Their quarrels must have made her life uneasy, but Stauracius seems to have been the prime favourite until May 799, when she fell sick, and the eunuchs, seeing an immediate prospect of her decease, schemed and strove more than ever. Aetius obtained for a while the ear of the Empress, accused his rival of aiming at power, and made her believe that he was the cause of all the factions and discords that prevailed. Irene scolded and threatened Stauracius, but he was able to win her confidence again and turn her against Aetius. She was the plaything of her favourites.

In the following February Stauracius organised a definite conspiracy against the throne, enlisting the guards (*scholarii* and *excubitores*) in his interest by bribes. His conduct was so suspicious that Irene held a *silention* in the "room of Justinian" to examine the matter, and the curious order was issued that no military persons should hold converse with Stauracius. He did not live long after this. He was afflicted with a spitting of blood, which the doctors knew must soon prove fatal; nevertheless, until the day of his death (in June 800) the flatterers and clients who frequented his house, like those of other great men, including the doctors themselves, wizards and monks ("unmonkish" or spurious monks they are called by the historian), continued to assure him that he suffered only from a slight indisposition, and that he was destined to live and reign. It would appear from this that Stauracius actually dreamed of ascending the throne himself, and exhibiting to a horrified world the unheard-of monstrosity of a eunuch wielding the sceptre of Augustus and Constantine. While he was suffering from the fatal disease, he was occupied with planting and fostering a conspiracy in Cappadocia, which was intended to bring about the violent overthrow of Aetius, who now occupied his own place in the confidence of Irene. Two days after his death the explosion for which he had laid the train broke out, but it was promptly extinguished and the conspirators were punished. Henceforward, until her fall two years later, Aetius was the prime minister of the Empress, a position which in later times became a recognised office, its holder being called *paradinastion*. The extent of Aetius' power may be estimated by the fact that the Opsikian and Anatolic themes were placed together under his sole command.

At this time Charles the Great, shortly after his coronation (25th December 800 AD), conceived the idea of uniting together the Teutonic Roman Empire and the Greek Roman Empire by a marriage with Irene. If this had taken place it would have brought about for a moment one European Roman Empire, somewhat resembling in geographical extent the old Roman Empire of Constantine the Great, and it would have added a new map to our historical atlases. But it could not have had any permanent duration; the marriage of countries and peoples so ill assorted must have been followed by a speedy divorce. As it was, this second design of an alliance of the Isaurian with the Karlingian house was thwarted by the influence of Aetius, who was bent on securing the throne for his relation Nicetas, the captain of the guards.

But the patricians and lords could not long be patient of the powerful eunuch's insolence, and they determined to anticipate his designs by dethroning Irene and electing an Emperor from among themselves. Nicephorus, the chancellor of the exchequer or "general logothete," was chosen, and on the last day of October 802, as Irene was suffering from indisposition and residing in her mansion of Eleutherius, the conspirators proceeded to the palace gate of Chalke and knocked for admission. They informed the porter (*papas*) that they were sent by the Empress to make arrangements for the proclamation and coronation of Nicephorus, as she wished to forestall and thwart the ambitious plans of Aetius. The palace officials did not hesitate to believe their statements and admit them, as they were all well-known men of the highest position. Having obtained possession of the palace, they collected a crowd of people in the Augusteum and proclaimed Nicephorus Emperor before the break of day, having taken the precaution of surrounding the house of Irene with soldiers. Then they transferred her to the great palace, and Nicephorus was crowned in St. Sophia—the first Augustus crowned there who cannot be called "the Roman Emperor" unreservedly, but must be called "the eastern Roman Emperor."

On the following day the new monarch paid a visit to Irene, who had accepted her fall with a quiet dignity, and only asked to be allowed to continue to live in her private house. Nicephorus promised to grant her request if she disclosed to him the secret stores of treasure which she was generally known to have concealed. She agreed, but when the Emperor had obtained the desired information he failed to fulfil his promise, and banished her first to "Prince's island," where she had built a monastery, and afterwards to Lesbos, where she died.

We must now notice briefly the wearisome wars with the Saracens, which possess little interest, as our sources give us no details. In 781 Mahdi's general, Abd Elkebir, led an army against Asia Minor, but, by Irene's orders, the strength of all the themes was concentrated at the frontier, consisting of from eighty to a hundred thousand men, under the command of Johannes, the sacellarius, and the Arabs were utterly defeated at Melon.

In the following year, 782, the Romans were not so successful. Harun, the son of the caliph, and Rabia Ibn Junus invaded Asia Minor with an army of a hundred thousand, which they divided into three parts. Harun marched to Chrysopolis; Ibn Junus, whom Theophanes calls Bunusus (Bonosus), laid siege to Nacolia; and Jahja the Barmecide (in Theophanes, Burniché) entered the Thracasian theme, where he fought a battle with the able general Michael Lachanodrakon at Darénon and lost fifteen thousand men. The treachery of Tatzates, the general of the Bucellarian theme, brought about a peace disadvantageous to the Roman Empire. Tatzates was jealous of the influence of Stauracius, the confidential minister of the Empress; and he received rich rewards for going over to the Saracens with his troops. Irene was forced to treat for peace—Theodore's expedition against the rebel Elpidius in Sicily had reduced the number of available fighting men—and the Roman delegates foolishly entered the Saracen camp without the precaution of an interchange of hostages. The Saracens perfidiously seized them, and Irene was obliged to pay 70,000 dinars yearly for a peace which was to last for a term of three years.

Mahdi died in 785. His son Hadi enjoyed the sovereign power for a year, and was succeeded in September 786 by his brother, the famous Harun, "undeservedly called Arraschid, the Just." Soon after his accession, Harun took measures for strengthening his north-western frontier. The fortresses which defended it had hitherto been part of the large province of Mesopotamia; Harun formed them into a separate government. He also strengthened the fortifications of Tarsus, and sent thither a large colony of Mohammedans. His armies invaded Romania almost every year, and in 790 his fleet endangered a Roman island, either Cyprus or Crete. On this occasion the armament of the Cibyraiots and the armament of the Aegean islands co-operated against him, and in a naval battle the general of the Cibyraiots, Theophilus, was taken prisoner. Harun would have not only granted him his life but raised him to high honours if he had consented to embrace Islam, but he refused on any terms and was executed. This incident shows that their religion really meant much to the Byzantine nobles. We are not told whether Elpidius, the recreant ex-governor of Sicily, became a Mohammedan; he is said to have taken part in an invasion of Asia Minor.

A peace was concluded at the end of the year 798, by the terms of which the Romans were to pay a tribute, as in the peace with Mahdi; but the cessation of hostilities was welcome to Harun himself, for he was troubled by the invasion of the Khazars, who harassed Armenia and relieved the Roman Empire by diverting and dividing the Saracen forces, just as in old days the White Huns and Turks used to divert the Sassanid monarchs from their wars on the Euphrates.

CHAPTER X

THE REACTION AGAINST ICONOCLASM

The Empress Irene, as might be expected from her Greek origin, was devotedly attached to the worship of images, and earnestly desired its restoration. But although the supreme power centred in her on her husband's death, as her son Constantine was too young yet to be more than a nominal Emperor, she was for several years unable to accomplish her design of reversing the acts of the three latest Emperors. This delay was caused by the strong iconoclastic spirit that prevailed among the soldiers as well as the officers in the army; as the Empire was at war with the Saracens, and the tributary Slaves of Macedonia were refractory, it would have been dangerous to run the risk of exciting an intestine conflict by agitating prematurely the burning question. At the same time, there is no doubt that complete tolerance was secured to the adorers of images from the beginning of the reign of Constantine and Irene, and pictures were restored to churches by a consent that was generally understood if it was not expressly declared. When peace had been made with the Abbasids, and the Slaves had been brought back to their allegiance, the field was free for settling the ecclesiastical question; and just then a new feature was given to the situation by the resignation of the Patriarch Paul and the succession of Tarasius.

The resignation of Paul was attended by circumstances advantageous to the reactionary policy. In August 784 he fell sick, and, conscience-smitten for his iconoclastic views, which he suddenly discovered to be false and impious, he resigned his office and exchanged the palace of the Patriarch for a cell in the monastery of Florus. When Irene, who had not anticipated such an event, learned the tidings, she visited the new monk, and heard with pleasure his acknowledgment of error. "Would," he said, "that I had not sat on the sacerdotal chair of the Church of God, for this Church is in rebellion, and severed from the other Catholic chairs (of Christendom), and subject to a ban!" Then Irene sent to Paul's bedside a number of senators and nobles who were inclined to iconoclasm, in order that the influence of his repentance might induce them to mend their ways and support the official restitution of image-worship.

An assembly was convoked in the palace of Magnaura for the election of a new Patriarch, and the secretary Tarasius, a layman, was elected by a large majority. Irene, remarking that the imperial choice had already fallen on him, but that he had declined the honour, asked him to speak for himself. Tarasius, having dwelt on his own unworthiness, stated that the chief reason which caused him to hesitate was the great schism which separated the Church of Constantinople from the other Churches of Christendom, and urged the re-establishment of ecclesiastical unity. Although dissentient voices were heard, the speech of Tarasius was received with general acclamation; and on Christmas Day 784 he was consecrated Patriarch. It is evident that the proceedings in the Magnaura were due to a prearranged plan between Tarasius and Irene.

It was almost a year later that Pope Hadrian received two communications from Constantinople, brought to him by a Byzantine priest, who was escorted by a Sicilian bishop. One of these was the enthronistic or inaugural manifesto of Tarasius; the other was a *divalis sacra* or imperial letter from Constantine and Irene, wherein the Pope was asked to fix a time for the convocation of an Ecumenical Council at Constantinople to decide on the question of imageworship. This letter was dated 29th August 785, and Hadrian replied to it on 27th October, so that the transmission was effected in a relatively short time. In his reply Hadrian rejoices over the imperial orthodoxy, and expresses his expectation that Constantine will be a second Constantine the Great and that Irene will prove a new Helena, while he insists that one essential condition of the realisation of such hopes is the recognition of the spiritual sovereignty of the chair of St. Peter. Having defended picture-worship at some length, he promises to send legates to an Ecumenical Council, and demands a *pia sacra* (in accordance with ancient custom) signed by the Emperor and Empress, the Senate and the Patriarch, to the effect that no pressure or constraint will be brought to bear on the representatives of Rome. Returning again to the interests of the Roman see, he demands the restoration of the *patrimonia Petri*, which the iconoclastic Emperors had confiscated; he revives the old complaint that the epithet "ecumenical" was appended to the name of the Byzantine Patriarch; and he censures the election of a layman and ex-soldier to the patriarchal chair. He concludes by promising that if the Emperor of Constantinople follow the guidance of the head of the Christian Church he will be victorious over his barbarian foes, just as Charles, king of the Franks and Lombards and Patrician of Rome, his son and spiritual fellow-father, *spiritualis compater*, had conquered the barbarians of the West, because he treated the Pope with veneration. Hadrian also wrote a letter to Tarasius in which complaints about his election were judiciously balanced with expressions of joy at his orthodox opinions.

When the delegates arrived at Constantinople for the council, in August 786, the imperial court was absent at some town in Thrace, and the interval of delay was spent by the iconoclastic bishops and their supporters in organising plots for the prevention of the intended synod. When the Emperor and Empress returned, the 17th day of August was arranged for the first session, and the church of the Apostles was selected as the place of assembly. On the 16th the imperial guards and other soldiers collected in the precincts of the church and made a hostile demonstration; and on the following day, although the session was allowed to begin, the soldiers rushed into the church in the middle of the proceedings, to the delight of the iconoclastic bishops, and threatened to slay all present. The remonstrances of the ministers whom the Empress sent to pacify them did not avail, and no course was open but the dissolution of the assembly.

The triumph of the iconoclastic party, who cried "We have conquered," was not of long duration. By a dexterous stratagem Irene paralysed the military opposition. She pretended to make preparations for a campaign against the Saracens, and with her whole court proceeded to Malagina in Thrace (September 786). In the meantime Asiatic (peratic) troops occupied Constantinople; a new corps of guards was formed, and the iconoclastic regiments were obliged to give up their arms, and disbanded. In the following May a new synod was convoked, and the papal legates, who had reached Sicily, returned to New Rome. On the 24th of September the first session was held, not, however, at Constantinople, but at Nicaea, memorable as the scene of the first great council of the Church. The Emperor and Empress were not present, but were represented by Petronas, a patrician, and Johannes, imperial ostiarius and logothete. At the first sessions several iconoclastic bishops, who had repented like Paul, stood forward and owned their errors. At the seventh sitting (5th or 6th October) the definition (*opos*) of doctrine was drawn up; after a summary repetition of the chief points of theology established by previous Universal Councils, it is laid down that the figure of the holy cross and holy images, whether coloured or plain, whether consisting of stone or of any other material, may be represented on vessels, garments, walls, or tables, in houses or on public roads; especially figures of Christ, the Virgin, angels, or holy men: such representations, it is observed, stimulate spectators to think of the originals, and, while they must not be adored with that worship which is only for God (*latiria*), deserve adoration. The council called down anathemas upon Theodosius the bishop of Ephesus, Sisinnius Pastillas, and Basilius Trikakkabos; upon the three Byzantine Patriarchs, Anastasius, Constantine, and Nicetas; moreover, upon John of Nicomedia and Constantine of Nacolia; while the names of Germanus, John of Damascus, and George of Cyprus were greeted with acclamations as the "heralds of truth."

The eighth session was held, not at Nicaea, but in the imperial palace at Constantinople, where the acts of the council were confirmed and signed by Constantine and Irene. Thus the Churches of Old Rome and New Rome were again united, and the cause of iconoclasm was defeated. It was not dead, however; it revived and was powerful again, twenty-five years later, in the reign of Leo the Armenian. The image-worshippers were destined to prevail in the end, but at the same time they did not undo the work which their enemies had accomplished, the regeneration of the Empire. The suppression of pictures was only the superficial side of the great battle which Leo III and Constantine V had waged unflinchingly and ruthlessly against superstition; and it cannot be ignored that, though pictures were not destined to be suppressed, the general tone of education and morality in the Empire was better at the end of the eighth century than it had been at the beginning, and the vitality of the State was higher, just as its position among nations was more assured.

CHAPTER XI

THE POPES, THE LOMBARDS, AND THE FRANKS

The dissolution of the connection subsisting between the Popes and New Rome, which went hand in hand with the formation of a close connection between Old Rome and the Frank kingdom, was a slow process, and it is hard to define at what period the Roman see ceased to be part of the Roman Empire. I must give a brief account of the Italian complications in which this tendency revealed itself and note the steps by which it gradually led up to that great event, the coronation of a Teutonic king as Roman Emperor at Old Rome.

The chief cause which induced the Popes to look to the Franks for succour against the Lombards was the simple fact that the wars with the Saracens in the East rendered the Emperors unable to protect their outlying possessions in Italy with an adequate force. The iconoclastic heresy, which had severed the sympathy between the Roman see and the Empire, made the Popes still more ready to apply to a foreign power. But at first these applications were without effect. Gregory II could not move Charles Martel, the mayor of the palace, to intervene. In 737 or 738 (seventh indiction) another and more urgent petition for help was made by Gregory III. The Pope and the duke of Rome had harboured Transmund, the duke of Spoleto who had rebelled against King Liutprand, and they refused to surrender him. Accordingly Liutprand seized four important towns¹ and threatened Rome. But although the Pope in his straits sent to Charles Martel rich presents and the keys of the sepulchre of St Peter, thereby making him protector of the Church, the appeal was not successful. When in the following year new hostilities were undertaken by the Lombards against the exarchate and the territory of Rome, yet another message was sent to Charles, but proved equally resultless.

These wars with Liutprand were chiefly due to the policy of the Popes in espousing the cause of the dukes of Spoleto and Beneventum, who were struggling for their independence against the king. The situation was changed by the election of the Greek Zacharias (December 740) to the papal chair. He abandoned the Lombard dukes and allied himself with the Lombard king, who restored not only the four cities which he had seized, but also confiscated domains belonging to the Roman patrimony, and made a peace for twenty years with the duke of Rome. By the intervention of the Pope, he also made peace with the exarchate.

Liutprand died in 743, and his nephew Hildebrand's reign of a few months was followed by the reign of Rachis, who was a friend of the Roman see. Among the Lombards there prevailed a strong spirit of hostility against the Greeks, and they were impatient of a king who, yielding to papal influence, was disinclined to prosecute the war. They unanimously deposed him (748) and elected his brother Aistulf, who acted with such rigour that two years after his election he had taken Ravenna and overthrown the exarchate (750). He then turned his arms against the duchy of Rome. Zacharias had died, and Stephen, who succeeded him in 751, applied in vain for help to the Emperor Constantine V. He then turned to Pipin, who had succeeded Charles Martel as mayor of the palace in 740, and this time the appeal was successful. The Pope went in person to Gaul and met Pipin at Ponthion; he deposed Childeric, the last of the Merovingians; he anointed Pipin of Landen king of the Franks, in order that he who possessed the royal power might also have the royal name, and created him a Roman Patrician. This was the first step towards a goal not yet visible, the foundation of a Western Roman Empire. If it is asked by what right Pope Stephen bestowed the title of *Patricius Romanorum* on Pipin, the answer is that he had no constitutional right. "Patrician" was a title of dignity, not of office, but legally the Emperor alone had the right to bestow it. The title had been given in former days to Odovacar, to Theodoric, to Chlodwig, and in the same way it might be given to Pipin; but it had no validity except as granted by the Emperor. Neither Pipin nor the Pope could reasonably expect that the Empire would recognise the Teutonic king as a Patrician. Nor is it likely that they thought of the title in very strict connection with the Empire. What the Pope did was rather this: he took an old familiar name—a title which had always belonged to the exarch—placed it in a new combination, and gave it almost a new sense. While it still conveyed the notion of a high dignity, it came, by its union with the genitive *Romanorum*, to suggest the word *patronus* or *pater*, and indicate a relation of protection. And *Romanorum* itself is to be taken in a limited sense. The Romani are primarily the people of Rome and its neighbourhood; they are not the *Romaioi*.

Pipin on his part undertook to march against the Lombards, to restore to the Pope those parts of the Roman patrimony which the Lombards had seized, and place in his power the territories of the exarchate. Aistulf was soon compelled (753) to sue for peace, and he engaged to surrender to the Pope the promised lands and never aggress again. But when the Franks had returned he declined to keep his promise, and the combined forces of the northern and the Beneventan Lombards laid siege to Rome. Pipin descended a second time into Italy, and Aistulf was bound to harder conditions and constrained to pay tribute to the king of the Franks (755).

Thus Ravenna and (partially) the territory of the exarchate, having remained four years in the possession of the Lombards, passed to the papal see by what was called the donation of Pipin. As Rome was still nominally, if not more than nominally, a city of the Empire, and the Pope still a subject of the Emperor, the act of 755 might be considered theoretically the recovery of the exarchate for New Rome; but the mode of its recovery and its new position, as well as the indifference of New Rome, rendered it in point of fact an independent papal state.

In the same year Aistulf died and was succeeded by Desiderius, the duke of Tuscany, who was at first friendly and afterwards hostile to Pope Stephen. In 757 he repeated the experiment which Liutprand had tried thirty years before, an alliance with the Greeks against Pope Paul and the Lombard dukes of southern Italy. Constantine V was asked for aid—a request which shows how utterly Old Rome and New Rome were estranged; and though he could not send it, the fleet of Sicily combined with Desiderius and took Hydrus (Otranto), which henceforward remained in the hands of the Greeks. The duchy of Beneventum was reduced to dependence on the

Lombard kingdom. Desiderius maintained friendly relations both with his suzerain King Pipin and with Pipin's son and successor King Charles, who married the daughter of the Lombard monarch; and the Popes did not assume an attitude unfavourable to the Lombards until the accession of Hadrian in 771.

Pope Hadrian I was a Roman of noble family and a strong antagonist of the Lombard party at Rome, which was led by Paul Afiarta. He entered into close relations with King Charles; he refused to crown the sons of Karlmann (Charles' brother), who had fled to Pavia; and he ordered the archbishop of Ravenna to imprison Afiarta. The archbishop, placing an unduly severe interpretation on this command, put the man to death. In consequence of these causes of discord, Desiderius plundered the territory of Rome, and Hadrian wrote to his friend King Charles for help. Charles set out in September 773 and forced Desiderius to retreat to Pavia, where he seized him, and then assumed himself the crown and title of the king of the Lombards. Thence, in the guise of a deliverer, and recognised as such, he proceeded to Rome, where he celebrated Easter (774) and renewed to Pope Hadrian the grants which his father had made to Stephen.

As to this donation of Charles the Great, diverse opinions prevail. The document itself, if such a document existed, is lost, and our only authority is Anastasius' *Life of Hadrian*, wherein it is stated that Charles made over to the chair of St. Peter, not only the exarchate, but Venice, Istria, Corsica, Beneventum, and Spoleto. Such a statement sounds incredible and almost unmeaning. Some regard it as a mere falsification, others defend it and lay emphasis on the form of the expression *promissio donationis*. Another disputed question in regard to this donation is whether Charles reserved to himself the overlordship of the territory which he conceded to the Pope or not; here also various opinions prevail.

On the whole, we may perhaps conclude that Charles confirmed the Pope in his rule over the Pentapolis and the exarchate; and that the question of overlordship did not arise at the time. It is not likely that contemporaries asked themselves distinctly the question, in what precise relation the Pope stood on the one hand to the Emperor and on the other hand to the Patrician of the Romans, or what precisely was the legal nature of the papal tenure of the lands which had been once governed by the exarchs. But in 781 (1st December) Hadrian took a step which was equivalent to a formal and final rupture of the thin bonds that bound East Rome to West Rome. He ceased to use the years of the Emperors as dates, and adopted the formula "Under the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ, our God and Redeemer." From this time until 25th December 800 we may say that the Church of Rome held the anomalous position of not being connected with a Roman Empire.

At this period, for ten years or more (766-777), the Popes had spiritual rivals in Italy, who like themselves affected temporal dominion. These were the archbishops of Ravenna, who had always endeavoured to maintain as far as possible an independent attitude towards the Popes. Archbishop Sergius succeeded in obtaining the larger part of the exarchate, which had been nominally transferred to the Pope, and "he administered all things like an exarch," in which he was secretly encouraged by King Charles. After the fall of Desiderius, Leo, the successor of Sergius, seized many new towns with impunity and attempted to extend his jurisdiction over the Pentapolis; but after his death in 777 the exarchate passed actually into papal hands.

Charles and Hadrian, thus brought into more intimate relations, did not remain long on friendly terms. Charles could see under the pontifical robe that greed for territorial aggrandisement which animated so many of St. Peter's later successors, and helped to bring about both the power and the corruption of the Church. For this worldly greed in a spiritual potentate the Teutonic king must have felt a contempt. Hadrian on his part found out that, if Desiderius was overthrown, he had to do with a new and far more powerful "King of the Lombards."

In 780 the general of Sicily united with the dukes of Beneventum and Spolegium against the Pope, who was compelled to send across the Alps and summon the "Patrician of the Romani" to lend aid against the Patrician of the Romaioi. He came and set things in order, and in the following year (781) he crowned his son Pipin king of Italy and his son Ludwig king of Aquitania. The new title, "King of Italy," did not mean any fresh arrangement of practical signification, but it marked a distinct stage in the development of the new relations into which Italy had entered. In 786 Charles appeared again in Italy to reduce to subjection Arichis, the Prince of Beneventum,—in 774 the duchy had become a principality,—and thus he became overlord of all Italy down to the borders of Calabria. But Beneventum was always practically independent of the Frank empire, and even the theoretical relation of vassaldom does not seem to have been more than transitory. On both these occasions, in 780 and in 786, new agreements advantageous to the Pope seem to have been made between Hadrian and Charles in regard to the extent of the Patrimonium Petri. In the last years of Hadrian's pontificate the discord which had been often manifested between him and Charles was increased, and there was a report that the latter had discussed with Offa, king of Mercia, the advisability of deposing the Pope. The ill feeling was augmented by a difference of opinion on the subject of image-worship. Pope Hadrian had thought to patronise the Emperor and Empress, of New Rome; he had written them a letter in which flattery, rebuke, and concern for the patrimony of Peter were seasonably blended; and he approved of the seventh Ecumenical Council, at which his delegates were present. That council had quietly ignored the Pope's communications except so far as they bore on the matter in hand; but the Pope was not in a position to resent the rebuff. He sent a copy of its acts to the Teutonic king, who agreed with the learned men at his court in disapproving of the doctrines there set forth. The famous *libri Carolini* were composed, in which the seventh Council was spoken of with scant respect and a theory was expounded which represented a compromise between iconoclasm and image-worship. On receiving this publication the Pope threatened Charles with the ban of the Church, and the monarch replied by holding the synod of Frankfurt (794) which condemned the recent council of Nicaea. In the following year Hadrian died on Christmas Day, and was mourned by Charles, notwithstanding all their dissensions.

Immediately after his election the next Pope, Leo III, sent the keys of the sepulchre and the flag of Rome to Charles, and asked him to send some of his nobles to receive allegiance at Rome. In reply to this Charles wrote a letter full of wholesome admonition—strange language coming from a king to a Pope—in which the following words occur: "It is ours to defend the Church of Christ everywhere on earth", outwardly against the heathen and unbelievers, inwardly by the recognition of the true faith. It is yours, most holy father, with hands raised like

Moses, to support our strife, that at your intercession by God's gracious help the Christian people may triumph over the enemies of his name, and that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified." These words breathe the spirit of a holy Roman Emperor, and are a clear recognition of the position which Pope Paul wished to assign to Pipin, a king divinely inspired to liberate the holy catholic and apostolic Church.

The friends of the deceased Hadrian agitated against the new Pope, and their attempts at violence obliged Leo to flee to France. As they preferred various charges against Leo, it was decided that he should be tried by a court. The trial was held at the end of the year 800, and Charles came to Rome for the purpose of presiding. The Pope was triumphantly acquitted.

This was the moment at which the decisive act, which had such a vast effect on European history, the coronation of Charles the Great as Emperor Augustus, took place. The celebrated passage in the Annals of Lauresheim, describing the event, runs thus:—

"And because the name of Emperor had now ceased among the Greeks, and their Empire was possessed by a woman, it then seemed both to Leo the Pope himself, and to all the holy fathers who were present in the self-same council, as well as to the rest of the Christian people, that they ought to take to be Emperor Charles king of the Franks, who held Rome herself, where the Caesars had always been wont to sit, and all the other regions which he ruled through Italy and Gaul and Germany ; and inasmuch as God had given all these lands into his hand, it seemed right that with the help of God and at the prayer of the whole Christian people he should have the name of Emperor also. Whose petition King Charles willed not to refuse, but submitting himself with all humility to God, and at the prayer of the priests and of the whole Christian people, on the day of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ he took on himself the name of Emperor, being consecrated by the lord Pope Leo."

The consecration consisted of coronation with a golden crown and unction with holy oil. The latter ceremony was not practised at New Rome; it was borrowed from the custom of the Visigoths of Spain. The Pope then adored the new Emperor and cried aloud: "To Charles the most pious Augustus, crowned of God, the great Emperor, who giveth peace, be life and victory."

The various theories which have been held as to the legal basis and import of this coronation have been discussed by Mr. Bryce, and I suppose that all unprejudiced readers will concur in the justness of his conclusion. "As the act was unprecedented, so was it illegal; it was a revolt of the ancient Western capital against a daughter who had become a mistress; an exercise of the sacred right of insurrection, . . . hallowed to the eyes of the world by the sanction of Christ's representative, but founded upon no law, nor competent to create any for the future." At the same time, I am inclined to think that if a contemporary had been asked for a theory of the coronation he would have interpreted it as an election of Charles by the Romans and their Republic, the Pope as the most exalted personage at Rome being their representative. No one would have looked on it as a direct consequence of Charles' conquests or as resting on the Pope's authority alone.

The most important, and also most easily misconceived, circumstance in regard to this event is that Charles was considered the successor of Constantine VI. This is distinctly implied in the cause assigned by contemporary writers for Charles' coronation—"the name of Emperor had now ceased among the Greeks, and their Empire was possessed by a woman." There was an idea prevalent, which Mr. Bryce's book, it is to be hoped, has finally dispelled, that Charles posed as the successor of Romulus Augustulus, who abdicated in 476. This error was due to the false use of words. It was the habit and is still the habit to speak of the dominions ruled by Honorius and his successors as the Western Empire. This false "Western Empire" was then connected in thought with the true Western Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, which was founded in 800, and whose coexistence as a rival made the name Eastern Empire for the first time applicable to the realm of the sovereigns of New Rome. Romulus Augustulus was succeeded by Zeno; and if Pope Leo had regarded Charles as the successor of Romulus he would have been obliged to regard the sovereigns whom the Popes acknowledged for three hundred years as usurpers. The fact is, that Romulus Augustulus was as much forgotten in the eighth century as any obscure name in history, and no one would have thought of making the year 476 A.D. a historical landmark.

When I call the Holy Roman Empire the true Western Empire, and the Empire of Nicephorus I and his successors the true Eastern Empire, I use the word "true" in a sense that requires a line of explanation. The Empire whose centre was Old Rome and the Empire whose centre was New Rome claimed each to be the Roman Empire. Nicephorus and his successors logically ought not to have admitted that Charles was a Roman Emperor; and Charles and his successors ought not to have conceded the title to their rivals. From a mere legal point of view the claim of the sovereigns of New Rome was good; while that of Charles rested on a basis completely infirm. But actually the two Roman Empires coexisted, compelled to recognise each other, but quite distinct, one in the East and one in the West; so that the terms Eastern Empire and Western Empire are really applicable. It was quite otherwise, as has been already so often observed, with the Empire in the fifth century. Then there was one Roman Empire, ruled by two Emperors, who for convenience divided the territory which they governed, but at any moment this arrangement might cease and one Emperor might rule the whole. If anyone speaks of a Western and an Eastern empire in the fifth century, he should write "empire" with a small initial so as to show distinctly that he uses the word in a different sense from that which it bears in the expression "Roman Empire," of which unity was an inseparable attribute.

It is hardly necessary to observe that the election of the new Roman Emperor, if it was not legally defensible, was yet as thoroughly justifiable by the actual history of the two preceding centuries as it has been justified by the history of ten succeeding centuries. For the Popes had practically assumed in the West the functions and the position of the Emperor. It was around them and their bishops that the municipalities rallied in a series of continual struggles with the Lombards ; the presence of the Emperor's delegates in Italy was becoming every year less and less effectual. It was the Popes who organised missionary enterprises to convert the heathen in the West, just as it was the Emperors who furthered similar enterprises in the East. Gregory I, in spite of the respectful tone in his letters to Maurice and Phocas, was the civil potentate in Italy. The mere fact that the

Pope was the largest landed proprietor in Roman Italy concurred to give him an almost monarchical position. As the virtual sovereign then of Italy as far as it was Roman,—for even in the days of exarchs he had often been its sovereign far more truly than the exarch or the Emperor,—and as the bearer of the idea of the Roman Empire with all its traditions of civilisation, the Pope had a right, by the standard of justice, to transfer the representation of the ideas whereof he was the keeper to one who was able to realise them.

CHAPTER XII

THE GEOGRAPHICAL ASPECT OF EUROPE AT THE END OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY

Since the beginning of the fifth century, when the Roman Empire was still conterminous with European civilisation, the political map of Europe was never so simple as in the last few days of the eighth and during the following centuries; and it has never been so simple since. The smaller independent kingdoms of the West had disappeared, partly conquered by the Saracens, partly gathered up into the dominion of the new Emperor of the West, and thus civilised Europe was divided among three chief powers—the Empire of the East, the Empire of the West, and the emirate, which afterwards became the caliphate, of Cordova. But there was another power which, though not at this period European, formed an important element in the political situation; this was the caliphate, afterwards the eastern caliphate, which included the north of Africa. Though the Omeyyad lords of Spain at first contented themselves with the title of emir, their dominion was not even theoretically part of the caliphate, from which they had revolted; not only had the court of Bagdad as little authority at Cordova as the court of Constantinople possessed at Aachen, but the Omeyyad emirs and the Abbasid caliphs were irreconcilable foes. When the emirs at length assume the superior title, the old caliphate becomes for historians' convenience the eastern caliphate, just as the Roman Empire becomes the Roman Empire of the East. It may be added that in the ninth century the eastern caliph became a European potentate by the conquest of Sicily.

At the end of the eighth century then the political aspect of civilised Europe consisted in the existence of two Christian and two mohammedan powers; a Roman Empire in the East and a Roman Empire in the West, a caliphate in the East and an independent emirate in the West. The mutual relations of these four powers were such as might be predicted, as Mr. Freeman has so often pointed out. On the one hand, rivalry existed between the two Empires, and rivalry existed between the two caliphates, if we may call the emirate a caliphate by anticipation; on the other hand, there were constant hostilities between the two eastern powers, whose frontiers coincided, and between the two western powers, whose frontiers likewise coincided. The consequence was that the Emperor of Constantinople was generally on friendly terms with the emir or caliph of Cordova, and the Emperor of Aachen was on friendly terms with the caliph of Bagdad. Two smaller and outlying states, the Christian Anglo-Saxons of Britain and the heathen Bulgarians of Moesia, were independent; the former by their geographical position being more closely connected with the Western and the latter with the Eastern Empire.

Such being the general aspect, we may now turn to the details, and examine the historical changes which took place during the eighth century, more especially as they affected the political geography of Europe.

The first feature that strikes us is that the two greatest powers in Europe, the Roman Empire and the Franks, were then recovering from a period of decline. The Roman Empire was renovated under the Isaurian Emperors, as the Frank kingdom was renovated under the Karlings. In both cases there had been a struggle between the monarchy and the aristocracy. In the Teutonic kingdom things went so far that the Merovingian dynasty was reduced to a simulacrum of royalty and the nobles wielded the power; while in the Roman Empire the strong but unpopular Heraclian dynasty was finally overthrown by an unmanageable aristocracy, and for a moment things went almost as far as in Gaul, when the throne was occupied by the insignificant Emperor Theodosius III, whose power was little more substantial than that of a Merovingian king.

It frequently happens that a period of internal reform or domestic prosperity for a state is ushered in by a successful defence against some dangerous invader. We may regard the victories of Charles Martel over the Saracens in the south of Gaul as the signs or heralds of Carolingian greatness, while the far greater achievement of Leo III in repulsing the enormous forces of Muavia from the walls of Constantinople inaugurated the epoch of Isaurian reformation. We speak intelligibly, though perhaps not quite philosophically, if we say that, but for the Karlings in the eighth century, there would never have been Emperors crowned at Old Rome to rival the Emperors crowned at New Rome; or that, but for the Isaurian sovereigns, the old Roman Empire would not have continued to exist in the south-east beside the new

Roman Empire of the West. It is hard for us to imagine that the Saracens might ever have settled permanently in Gaul and spread northwards, perhaps even to the English Channel, and that Paris, like Arles, might have been once a Saracen city; we cannot but suppose that, even had they extended their power farther than Septimania and maintained it for a longer period than forty years, they would have been driven back from Gaul many centuries sooner than they were actually driven back from Spain. But it is easy to imagine, on the other hand, that the Mohammedan Arabs might have occupied permanently the south-eastern corner of Europe seven centuries sooner than it was blighted by the presence of the Mohammedan Turks.

While the greater powers increased, the smaller powers diminished. The kingdom of the Visigoths was conquered by Tarik and Musa (711-713 AD), including Septimania, or Gothia, as the portion that remained to the Visigoths of their Gallic possessions, which had once extended to the Loire, was sometimes called. The kingdom of the Lombards, which under Liutprand had seemed likely to rise to greatness, was overthrown by the Franks and became a group of Frank provinces, destined afterwards to become a separate kingdom under the suzerainty of the Teutonic Roman Emperor.

The frontiers of the Frank power advanced in four different directions. (1) To the south they were extended by the acquisition of the Lombard territories, Austria, Neustria, Tuscia, and the duchies of Friuli and Spoleto, and by the subjection of the exarchate. (2) To the south-west the Visigothic province of Septimania was added to Frank Gaul; but it was not won directly from the Visigoths, just as the exarchate was not won directly from the Greeks. Septimania became first a Saracen and then a Frank province, just as the exarchate passed into the hands of the Lombards before it passed to the Franks. The Lombards weakened the Greeks in northern Italy as the Saracens weakened the Goths in southern Gaul, and in both cases the Franks profited. (3) To the north-east lands were conquered from the heathen waste of central Europe by the victories of Charles over the Saxons in 772 and the following years; while (4) to the south-east the kingdom of the Avars in Pannonia was conquered by the same monarch (796 A.D.), whose power also extended into the Slavonic lands of Carinthia and Istria.¹

When we speak, however, of a Cisalpine dominion of the Franks, we are not speaking quite strictly, and must make two modifications. Although the power of Charles in Italy practically amounted to a Cisalpine dominion of the Franks, Charles did not hold either his Lombard conquests or the exarchate in the capacity of king of the Franks. He assumed the title of king of the Lombards, and thus, from a theoretical aspect, the kingdom of the Lombards did not disappear in the eighth century, but continued to exist under sovereigns who were also kings beyond the Alps. As for the exarchate, it was under the direct control of the Popes, by virtue of the donation of Pipin, which Charles the Great confirmed; and thus it was as Roman Emperor and not as king of the Franks, it was by right of his coronation and not by right of his conquest, that Charles could claim dominion over the patrimony of St. Peter.

The memory of the Lombard power, which endured in Italy as an independent kingdom for two hundred years, is perpetuated by the name Lombardy, which is still used to designate the land which was called Neustria, and part of what was called Austria. In the same way the name Romagna still survives, a memorial of the exarchate and the rule of the Greek Romans in Italy. Perhaps no geographical appellation is more suggestive of the fortunes of the Roman name than Italian Romania—not even that of Asiatic Romania, the Seljuk kingdom of Roum. A tract of country, within a few days' march from Rome herself by the Flaminian road, receives the name of Rome, but not until that name has first travelled to Constantinople and thence returned, after two and a half centuries, to Ravenna and the adjacent districts. Thus the only part of Italy that is called by a name derived from Rome, received that name, not from Old Rome on the Tiber, but from New Rome on the Bosphorus.

The overthrow of the Lombard kingdom did not carry with it the extinction of all independent Lombard power in the peninsula. The duchy of Beneventum, which since its foundation had been practically independent of the royal government at Pavia, until the energetic action of Liutprand in the eighth century brought for a moment the dukes of Beneventum and Spolegium into nominal subjection, was never incorporated in the dominions of the Carolingians, although at first its lords were compelled to recognise the conqueror of Lombardy as their suzerain (786 A.D.) But the immediate consequences of the Frank conquests were agreeable to the duke. He at once assumed the title of prince, and henceforward we must speak of the principality, instead of the duchy, of Beneventum. He might reasonably anticipate that there would be less danger of interference with his independence from the new Transalpine than from the old Cisalpine lords of northern Italy.

One state in northern Italy, which was theoretically part of the exarchate though before the end of the seventh century it was practically independent, never passed under Frankish rule, the duchy of Venice. Venice continued to be nominally subject to the Emperor of Constantinople, and, for some centuries to come, must be considered as an outlying post of the Eastern Empire in northern Italy. The policy of the city of St. Mark was to maintain her independence by playing off the Emperor of the East against the Emperor of the West, and thus she carved out a peculiar history of her own. The republic of the lagoons was quite distinct in character from all other Italian cities; there was not much occidental flavour about it, and yet it cannot be quite called a Byzantine city. Its spirit, well symbolised in the church of St. Mark, was so unique that it can only be designated by the word "Venetian nevertheless, of the elements which composed the Venetian type the Byzantine element preponderated. We may say that the Venetians formed an intermediate stage between the western European nations and the Byzantines, just as the Byzantine world itself formed an intermediate stage between the Orient and the Occident. It was the Byzantine character of Venice that determined the peculiar part she played at the time of the Fourth Crusade and under the dynasty of the Palaeologi.

While in the West it was the tendency of smaller kingdoms to disappear, because the power of Francia increased, in the south-east a new kingdom had been established before the Isaurian sovereigns regenerated the Empire. There would be little use in considering whether, supposing the Bulgarians had not crossed the Danube in the reign of Constantine IV, but had waited until the eighth century to press southwards, Leo III or Constantine V would have been strong enough to prevent them. It is certain that these Emperors did not consider it feasible to drive the intruders out; they contented themselves with hindering further aggression and preserving the frontier of Mount Haemus. The expeditions of Constantine V aimed at weakening the power rather than at effecting the conquest of the Bulgarian kingdom.

We have already considered at length the import of the foundation of the Holy Roman Empire and the new attitude assumed by the papacy in the eighth century, and it has been observed that without a comprehension of these events modern history is unintelligible. It is interesting to compare the offices which the new Empire in the

north-west and the old Empire in the south-east respectively performed. In many respects their functions were similar. They were both forced to play a part in the decision of the “eternal question”; while the eastern Emperor defended Mount Taurus against the eastern caliphate, the western Emperor held the Pyrenees against the western caliphate; and it devolved upon both Emperors to keep the heathen of central Europe at bay, the Magyars (before they became Christians) and the Patzinaks. Both Emperors ruled over Slaves; the western Emperor over the Slaves in Pannonia, the eastern Emperor over the Slaves in Macedonia and Greece; and in both cases the Slaves proved an alien and troublesome element.

Both Empires were the champions of order in Europe; both Old and New Rome were ranged for civilisation against barbarism. But there is a broad contrast between them. The part played by the Eastern Empire may be described as negative, while the part played by the Western Empire was positive. The Eastern Empire protected Europe against the inroads of Asiatic barbarism, while the Western Empire extended Christianity and order in central Europe. The Eastern Empire conserved and in many respects refined ancient civilisation; the Western Empire learned of the Eastern, and developed what it learned in new directions. In Russia indeed New Rome played a more positive part than elsewhere, but its influence there was spiritual rather than political. Thus the Holy Roman Empire has in some respects more resemblance than the Eastern Empire to the old pagan Roman Empire. I do not mean the more superficial circumstances that the centre of both was Italian Rome, and that in both Latin was the official language; I mean the essential circumstance that they performed similar offices for Europe; for just as the pagan Roman Empire civilised Gaul, the Holy Roman Empire civilised central Europe. The Eastern Empire, on the other hand, had the function of the ancient Greeks rather than that of the ancient Romans—spiritual rather than temporal dominion; it was the great permanent fixture which remained until western Europe was prepared to take the torch for ever and march with certain footsteps in new paths of development.

CHAPTER XIII

SOCIETY IN THE EIGHTH CENTURY

The endeavours of the Isaurian monarchs to renovate the Empire bore such fruits as were possible at a period when the horizon of the human spirit was determined by a series of ecclesiastical formulae. Whereas at the beginning of the century there was no distinguished writer, no man of preeminent learning within the limits of the Empire, there was at the close of the century quite a large group of literary men, who had studied a great many subjects and could write very good Greek. There was George the Syncellus, who wrote a history or chronicle of the world and carried it down as far as Diocletian; there was his friend Theophanes the monk, who continued the chronicle where George ended and carried it down to his own times; there was Theodore the abbot of Studion, who has left works which form a good-sized volume; there was the learned Nicephorus, who, at first a secretary, afterwards became Patriarch and wrote a short history of the Empire from the accession of Heraclius to the middle of the reign of Constantine V; there was Tarasius, who enjoyed also a secular education and was suddenly promoted to the highest ecclesiastical dignity; and there was the abbot Plato, who, though he did not write himself, perhaps exercised to some extent a literary as well as a monastic influence. Besides these, John Lekanomantis, a learned man of science, who had an evil repute for occult lore in the days of Leo the Armenian, must at this time have been receiving his education.

A few glimpses of the usual course of education are afforded to us in the lives of certain of the famous ecclesiastics just mentioned, which were in some cases written by eminent contemporaries. Children were sent at an early age to an elementary teacher or *grammatistes*, who gave them what was called an “eisagogic” or “propaedeutic” training. Theodore of Studion was taught by a *grammatistes* for no less than seven years. It probably often happened that parents who had the requisite leisure and knowledge taught their children at home; and from the fact that Theoctiste, Theodore’s mother, was uneducated *because she was an orphan*, and was obliged to teach herself after her marriage, it might be inferred that women received only home instruction. The elementary training was followed by a higher or university course in philology (“grammar”), dialectic, and rhetoric; some also studied mathematics and music. The study of philology doubtless consisted in a careful reading of literary works and perhaps the practice of composition in Hellenistic style,⁴ which was so different from the spoken language that for writing in it—as well (for example) as Theodore of Studion could write—a diligent course of study was necessary. We are told that Theodore objected to the elegance and emptiness of the rhetors,—but it is not quite clear whether the rhetors of the past or rhetors of his own day are referred to.

Theodore had studied poetry, and composed sacred poems which were popular and widely circulated. A curious story is told which indicates their wide diffusion. There was a certain man in Sardinia who was very fond of these verses, especially of the Triodia composed for the season of Lent. One day he entertained in his house some monks who were pupils of Gregory of Syracuse, and when he began to descant on his favourite literature they turned the poems into ridicule as provincial and bad. The easily impressed host veered round to the opinion of his guests; but that night Theodore himself appeared, to take vengeance on his admirer for his faithlessness, and caused him to be whipped. This is only one of many miracles which were connected with St. Theodore.

We must notice here a celebrated Greek writer of the eighth century, who was not, however, a subject of the Empire, the Syrian John of Damascus. His father held an administrative post under the Omeyyad caliphs, and possessed considerable landed property in Palestine and Judaea. He spent a large amount of his money in redeeming Christian captives, and if any of them wished to remain in the country he bestowed on them small farms on his own estates. On one occasion he had the good fortune to purchase a monk of Italy, probably of Calabria, named Cosmas, whom the Arab pirates had brought from over seas to the slave market of Damascus, and he installed him as teacher of his son Johannes. Cosmas was learned in philosophy as well as in theology, and intimately acquainted with the writings of both Aristotle and Plato. The pupil profited by this instruction, and was considered in his day such a master of style that he was called Chrysorroas. He is chiefly known to the historians by his essays against the iconoclastic movement, which, however, are a very small portion of his works.

With the exception of the iconoclastic movement itself, which, although suggested by the Mohammedan doctrine, had many points of originality, there were no new ideas in the eighth century. The only eccentricity that I can find is the theory of Virgilius (condemned by Pope Zacharias), who not only believed in the existence of the Antipodes, but held that a race of men dwelled there who were not descended from Adam and for whom no Redeemer had died.

All that Leo and Constantine had done against superstition and monasticism did not touch the foundations of religious belief; their policy affected only the accidents of Christianity. They could not rouse up thought from the dead level and monotony to which it is condemned when its envelope is a stereotyped creed, anything different therefrom being incredible, almost unimaginable. They could not even remove the blight of superstition from the more educated classes, though their efforts were attended with some success. It was seriously believed that Leo IV died from boils on his head, a direct visitation from heaven because he had worn a crown which had been dedicated in St. Sophia. It was gravely asserted that the eyes of Constantine VI were put out on the 15th August because five years before he had put out the eyes of his uncles on that day, the coincidence of date indicating the retributive justice. It might be conjectured that the enemies who blinded him chose that very day on purpose, in order that the general public might look upon the crime as a punishment ordered by heaven, but in any case it is an example of superstition.

The discord in Church and State created by the marriage of Constantine VI with Theodote, the maid of honour, is instructive. It disclosed the difference between monks like Plato and Theodore, and men of the world like Tarasius and Nicephorus, who had led a secular life at first and entered the Church almost by accident. The austerity of the former was thoroughly honest, and justified by the letter and spirit of the religious canons; and Theodore alleges, in proof of the gravity of the Emperor's transgression, that the imperial example was infectious, and that governors of provinces—the Gothic governor of Bosphorus is especially mentioned—began to imitate it securely. On the other hand, the tolerance of Tarasius, who, though he did not venture to perform the matrimonial ceremony, gave a tacit consent, is characteristic; and, I venture to say, it was an unconscious result of the rationalistic and anti-monastic spirit diffused by the two great Isaurian Emperors. In fact, I believe that the very election of Tarasius, a layman and at one time a military officer, to the patriarchal chair would never have been possible but for the views disseminated by those two Emperors, who deprecated over-strictness and condemned the superlative punctiliousness of monks. In the eyes of the Pope the election of such a Patriarch was doubtless a clear indication of the general demoralisation of the Empire.

The lenient manner in which the orthodox treat the Empress Irene is also worthy of note. They never forget that she led the reaction against iconoclasm and brought about the seventh Ecumenical Synod; and if her son after his questionable marriage is no longer a new Constantine the Great, Irene, in spite of all her questionable conduct towards her son, is always a new Helena. The ethical judgment of the contemporary historians is perverted by a prejudice; the virtue of orthodoxy covers a multitude of vices; and the fact that Irene took the part of the monks against her son, although her motive was clearly to serve her own worldly ends, is imputed to her credit. She was a beautiful and accomplished woman who could beguile hearts, and we certainly do not expect writers to enlarge on the thesis that she was an unnatural mother; but it is amusing that the struggle between her and her son should be set down altogether to the account of the devil.

attraction which monastic life possessed for men of the highest rank in the eighth century—the tendency, which Constantine V so vigorously combated, to found monasteries and retire from a public career—has been already noticed. Women as well as men were sometimes carried away by this desire; for example, Theoctiste, the mother of Theodore Studita, became a nun in middle life, to the surprise and consternation of her friends and of the Empress herself, who wondered that a lady in such a good social position should abandon the world. She was, however, an impulsive woman, and I think we may conclude that it was not fashionable among ladies of rank to get them to a nunnery.

The parents of Theoctiste and Plato were victims of the great plague, and the children were left orphans at an early age. Plato was trained to be a notary and was employed as a secretary by a relation who held the important office of general logothete. But he soon embraced monastic life, and became the abbot or hegumenos of the monastery of Saccudion, situated beside Mount Olympus on the coast of Bithynia. At the time of the general synod of Nicaea he visited Constantinople and stayed with his sister Theoctiste, who had married Photinus, a minister of rank. The spiritual personality of Plato influenced so profoundly not only his nephews but his brother-in-law and sister, that they all determined to enter immediately upon the more excellent way of life. So Photinus and Theoctiste (to the surprise of her fashionable friends), along with their family, including a girl and three boys, of whom one was the famous Theodore, left Constantinople together and settled in a country retreat which belonged to them, named Boskytion. This domain, not far from the monastery of Saccudion, was enclosed at one end by a crescent of trees, and overlooked a pleasant breezy plain which stretched below; an expanse of transparent water enhanced its delights. But, best of all in the eyes of its inhabitants, it afforded "quiet to those who dwelled in it, to be alone with God and at rest from the senses." Here Theodore became a monk and engaged in hard agricultural work, like a common farm labourer, not, however, neglecting his studies. We are told that he was very zealous to reform monastic corruption, and this desire "was doubtless felt by many men of his rank, who

became monks from purely disinterested motives, and led blameless lives. Such men, of high breeding and good education, must have produced incalculable effects by their example and influence in keeping personal morality at a relatively high point; and it cannot be denied that in this way the political decay involved in the monastic system was to some extent neutralised. When Theodore in later years was appointed abbot of the monastery of Studion (whence he derived his distinctive name Studites), he introduced the practice of mechanical work among the brethren ; every one learned a trade; some were builders, some weavers, some bronzesmiths, some ropemakers, others shoemakers. Many new houses, organised on a similar system, were founded throughout the Empire by Studite monks.

Perhaps no one was more austere, no one more uncompromisingly militant against the instincts of the senses, than the monk and historian Theophanes, who, while the other ecclesiastics proceeded to the council of Nicaea on splendid horses and in fine array, rode thither on an ass, clothed in a hair garment. He was one of those divine men, says his friend and biographer Theodore, the example of whose lives, like stars appearing after a storm to sea-tossed merchants, bring men safe to port. He had a considerable fortune, which he spent on charitable works, and a kinsman who did not wish that the property should leave the family complained of the matter to Leo IV. The Emperor threatened Theophanes with the loss of his eyes if he persisted in his irrational unworldliness, and sent him on business to Cyzicus, in order to entangle him if possible in the things of this life. But the deaths of both the Emperor and the dissatisfied relation soon relieved Theophanes from such vexatious constraint, and he retired with his wife to the island Kalonnesos, where he built a monastery. The wife of this saint was wife only in name, and the description of the wedding night is curious and edifying. He treated his bride to a discourse on the spiritual necessity of unsullied purity; they agreed that they would never contaminate themselves by physical union; and the lady remained for ever a maiden. At the moment when they undertook the chaste engagement they were aware of a savour of sweet spices which filled the whole house, a miraculous token vouchsafed of celestial approval; this touch reminds us of the mystic odours in the legend of the Holy Grail.

It has been already remarked that Constantinople was becoming ever more and more a Greek city, and that its Greek character was greatly increased by the consequences of the plague. At the same time, its streets swarmed with numbers of wholly Graecised, half Graecised, or utterly barbarous foreigners, especially Armenians and Slavonians. The importance of the Armenian element is indicated by the number of Armenians who held governorships in the Empire; for example, Artavasdos, the son-in-law of Leo III, was an Armenian. A Slavonic clergyman, Nicetas, was made Patriarch, and in the early part of the ninth century Thomas the Slavonian was one of the most powerful men of the time and wellnigh ascended the throne. A story is told, by a late writer, of the Patriarch Nicetas, that when reading a chapter of the New Testament he pronounced the name *Mattháion* as if it were a quadrisyllable, *Mattháion*. When someone present corrected him he indignantly cried, "Don't be silly; my soul utterly abhors diphthongs and triphthongs."

If newspapers had been published at Constantinople in the eighth century, columns of court news and columns of church news would have occupied most space. Almost every week, and often more than once a week, there would have been a description of some elaborate ceremonial procession. It would be tedious to go into the details of these ceremonies,¹ which come within the scope of archaeology rather than of history, and we may go on to glance at the functions of the prefect of the city and the quaestor, the two officials who had most to do with the police control and maintenance of order in Constantinople, and whose names remind us of the continuity of Roman history.

Next to the Emperor himself, the prefect of the city was the greatest man in Byzantium. He was the supreme judge, not only inside the walls, but for one hundred miles beyond them. Let us enter his court and see what sort of cases used to come before him. At one time it was a slave—it must not be thought that Christianity had entirely blotted out slavery—who had taken refuge in a church and pleaded that he had paid the money for his freedom and had not been emancipated; at another time it was a poor patron who claimed to receive support from his former slaves, who had been manumitted. The prefect was often obliged to "teach" by threats or flogging freedmen who ventured to treat with contumely or scant courtesy their patrons, or patrons' wives or children; if a freedman went to the length of informing or conspiring against his old master, he was beaten with clubs and tonsured, his freedom was cancelled, and he was handed over to his patron. Probably one of the commonest misdemeanours was the malversation by guardians of their wards' property. It was considered a crime to hire out a slave for prostitution, on the principle apparently of preventing, not cruelty to animals, but the corruption of human souls; and the prefect was supposed to interfere. It devolved upon the prefect to provide for fair dealings in the exchange and for fair prices in the meat market; and it was his duty also to preserve discipline in the streets and at the public games, for which purpose he had soldiers under him. He possessed the power of excluding any individual from the city or from any part of it, from trading in it or from attending a show, from practising a profession in it, and he could impose all these disabilities either temporarily or permanently. Thus the office of prefect still combined judicial with executive functions.

Some, however, of the duties which in a modern state, where there is a strict police control, would be discharged by that department, devolved, not upon the prefect, but upon the quaestor. For the quaestor had power over all strangers sojourning in the city, whencesoever they came and of whatsoever sex or profession they were,—even over clerks, monks, and nuns. It was his business to inquire who each was, whence he came, and what he wanted, and to take care that if he sought redress he should obtain it, in order that he might return as soon as possible to his home. For provincials were not allowed to stay in the capital or visit it whenever they liked; they were only tolerated there when they sought redress for injury or had a petition to present to the Emperor.

The general law laid down by Justinian was that if the quaestor found any one within the walls of Byzantium who was neither gaining his livelihood by a trade or profession nor concerned in a lawsuit, he was to be sent out of the city, if he were not a native; if he were a native and an able-bodied man, he was to be enrolled among the public workmen, or placed in a bakery, or employed as a garden labourer, or have some other occupation assigned to him; in case he declined to work, he was to be expelled from the city. On the other hand,

such as were maimed or old were to be gently dealt with. Besides these functions the quaestor had a judicial office of small scope; a certain kind of cases came before him, namely those of forgery and false coinage.

It is interesting to notice the two reasons assigned, in the eighth-century handbook of law, for the strict prevention of idleness in Constantinople. The first is that idleness leads to crime, and hence for self-protection the State is justified in discountenancing it. The second is that it is unfair that strong men should live by the consumption of the superfluity of the labour of others, because that superfluity is owed to the weak. The duty of supporting the weak is one of the Christian ideas that had long since been recognised by custom, and had already penetrated into civil law.

The employments specially instanced as open to a man who wanted work are worth noting. We are reminded that, besides the inevitable staff of public workmen, who, in a city like Byzantium, where fires were frequent and earthquakes not uncommon, had much to do beyond the repairs necessitated by the wear and tear of time, the State also supported multitudes of bakers, as the *panis et circenses* were a survival of antiquity that lasted long into the Middle Ages; and we are taught that the gardens, to which we sometimes meet casual references in the historians, were not the property of private citizens, but were parks for the people, kept up at the State's expense.

Little can be gleaned from our sources as to the details of the daily life of the educated lay classes. We get no glimpses into the drawing-rooms of the countesses, archontesses, or hypatesses; all we can say with confidence is that religion filled a relatively large portion of daily life, and, as at all other periods, this applies especially to women. We might have conjectured with subjective certainty that the monks in their resistance to iconoclasm found firm allies in the female sex, even if we did not possess direct confirmatory evidence. Nor is it insignificant that a woman headed the reaction. But although the women, like the monks, had much to answer for in fostering and transmitting superstition, there were doubtless many enlightened mothers who could educate without tainting their children's minds.

There is evidence that weddings had still a Bescennine flavour, and the customs of licentious antiquity¹ had not been entirely abolished. But it is highly probable that there was not at this period more of that which might reasonably offend a delicate or seriously religious nature than there was at marriage festivities in the days of our ancestors not so long ago.

A few interesting traits are related about the domestic life of Theoctiste, whose acquaintance the reader has already made, by her son Theodore.² She was a considerate mistress to her servants; she allowed them not only bread, wine, and lard, but on feast days treated them to fresh meat, condiments, and fowl. But nature had given her a quick temper, and being an orphan she had not been taught to keep it under control. Consequently she used often to fly into a passion and box the ears of her maids; but when she became cool again she would retire to her bedroom and strike her own cheeks to punish herself for her want of self-restraint. She used then to call the injured maid and ask her pardon.

The material splendours and the literary and scientific culture which had begun to distinguish the court of the Ab-basid caliphs in their new city on the Tigris were well known and reported with exaggerations at Byzantium, but there is no evidence that they produced any visible influence on Byzantine life until the reign of Theophilus. Abu Djafar Manssur, the founder of Bagdad, had intended the place rather as a strong military fortress—to control Kufa on the one side and Chorasán on the other—than as a rich and luxurious capital. This caliph was miserly, even mean, in his habits, dressed shabbily, and was disinclined to pageantry and pomp. He did not encourage poetry and he abhorred music; a story is told that on one occasion, hearing a slave playing a tambourine, he ordered the instrument to be broken on the player's head. But he encouraged all positive sciences, history, law, grammar, and natural science; under him flourished Chalil the great student of literature, and Mohammed Ibn Ishak the father of Arabic history. It is remarkable, however, that most of the learned men were of Persian nationality, and Chalid, the architect of Bagdad, was a Persian. The elevation of the Abbasid dynasty and the translation of the centre of the empire to the Tigris were accompanied by the rise of Persian influence, which may perhaps be compared to the growth of Armenian influence in the Roman Empire.

It was Manssur's son Mahdi, whose character in all respects contrasted with that of his father, that originated the splendour and luxury for which Bagdad soon became famous throughout the world. The care for luxurious comfort may be illustrated by the incident that ice was sent to Mecca in September when the caliph was visiting the holy city. "The capital, continually increasing in size," writes Weil, "soon became a centre for all the rich and noble men of the realm; music and song, which in the reign of Manssur were condemned to silence, resounded in the streets; scholars and poets were drawn to the court and rewarded with royal bounty; everything was done to support commerce and industry; postal arrangements connected the capital with all parts of the empire; and great pilgrimages were organised, with a luxury and lavish munificence of which all the poor from Bagdad to Mecca profited; a special divan was made for the support of the blind." Thus the reign of Mahdi was marked by a great reaction against the stern parsimony of his father; and the cruel Harun, the famous hero of flattering romances, followed the example of Mahdi in beautifying Bagdad and making his court attractive by luxury and culture.

The court of New Rome, from its foundation by Constantine, was characterised by many oriental features derived from Persia. In dress, for example, the tiara and the skaramangion (state robe), the profuse use of ornaments, were imitated from Persian customs. In each succeeding century there was doubtless a marked increase in the distance of Byzantine life from old Greek and early Christian simplicity, and in approximation to oriental richness. The rich men of Constantinople wore gold and jewels on their shoes¹; the floors of their houses shone with glazed tiles. For the vessels of domestic use a simple and beautiful form no longer sufficed, they were overlaid with heavy gold leaf. This delight in rich and showy material naturally travelled to western Europe, which in all such matters revered Constantinople from afar, and relics at Aachen show how Byzantine ornamentation influenced art at the court of Charles. We must not think of comparing the luxury and opulence that marked daily

life at Byzantium with the magnificence of old Romans, like Lucullus or the rich men described by Horace and Martial. Such colossal splendour is a thing quite distinct from the diffusion of oriental luxury on a small scale; and the houses of rich men at Constantinople in the eighth century resembled in point of opulence the mansions of wealthy merchants nowadays rather than the palaces of the old Roman aristocrats and bankers. In the first place, people were not so enormously rich; and in the second place, the spirit of the established religion seems to have had the effect of suppressing tendencies to extravagant display. Men did not think of lavishing fortunes on banquets of inordinate costliness; voluptuous carouses, celebrated in a showy and expensive manner, would have been considered a scandal and regarded as an insult to society.¹ ² Many unkind things were said of Constantine V because he kept a merry table, and yet we never hear it hinted that he wasted money on luxury or display.

The East was a country of fables and romances as well as of material splendour, and here we come to an important field in which it influenced Europe. Novels and stories composed by individuals are in their nature an ephemeral branch of literature; and of the numbers that were disseminated in the Middle Ages comparatively few have survived. We have many tales in Italian or French, which came from Byzantine and ultimately from oriental sources, but of which neither the oriental original nor the Byzantine intermediate form remain. These stories reached the West in various ways, by southern Italy, by the exarchate while it lasted, and by Venice. The caliphate of Cordova in later times was a centre for their diffusion. But in this place we need not pursue a subject on which we have no direct evidence at such an early date, and I shall merely speak of the story of Barlaam and Josaphat, which doubtless reached Europe in the eighth century, even if it was not written in Greek by John of Damascus, as is usually stated. The tale underwent four translations or adaptations. The Indian original was rendered into Pehlevi, the Pehlevi into Syriac, the Syriac into Greek, and the Greek into Latin; whence German and French versions of the story were composed.

No one can read *Barlaam and Josaphat* without being struck by the resemblance which it bears to the life of Buddha. The heathen father of Josaphat in vain takes every precaution to hinder the decree of destiny or providence that his son was to become a Christian, and Barlaam converts the young prince, whose soul, being “naturally Christian,” was easily determined to abjure the things of this world and aspire to the ideal of monasticism. The discourses of Barlaam, which convince the prince of the new doctrine, are rich in oriental similes and metaphors, but the exposition seems to have been worked up anew and adapted for the Byzantine world by the Greek monk John, of the monastery of St. Saba, who brought the “edifying story” from India to the Holy City. The note of the whole tale is the contrast between the world and the spirit,—the transitory and the abiding. The world is as a city where a new king is elected every year, and at the end of that term, when he is at the height of enjoyment and expects to reign for ever, the citizens dethrone him and banish him naked to a distant island. The wise man will follow the example of that rare king, who prudently thought of the future, and during his year’s reign caused the treasures of the palace to be conveyed to the island of exile, so that when he was sent thither his wants were well supplied. But nothing in this vein is so striking as the allegory of the man suspended in the pit — a picture of medieval grotesqueness that might have been painted by Albrecht Dürer. A man fleeing from an unicorn which pursues him, stumbles into a pit, but rescues himself from falling into its depths by grasping a tree, which grew on the margin, and supporting his feet on a jutting ledge. But when he looked downward he saw a fiery terror in the shape of a dragon, eager to devour him; and at the roots of the tree he saw a black and a white mouse gnawing, whence he knew that his support must soon give way and precipitate him into the jaws of the monster. And from the ledge on which his feet rested he saw the heads of four asps peeping forth. Then turning his face from these horrors and looking upwards he saw a drop of sweet honey distilling from the tree, and a longing for the sweetness so possessed him that the things below were soon clean out of mind. The unicorn from which the man runs is death; the pit is the world; and the tree is the space of man’s life. The white and black mouse which nibble at the roots of the tree are day and night; while the four asps represent the four unstable elements of which the human organism is built. The drop of honey is the pleasantness of the sweets of this world; the fiery dragon is the fearful belly of hell.

An attempt was made, at the suggestion of the idolater Theudas (who afterwards burned his magic books, like Cyprian), to turn away Josaphat from his ascetic unworldliness by the temptation of beautiful and alluring women. As with Buddha, this stratagem was ineffectual; Josaphat was forearmed by a dream, which transported his imagination to a pleasant plain and a city, where he saw all the fascinations of beauty and pleasure, and, as his spirit was yielding to the seductions, he was removed thence to dark and dolorous places, where the young women seemed fouler than corruption.¹ In contrast with the asceticism of Barlaam and Josaphat is the temperament of the king, Josaphat’s father, who held the bright pagan view of life, which accepts cheerfully and securely “this sweet light and the pleasant things which the gods gave to delight us.”

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of the period treated in this work the universal dominion of Rome was passing away. We have seen the Empire dismembered; we have seen how it came to pass that the West was taken and the East was left; and we have traced the history of nearly four centuries in which the Roman Empire, no longer a universal

mistress, was administered by great legislators, great warriors, and great reformers, who ruled in the New Rome on the Bosphorus and were called by the same title as Octavian and Trajan.

If the idea of the Roman Empire before it was dismembered was universal dominion, if its function was to rule the peoples, *regere imperio populos*, what was its function, it may be asked, when it no longer represented that idea of universal dominion?

The answer is that the Roman Empire was the material and moral support, the political and spiritual bulwark of European Christendom; it represented the principle of cosmos. It was not enough, as some have thought,—as M. Guizot seems to have thought,—for the Roman Empire at the height of its greatness to give once for all a principle of order to the “wild nations.” The author and giver of the principle could not be discarded; like the God of Descartes, the Roman Empire was the preserver as well as the initiator of civilisation. The view of the historical Anaxagoras, who attempts to explain European development by a prime impulse communicated once for all by the Roman Empire ere it retreated from the shores of western Europe, and who regards the “Romaic” Empire (if he does not call it by some more disparaging name) as a superannuated and decrepit survival, is a view which can as little satisfy the true student of history as the view, which represented *Nous* as the prime arranger of the elements of the world and then laid it aside as unnecessary, could satisfy the true philosopher. The Roman Empire was not, as many would have it, discarded as superannuated when its western provinces were lost; its existence could not have been dispensed with; its obliteration would have been fatal to the cause of civilisation. The “wild nations” had not yet learned more than the alphabet of their lesson; and if they disdained a mistress in the sense of a queen, *domina*, they required a mistress in the sense of a teacher, *magistra*, for a long time yet.

In the first place, the later Roman Empire was the bulwark of Europe against the oriental danger; Maurice and Heraclius, Constantine IV and Leo the Isaurian were the successors of Themistocles and Africanus. The idea of European Christendom, at once Teutonic and Roman, making common cause against the peoples of Asia, who, if their progress had been unresisted, would have made the world stand still, first appeared clearly when Aetius and Theodoric fought together against the champion of desolation on the Mauriac Plain. But from that time forward it was destined that the Romans should perform alone the work of defending Europe; and until the days of the crusades, the German nations did not combine with the Empire against the common foe. Nor did the Teutons, by themselves, achieve any success of ecumenical importance against non-Aryan races. I may be reminded that Charles the Great exterminated the Avars; but that was after they had ceased to be really dangerous. When there existed a truly formidable Avar monarchy it was the Roman Empire that bore the brunt; and yet while most people who read history know of the Avar war of Charles, how few there are who have ever heard of Priscus, the general who so bravely warred against the Avars in the reign of Maurice. I may be reminded that Charles Martel won a great name by victories in southern Gaul over the Saracens; yet those successes sink into insignificance by the side of the achievement of his contemporary, the third Leo, who held the gate of eastern Europe against all the forces which the Saracen power, then at its height, could muster. Everyone knows about the exploits of the Frank; it is almost incredible how little is known of the Roman Emperor’s defence of the greatest city of Christian Europe, in the quarter where the real danger lay. What should we say of the knowledge of one who was acquainted with the victory of the western Greeks over the Punic invaders of Sicily, and had never heard of the battle which was fought by the eastern Greeks at Salamis? The same remarks might be made of the earlier siege of New Rome in the days of Constantine IV, when the armies and the armaments of Muavia were driven back and the nations of the West acknowledged the greatness of the Roman Emperor.

In later centuries the chivalry of western Europe went forth against the Moslem; but the crusades whose name is so familiar were of far less moment than that crusade against the fire-worshippers which was fought and won long before by the Emperor Heraclius, when the work was not merely to rescue the sanctuary of Christian sentiment but to save the centre and bulwark of the Christian world. For in the days of Heraclius Constantinople was in far greater peril than in the days of the Comneni, and its fall in the seventh century would have been a far more serious blow to the cause of European civilisation than its fall in the eleventh or the twelfth.

But, in the second place, the Empire was much more than the military guard of the Asiatic frontier; it not only defended but also kept alive the traditions of Greek and Roman culture. We cannot over-estimate the importance of the presence of a highly civilised state for a system of nations which were as yet only beginning to be civilised. The constant intercourse of the Empire with Italy, which until the eleventh century was partly imperial, and with southern Gaul and Spain, had an incalculable influence on the development of the West. Venice, which contributed so much to the growth of western culture, was for a long time actually, and for a much longer time nominally, a city of the Roman Empire, and learned what it taught from Byzantium. The Byzantine was the mother of the Italian school of painting, as Greece in old days had been the mistress of Rome in the fine arts; and the Byzantine style of architecture has had perhaps a wider influence than any other. It was to New Rome that Teutonic kings applied when they needed men of learning, and thither students from western countries, who desired a university education, repaired. Nor should Englishmen forget that the man who contributed more than any other individual to the making of the English Church, both by ecclesiastical organisation and by the training of the clergy, was one born in Cilicia and educated at Athens, one who in his youth had rejoiced in the glories of Heraclius and lamented over the first conquests of the Saracen invaders,—the great Theodore of Tarsus. It was, moreover, in the lands ruled by New Rome that old Hellenic culture and the monuments of Hellenic literature were preserved, as in a secure storehouse, to be given at length to the “wild nations” when they had been sufficiently-tamed. And in their taming New Rome herself played an indispensable part. The Justinianean law, which still interpenetrates European civilisation, was a product of New Rome.

In the third place, the Roman Empire for many centuries entirely maintained European commerce. This was a circumstance of the greatest importance; but unfortunately it is one of those facts concerning which contemporary historians did not think of leaving records to posterity. The fact that the coins of the Roman Emperors were used throughout Europe in the Middle Ages speaks for itself. To Finlay belongs the credit of having pointed out the extent of the commercial activity of Greeks in the Middle Ages; yet even still the old error is prevalent which regards the Saracens as commanding the commerce of the Mediterranean.¹ The mere

circumstance that the law of the Mohammedans forbade the lending of money on interest gave the Greeks a considerable advantage.

In the fourth place, the Roman Empire preserved a great idea which influenced the whole course of western European history down to the present day—the idea of the Roman Empire itself. If we look at the ecumenical event of 800 AD from a wide point of view, it really resolves itself into this: New Rome bestowed upon the western nations a great idea, which moulded and ordered their future history; she gave back to Old Rome the idea which Old Rome had bestowed upon her five centuries before. In point of actual fact, of course, the title of Emperor was usurped; but the immediate accidents of the transaction do not alter the general truth, that but for the preservation of the Roman Empire and the integrity of New Rome there would have been no Western Roman Empire; if Constantinople and the Empire had fallen, the imperial idea would have been lost in the whirl of the “wild nations.” It is to New Rome that Europeans really owe thanks for the establishment of the principle and the system which brought law and order into the political relations of the West.

Of the incalculable services which the Roman Empire continued to perform for Europe and Christendom after the year 800 AD it does not devolve upon me to speak here; the diffusion of culture and Christianity among the southern and eastern Slaves, the missions of St. Methodius and St. Cyril, all that Russia owes to New Rome, belong to the history of the “Eastern Roman Empire,” as it may fairly be called.

From the fifth century, when Rome on the Tiber ceased to be an imperial capital, until the fifteenth, when Rome on the Bosphorus fell, the Empire continued to represent the principle of civilisation ; for a great part of that time it was the bulwark of Europe. Philosophers know that change is inconceivable without a principle of permanence, and cosmos impossible without an idea; and historians must recognise that the development of the German nations in the West, by which from a state of almost primitive barbarity they attained so soon to a highly complex civilisation, was rendered possible by the presence of the Roman Empire in their midst. Such was the function of the Roman Empire in Europe; it represented the principle of stability, and was a perpetual link between the present and the past—a permanent background, we might say, in a theatre of changes and commotions. With the name of Rome, whether borne by Romani or by *Romaioi*, were indissolubly joined the ideas of law and culture (*civilitas*), and in the days of the Othos or of the Carolingians, as in the days of Alaric, the true Roman Empire deserved and commanded the respect of the wild peoples;

discite vesanae Romam non temnere gentes.

THE END

